

Oliver Doe

Somewhere In Between

Vane, Newcastle

18th July - 24th August 2019



You have made my body
a bundle of carnations,
bursting with vibrant song,
lain crimson between your teeth
and firm, gentle hands.

Somewhere

In between your body,
I am needing you;
in between our skin,
I am needing you.

I have dissolved into an image of us,
suspended within that picture
that has etched itself into my mind.

Draw me back together, held tight
by the thread of desire...

I am needing you.



I have not lived that dream
of New York in Spring,
spurred on by old words
 about older paintings
that still conjure tenderness.

As I lay in our room,
covered by your arms,
and uncovered my chest
 and nervous legs,
I read your body -

What colours did you summon?

The black of your shirt,
the blue-grey of your tattoos,
the red of your mouth
or the pink of your skin?

I have not lived that dream,
of New York and your bed,
spurred on by new anxieties
 about old lovers
that still conjure tenderness.

As I lie in my room,
covered by longing,
and undone by loss
 and nervous hands,
I read my body -

What colours did I summon?

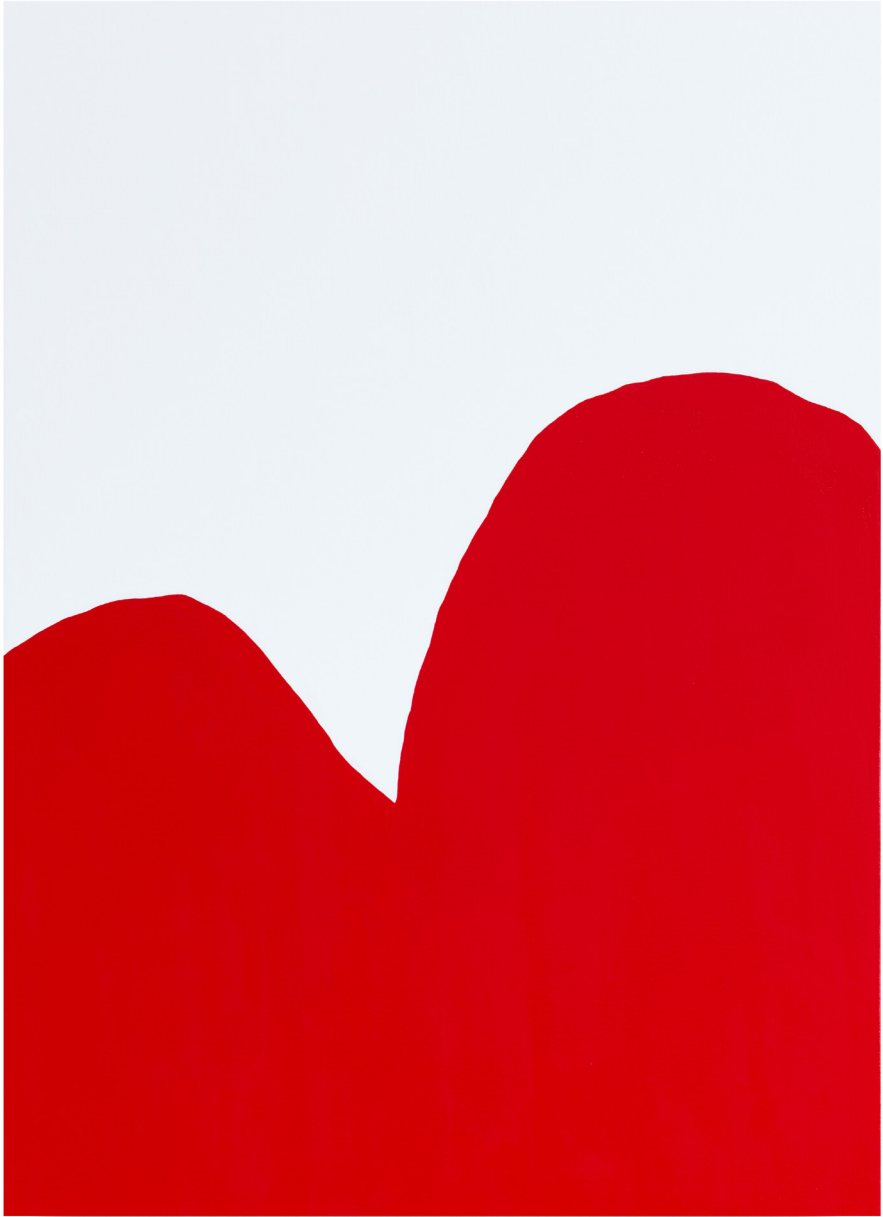
The magenta of my jacket,
the blue-grey of my underwear,
the red of my mouth
or the pink of my skin?



