



Adele Warner

Views of Paradise

25 May – 15 June, 2024

Views of Paradise is an intuitive reflection on the state of disconnection experienced within a metropolitan existence. Paradise, in the eyes of 20th century ethologist J.B. Calhoun, meant to be free of hunger, thirst, disease and predation. In a series of experiments Calhoun undertook via the creation of ‘mouse paradises’, the rodent subjects were provided with everything except unlimited, ever-expanding space. The elimination of material needs initially resulted in the rodent equivalent of prosperity, with rapid overpopulation, but eventually induced a state of pervasive social alienation with a decline in meaningful social roles and population stasis due to profound apathy.

Not to be mistaken for a form of Malthusian fear mongering, *Views of Paradise* rather highlights a derealised perspective of urban pessimism. Images drawn from both personal photography and digital image repositories (such as Wikimedia Commons and Reddit) offer glimpses into domestic scenes that seem simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar. Through portrayals of a place where one is most vulnerable – the home – a sense of nostalgia is fleetingly instilled, before it becomes clear that none of the sentimental comforts of our past are still present. Forced to contend with this inverse, one is left with a sense of estrangement, isolation and alienation.

Drawing from techniques and styles of the Western painterly canon, images are rendered with a stifling clarity. Paintings weave into one another to form ambiguous tableaux of memories that never occurred.

AW