

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Time Out
Lisa Brice review
Eddy Frankel
October 2019



Lisa Brice Review



Lisa Brice 'Untitled' (2019) © Lisa Brice. Courtesy the artist and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.

Time Out says
4 out of 5 stars

Blue is a big deal in art history. In the Renaissance it implied wealth and opulence; for Picasso it implied overwhelming, overpowering sadness. Matisse used it for his most sexual of works, and then Yves Klein came along, trademarking his own shade, splodging it everywhere and using women as paintbrushes to daub his canvases with it. Blue, over the centuries, became a weapon of male sexuality.

And now there's Lisa Brice, prizing it out of the rigor mortis grip of the past and imbuing it with new meaning. In her small, pure blue paintings here she captures women at rest and at play: smoking, painting, stretching, changing, staring at their bodies, staring into space. It's the same vibe as her show here a few years ago and the Tate last year.

It's the bigger paintings that really elevate the show. They're door-sized works, as if Brice is letting you into private moments. There's pink in these now, along with the blue, and black and brown too. In the best work, a bright sunburnt woman smokes, her arms and face dipped in blue paint. In others, nude women are reflected in multiple mirrors or invitingly opening a door.

In the back room, the figures are painted on screens: objects of privacy and separation. That's the point. The women in Brice's work are sexual beings, but not for the sake of being consumed by men's eyes, that's just what they are. They're women, existing. Fiercely, proudly, unashamedly going about their lives. Their bodies don't belong to the viewer, they belong to themselves.

Brice has taken the history of blue and ground it into the dirt. Now, the colour's her's, and she's not letting go without a fight.