FLOWERS

Bride (2012), oil on canvas, 59.25 x 47.25 inches

JOHN KIRBY

September 12 – October 12 2013

Opening reception:
Thursday September 12 6-8pm

"I come from a Liverpool-Irish background and what I do is tell stories. They're not clear narratives and I don't even know what the story is, really." J. Kirby

Flowers Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of recent works by British artist, John Kirby. His paintings explore the darker side of youth and the anxieties of adulthood touching on issues of gender, sexuality, religion and race. The exhibition will run from September 12th through October 12th, 2013, with an opening reception on Thursday, September 12th from 6-8pm.

Born in Liverpool in 1949, Kirby was raised Catholic and served as an alter boy before spending a stint as a shipping clerk and then traveling to Calcutta to work in a children's home run my Mother Theresa. Upon returning to England, Kirby settled in London where he found employment first as a social worker and then as a probation officer. It was not until the 1980s, when he was already in his thirties, that Kirby decided to attend art school—enrolling first at Central Saint Martins School of Art and then at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Kirby's paintings often feature solitary figures against sparse backgrounds, evoking a sense of loneliness and melancholy. Many of his works are sublimated self-portraits, while others nod to religious and cultural iconography and still others are coded memories of his own family. His surrealist style has drawn comparisons to Magritte, Hopper and Balthus and in 2012 Kirby was honored with his first major retrospective held, fittingly, at the Walker Art Gallery in his hometown of Liverpool.

John Kirby has been exhibited internationally and his works are held in several public collections including the Tate Gallery in London, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the private collection of David Hockney.