

Monk's House

The house was empty, and one felt, since one was the only person in the drawing-room, like one of those naturalists who, covered with grass and leaves, lie watching the shyest animals - badgers, otters, kingfishers - moving about freely, themselves unseen. The room that afternoon was full of such shy creatures, lights and shadows, curtains blowing, petals falling - things that never happen, so it seems, if someone is looking. The quiet old country room with its rugs and stone chimney pieces, its sunken book-cases and red and gold lacquer cabinets, was full of such nocturnal creatures. They came pirouetting across the floor, stepping delicately with high-lifted feet and spread tails and pecking allusive beaks as if they had been cranes or flocks of elegant flamingoes whose pink was faded, or peacocks whose trains were veined with silver. And there were obscure flushes and darkenings too, as if a cuttlefish had suddenly suffused the air with purple; and the room had its passions and rages and envies and sorrows coming over it and touting it, like a human being. Nothing stayed the same for two seconds together.

Virginia Woolf, *The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection*

Night Club is pleased to present its second solo exhibition of the work of Alice Tippit. The exhibition is titled after the country home of Virginia and Leonard Woolf. Woolf completed many of her best known works in a small writing lodge tucked away in the garden. Invariably described as tranquil, Monk's House and its beautiful garden are credited with providing her with the peace and quiet thought necessary to inspiration.

Both the notion of solitude as a precursor to creative activity and the need for a personal environment replete with symbols of the occupant's identity are key to understanding the exhibition. The most solitary of the great apes, the orangutan, is represented in the exhibition by two drawings. Both are traditional portraits, playing upon our tendency to assign human traits and emotions to non-human entities. Verification of these attributions is not possible; the orangutan is ever unknowable. The impulse to understand other beings in terms of our own experience mirrors Tippit's interest in how we identify with and attach meaning to images. The simplified forms and reduced references of her paintings are open to interpretation, a reminder that—as in the writings of Woolf—identity is a fragile construct, highly variable and difficult to maintain.

Alice Tippit (b. 1975) lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. Solo and group exhibitions include: Carrie Secrist, Chicago, IL; Nicelle Beauchene, New York, NY; 47 Canal, New York, NY; Paris London Hong Kong, Chicago, IL; Greene Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA; Night Club, Chicago, IL; Roots & Culture, Chicago, IL; Devening Projects, Chicago, IL; Jancar Jones, Los Angeles, CA; and Important Projects, San Francisco, CA.