

MSSNDCLRCQ
Meessen De Clercq

SUSAN COLLIS

The Price of Nails

22 February – 23 March 2013

MEESSEN DE CLERCQ
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For her first personal exhibition at the gallery, Susan Collis takes over the first floor, with new works, some of which created specifically for this space. The heart of Collis's work lies in the representation of everyday life, the commonplace and the accidents that constitute it. With an impressive technical virtuosity, she focuses on details that give substance to the fabric of reality.

The visitor is greeted by *You know you want it* consisting of a neon sign bought on the Internet and a box containing some boxes of nails. Exploring the polysemy of the word "nails", Susan Collis emphasises the ambiguous character of the piece: beyond its commercial function, the neon takes a semiological, almost Magritian connotation (depicting the object and the word that designates it). In addition, the nails are freely available to the public. In this act, Collis's intention is not so much to refer to the work of a particular artist, as to restore a symbolic value to the humble nail.

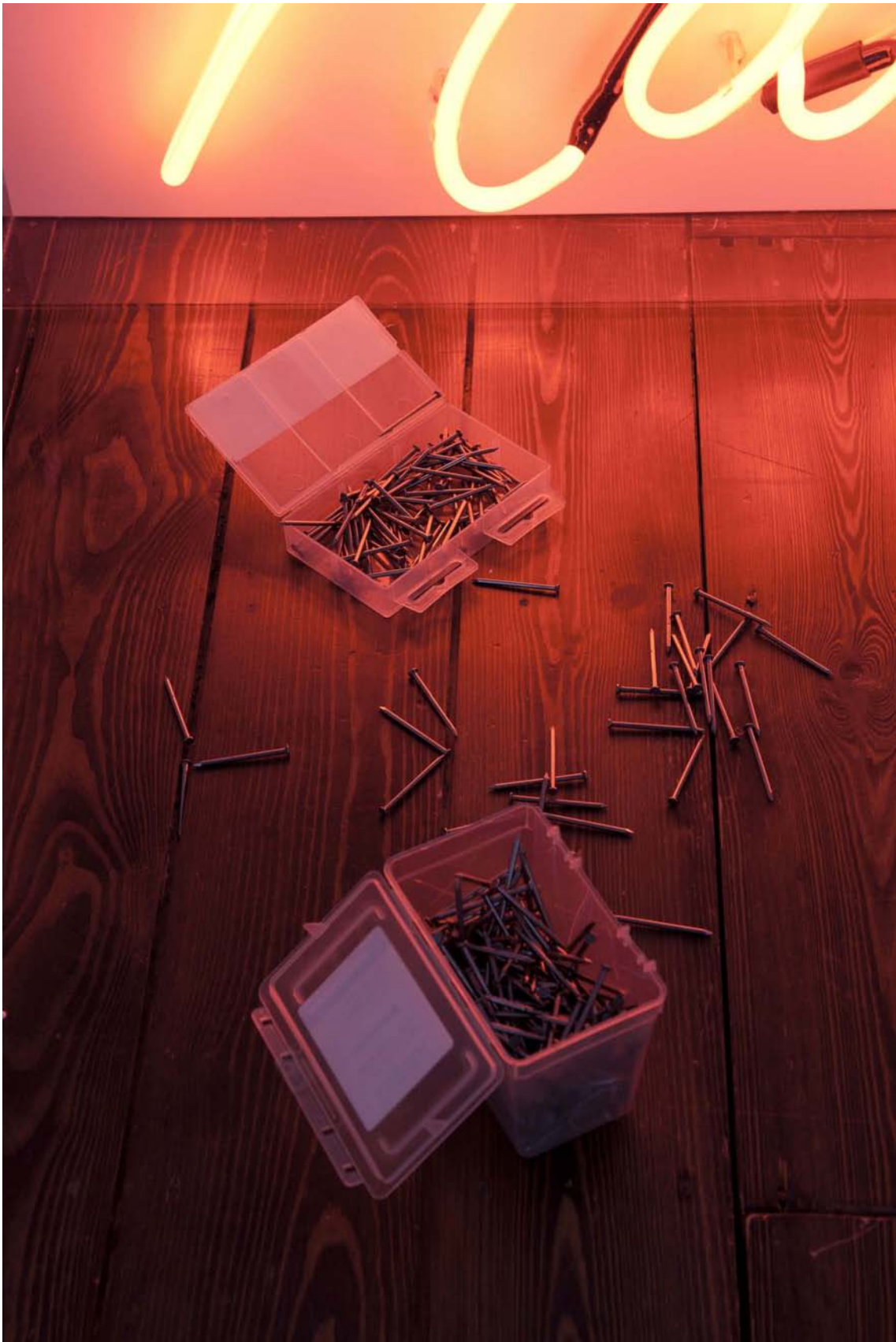
In **the right-hand room**, *Malaprop* combines the prodigality of nature (the sea in this case, since the piece is made of shells) with an obsessive work at the crossroads of art brut and Sunday DIY. The technical mastery of marquetry and inlay that we can see in *Forget me* is also striking in the drawing. The diptych *Each to Their Own*, drawn patiently in lead pencil, an "endurance drawing" as the artist calls it, gives the illusion of a spot of white paint mark on a black background and is so precise that the eye is completely misled. Collis manages to pair off activities that seem at first sight to be opposites: materials seem to be of low quality yet, on the contrary, they are precious; what looks dirty is extremely clean and meticulously prepared, while what seems untidy is actually arranged in perfect order. We can see that characteristic particularly in the work with the tongue-in-cheek title: *Everybody needs good neighbours*. The idea that "seeing in detail would bring us closer to the act of knowledge" is questioned by the philosopher Georges Didi-Huberman who describes the different moments that make up our understanding of a work by analysing the detail (the approach for noticing detail/"cutting up" which enables us to get to the heart of a work/the reassembly of all these parts). Composed of various elements (wood custom-printed laminates, hand-printed cotton, vinyl stickers and c-type photographic prints, etc.), the work resembles a collection of scrap materials, yet all the parts are made meticulously by hand. Again, the viewer is deceived intentionally and is required to come closer to become fully aware of the quality of the details.

