

# The approach

# Time Out London

## Rezi van Lankveld



'The Root', 2008



**The Approach W1** Soho to Hampstead

Dutch painter Rezi van Lankveld has been widely tipped for greatness, and while this hang displays oil-works on paper rather than the usual board, her signature technique remains the same. Diluted paint in two or three colours is poured and dripped on to a horizontal support, where it spreads and bleeds into an open marbling; in the unstable pattern that results, van Lankveld eases the liquid paint towards image and form without premeditated design.

Her palette is generally muted, with greys, blacks and dimmed purples predominating, and the figures that emerge from this thawing gloom of smudges and pools are ambiguous and melancholic: here a blotch of kneeling or crouching nude, here a cursory face or fluid pair of figures. Due to the paint pouring, inevitable comparisons have been made with Pollock. But if anything the technique has more in common with some of the automatist ploys of surrealism (influential on Pollock himself, of course), which opened a space for the visionary imagination through the judicious manipulation of chance effects.

This is not figuration in dissolution; rather, it bears witness to the emergence of fragile representative images from chaos and formlessness. When successful, the paintings are suggestive and affecting, their rainy twilight populated by a distant and mysterious cast of melting ghosts. But, like much work that relies heavily on chance, the paintings are vulnerable to inconsistency, and the nature of van Lankveld's technique is such that the resulting images can seem to lack independent power. Only irregularly do they have enough autonomous energy to lift themselves out from under the method of their creation. *Francis Gooding*

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