Alison J Carr

Works on Paper Catalogue





The In Between (Rectangle) 2025 drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



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The In Between (Rectangle) 2025 drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



Crown / Halo (Clipping) 2021, drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



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Crown / Halo (Clipping) 2021, drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



Spirit of A Muse, Seated 2024, drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



Spirit of A Muse, mermaid pose 2024, drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



Spirit of A Muse, arms across body pose 2024, drawing with gouache and gold ink on A4 300gsm paper, £275



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Gloss Blob on dress, Mlle de Bremont) 2022, A4 collage on 300gsm paper, £275



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Gloss Blob on head, Getty Jasonne) 2022, A4 collage



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Erni Erica with Gold Square) 2020, A4 collage on 300gsm paper, £275



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Catherine Hamilton & Burgundy Circle) 2020,
A4 collage, £275



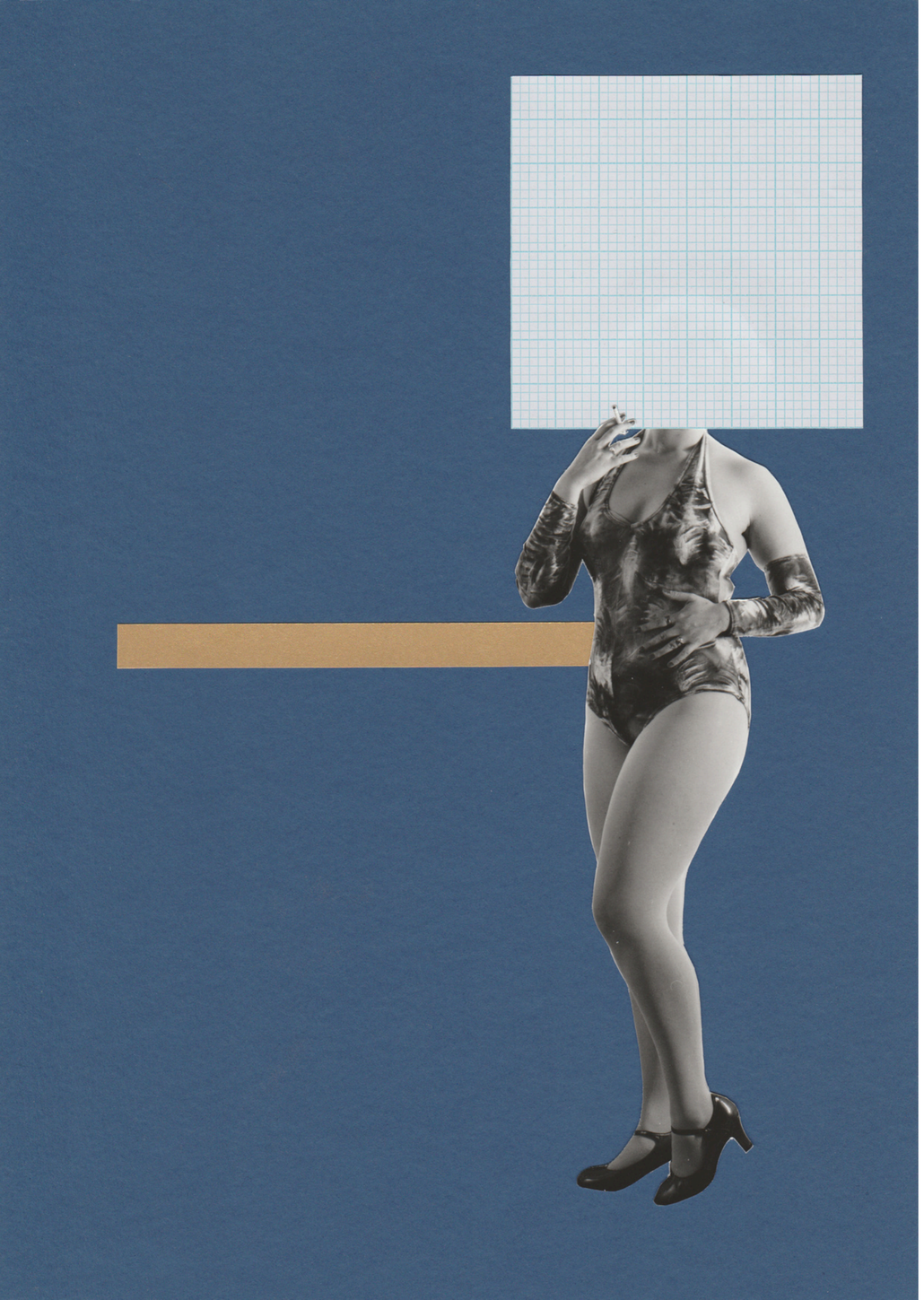
How Can I Perform As An Image? (Maryse Grandt, Stripped Bare, Even) 2020,
A4 collage, £275



