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To everyone I have loved, especially my mother who taught me how to love.



Self portrait, photobooth

2022

Oil on canvas

300 x 220mm

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“To try to write love is to confront the muck of language”¹

This body of work is an inevitably flawed attempt to speak about love.

The words “I love you” have lost their ability to be sincere. Romance is a script that we follow. It is a script that has been written for us by romantic comedies and Barbara Cartland novels. How, then, can we speak about love without slipping into clichés?

Lovesick aims to develop a lexicon for love while acknowledging that all my attempts will only amount to pink “muck”.

I have turned to the act of painting as a way of finding a language through translation. In the same way that Roland Barthes offers a discursive site for love - “the site of someone speaking within himself, amorously, confronting the other (the loved object), who does not speak” - my studio practice this year has been a discursive site where I have given myself space to contemplate love, alone.²

I am approaching love with both cynicism and sincerity.

I am offering a non-linear, complex contemplation of intimacy.

I am playing the role of the boy-obsessed teenage girl or the pining, hysterical woman.

I have appropriated the language of pink. I think of this as the language of obsession, of Dear Diary..., of heart shaped things.

I cannot help but regurgitate the only language that has given words to love - yet I crave a new language.

Pink is both corporeality and artificiality. It is at once innocent and erotic.

1. Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 99.

2. *Ibid.*, 3.

I am asking how the internet digests our love and mediates our desire.

I have taken off my clothes and exposed myself as a hopeless romantic. This undressing has culminated in a body of work seeped in desire.

I am straddling the grey area between a sickly-sweet, cheapened, synthetic, pop culture lexicon of love and a gentler reflection on my own relationship with love. In this grey area the boundaries between love/lust and friendship/romance and sincerity/performance become pixelated.

Oil paint has served me well for an exploration of closeness. It is skin pressed up against skin. The body seems to have come apart, opened itself up, burst at the seams. The inside of a mouth or a beating heart or a stomach full of butterflies. Unknowingly, I have been seduced by the medium and thus Lovesick has become a love affair between myself and paint. What began as a monologue about romance has become a conversation between myself and paint.

After a year of making and loving, my conclusion is that love is not pink but grey. However, my work has culminated in a studio full of pink. Despite my cynicism I am still attached to love's ideals. I keep being seduced by pinks, by the romance of it all, despite the grey.

“I think of the postmodern attitude as that of a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows that he cannot say to her “I love you madly”, because he knows that she knows (and that she knows he knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland. Still there is a solution. He can say “As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly”. At this point, having avoided false innocence, having said clearly it is no longer possible to talk innocently, he will nevertheless say what he wanted to say to the woman: that he loves her in an age of lost innocence.”¹

1. Umberto Eco, *Postscript to The Name of the Rose*, tr. William Weaver (New York: HBJ, 1983), 560



As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly

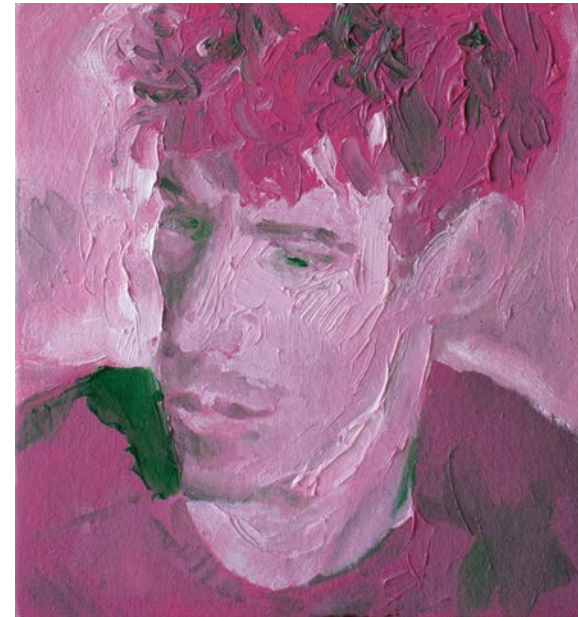
2022

Oil on canvas mounted on board

300 x 450mm



What was love like in the 90s?
2022
Oil on canvas mounted on board
450 x 300mm



Lover/friend
2022
Oil on canvas mounted on board
255 x 265mm



My insides
2022
Oil on canvas mounted on board
190 x 360mm



Green things grow in the wrong places

I

Green things grow in the wrong places.
 They unfeather in the emphasis
 On noughts in the sum.
 Love is no logician, hears the argument
 Blandly, never to profit
 By the Socratic method,
 And puts forth greenness on outlandish stone.

