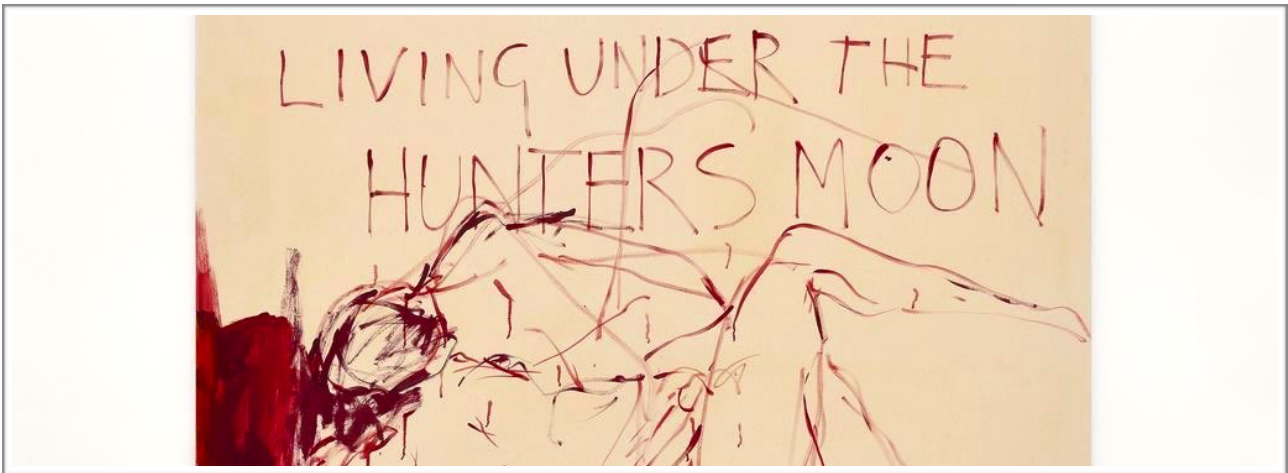


ART PROBE

ISSUE

#3

- Shristi Sainani

Exhibition : Living Under The Hunters Moon***Artist : Tracey Emin******Venue : White Cube (UK)******Dates : 25 November 2020 – 30 January 2021***

The Hunters Moon, 2019 (detail)

Source : ArtForum

The exhibition '*Living under the Hunters Moon*' explores artist Tracey Emin's work, which is a product of her encounter with extensive surgery, post her cancer detection.¹ This artist output draws inspiration from the renowned paintings of Norwegian painter, Edward Munch, who she continues to greatly admire.² "*I've been in love with this man since I was eighteen*", she states in an interview with The Royal Academy of Arts. In Munch's paintings, one can internalise a colossal sense of anxiety, loneliness and pain; reflected also in the displayed work of Emin. The exhibition inherits its title from the painting with a synonymous name.³ It sees the likes of a variety of media; ranging from oils, water colours, neon, sculpture as well as film. Her artistic expression tends to depict a certain notion of narcissism which she admits to; usually confessional, calling attention to her personal experiences.

Born in Croydon, South London, Emin is a popular figure within both — the British as well as global art turf. She is a prominent member of the collective Young British Artists (YBAs), with contemporaries such as Damien Hirst and Chris Ofili. She gained public recognition when she appeared on Channel 4, a British television program, in 1997, to showcase her piece called "*Is Painting Dead*". In 1999, she earned the Turners prize.

¹ Nick Glass, 2020

² Tracey Emin: *Living Under the Hunters Moon*, 2020

³ Nick Glass, 2020

Some of my favourite pieces from the show '*Living Under the Hunters Moon*' were:

1) **Absolute Fucking Desperation, 2020**



Source : © Tracey Emin. All rights reserved, DACS 2020. Photo © White Cube (Ollie Hammick)

What is seen in front of us is Emin's work produced in the year 2020. *Absolute Fucking Desperation* follows a dark red and blue palette where forms are vigorously, overlaid on each other. It is an acrylic on canvas, measuring 182.2 x 214.1 cm. There is an enormous amount of energy in this piece.

Some aspects of the work seem like street art graphics; one can see blue and red heart shaped formations on the right side of the canvas. In addition, there are gestural qualities of typography, which indicate 'tagging', found prominently on sites such as railway stations or walls of a centrally located neighbourhood. This questions not only the state of mind in which Emin gave birth to this creation but also if she was trying to merge the ideas of high art and low art? Whether if there was any connectional juncture between this particular piece and a Munch work, other than the emotion that it seems to portray.

2) There was so much more of me, 2019



Source : © Tracey Emin. All rights reserved, DACS 2020. Photo © White Cube (Ollie Hammick)

‘*There was so much more of me*’, takes form in crouched position, with the head seeming to have drowned into the earth. It is a large bronze piece measuring 92 x 242 x 140 cm, which is headless as well as lacks half its limbs.⁴ The arms are missing, stating why the piece has been given its name. With its textural quality the sculpture is experienced as a figurine, too close to the burning fire, as it were melting in dismay. Its molten-like state expels a visual quality of a body rotting, which points to the severe pain Emin underwent due to her surgery. It expels a sense of physical agony and a want for diluting into the ground — just as ice does, slowly and effortlessly.⁵

The over-the-top scale of the sculpture startles a viewer upon entering the gallery premise as it serves as a focal point. The scale also proves the sculpture to be a quintessential Emin since it is not only ginormous as compared to human anatomical conditions but also reeks of self-depreciation, while being autobiographical.

⁴ Tracey Emin: *Living Under the Hunters Moon*, 2020

⁵ Tracey Emin: *Living Under the Hunters Moon*, 2020

According to White Cube, *There was so much more of me* (2019), is the truncated form of a woman which appears both eroticised and defenceless. Kneeling as if in supplication, with legs splayed apart, the figure is bold yet vulnerable.

3) Only Room in my mind For you, 2019



Source : © Tracey Emin. All rights reserved, DACS 2020. Photo © White Cube (Ollie Hammick)

Finally my last pick of the lot would be *Only in my mind for you*, painted by Emin in 2019. It is an acrylic on canvas, measuring 182.1 x 151.9 cm. This particular piece oscillates between a case of abstraction versus a figurative.

One can see, on the left bold, thick and aggressive brushstrokes of crimson and medium violet; with paint splattering down the canvas in an organised manner. The strokes are representational, dealing with ideas of mutilation or suffering rather than depicting them directly. Whereas it is on the right hand side, the slim, line-like quality of the brushstrokes, suggest a figure in motion. One can see a moving head and arms to shed light on a person in distress. Unlike the left half, it clearly is a derivation of a human body. In the central part of the canvas, the strokes propose, what looks like a woman's breast, followed by a hand clasping it. Everything about *Only in my mind for you* calls to attention Emin's struggle with cancer and the undergone surgery.

REFERENCES

— **Tracey Emin: Living Under the Hunters Moon, 2020 :**

White Cube. 2020. *Tracey Emin: Living Under The Hunters Moon*.

Available at: <<https://whitecube.viewingrooms.com/viewing-room/8e3f53d5281548b4ad011cb3520b8eb2/>> [Accessed 15 December 2020].

— **Nick Glass, 2020 :**

Nick Glass, C., 2020. *After Fighting Cancer, Tracey Emin Returns To The Art World With Raw, Emotional Works*. CNN.

Available at: <<https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/tracey-emin-interview/index.html>> [Accessed 17 December 2020].