

Katerina Lukina, Andrei Pokrovskii

18 October–9 November, 2024
6 Percy Street, London

Two shoes are not a pair

Katerina Lukina

b. 1995, Mytishchi, Russia
based in London

Katerina graduated from Moscow State University of Printing Arts in 2019. Her practice blends surrealism with abstract and figurative elements and is centered on themes of transformation and perception, incorporating mixed media, such as multilayered reliefs and UV printing. Katerina's art often features a fusion of fantastical imagery and mysterious, macabre landscapes.

Andrei Pokrovskii

b. 1996, Moscow, Russia
based in London

Andrei studied Graphic Arts at Moscow State University of Printing Arts and earned a BA in Illustration from the British Higher School of Art and Design (2019). His work reimagines the environment as a theatrical stage, where the scenery dictates the actions of its inhabitants. In this setting, his characters serve as extensions of the landscape, performing parts of an enigmatic play.

Two Shoes Are Not A Pair is a duet exhibition that brings together two artists who, though working side by side for years, have never actually collaborated. This moment raises an essential question: Can two creative practices, similar in some ways but still very much their own, truly coexist? Is such a pairing necessary or even possible?

The title is inspired by a twist on a Russian proverb, “Two shoes – a pair,” usually used to describe two individuals whose actions lead to the same troublesome result, despite their differences. Here, the phrase suggests that while the two artists may seem to walk in parallel, they are not a perfect match.

Drawing on the words of Jorge Luis Borges—“Mirrors and childbirth are abominable, since they multiply the already existing”—the exhibition revolves around the idea of creative autonomy. The artists are not reflecting one another, duplicating, or completing each other. Instead, they stand as fully formed, individual entities, refusing to merge. This tension runs through the works on display, where multiplication, mirroring, and doubling appear in unsettling, distorted ways. It's not about harmony but about the discomfort and complexity of being “two” in a world that often demands unity.

The recurring theme of duplication shows up literally, in diptychs and other mirrored forms, as well as in the narrative: oddities in the body, spectral doubles, absorbed twins, and dark omens. The works suggest a sense of unease, of things not quite right, reflecting the inherent contradictions in working as both an individual and a pair.

At its core, the exhibition is about resisting the urge to reflect, complement, or merge. It's about remaining distinct, even when faced with the idea of working together. Like two shoes that don't quite match, these works challenge the viewer to question what it means to be together, yet apart.

Text by HG