

ALESSIO BOLZONI + CHRISTOPHER ORR

3 June – 2 July 2021
6-10 Lexington Street, London



HAA – HENI Artists Agency is pleased to announce a two-artist exhibition with Alessio Bolzoni and Christopher Orr. The exhibition brings together Bolzoni's large-scale photographs and Orr's recent paintings, both of subjects suspended in time, history and their own other-worldly settings. Each artist places their subjects at the fading precipice of memory and the limits of perception, an in-between state which oscillates between abstraction and figuration, the real and the imagined, the material and the immaterial.

This exhibition debuts a series of large photographs by Bolzoni, collectively titled *Abuse*, an analytical study of cut flowers at the transition from decoration to decay. Bolzoni coalesces that fleeting moment between use and abuse under dramatic, cold lighting to expose the inevitable decadence. Although evocative of 17th century Vanitas still-lives depicting vases overflowing with richly coloured flowers in full-bloom, Bolzoni's work speeds forward into the next phase of dehydration and decay: curling brown petals, leaves withered and brittle, stems softened and bent. Rather than hinting at the futility of secular pleasures through indulging in the sensuous beauty at its pinnacle, his work reveals the delicate yet enduring beauty of submission and decline. The theatrical illumination and large scale relentlessly expose every sign of deterioration and suffering in these fragments of nature, disabling any doubt as to their fate governed by the passing of time.

Christopher Orr's latest paintings, oil on wood panels, portray unidentifiable figures weaving in and out of atmospheric backgrounds. Known for figurative work that recalls the visual language of 19th century German Romanticism, these contemplative, recent works also radiate awe and symbolic mysticism as his earlier works. Yet the amber warm light akin to 17th century Dutch pictures, the looser brushstrokes that blends the figures and landscape into one symphonic whole, and the introduction of richer hues within his signature earthy palette of browns evidence a significant shift in this new body of work. While earlier works referenced photographic images of hard-edged clarity, Orr recently began to study pixelated figures in the blurred distance of images found on the internet. He salvages these lost figures on the verge of disappearing into their surroundings and renders them visible by giving them new life in an alternate past. These bodies manifest the turning point from the forgotten to the visible.

Bolzoni uses a singular light source to extract his subject's remaining vitality, reincarnating them in painterly abstraction, while Orr brings renewed life to marginalised figures by situating them in imaginary, alternate realities. The used flowers and sidelined bodies gain permanence through the artists' ability to still time at a point of metamorphosis.

Alessio Bolzoni (b.1979, Crema, Italy; lives and works in London, UK) is an acclaimed photographer who has successfully navigated both the fine art and commercial world. He is widely recognised for his commercial photographic work for fashion houses such as Valentino, Dior, Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Off-White, as well as for films such as *Call Me by Your Name*, *Suspiria*, and *We Are Who We Are*. Since 2010, he has embarked on a personal artistic research, resulting in two publications *Abuse* and *Abuse II - The Uncanny* and most recently the project 'Action Reaction', a satellite exhibition of photographs plastered over twenty-six billboards in sixteen different locations across the city of Milan in June 2020.

Christopher Orr (b.1967, Helensburgh, Scotland; lives and works in London, UK) is recognised for his oil paintings in which characters, scenes, and objects borrowed from various sources of found images come together to conjure a dream-like reality evocative of an alternate past. Orr came to the wide attention of international curators through his participation at the Third Tate Triennial London in 2005. He took part in institutional exhibitions at The Royal Scottish Academy Edinburgh (2013), the Royal Academy London, the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2009), Witte de With Rotterdam (2006) and Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt (2005). Recent solo institutional shows were held at Kunsthhaus Baselland Basel (2013), the 54th Venice Biennale (2011), CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain Bordeaux (2010) and Kunsthalle Brandts in Odense (2006). His work belongs to the permanent collection of MoMA, NY and MOCA, LA to name a few. Christopher Orr's earlier works will be on view at HdM Gallery's temporary space in London at the same time as HAA's exhibition.

The exhibition is on view at 6-10 Lexington Street, 1st Floor, Monday through Friday, 11:00 – 6:00pm, and on Saturdays by appointment. Please visit heniartistsagency.com or call +44 203 789 5019 for further information or to arrange a visit. For press enquiries, please contact Charlie Nia Dunnery McCracken – c.mccracken@heni.com.