

HANNAH RILEY | *STILL OCCUPANTS*

6 - 31 October 2009



Hannah Riley
(Untitled) Detail 2009

The subjects in Hannah Riley's *Still Occupants* span a full spectrum - from morbid and mundane to amusing. With a chorus of decomposing rabbits who cavort across the wall, to the slow melting of a popsicle dripping sugary puddles from the clutches of a fur stole, death and humor exist simultaneously in Riley's work.

There is a loose ambiguity over the extent of interference with found objects and materials. From the poses of the mummified rabbits to the cobwebs which read initially as pencil drawings. The forms of found materials seem almost too opportunistically fit for purpose.

Riley's only photograph dealing with the human form - a reworking of Man Ray's *La Priere (Prayer)* (1930) - highlights the permeable boundaries of the self which are here protected by hands barring access to the body. The performative, confrontational and humorous elements involved in exposure to the camera and audience are counterbalanced, to a degree, by the image's positioning within the conventions of the nude.

Employing a variety of media, Riley toys with the idea of transmuted boundary lines, both physical and social. Her subjects are presented in a state of flux. Dead things become animate, hairy seed pods twist and multiply, a video of a butterfly tentatively and indecisively emerging then retreating from a chrysalis all capture Riley's interest in the spaces between different states of being.