

Liz Rideal - introduction by John Zurier, 2014

Welcome everyone. Thank you all for coming out for tonight's talk by Liz Rideal as part of California College of the Art's Paintings Lecture Series. For those of you who don't know me, my name is John Zurier and I am a professor of painting here at CCA.

It is my pleasure to introduce Liz Rideal. Liz is an artist and writer living in London whose work reflects an overriding interest in colour, movement, repetition, and the aesthetics and culture of cloth and drapery. A multifaceted artist, she works primarily with photographic processes across an array of disciplines that includes photography, collage, watercolour, sculpture, tapestry, film, film projections, and large-scale installation and architectural projects. To borrow a phrase from Robert Herrick, the 17<sup>th</sup> century English poet, I would characterize Liz's work as having a "wild civility." It has an unfurled clarity that blends the haphazard quotidian poetry of an unmade bed with a shimmering structure—linking intelligence to sensuality and to social space, and in turn, linking it to a deep love and understanding of picture making and the culture of painting.

Liz is a professor of painting at the Slade School of Fine Art and was educational resource writer at the National Portrait Gallery, London. She has exhibited widely in museums and galleries in Europe and the United States, and her most recent exhibition "Freefall" was held at Gallery 339, in Philadelphia last month. In 2008/2009 she was awarded the prestigious Wingate Rome Scholarship in Fine Art at the British School at Rome. Her work is in the public collections of the Tate, the V&A, the British Museum, Yale Center for British Art, the Portland Art Museum, and the George Eastman House. She is the author of *Mirror, Mirror: Self Portraits of Women Artists* (2001), *Insights: Self Portraits* (2005), and has recently published *How to Read Paintings: A crash course in meaning and method*. Rizzoli Press is publishing the book for the American market this April.

On Monday, Liz gave a talk on her own artwork at the art department at University of California, Berkeley, and tonight, the subject of her talk will be her new book: *How to Read Paintings*, a brilliant introduction on how to look at and think about painting. For me, this little book is like a good small sized painting that despite its diminutive format is vast in scale and scope.

Now I'm going say you something personal about Liz...

First meeting: large scale photo-booth collage, gesture and fabric, lush and exacting...talking Antony Van Dyck....Venetia, Lady Digby, mysterious and tender deathbed, almost all cloth... delight in looking at painting...

Please join me in welcoming Liz Rideal

Poems by Robert Herrick

Delight in Disorder.

A Sweet disorder in the dresse  
Kindles in cloathes a wantonnesse:  
A Lawne about the shoulders thrown  
Into a fine distraction:  
An erring Lace, which here and there  
Enthralls the Crimson Stomacher:  
A Cuffe neglectfull, and thereby  
Ribbands to flow confusedly:  
A winning wave (deserving note)  
In the tempestuous petticoate:  
A carelesse shooe-string, in whole tye  
I see a wilde civility:  
Doe more bewitch me, then when Art  
Is too precise in every part.

Upon Julia's Clothes.

When as in silks my *Julia* goes,  
Then, then, (me thinks) how sweetly flowes  
That liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see  
That brave Vibration each way free;  
O how that glittering taketh me!

From the Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick, edited with an introduction and notes by J. Max Patrick, Anchor Books, 1963, The Anchor Seventeenth-Century Series