FUSED



ART

CAROLINE WALKER: CALIFORNIA DREAMING?

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It's easy to be seduced by Caroline Walker's paintings. They often take us into stunning private houses and estates – the kinds of places we might only ever see in films or on TV. There are beautiful modernist buildings, amazing manicured gardens, immaculate sun-drenched bathing terraces, and sky-blue sparkling swimming pools.

fible many of these locations are for the wealthy eite, the doors are often opened for Walker by her ever-growing reputation as one of cotland is leading painters or her generation. But Walker int his st dowing us places we might aspire to with, the it, or even to own — far from in fact, for there is always something more complicated and mysterious underlying the outward appearance of beauty and luxury in lalker's world, and it fixed of depends who we think were locking at and, of course, who'd coloing the locking.

The intrigue begins when it is established that some of the people in Walker's paintings are unwitting protagonists, snapped unawares or without forewarming, while others are models and actiesses who have been carefully observed any direct for time. This might place people also exceed under an accessories, measure pand regled hat (Walker's in or stranger to with the tabekstage waterdoes) or chareographed instructions about where to stand, what expression to hold. Her cast – which to date has been almost exclusively women –

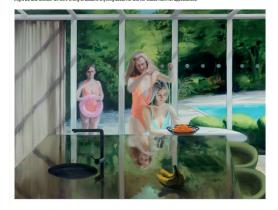


alker has, ever since studying at Glasgow School of Art and the Royal College of Art, quite consciously sought to explore representations of owner in her work, and to do so in ways that not only challenge conventions in art history, but also perceptions and attitudes that are deeply grained in our (still) patriarchal society and manifested throughout visual culture today.

he relationship between women's inner lives and outward appearances, and the relationship between the physical places in which they pend time and the underlying structures that control these places and hence women's lives within them, are central to Walker's practice. 2015, Walker were to an essearch trip to Los Angeles and Parlis Springs – a beacco for those desaming of sanshins, pools, iglemour, fast



In the work Sunshine Court (2014) we see some kind of lawny quorient or resort saturated by bright sursight, the eladors of tropical bushes and trees failing road switch early or an and exhibit extra or an electric position of the initiating position for the initiating position of the initiation of



In Desert Modern (2016), Walker takes us to a mid-century modern building in Palm Springs – one of three venues she stayed in during her trip. The work captures another poolside location, this time at dusk, with a cool bile light falling over the scene. In the distance, pupilsh hills feld time to light bile will, with pain trees shirted degistant them. Areally trimmed hedge offen the oligit brine, and a small seating ware register with stripy parasol supports this might be a private villar other than a conventional hold complex. On the right, a woman sits reading mangatize in shadow under an architectural canage extending out from the villa. Through some glass doors we see into the living room of the villa belinch he, with electric mood lighting casting its high onto the pation conside.

A figure sits inside, casually resting their head on a bent arm. The scene is one of relaxation, peace and quiet, and yet there is something dramatic underlying it, a tension of some kind, partly evoked by the fact that we the viewer are looking on from behind a low wall, as if a voyer or reservice quest. This undeclidency contributes to the clearmants cenne that Walterha created in the parting like a conner from some Hollywood movie. Writing about Walter's LA fip in the catalogue for a group exhibition at Lin & Lin gallery in Taipet this spring, curator Helen Clarge suserest Marghe conduits in a qualification, many contribution and the spring curator related course of the spring curator and the spring country of the contribution of the spring curator and the spring country of the contribution of the spring country of the contribution of the spring country of the spring curator and the spring country of the spring curator and the spring country of the country of the spring curator and the spring country of the spring curator and the spring country of the spring curator and the spring cu



Walker LA, and Palm Springs series leads is through a vietal port of indioxival doctor pages, starring at black cited batters who perhaps don't lower with the text in the designation on of vietal management properties for an eventing out, catching a vietal pole entering a still was high tarter sensade us in the propheral vision; and a childrigh in the dischoss looking through people's vietalow and doors. Maybe it sall in monorer mough, but there is an underlined present of ementing was existent at play, and weather writer interfaced in that in the process, while is clearly subversing or undermining the male gaze, surreptitionally tableg control from the particularly which, with her wonderful lightness of touch, also somplainty name in good on the patients.

carolinewalker.org

Matt Price

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