

Lyles & King

Polly Borland

Blobs

April 7 - May 13, 2023

“I am convinced that of all the manifestations of the ephemeral the human body is the most vulnerable, the only source of joy, all suffering, and all truth.”—Alina Szapocznikow

Lyles & King is pleased to present *Blobs* by Polly Borland, an exhibition of three new resin sculptures. This is the first time Borland’s sculptures are being exhibited in the United States.

Polly Borland’s *Blobs* are bulbous, grotesque, humanoid figures teetering between irreverence and the grotesque. Their weight is viscerally felt—stuffed, folded, tied, and exaggerated—as she has explored in her photographic work since the early 2000s. The *Blobs* create a playful unease, conveying a feeling that they could melt or ooze out of their own forms at any moment. Cast in translucent resin, the sculptures’ appearances subtly change with natural daylight cycles and the ambient LED bulbs that illuminate them from within. Borland’s *Blobs* read as apparitions or beings trudged up from an toxic extraterrestrial swamp.

Polly Borland (b. 1959, Australia) is one of Australia’s foremost photographic artists and is widely known for her portraits of prominent cultural figures and conversely, underground communities. Borland’s decades-long photographic investigations of publicly and privately curated personas are built on the manipulation of body, power, sex, and ego. The subversion of the male gaze to surreal, punkish or ghoulish consequence has always been present in her work. Borland often cites Hans Bellmer, Paul McCarthy, and Mike Kelley as her biggest influences - all who play with a combination of the abject, disgust, dark humor and a strangely seductive, aesthetic violence of contemporary life. Borland points out the moments of metamorphosis in the images; her work at its best seems to reach inside human beings and turns them inside out, exposing viscera, quietly trespassing into inner worlds to access what usually remains hidden. Like the work of these influential artists, from the Surrealists to her contemporaries, Borland’s enigmatic and absurd tableaux invite new considerations of underlying cultural contradictions.

Polly Borland has had work exhibited at National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; National Portrait Gallery, London; University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane; National Portrait Gallery, Canberra; Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles; and Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane; among others. Her work is in public and private collections including The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; National Portrait Gallery, London; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; and Damien Hirst’s Murderme Collection. Borland lives and works in Los Angeles.