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Divided Self, Maria Gregor) 2022, A4 collage on 300gsm paper, £275



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Mlle de Bremont doppelganger) 2021,
A4 collage, £275



How Can I Perform As An Image? (Erni Erica with Graph Paper Square and Gold Line)
2020, A4 collage, £275



Pose and Shadow, performer unknown (backflip) 2021, drawing with gouache on A4 300gsm paper, A4, £275



Pose and Shadow, *Tatiana Ryaboushinskaya* 2020, drawing with gouache on A4 300gsm paper, A4, £275



Pose and Shadow, *Elvira 'Vida' Lopez* 2020, drawing with gouache on A4 300gsm paper, A4, £275



Pose and Shadow, *Alexandra Danilova* 2021, drawing with gouache on A4 300gsm paper, A4, £275

I work in a studio repurposed from a 1920s department store. My work, though, begins in empty theatre seats and expectant lap dance booths. I'm insatiably curious about the bodies we look at, the women who step into the spotlight. What creates their appeal? What is the inner experience of performing charisma like? I fastidiously research real labour as well as fantasy archetypes: myths and testimonies. I interview chorus girls who witnessed seismic social change in the twentieth century. I hunt for alternative narratives in Hollywood musicals. I stage myself, copying pin-up poses or taking screen grabs from dancing. I'm as curious about interior lives as I am about constructed glamour projected outwards.

My artistic lineage is a private boardroom of rebels. Lee Miller, Louise Brooks, Rita Hayworth, Margaret Morris, Anita Berber. Women who inhabited their bodies as proclamations, who shaped their own images rather than being shaped by them. Their refusals fuel the way I approach my own body in performance and the way I look at others.

Long-exposure photographs capture theatre interiors with uncanny detail. Photos rendered on velvet convey the tactile, secretive promises of strip clubs. The watery wash of a single colour on my tracings of performers blur memories with apparitions. Gold ink on black paper swirled into patterns reminiscent of Klimt I use to describe the aura of charisma that surrounds a stripper on stage.

I constantly experiment with ways of working: photography, video, drawing, collage, performance and written pieces, I'm always looking to distil lush sensuality, connection, intention, and ornamentation with refined incision and emotional resonance. When people meet my work, I hope they feel a kind of charge, a recognition that bodies carry history, agency, pleasure, and power. I want my viewers to delight in the truth that all bodies matter.

Down the road at Bloc Projects, Carr's cinematic photographs of northern theatres mesmerise. The familiar rows of luxurious velvet seating, the draped curtains and gold-painted detailing are captivating through Carr's colour-soaked lens. Each image focuses on the staircase that leads to the stage - a bridge between reality and creativity, especially for women. She who climbs it may have a moment of artistic freedom, she is to return to her expected role.



▲ Colour-soaked ... Alison Carr's Ascending a Staircase. Photograph: Alison J Carr

'Yorkshire's steely antidote to London-centric art, Platform 2019 review' Hannah Clugston, Guardian

Alison J Carr is an artist based in Sheffield. She works visually and creates performances. Following her sojourn to the California Institute of the Arts, where she absorbed the critical dialogue and the lure of the Hollywood facade, she returned to Sheffield for a PhD at Sheffield Hallam University, where she gained her undergraduate degree.

Her book, *Viewing Pleasure and Being A Showgirl: How Do I Look?* was published by Routledge in 2018. Her next book, *Sex on Stage*, co-edited with Lynn Sally was be published by Bloomsbury, 2025. *The Night* was re-published by Peakrill Press, 2025.

Support for her work included: Terra Foundation, Freelands Foundation and the Site Gallery, the Jerwood, and Arts Council England. Most recently she was awarded a 'Looking Forward, New Dialogues' commission for Sheffield Museums. Alison has shown her work internationally in LA and Berlin, and nationally in London, Sheffield, Leeds, Huddersfield, Manchester, and Blackpool.

