

PRESS RELEASE

MICHAEL BROUGHTON

Beerwolf

Paintings and Drawings 2014

27 June – 26 July 2014

*Small Hotel I*, 2013, oil on board, 19.5 x 28 cm

In his paintings and drawings Michael Broughton takes as his subject the environs and objects of his everyday life – furniture, architecture, snooker tables; human paraphernalia and detritus that may be taken for granted or overlooked.

This recent body of work, representing the pub and hotel environs of Falmouth, moves away from the studio setting that so dominated his previous output. And, for the first time, we are presented with exterior views of a building – a subject repeatedly drawn over a two-year period, synthesised in paintings.

The title of this exhibition, *Beerwolf*, at once suggests a glibly-named bar and the Anglo-Saxon epic poem (*Beowulf*). It sums up the lifeworld of a hotel, seen from within and around in this group of paintings and drawings; yet, its literary allusion might encourage us to find a symbolism in the objects represented, or a narrative to these scenes. Broughton's phlegmatically titled subjects (for example, *Snooker Room I*) however clarifies that there are no metaphors or allegories in these works. The artist's sole aim is, rather, to describe the connected lives of objects and his encounters with them.

Stylistically, Broughton unifies objects as collective, inter-dependent things. Snooker tables and chairs, lamps and timber beams are threaded together as one with line, gesture and colour. While in the drawings charcoal markings are weaved to build continuous form and mass, the whiteness of the paper glimmers through as light from within. And in the paintings Broughton sees his subject in totality with a directionless 'half light' that does not settle on particular objects, but rather serves as an immersive mid-tone. A muted palette and nebulous handling renders objects tantalisingly indistinct, thus out of reach.

Broughton (b. 1977) trained at City of Bath College and Falmouth College of Art and has undertaken residencies at the Museo Del Prado, Madrid, and Tate Britain. He regularly shows in London and abroad, and has recently exhibited at MUBA, Tourcoing, Lille.