Touch my eyelids
with a touch as soft as chalk,
whilst my mind crumbles around my skin.
Your breath on my neck barely lingers,
translucent
and tragic.

I think the most tragic thing I've ever seen
was you smoking on your own

My legs ache
and ache for love,
whilst my bones collapse into my bed.

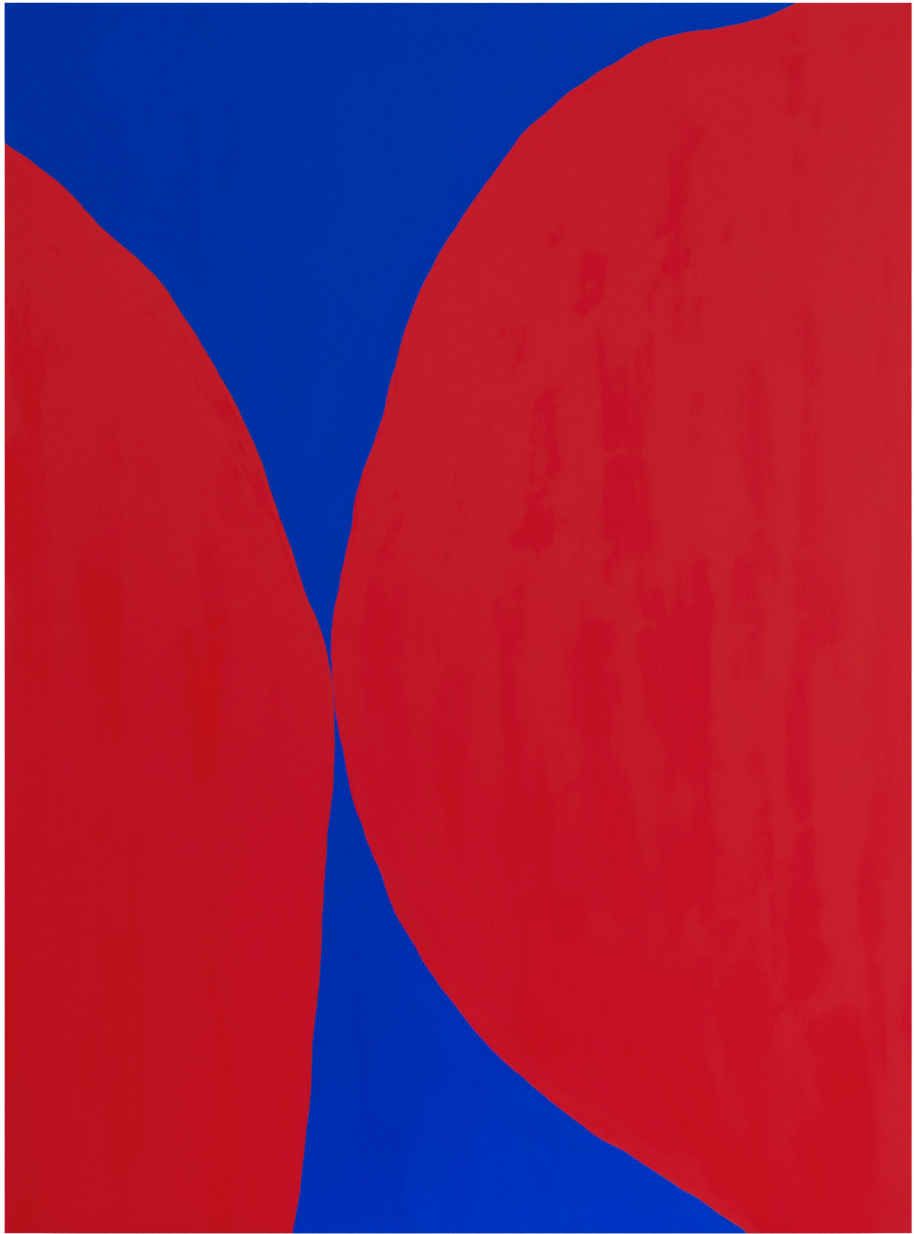


Listening for the silence of the trees
that have not grown outside my window,
my eyes gaze up,
and out,
over the cracks in the clouds,
sewn so lightly together
to darn over the northern sky
that conjures, with sapphire fractures,
images of longing, and love,
and lives so full of potential,
beautiful in their possibilities.