In the **left-hand room**, once again we find mystification with *You go your way, I'll go mine* on the table and in *State Border*, where the work has painstakingly assumed the appearance of a damaged plank of wood, worthless and unfit to be used for anything.

The process developed by Collis allows everyone to understand that often the eye exerts an abusive authority over our perception and beyond that, over our mind and our thoughts.



You know you want it, 2013
Neon light, nails, dimensions variable



You know you want it (detail), 2013
Neon light, nails, dimensions variable



View of the exhibition « The Price of Nails », Meessen De Clercq, 2013



View of the exhibition « The Price of Nails », Meessen De Clercq, 2013



Each to their own, 2012
Graphite on paper, dimensions variable



View of the exhibition « The Price of Nails », Meessen De Clercq, 2013

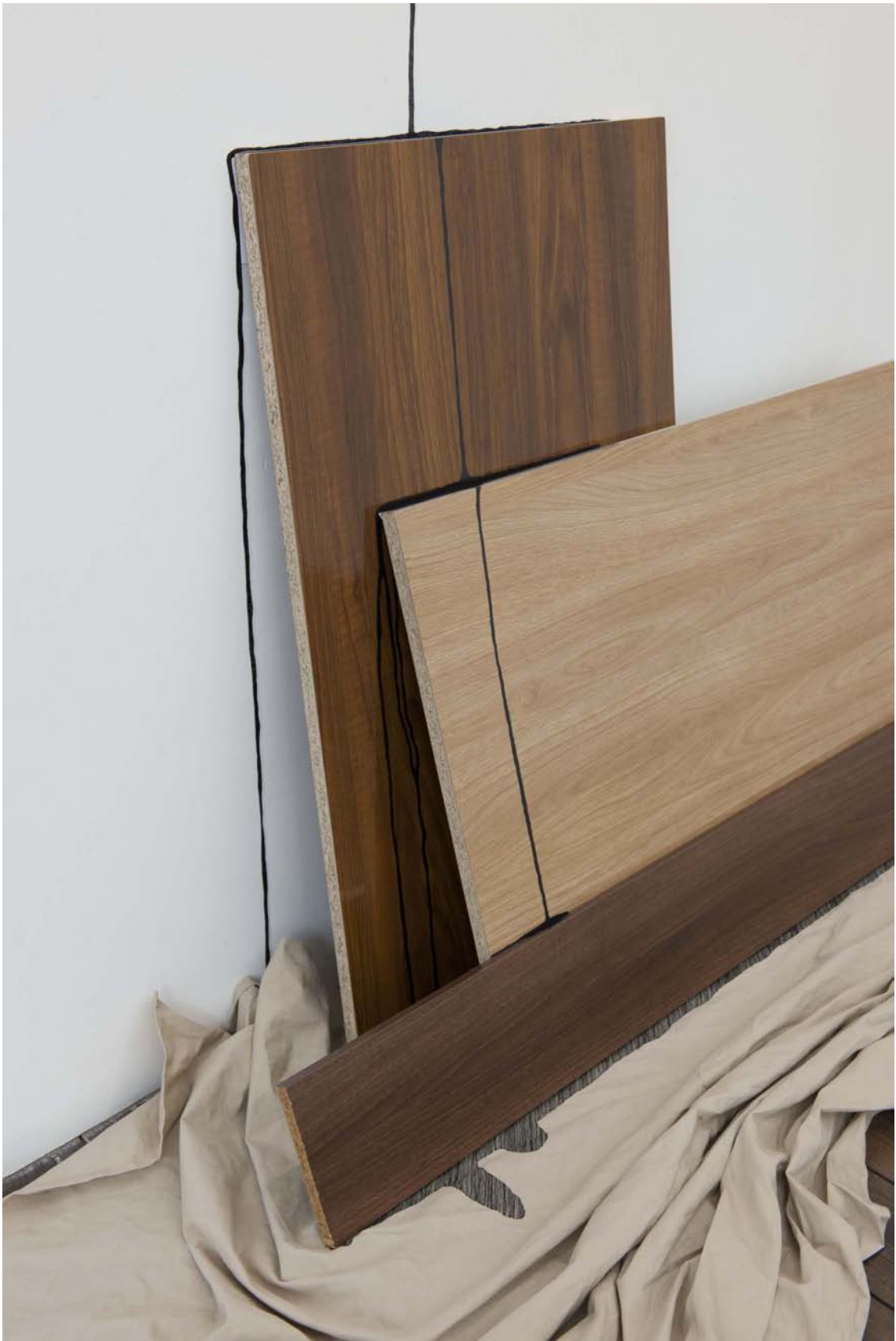


Malaprop (detail), 2012
MDF, seashells, 295 x 127 x 14 cm



Everybody needs good neighbours, 2013

Wood, custom printed laminate, hand printed cotton, printed vinyl wall sticker, c-type prints, dimensions variable, edition of 3



Everybody needs good neighbours (detail), 2013



Everybody needs good neighbours (detail), 2013



Forget me, 2011-2012

Pau Amarillo wood, teak, veneer, Mother of Pearl, turquoise, hallmarked silver, 78,5 x 17,5 x 1 cm



Forget me (detail), 2011-2012



View of the exhibition « The Price of Nails », Meessen De Clercq, 2013



State Border, 2010
Sonokelling, rosewood, Bog oak, white holly, walnut, 91 x 49 x 2,5 cm



State Border (detail), 2010



You go your way, I'll go mine, 2013