II

Love? We should smother it
 And push it up the chimney –
 He said, half meaning it.
 We know now what he intended
 For finding love at their door
 On a cold night, people – if they are wise –
 Will push it up the chimney into the smoke before
 It wails at them with such clenched desire
 As will bring into the quiet house
 The significant ecstatic loss.

III

On the high hill in the cold wind
 On a sunless day
 You brought my a bird seeking to unsay
 Its vulture moments. Though I was afraid
 I felt its warmth undo my startled hand.¹

1. Ruth Miller, *Aspects of Love*



Green things grow in the wrong places

2022

Oil on canvas

1830 x 2000mm

Green things grow in the wrong places

Detail
2022
Oil on canvas



Misc. works on paper



Previous:

Lick

2022

Oil on paper

100 x 140mm

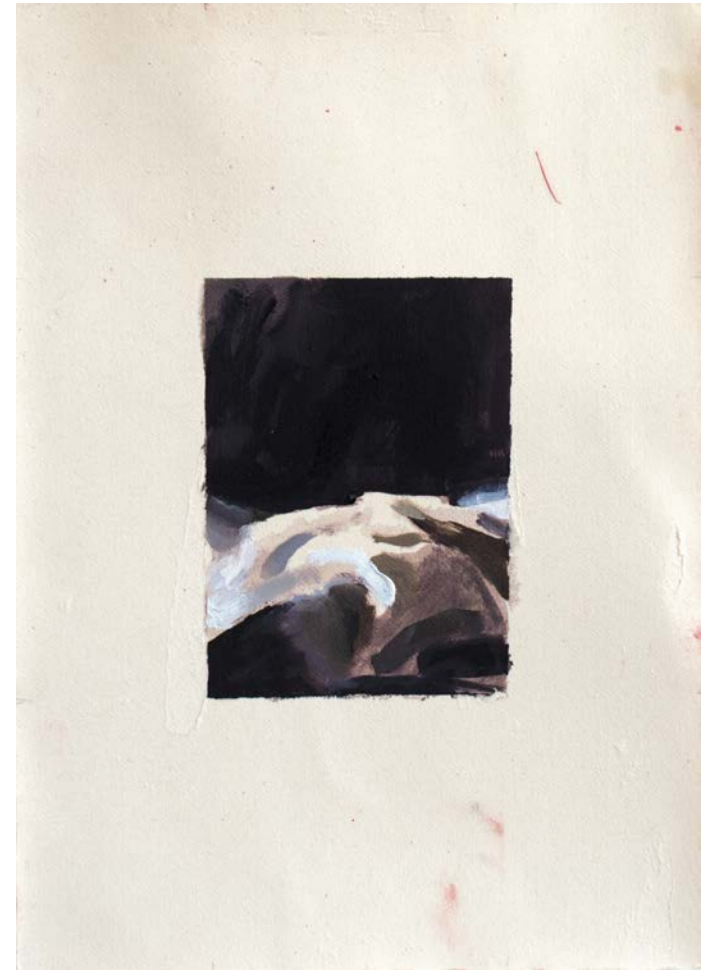
Have my cake and eat it

2022

Oil on paper

175 x 250mm





Duvet
2022
Oil on paper
175 x 245mm



If you were a colour
 2022
 Oil on paper
 205 x 290mm



It doesn't belong to me (I stole it) but maybe it did for one night
 2022
 Oil on paper
 220 x 295mm



Pink sky (a nod to Romanticism)

