

Exhibition of the week,

Esther Teichmann 'Silently  
Mirrored',

by Helen Sumpter for  
TimeOut London  
27.09.07

Esther Teichmann's photographic and video portraits of her mother, father and husband take us into the psychological territory of presence and absence, clarity and uncertainty, light and dark, while making claims for the body as an emotional as well as a physical landscape.

In the first of two photos titled 'Exuberant Skin', the artist's mother is shown turning away from the camera, topless. With the face obscured and areas of the image slipping in and out of focus, the eye is drawn to the contrast between the tanned and freckled skin on the woman's shoulders and neck, and to the pinky, unexposed flesh which her clothes have protected. In the second image, Teichmann's husband is similarly shown from the chest upwards, but lies down with arms raised and eyes closed. The contrast here is between the peachy flesh tones where the light hits his underarm and face (paler than mère Teichmann's bronzed arms) and the shades of greeny and purpley-brown where his black skin disappears into shadow.

Teichmann's compositions – be they of the soft geographical contours of her mother's torso in the bath or a single suspended hand, emerging out of shadow, as if severed – reflect the complex range of emotions that form all personal and family relationships from love to loss, adoration to rejection. This isn't an exhibition that shouts at you from the walls but one that quietly seeps under your skin and remains there.

Rating: \*\*\*\*\*

Helen Sumpter, TimeOut