

emily blom —  
*between being and becoming*



This body of work is a quiet reverie on the small moments of daily life. I am interested in how the act of dressing, grooming and adorning the body can become ritualised. How it is a slow, methodical process that occurs daily. I am particularly interested in pausing in this transient space. To examine it from all angles and to appreciate the beauty of these small, nuanced moments that reflect something larger and more profound.

I have chosen to use young women as my subject matter, as they are themselves in a state of transition. On the cusp of adulthood, the figures are suspended between what they were, what they are, and what they will become.

The work is driven by my longstanding fascination with textiles and the intricate relationships between fabric and the human body. I am exploring an inherent femininity that exists in cloth, with its motherlike offerings of warmth and protection. I'm interested in how it is constantly transforming and changing, as it is modified, adapted and embellished by the wearer in processes that date back centuries. Cloth acts as both the body's second skin and as an everchanging display of social standing, cultural belonging and personal identity.

In this series, young women are dressed in chamber robes, a morning gown inspired by the Japanese kimono that became popular in Europe during the early 20th century. These were worn within the privacy of the home while preparing for the day ahead, much like the dressing gowns we know today. The garment offers comfort and warmth, but it is also a decadent display of silk, pattern and colour. The opulent beauty of the gown makes it inherently an object to be desired, even if only by the wearer. As such, it creates a delicate interplay between the private and the public spheres, reflecting the transitional state of the figures that are enveloped between its folds.

For this body of work, I have created a series of morning gowns that derive their form from that of a traditional kimono. I have constructed these with patterns that are European in origin in order to create a harmony and marriage of cultures, where the past and the present can merge, with each informing and influencing the other.

new  
paintings

13.10.23 —  
30.10.23

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The work is heavily informed by time spent in Japan and has been led by a range of traditional Japanese design principles and philosophies. With inspiration found in ancient poetry, Ikebana, the woodblock prints of the Edo period and most notably, the ritual of the Japanese tea ceremony and the philosophies imbedded within this ritual.

The work acts as a reflection on these ideas and experiences, explored through the lens of my own cultural background and contemporary interpretation.

The series follows a simplified, paired back colour palette and the compositions have been thoughtfully constructed to create balance and harmony. The female form is shown with minimal distractions, props or adornments, so that a single gesture or glance is able to reflect something deeper and more meaningful.

Each piece utilises a combination of techniques, merging traditional painting and printmaking methods with contemporary graffiti practices to create multilayered hybrid works that are rich in colour, pattern, and texture.

Figures are presented as if they have been captured voyeuristically, however, there are small details that deliberately contradict this. Ribbon has been wrapped theatrically, as if staged, and the figures are often illuminated by spotlight. There is an element of display or an awareness of the viewer's gaze. The opulence of the cloth is juxtaposed against the subdued figures, which are painted in desaturated tones, yet their cheeks are artificially rouged, and lips are stained pink.

The result of these contradictions is an intriguing, constructed scene that is both theatrical, yet intimate. Existing somewhere between the private and public, between the past, present and future. It imbues the viewer with a deliberate stillness, quietly asking us to be in the moment and to relish the process of slowing down. To reflect on the complexities of a brief moment, this fleeting beauty that is between being and becoming.

## new paintings

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