

# DAVID WEST & RUBY KNIGHT

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CURATED BY  
LINSEY GOSPER



## What It Means To Care – Some thoughts on David West and Ruby Knight

These are nervous, scratchy times. **David West** and **Ruby Knight** – separated by continents and decades – both approach their art through a sense of visual urgency, which they eagerly embrace. Their works are vivid, powerful and deeply resonant drawings that are inhabited by powerfully human figures that move with their own unique rhythms. There is a deep sense of expressionism at play in these artists' works, both share a powerful desire to find the uniquely human in their subjects, and each emphasizes their subjects as profoundly alive.

In David West's drawings of bands and musicians the performers shiver and vibrate before him. West's lines tracing and retracing the movements of the bands, emphasizing their presence before him as living people. His musicians are not simply frozen in space, but instead appear to be moving through the world. The stage on which they perform repositions them as subjects to be watched during their performance, but in West's drawings they remain within the world, their humanity caught in his illustrations. His portraits also capture the subject in similarly contemplative moments, profoundly alone in a world yet never isolated. West's work feeds both into and from the presence of his subjects within their lived environments, the backgrounds often simple spaces, but the figures always immediate and alive, details rendered through West's strokes.

In contrast to West, Ruby Knight finds her subjects through calmer, curved lines, slowly drawing out the subjects of her work through their gestures within the space of the paper. Backgrounds – already rendered almost as a cipher in many of West's works – have almost disappeared in many of Knight's images, the white and grey blankness of the paper further emphasizing the black lined figures in her pictures. In contrast to West's figures, who often appear alone in their worlds, Knight's subjects exist in continual contact, their bodies overlapping as they touch and grope each other, prepare to go out, socialize, and fuck.

While both West and Knight use colour, they frequently do so sparingly, much of their work is rooted in the black ink strokes that create their subjects. The power of these drawings lays not just in the subjects but also in the use of such techniques, which help punctuate the artist's depiction of the human.

Jack Sargeant, 2016





# STRANGE NEIGHBOUR

Cover: David West, *Patrick Eudeline* 2009, ink on paper, 26 x 36 cm

Inside: Ruby Knight, *Fe-Fi-Foe-Fem, I Smell Your Blood Seeping Through Your Hem* 2016,  
pen on paper, 31 x 20 cm

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