Graphite on paper, dimensions variable

SUSAN COLLIS

Born in 1956 in Edinburgh (Scotland). Lives and works in London (UK)

SOLO EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

2013

The Price of Nails, Meessen De Clercq, Brussels (Belgium)

2012

That way and this, Seventeen Gallery, London (UK)

Rein, Honigbrot Gallery, Köln (Germany)

2011

So it goes, Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin, Texas (USA)

2010

I Miss You, Seventeen, London (UK)

Works on paper, Seventeen, London (UK)

I don't love you anymore, galerie frank elbaz, Paris (France)

Since I fell for you, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham (UK)

Sculpture Show, Torrance Art Museum, CA (USA)

Commissioned artist of the Armory Show

2009

Twice removed, Espacio Minimo Gallery, Madrid (Spain)

For all the things we thought we'd love forever, Seventeen, Solo presentation, Frieze Art Fair (with catalogue), London (UK)

2008

Why did I think this was a good idea, Lora Reynolds Gallery, Austin, Texas (USA)

Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh (Scotland)

Sweat, Seventeen, London (UK)

2007

The grand scheme of things, The City Gallery, Leicester (UK)

Don't get your hopes up, Seventeen, London (UK)

2004

I know all about you, Aspex Gallery, Portsmouth (UK)

2003

Engineer, Beaconsfield Gallery, London (UK)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)

2013

L'origine des choses, Centrale for Contemporary Art, Brussels (Belgium)

Testing Ground: Disappearing into one, 176 Gallery, London (UK)

2012

Lifelike, Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis (USA)

