



# ISHBEL MYERSCOUGH

## LIFE

**1 – 25 JUNE 2011**

**PRIVATE VIEW WEDNESDAY 1 JUNE 6 - 8PM**

9 year old 2010 Oil on panel 153 x 46 cm

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The works in this exhibition encourage the viewer to elaborate on the lives of the subjects; their age, stage in life, birth, grief and banality. The paintings are purposefully stark and paired down in order to engage the observer into reading the details. Myerscough's work examines subtleties such as the parting of the lips, the spreading of the toes and the hair on the back of the hand. *Life* observes subjects with an intricate simplicity, Myerscough paints entirely from life and usually has numerous sittings with her subjects.

*"Ishbel Myerscough is interested in pimples, not only pimples also wrinkles, puckers, tattoos, moles, freckles, bulges, veins, hair, skin colour, stretchmarks - all the things, in fact, that we edit out of our body images. Her work, very often, constitutes a sort of journey to the surface of the human being and everything she finds there she records.*

*Sometimes she has painted a detail from a body and nothing more. A few years ago, when I asked her to send in some works to an exhibition of small painting, two studies of her own breasts arrived, about six inches square and labelled 'Left' and 'Right'.*

*Another non-human subject is food - a plate of English breakfast, for instance - considered in the same minute fashion (down to the way the pattern of the plate shows through the slightly translucent whites of the eggs). Her self-portraits are different, almost unrecognisably so - seedier, more intimate, often naked or partially naked, preoccupied with marks and puckerings of the skin. They present a private truth.*

*But the elusiveness of individuality doesn't stop the results from looking grittily, but also humanely real. That is the hallmark of Myerscough's art."*

Martin Gayford

Ishbel studied at Glasgow and the Slade Schools of Art; she won the National Portrait Gallery's annual BP Portrait Award competition in 1995 and as a result was commissioned to paint Helen Mirren's portrait for the collection and subsequently Sir Willard White.

For further information and images please contact James Ulph 020 7920 7777 or email [james@flowersgalleries.com](mailto:james@flowersgalleries.com)