



## MATTHEW BURROWS

### PARA-DICE

26th February - 28th March 2014

Vigo is proud to announce *Para-dice*, Matthew Burrows' first solo show with Vigo. The paintings explore the relationship between certainty and doubt, a condition Burrows sees as akin to that of *faith*, - a place he believes painting is well equipped to occupy.

Highly structured and spatially managed, the works are painted with the *'touch of a lover'* crossed with the obsessive scrutiny of the scientist. The surface is tactile and crafted but held by a draughtsman's certainty of line. The forms seem on first view to be abstract, with the jumble like quality of a child's play box. However, with the slightest of means, a mark opens up these shapes into a figurative plane. A fence, gate, ladder and table combine with the animate world of flesh and blood, creating portraits of figures and creatures. A broken ladder or table becomes a character on a stage or a dancing figure. There are moments of vulnerability and aggression, held in check by a tender mark, or subtle shifts between planes of colour. These paintings are a place where line meets form, light meets dark, opposites combine and confront and certainty meets doubt. He is aiming for an *other worldliness* where dreams collide with painting, and where nothing is as it first seems.

The title for the exhibition is at once a play on our hopes and a critique of the conditions in which they exist. The word Para, from the Greek meaning beyond or at the side of, combines with the game of dice. Dice have been used for thousands of years as a form of entertainment and decision-making. The Pythagoreans referred to "the dice of the gods". In both the Christian and Buddhist traditions the use of cleromancy, the casting of lots as a means of divination, is well documented. It is this point where doubt calls upon what is random, to find a condition of certainty, (not actual certainty, but a position of faith from which one can act), that these works find a context and the friction necessary to exist.

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