2022

Oil on paper
140 x 230mm



Morning legs I
2022
Oil on paper
175 x 250mm



Morning legs II
2022
Oil on paper
250 x 350mm



My foot
2022
Oil on paper
250 x 350mm

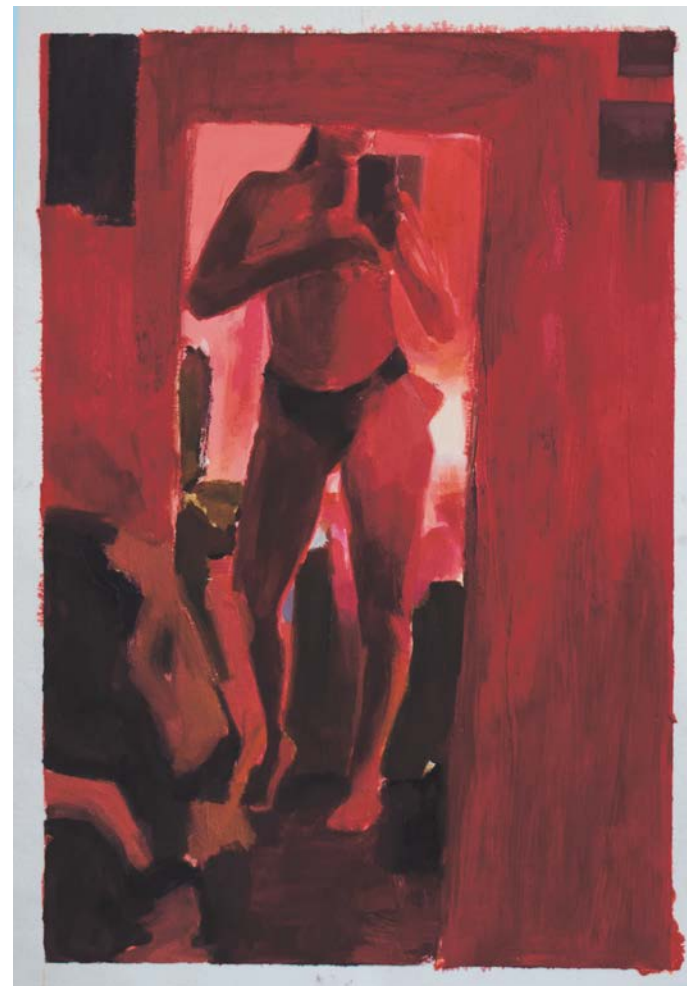


Your foot
2022
Oil on paper
250 x 350mm

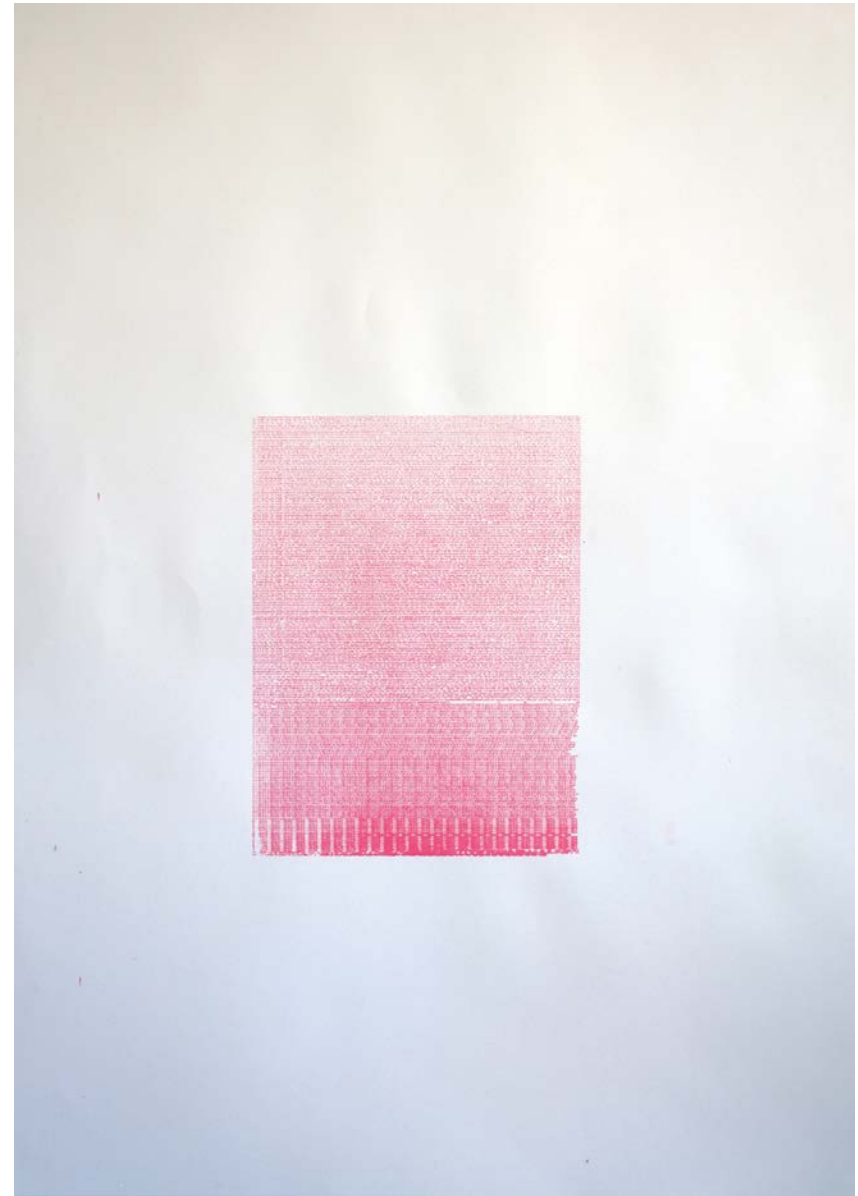


Watching the sun disappear behind signal hill

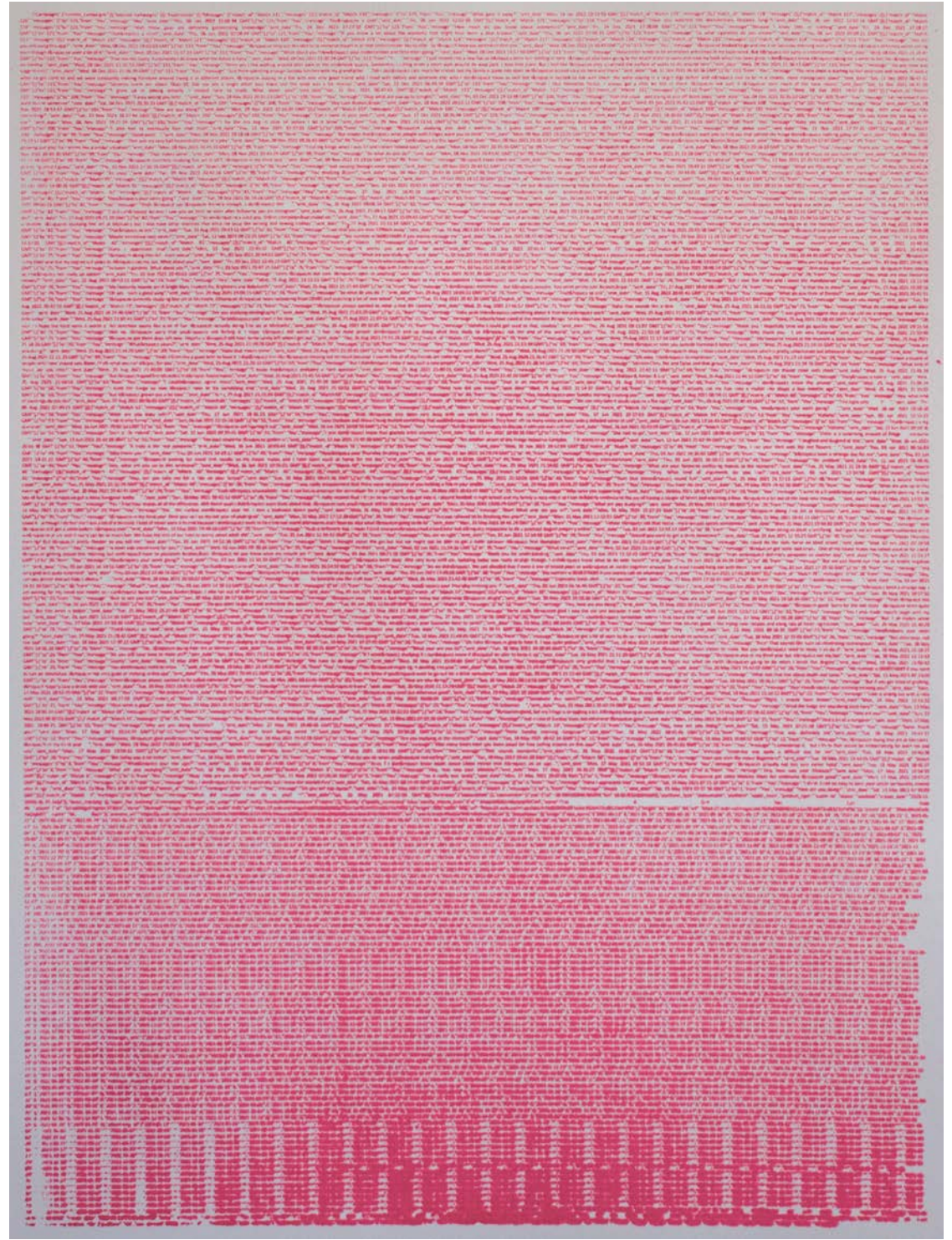
2022
Oil on paper
260 x 395mm



Mirror selfie
2022
Oil on paper
210 x 310mm



Love data
2022
Screenprint on Rosapina
700 x 990mm





I think of the post-modern attitude as that of a man who loves a very cultivated woman and knows he cannot say to her, I love you madly, because she knows that she knows that she knows that these words have already been written by Richardson and still have no traction. He can say, I love you madly, because she knows that she knows that she knows that these words have already been written by Richardson and still have no traction. He can say, I love you madly, because she knows that she knows that she knows that these words have already been written by Richardson and still have no traction.