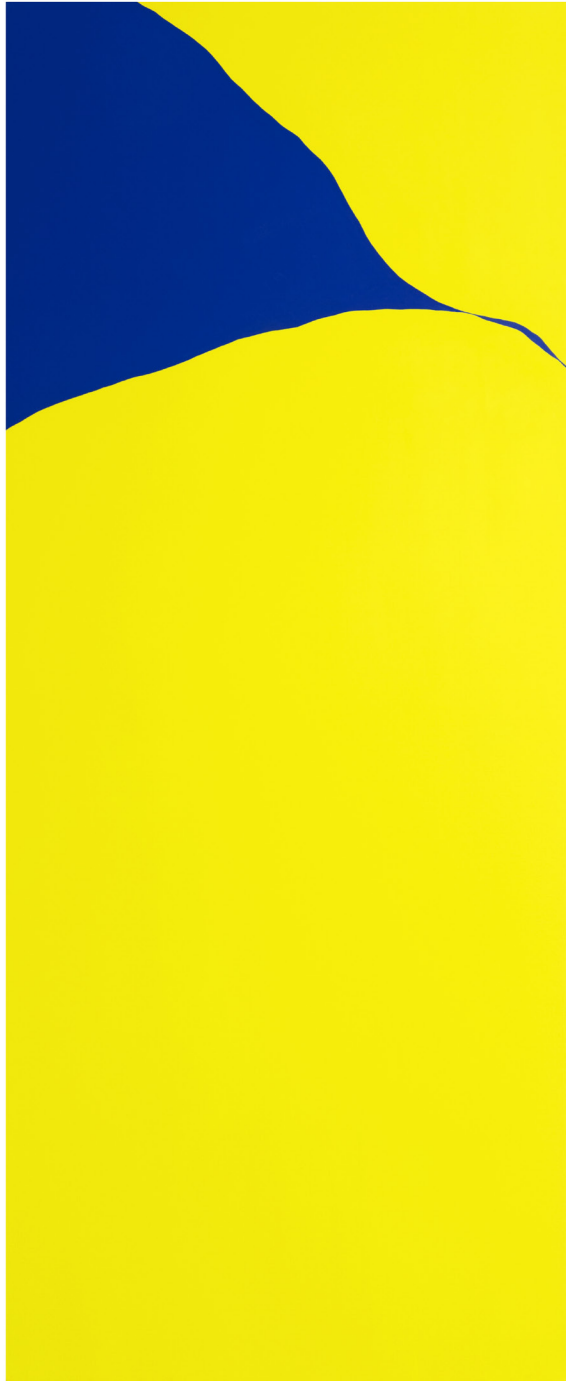
Can you hear me in the depths of this grey quiet?

My eyes dare wander
to an image of us,
but you are not there in that sky (it's
greyness an absence to match
the creases in my cold duvet),
you are hidden below.

The sun has sunk itself softly
back into the deep white
winter sky, a brief kiss on
a rose cheek, faded
but lingering upon me
like the memory of you, over my chest.



My teeth have outlined
the creases in my lips
(waiting to be opened by you)
for thirteen long days, lingering
on an image of your bare shoulder
in the mirror
part covered by steam,
its outline drawing a line through my sight
and straight into my chest.



