

Calida Rawles

*This Time Before Tomorrow*

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No.9 Cork Street, London

*This Time Before Tomorrow* explores the transformative nature of identity—specifically, the moment in which that transformation occurs. These paintings are dark. Figures blur into their reflections, suspended in murky, uncertain waters. The environment is heavy with emotion, evoking a cosmogonic space that carries the viewer across time and place.

This body of work responds to the rapidly shifting identity of my nation—and, by extension, my own. To process this upheaval, I turned to writings from the 1940s, including Joseph Campbell's *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, which examines universal motifs of transformation, and Albert Camus' *The Myth of Sisyphus*, which wrestles with the ideals of existentialism. At the same time, I reflect on and draw inspiration from the life and writings of Audre Lorde—her profound understanding of survival, resilience, and our relationship to a planet in transformation.

Personally, I'm grappling with the fractures within the American mythos—once rooted in the promises of democracy, inclusion, and justice. Today, that dream feels increasingly elusive. The melting pot that was once a symbol of unity now cracks under the weight of deportations; truth has become subjective; and justice feels subverted. Amidst this cultural disorientation, I find myself untethered—aware of tectonic shifts beneath both my personal and collective foundations.

In search of grounding, I looked to existential philosophy, history, and mythology—the frameworks we have long relied on to shape identity. These works are born from that search: meditations on change, disillusionment, and the potential for renewal. Through them, I hope to press against the limits of the possible and create images with a timeless form.



Calida Rawles, *When Time Carries*, 2025 (detail)