

STEVEN
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GALLERY



Miles Aldridge Gives Us Glamorous Photography

BY: TABISH KHAN, 15 JULY 2013



Miles Aldridge, Short Breaths. Image courtesy the artist and Brancolini Grimaldi

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On first entering this exhibition you could be forgiven for thinking you've entered the outputs of a fashion shoot. The walls are adorned with beautiful women striking model poses as if part of an advertisement. But hold your gaze a little longer and the unsettling nature of these works becomes apparent.

This free exhibition is an accompaniment to the larger Miles Aldridge retrospective at Somerset House. Despite the smaller space at Brancolini Grimaldi, it's packed full with his most iconic images and the mixture of glamour and colour ensure it's a visit that's difficult to forget. A woman in a bikini leaning over a sizzling barbecue of sausages should make for a highly suggestive image but her eyes alter the mood of the scene entirely. They are glazed over as if she'd rather be anywhere else instead thus giving her a vulnerability that is much more artistically interesting than the bold colours and beauty of the subject. Similarly, a woman in a wedding dress walks down some stairs but there is no hint of happiness or anticipation in her eyes.

The works often become surreal and the ridiculous settings therein make for some humorous works. A woman tries to light her cigarette from a hob while others engage in a seance that is so over the top as to be infeasible.

Our favourite work is of Lily Cole posed with butterflies in a scene so unreal that it could have been taken from a Pre-Raphaelite painting

As we saw with the Juergen Teller exhibition, the line between fashion and art is often blurry. This exhibition sits squarely on that fence and depending on personal tastes viewers will either find it overly kitschy or bright and evocative.