Into the wood, curated by Daria de Beauvais, Galerie des Galeries, Paris (France)

Meanwhile II, John Hansard Gallery, Southampton (UK)

Look closely now, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, NSW (Australia)

Passage, Blindarte Contemporanea, Napoli (Italy)

2011

La Vie Mode d'Emploi (Life A User's Manual), Meessen De Clercq, Brussels (Belgium)

Mystics or Rationalists?, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh (Scotland)

L'art contemporain et son exposition, Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris (France)

A new Hook. Re-thinking needlework, Museum Bellerive, Zürich (Switzerland)

The Workers, Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams, Massachusetts (USA)

De-building, Christchurch Art Gallery, Christchurch (New Zealand)

2010

Les Elixirs de Panacée, Palais Bénédictine, Fécamp (France) curated by Ami Barak

Les compétences invisibles, Maison Populaire de Montreuil (France)

Lean, Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York (USA)

Look again, Marlborough Chelsea, New York (USA)

Nod Nod Wink Wink, Taos Museum, New Mexico (USA)

2009

Souvenir, Leeds Metropolitan Gallery, Leeds (UK)

The Sculpture Show, Eastside Projects, Birmingham (UK)

Out of the Ordinary, Tullie House, Carlisle (UK)

No Show, Nicholas Robinson Gallery, New York (USA)

Susan Collis, Ane Mette Hol and Toril Johannessen, Lautoum (Norway)

Bizarre Perfection, The Isreal Museum, Jerusalem (Israel)
Apparently Invisible, The Drawing Center, New York (USA)
At Your Service, The David Roberts Foundation, London (UK)

2008

Out of the Ordinary, Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead (UK)
Lure, Galerie Frank Elbaz, Paris (France)
Presque Rien, Laure Genillard, London (UK) curated by Gavin Turk

2007

Isobar, Fieldgate Gallery, London (UK)
Business as Usual, Angel Row Gallery, Nottingham (UK)
Citadel I, Front Room/Killing Room, David Risley Gallery, London (UK)
Ultrasonic International II, Mark Moore Gallery, Santa Monica (USA)
Out of the Ordinary, The V&A, London and touring (UK)
An Archaeology, Project Space 176, The Zabludowicz Collection (with publication), London (UK)

2006

Until it makes sense, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris (France)
Until it makes sense, SEVENTEEN, London (UK)
Seventeen Presents..., SEVENTEEN, London (UK)
Brownfield, Lounge Gallery, London (UK)

2005

The Vinyl Project, Cork (Ireland) curated by Simon Cutts for Cork City of Culture
Drawing 200, The Drawing Room, London (UK)
Oriel Mostyn Open 2005, Llandudno, Wales (Winner) (UK)
Arttextiles3, Touring Exhibition *Thy Neighbours Ox II*, Space Station 65 Gallery, London (UK)
Taking a line for a walk, The Place, Letchworth, UK *Chronic Epoch*, Beaconsfield Gallery, London (UK)

2004

Free From the Itch of Desire, Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin (Ireland)
Emergency, Aspex Gallery, Portsmouth (UK)

2003

40 White Chairs, Wapping Hydraulic Power Station, London (UK)
Gobbledygook, The Centre of Attention Gallery, London (UK)

2002

Jerwood Drawing Prize, Touring Exhibition
Notably, Pump House Gallery, London (UK)
Arcadia In the City, Marble Hill House and Grounds, Twickenham (UK)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2010

Les élixirs de Panacée, Palais Bénédicte
Susan Collis Since I fell for you, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

2009

For all the things we thought we'd love forever, Seventeen
The Bizarre Perfection, Suzanne Landau, The Israel Museum

2008

Susan Collis and Kay Rosen, Art Monthly, James Clegg, Oct 2008
The Times, *The Knowledge*, p. 26-28, Nancy Durrant, 26th July 2008
Susan Collis, Art World, Paul Carey Kent, Aug/Sept 08

2007

Out of the Ordinary, Laurie Briton Newell, V&A Publications
Don't get your hopes up, Seventeen
An Archaeology, Zabludowicz Collection
Bon Magazine, Spring 2007, Friere Barnes
The Drawing Book: A Survey of Drawing, Ed. Tania Kovats

2006

Memorabilia, Maxime Thieffine, Paris-art.com

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

France Fonds national d'art contemporain
Israël Museum of Israel,
UK The Arts Council Collection