

## *Biophobia*

2019

Oil and acrylic on canvas

155cm x 155cm

A red female figure bends in an S-shape, gaze towards the top of the painting, mouth open. She is holding two purple hairdryers, like guns, aimed at warm, autumnal leaves. She blows the leaves away in a frenzy before they dare to fall on her hot skin. Her dark ponytail hangs down out of the bottom-right of the picture frame, almost like another limb. Hues of intense reds, oranges and yellows make up a hazy, gradient background, giving the painting a fiery and energetic quality. The entire image feels as though it is overheating, like a hairdryer would from overuse. Biophobia is an aversion to nature. Like all of the figures Epp depicts in his work, they feel at home in the artificial, digital landscape of their screens. The objects and creatures of the natural world feel unsafe and unfamiliar and in this painting, Epp's figure appears scared of their tangibility, of their realness. *Biophobia* presents how a choice to disengage with the real world can slowly morph into a revulsion towards it. In this instance, the figure literally uses technology as a tool to combat the natural elements.