

Kate Groobey

Perfect Potatoes

May 26th – July 9th, 2016

*There's nothing quite so perfect as potatoes
there's nothing quite so perfect as potatoes
there's nothing quite so perfect as potatoes
potatoes, perfect potatoes, potatoes, potatoes.*

Characters based on the people closest to her populate Kate Groobey's paintings and videos. She observes the strategies and mechanisms friends and family employ to cope with their own bodies, careers, relationships, and mortality. Through the creation of her work she embodies these characters, trying on their personas and presenting stylized versions of their survival mechanisms. The lyrics presented above come from one such strategy, a song written by Groobey's father and niece.

The artist begins with small watercolor and gouache drawings, which she then cuts up and rearranges. This collaging technique allows her to tap into her own subconscious and develop her characters intuitively. Although the paintings are based on the artist's experience of others, Groobey herself is always present in the work, not only through the emotive brushwork but the traces of her footprints.

The presence of the artist is taken further in Groobey's video work as she literally becomes the painted characters, bringing them to life with dance and movement. For these short films the artist has created costumes and backdrops that are based faithfully on her paintings. The abbreviated soundtracks come from a collaboration with the Paris-based DJ Jackson and his Computer Band.

The title of the exhibition, *Perfect Potatoes*, comes from the frequent inclusion of potatoes in the work. For Groobey the potato is a stand-in for a tumor, and a perfect tumor is a truly absurd proposition. For Groobey, this aggressive perfect also relates to the body, to the way we imagine our own bodies and the unceasing desire for idealized, or at least improved, physical manifestations of ourselves. Groobey talks about the idea of painting a body from the inside out, as it is felt and experienced.

Kate Groobey is a British born, Paris-based artist. *Perfect Potatoes* is the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States.