Celebrities in love



Previous:

Zoë Kravitz and Channing Tatum

2022

Oil on paper

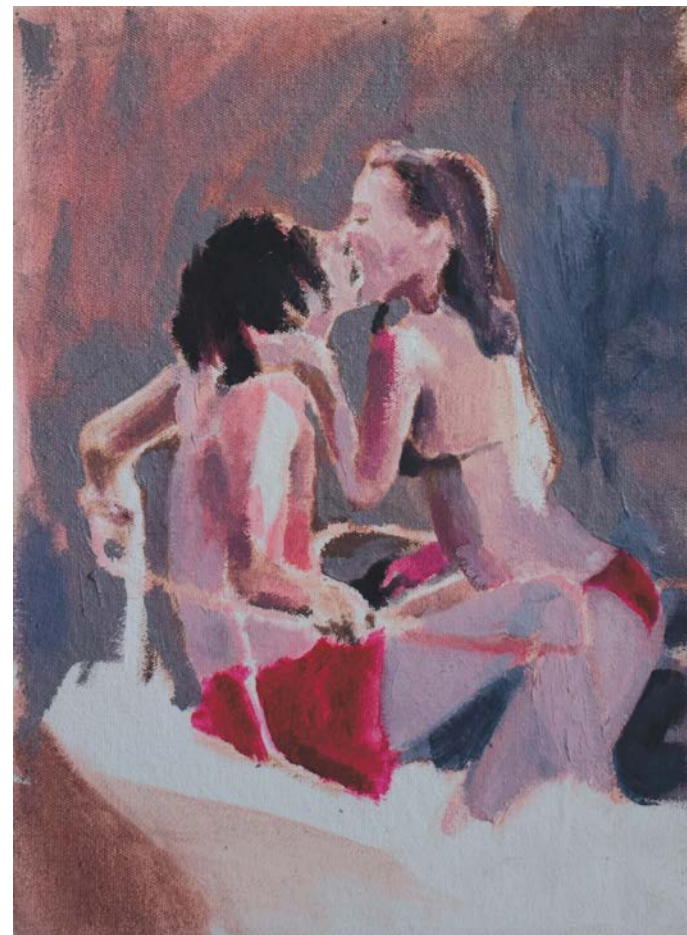
245 x 345mm

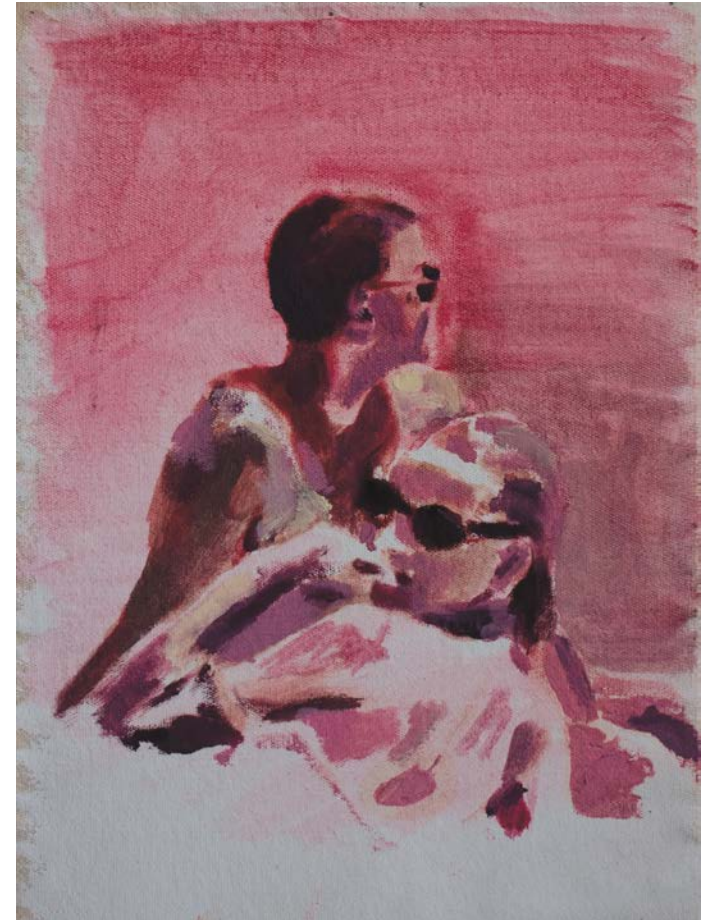
Lily-Rose Depp and Timothée Chalamet

2022

Oil on canvas

230 x 310mm





Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed

2022
Oil on canvas
220 x 310mm



Untitled
2022
Oil on canvas
320 x 375mm



Charlie Heaton and Natalia Dyer I

2022
Oil on canvas
310 x 220mm



Charlie Heaton and Natalia Dyer II

2022
Oil on canvas
305 x 440mm



Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy and John F. Kennedy Jr.

2022

Oil on canvas

300 x 310mm



Untitled
2022
Oil on canvas
240 x 305mm

*I am still just waking up next to you to
find that the world is pink*





I am still just waking up next to you to find that the world is pink

2022

Oil on canvas

2450 x 3000mm

How to be in love



Previous:

Permanent rose and zinc white

2022
Oil on board
110 x 170mm

James and Bryony

2022
Oil on paper
190 x 290mm





Amber and Sam

2022
Oil on paper
255 x 350mm



Hannah and Hayden II

2022
Oil on paper