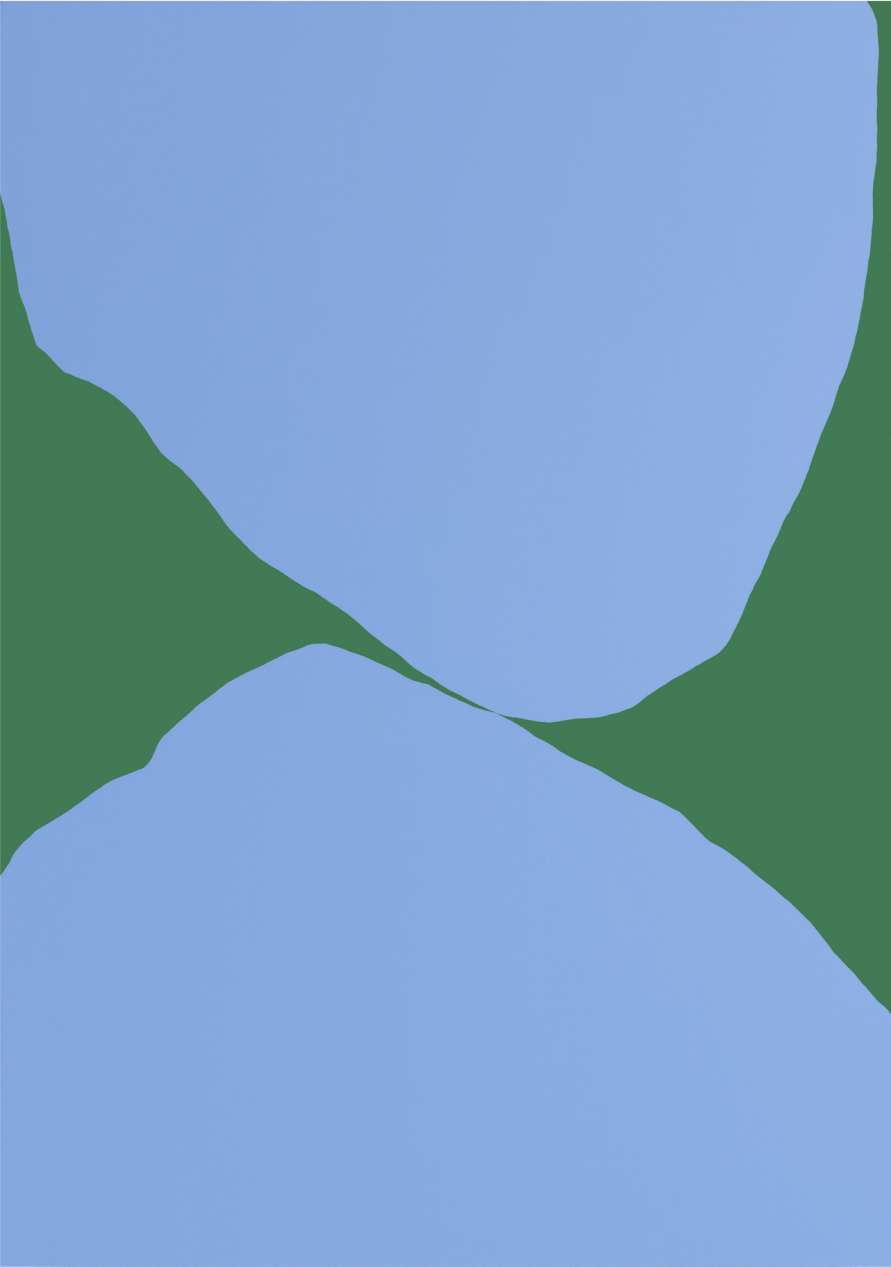


I have been drawn
to the colour of the space
behind your shoulder blade,
in shadow,
against the little red lights that line the top of my bed.



Carry me, beating heart,
to the comfort of another body
to drink and dance
to bed
to the black spaces in between scenes
 and to the blank spaces in between lines
to the warmth of foreign tongues
 or to the void of what we know.

Carry me, tired lungs,
to the relief of another's breaths
to kiss and caress
to bed
to the interludes in between songs
 and to the blank spaces in between veins
to the warmth of foreign beds
 or to the depths of what we've forgotten.



Somewhere in between
subject and object your body and mine
or, sex and absence,
or something like that,
that I've missed like the memory of that party I never went to
whilst here,
placed before you

Barely visible to the naked eye, but
totally naked in your eyes,
pink and white,
in the low light through the curtain that's smothering this early evening

I stood there,
hand on the dresser
to hold my form up

Once I saw a light in my senses,
In that mirror behind you,
above the piano with three keys
dischordant as my thoughts...

Somewhere in between
subject and object your desire and mine
or, intimacy and absence,
or something like that.