Alison J Carr
Born 1978 Sheffield, lives in Sheffield

Education
2013 PhD Fine Art, Sheffield Hallam University
2009 MFA Photography & Media, California Institute of the Arts (CalArts)
2001 BA (Hons) Fine Art: Combined & Media Art, Sheffield Hallam University

Solo Exhibitions, Performances & Screenings
2023 They Danced As One, live scored screening with Rob Bentall, Cultures of Sound, Huddersfield, UK
2022 Night World, Exchange Place, Yorkshire ArtSpace Society, Sheffield, UK
2021 Bubikopf, performance, The Cellar Theatre, Sheffield; NewBridge Project, Newcastle, UK
2020 Ascending A Staircase, Darlington Hippodrome Theatre, Darlington, UK
2019 Into the Spotlight, Platform / Site Gallery, Bloc Projects, Sheffield, UK
The Gaps in the Cannon, McCullough Center, Middlebury College, USA
2018 Felicity Means Happiness, Abingdon Studios, Blackpool, UK

Selected Group Exhibitions, Performances & Screenings
2025 The Muses Are Watching, Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield, UK (commission)
Mad Dooley Circus Art Show, The Untouchables Bar, Newburgh, NY, USA
2024 Hold the Space, Brown Street Project Space, Sheffield, UK
2023 Babble, Ilkon, Ilkeston, UK
Contrafibularities, Fronteer Gallery, Sheffield, UK
2022 Think of Me With Kindness, Gage Gallery, Sheffield, UK
2021-22 Single Figures, Prosaic Mosaic, Sheffield, UK
2021 Undertow, Group Show, Freelands Foundation, London, UK
2019 Prosaic Mosaic: A Survey of New Paintings, Bloc Projects, Sheffield, UK
Inter-Section, Temporary Contemporary, Huddersfield, UK
Showgirls: Screening and Book Launch, Glasgow Women's Library, Glasgow, UK
2018 Construction House, performance, S1 Artspace, DINA, Sheffield, UK (commission)
Showgirl Manifesto, Temporary Contemporary, Huddersfield, UK
On Show, Curator's Show by Joanna Craddock and Dawn Woolley, Leeds Arts University, Leeds, UK
2017 Lay of the Land Performance, HOME, Manchester, UK (commission)
2014 WROUGHT One-to-One Performance Festival, The Hive, Sheffield, UK
Three Act Structure, S1 Artspace, Sheffield, UK (commission)
London Life, L A Noble, London, UK
Library Interventions / Sharon Kivland, Leeds College of Art, Leeds, UK
2013 Past/Present, Kinsey Institute Gallery, Indiana, USA
2012 Showtime, with artist Kerstin Honeit, SIA Gallery, Sheffield, UK
2011 Showtime, with artist Kerstin Honeit, LoBe Gallery, Berlin, Germany
2009 Greater LA MFA (GLAMFA), California State University Long Beach, USA
MFA Conversations Part II, I-5 Gallery, Brewery Arts Complex, LA, USA
Why Theory: MFA Graduation Exhibition, Spring Arts Tower, LA, USA
2007 Déjà Vu, three-person show, Bloc Projects, Sheffield, UK
2006 Just for Fun, performance, Webster Gotts & Robin Close, Sheffield, UK (commission)

Curatorial Projects
2018 Showgirl Manifesto, Temporary Contemporary, Huddersfield, UK
2014 You Me You Me You Me, S1 Artspace, Sheffield, UK
Hollywood Forever, SIA Gallery, Sheffield, UK

Residencies
2011 LoBe London Berlin Art Kunst, Berlin, Germany
2010 Terra Summer Residency, Giverny, France

Collections
2020- Numerous private collections
2009 Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender & Reproduction, Indiana, USA

Awards
2024-5 'Looking Forward, New Dialogues' commission, Museums Sheffield, UK
2022 1:1 Fund, Jerwood Arts
2018-20 Platform / Freelands Artist Programme, Site Gallery, Sheffield
2008 American Association of University Women, International Fellowship

Funding
2021-22 Developing Your Creative Practice, ACE
2018-19 A-N Mentoring
2017-8 Grants for the Arts, ACE

Selected Press
2022 'Rina Arya in Conversation with artist Allie Carr: Ascending a Staircase: the magic of the interior' Dispatches, Contemporary Theatre Review, 2018
2021 'Counter Pose' Edward Ball, Old Land, New Waters, Freelands Foundation, 2021
2019 'Platform Shoes: Emerging Artists In Sheffield', Allan Gardner, The Quietus, 2019
'Yorkshire's steely antidote to London-centric art, Platform 2019 review' Hannah Clugston, Guardian, 2019

Selected Publications
2025 Sex on Stage, eds. Alison J Carr & Lynn Sally, Bloomsbury
2022 The Night, self-published novella (2nd edition 2025, Peakrill Press)
2018 Viewing Pleasure and Being A Showgirl: How Do I Look? monograph, Routledge
2017 'The Stripper, De/Constructing Key Figures', The Routledge Companion to Media, Sex and Sexuality, eds. F. Attwood, R. D. Egan, B. McNair, C. Smith, Routledge

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