

The Inhuman /difficult transition/ is a research project developed by Dr Andrea Medjesi-Jones. It deals with a question of representation in contemporary painting practice. The exhibition curated by Medjesi-Jones was held at Thames Side Studios, London in May 2019.

The question of representation is an example of both relevance and contempt. Its responsibility to account for diversity of our democratic voice made more urgent in a globalized yet fractured and divided world. The crisis of representation and the scrutiny of democratic method and transparency in both political and cultural spheres of the human generate equally reciprocal, also reactive responses to the meaning and the representation of the inhuman.

The proposed framework for **The Inhuman /difficult transition/** is a consideration, and a reflection on the context defined by Jean- Francois Lyotard. The question asked is "*What shall we call human in humans?*"¹

In **The Inhuman /difficult transition/**, the exhibition centered around 11 contemporary painters, a dialogue emerges with an aim of discussing the institution of painting in the most immediate and urgent of circumstances. Set against the backdrop of current and turbulent political changes, it questions the integrity and the function of democratic representation in view of Lyotard's concept of *the inhuman*.

The question of what *the inhuman* looks like is here considered through multiple means and processes: formal abstraction, spatial referencing, collage, material presence also restraint, fragmentary compositions and interrupted gestures, temporal thinking, painting performance and labour. Through diverse articulation of painterly traditions and languages which sit outside any formal categorization, the concept of *the inhuman* is embodied and clarified. The research contribution proposes deeper analysis and readings of painting, based on its presence and the acknowledgement of its content which is not tied into representation alone but a complex set of conceptual, performative and formal methods that articulate paintings multiplicity and plurality.

¹ Lyotard, J.F, 1991, *The Inhuman*. Cambridge: Polity Press