

Cabaret

2019

Oil and acrylic on canvas

175cm x 170cm

A leopard print wearing figure bends and contorts, with a hand raised and back arched in mid performance. Her gold, petal-shaped nipple tassels dazzle in the stage's light, enticing an audience of male spectators. A circle of sparkling diamonds frame the figure's pink bottom, an embellishment which seems to corrupt rather than elevate the performer. She appears unfazed, her lips gently parted, in mid song. Her white gloved hand sits away, elevated from the rest of her body like magic. Here, Epp disrupts the continuous lines of the figure's form in order to establish the gloved hand as a singular motif, one which alludes to notions of purity, power but also of concealment. This appears in contrast to the overtly sexualised figure, one which is covered in skintight leopard print, with only the more intimate areas of the female body exposed. A full, red mouth is the only facial feature depicted, the rest left blank, making her unidentifiable as anything other than an object of desire. What can be dissected from *Cabaret* is the essence of a performance is in the presence of an audience and so, perhaps the essence of a painting is the gaze of a viewer.