

Bag for Life

2018

Oil, acrylic and spray paint on canvas

80cm x 90cm

An orange Sainsbury's bag covers the hypertrophied head of a single figure, suffocating him. The figure gasps for air, sucking the plastic bag into the opening of his mouth, its folds and creases painted with assiduous detail. The Sainsbury's logo is immediately recognisable, despite being read upside down; the familiar curves and colour of the typography pulling at the recollection of the everyday British shopper. In the background, an abstract grid resembles a supermarket trolley and reaching towards the figure from the left hand-side of the painting: a red, fake nailed hand. Epp intelligently constructs the narrative of a misbehaving child, who struggles with a rogue Bag for Life whilst being pushed along the food aisles. Finally noticing, his distracted mother is about to pull the bag off his head before its too late. Critics are reminded of the news of the Conservative MP, Stephen Milligan, who in 1994, was found at his home with a black bin-liner over his head, an orange in his mouth, and an electric cable round his neck. A 5p bag suicide. *Bag for Life* is a satirical commentary on the daily banality of the weekly food shop. Sainsbury's - an emblem of Britain - speaks directly about Epp's experience growing up in London. Tesco £3 meal deals, the London Underground, binge drinking. The Sainsbury's Headquarters is a three minute walk from Epp's studio, a daily reminder of his unequivocal Britishness.