

EXTRACT: AUDREY REYNOLDS

But silent, no?

I think so, yes. But in this silence, something should appear to be withheld, do you see? There are different frequencies at work here. Within or around this space? Noises from nowhere, of nowhere. An object would appear on a black marble plinth in one of these spaces: the head of a small child at an odd enquiring or listening angle, eyes shut, sleeping or perhaps dreaming.

Dreaming, yes.

Again, formed in wax. Then, a room in which we seem to linger, that we stay in for a moment, to look around.

The space is the same?

Less nebulous. A rectangle or a cube painted a dark green. Some plinths and a vitrine can be seen, spotlit. Objects, small cases, more sculpted heads and ceramics, miniatures. More plinths of differing heights, or underplinths. Low, painted a single colour, placed close to the wall and bearing a certain significance. I like plinths. They are inert, a guide, a facilitator or custodian with no treasures to protect, no danger to warn of. Harbingers of hollowness and the divided nature of things. There is an audible commentary to the scene, a contemplation on sculpture, on objects, on what they might contain. Some sort of inner voice which asks how it is we can know that this is only this, that there is no deeper life in these things? How can we be sure, the voice says, that an essence has not been sealed up in these objects forever? Within a chalice, a box, a stolid vase. The touch of the cupbearer, the gentle fonder, some future connoisseur who appreciates the base, the handle, that fine work around the lip. Something secreted upon touching then sealed up. And in this sealing, something has somehow matured, developed and

ripened, ripened inside that vase or objet d'art to be released as a certain epiphany upon breaking or touching it, like summoning up a genii. The voice says there is this longing to make real what can never be made, that there is something waiting down there amongst the screens, moving with painstaking slowness, codified.

The voice is heard or imagined?

I'm not sure. Both. Either. Now we see a hand move in slow motion through the heavy air, we see a mask beyond it, or behind it. The sculpture voice continues, talking abstractedly about being governed by the whims of others, only existing because others perceive one into being, saying that without such eyes without such recognition, there is only fired clay, smeared pigment, coloured smoke; a vampire at dawn, a coach back into pumpkin. The opposite is also true, says the voice. There is enough, it says, in a simple ambiguity to admit of potential, to admit of a potential existence, a possible future, at least, possible. The voice fades and the scene is moved through. We move through it and away. Bloody hell! I am exhausted.

We both need to rest.