175 x 250mm

Endlessly I sustain the discourse of the beloved's absence; actually a preposterous situation; the other is absent as referent, present as allocutory. The singular distortion generates a kind of insupportable present; I am wedged between two tenses, that of the reference and that of the allocution: you have gone (which I lament), you are here (since I am addressing you) ...¹

1. Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 5.



Hannah and Hayden I

2022
Oil on canvas
300 x 300mm



Ruby and Nathan

2022
Oil on paper
230 x 165mm

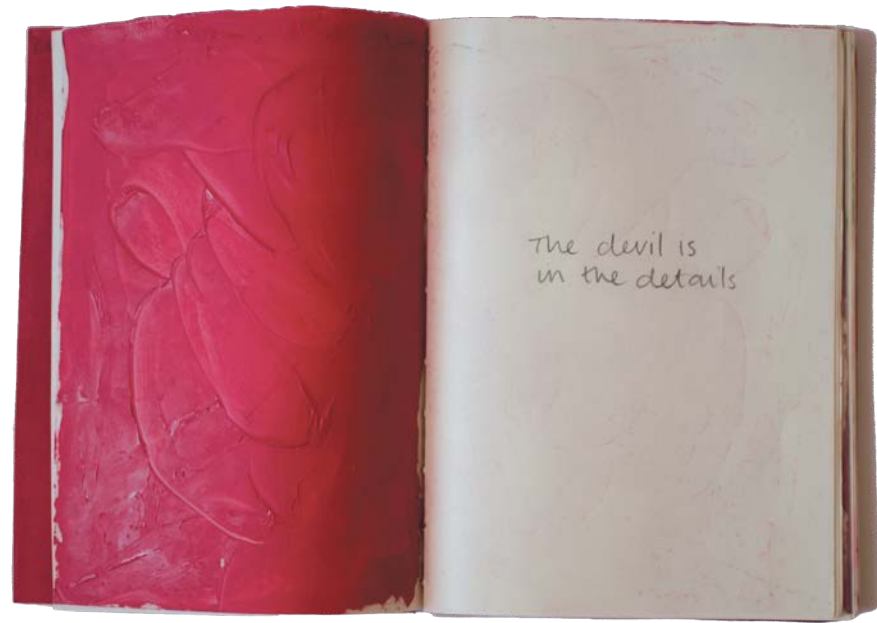


James and Chris

2022
Oil on paper
245 x 175mm

Book of pinks





Book of pinks

2022

Oil on tracing paper bound between munken
148 x 210mm



Crimson swatch
2022
Oil on tracing paper
148 x 210mm

Acknowledgements

Virginia, for your insight

Stanley, for your generosity

Pia and Joëlle, for being the best people to paint alongside

Hannah, for your opinions that I trust more than anyone else's

Ruby, for teaching me that green and pink belong next to
one another

My parents, for more than I could list here