



3 for 1 at Camden Art Centre: Adam Farah, Phoebe Collings-James & Zeinab Saleh

24/10/21

Emoji summary: 💧 🏠 ☁️

It looked sunny when I left the house but by the time I got to Camden Art Centre the clouds were low and grumbling. 3 shows in 1 place: [Adam Farah](#), [Phoebe Collings-James](#) & [Zeinab Saleh](#). I am a sucker for a bargain, even if these are 3 artists that feel far apart at first glance. Let's go through them all and then circle back for a debrief.

Through a doorway and into a side room, the light lifts. Zeinab Saleh's paintings are against a backdrop that's even cleaner and sparser. It's like mood is dropping off me as I move through the spaces. If Adam and Phoebe's rooms were earthy and grounded, Zeinab's is smoke and air, reflecting light. Neatly hung canvases on bright white walls, muted colour, smooth gesture and implication. The handout tells me the drawings are layered charcoal, swept over the surface with a broom or a brush. Marks have been made by removing the charcoal, masking parts off, body and movement. These works feel physical and ever so slight. A hennaed hand reaches out to stroke the back of a cat, a dove and a snake bordered by tassels, a mirror by a window in the moonlight, a lily open and waiting, two swans on the brink of a kiss. Where Adam deploys careful feeling, Zeinab's work is a sprawling, leaking mood. RnB slow jams, lo-fi, it moves slower and smoother, but it is an open pore. Even if the title rests heavy on softness, these are all images with a kind of quietness and solitude. They feel like they're waiting or on pause.

