

Donna Huddleston

The Exhausted Student

28 November 2019 – 1 March 2020

The hours were long, the regime was brutal...

The students of theatre design were, it transpired, supposed to suffer. To collude with a culture of professional crises.

The world of the theatre, of actors and acting - of the production - was heady and strange. Small wonder that Tennessee Williams said that his female characters – “a woman, an important, powerful woman” – were announced by the arrival of a fog in his subconscious; and this fog came with the pungent smell of radiators hissing and clanking and rattling in rooms where he wrote, dreamed, fucked, starved and prayed, in New Orleans and St Louis and New York.

The watercolours and character sketches she touted around the hotels, waiting for her father – the oldest living poet – to finish his final poem.

The student took it all in. Took in the all-nighters, too; got jaundiced. Swore she saw her tutor turn into a lizard.

As a child at the convent school in Sydney, the student had noticed that the Eternal Flame had gone out – was scolded by a nun for asking why.

“That created a gap.” she said, later.

“Yes, thanks and all praise.”

“So that one of God’s creatures could scramble home, safe and free. A little act of grace, honey.”

“I can make it downhill but not back up.”

“I’ll get you back up the hill.”

List of Works

Right to left from freestanding wall

1. *The Exhausted Student*, 2019
Coloured pencil on paper
8 parts each 145 x 226 cm
2. *The Call*, 2019
Pencil on paper
72 x 106cm
3. *Parade*, 2019
Gouache and emulsion on wall
115 x 100 cm
4. *The Instant*, 2019
Coloured pencil, silver and gold point on paper
25 x 90cm
5. *Its Double*, 2019
Pencil on paper
69 x 85cm
6. *Schnapps*, 2019
Pencil on paper
69 x 85 cm
7. *All Nighter*, 2019
Silverpoint on paper
45 x 60cm

Plinth

8. *Untitled*, 2019
Papier-mâché, soap, gesso, pencil, birch tar
70 x 50 x 90 cm



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



CARAN D'ACHE
Genève



The Elephant Trust



The artist wishes to thank Arts Council England through National Lottery Project Grants for their support.