Push your fingers taut against my ribs,
carry every heavy breath with
the weight of your wrist,
every heartbeat in your gentle palm.

Turn me to face you,
slow breath against my throat,
warm, and wet, and closer than my own,
trembling between your gentle arms.



Pulling my shirt over my head,
a memory returns
of your cold fingertips
on my ribcage, pale
in the morning sun of summer...

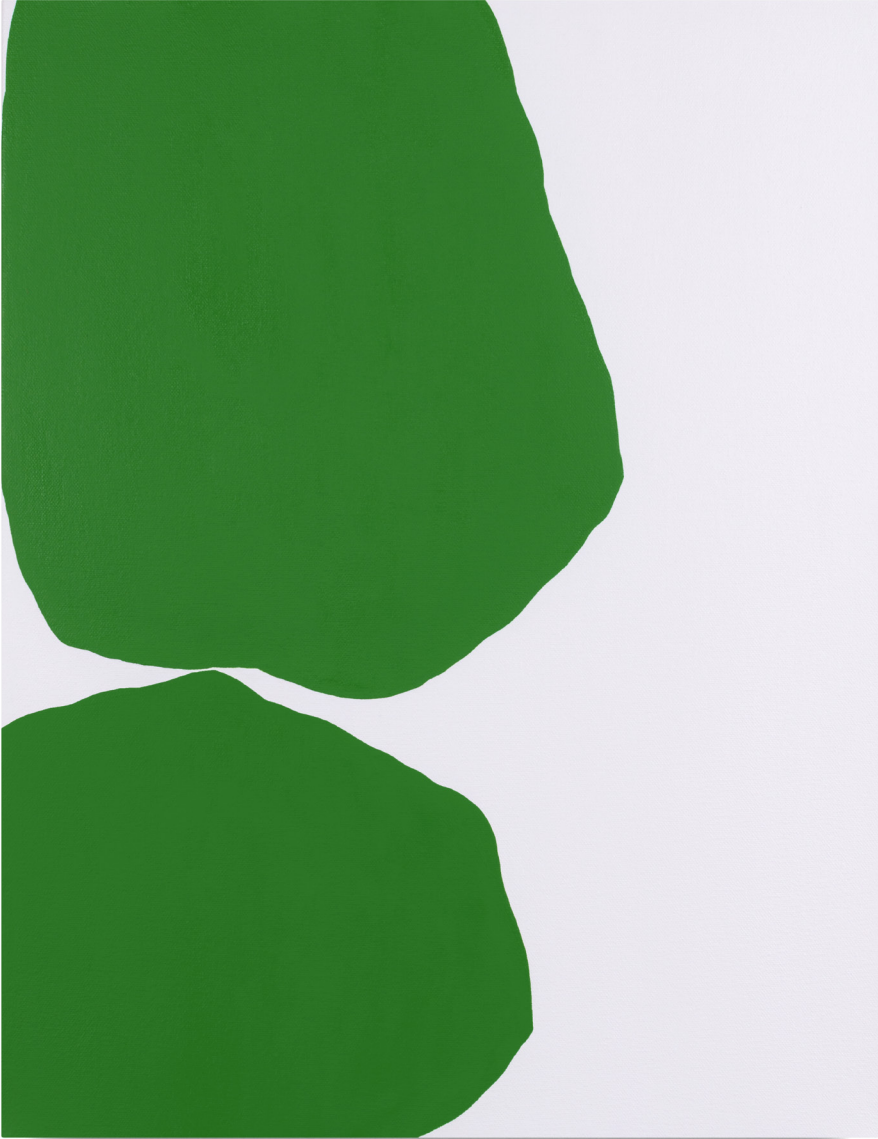
Inertia bites back
with one arm through the sleeve,
and a now cold mouthful of tea
held in the back my throat.

Swallow.

Pulling my thoughts back together,
a desire returns
for some warm embrace
on my torso, cold
on this dusky February afternoon.

Seclusion comes back
with one eye in the mirror,
and a fresh cup of coffee
sat in front of my hands.

Swallow.



In my orange shirt, I look like a worse-for-wear, miserable St. Valentine (orange has never really suited me), and I don't particularly like yoghurt (I'm terribly sorry, Frank). I haven't been to the Frick, though, if anybody fancies taking me...

