

# ANTHONY REYNOLDS GALLERY

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## PRESS RELEASE

# DAVID AUSTEN

## GLITTER

11 MAY – 16 JUNE 2007

Anthony Reynolds Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new painting, drawing and sculpture by David Austen.

Austen's recent exhibition at Milton Keynes Gallery, demonstrated an ambitious and powerful expansion of his work into sculpture and film. This impressive and large-scale show, while confirming Austen's exceptional strength as a colourist and draughtsman, illuminated a strong thread of menace that has hitherto been lurking beneath the surface of his work. Central to this was the premiere of his film *CRACKERS*, an extraordinary work in which a tragicomedy of fear and longing is acted out in the decayed elegance of a fading Regency house in Brighton.

For Anthony Reynolds Gallery, Austen has developed the intervention of sculptural elements into the exhibition space and it has become more threatening: a blood red string of orbs hangs from the ceiling, a broken necklace of marker buoys, giant solid droplets, balls and chain. A collection of huge amputated stars, bandage white, turn slowly against the red and white walls; a solitary red painting bears the legend *Dream land* painstakingly stroked in oil onto the surface of the canvas, each touch another note of longing for the painting's promise.

Upstairs, silver aluminium balloon like forms hangs in clusters, shapes without obvious colour, which hold a muted glitter. Simultaneously light and heavy they seem to defy gravity and echo the emotional charge of the whole exhibition. Around the space, a line of thirty black-and-white drawings follow the motion of the suspended mobile, flipping in and out of abstraction, hope flirting with illusion.

Austen's work has always had its dark side, a dark side illuminated by passion and beauty. His celebrated watercolours of isolated figures are witness to his fluency of touch, mastery of colour and delicacy of feeling. The very technique of his paintings is akin to touching skin – a supreme respect for the surface and its power to hold the evidence of emotion. The new films and mobile sculptures add a remarkable new dimension to the work of one of Britain's most brilliant artists.

*CRACKERS* will be screened at Prince Charles Cinema, 7 Leicester Place London WC2, on 16 May at 6:15 pm. This presentation is a collaboration with Artprojx and Milton Keynes Gallery. Tickets from the Cinema Box Office: 020 7494 3654 (open 1-9pm).

A major new publication on Austen's work is available from the gallery, price £15.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, IMAGES AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS, PLEASE CONTACT MARIA STATHI  
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