

CHRISTINE KÖNIG GALERIE

[everything becomes mysterious]

A fictive space, a complex legacy, a participatory field, a thing we collude in dreaming up, willingly suspending our disbelief.

[It exists not on a surface, but on a plane that is imagined...]

As the archetype of art,

[A painter doesn't paint a quince, he paints all quinces],

it has re-invented itself and been re-invented by others innumerable times.

[Painting exceeds its frame.]

A production of signs different to other mediums, swimming in a historical sea.

[I paint because I am a country girl. Clever, talented big-city girls don't paint.]

The designator of market values and authenticity,

[The good son.]

its self-reflection creates a dissatisfaction with itself that propels it forward.

[In the good old days, painting was an art...]

It is distinctly conflicted.

[A constellation of problems.]

[Not Paradise.]

Re-mediatization - where the aspects of one medium are addressed by another - has kept it open and alive.

[It is a mirror, mirroring change.]

Overtly, it is no longer medium-specific.

[Painting is a philosophical enterprise that doesn't always involve painting.]

The un-nameable meeting the structural, a ghost of presence manifested through the handwriting of the author.

[The act and the eye.]

A face, a subjectivity, brings forth a monologue/dialogue with the viewing eye, holding concretely a private, imaginary space.

[A labyrinth of labyrinths.]

In honouring the alchemy of painting, we might paint or we might not.

Sophie O'Brien

[with Dorothy Porter, Philip Guston, Marlene Dumas, Mark Leckey, Pliny the Elder, Theodor W. Adorno, Gerhard Richter, Isabelle Graw, Jorge Luis Borges and others.]

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Gil Leung

Falling Into or Against, 2013

Falling Into or Against is a movement between surface and depiction.

It is about the convergence of an absence and an excess of image.

Where depiction removed reappears contextually, surface filled with the presence of contingency. Where an excess of images, signification over and against itself, flattens to a multiplicative null. Immersed or distanced, falling implies this transition, the seductive pull into and against something other than.

Jeremy Hutchison

Objectless expansion, 2013

A procedure:

Harpers Bazaar Art Arabia is a magazine of Middle Eastern contemporary art. It is printed in Dubai and distributed across the Arab world.

A white English male artist commissions this magazine to print a pure cyan page. It appears in the July-August edition.

He photographs the page, and commissions the magazine to print this photograph in the next edition of the magazine. The photograph of the cyan page duly appears in the September-October edition.

Again, the artist photographs this page. He commissions the magazine to publish the photographed photograph of the cyan page in the next edition.

This photograph is subsequently reprinted in various art media. And again rephotographed. And again reprinted on promotional graphics, and marketing materials, and fashion items.

An assemblage of this material is hung in a commercial gallery during an international art fair, where it is photographed by the gallery, the media, and visitors. These images are recuperated by the artist. And rephotographed, and reprinted.

The procedure is ongoing.

"Expansion for the sake of expansion, war for the sake of fighting, domination for the sake of dominating."

Joseph Schumpeter

Objectless expansion is a term coined by Schumpeter to describe the workings of empire. Its objective is not material, but formal: the empire expands for the sake of expanding. *Plus Ultra*. Endless conquest. A campaign without end.

This insatiable appetite for territory is reflected in the flow of the contemporary image. A painting must circulate endlessly. Must cross borders and currencies. Must span the network. A painting must expand. A painting is less a surface, more a campaign.

The strategies of military / marketing campaigns are characterised by shift. Distortion occurs as ideology meets material. The material shifts. The ideology distorts. Again shifts. Again distorts.

The goal is expansion.

It is a formal objective.

Plus Ultra.

Expansion for the sake of expansion.

A cyan page drifts into thin abyss.

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MATTHEW HUNT *The Stack, 2013*

In his latest work Matthew Hunt continues his research into the dynamism between the individual and the wider community. The broad and subjective trajectory that Hunt maps out is the signature of his work. Hunt moves between personal references, moments and story telling and wider cultural and historical ideas. He never forgets that he is making Art within a global continuum and that he must then become just another part of an historical framework.

Speaking in a recent interview Hunt gave a glimpse into his fractured subjective and historic narrative. *"I guess my ideas build up, it's an accumulation thing. I follow leads, I get distracted, forget, misread or mishear; I collect, I get fascinated for no particular reason and things catch my eye. They tend to be things which are overlooked, or on the periphery, or too close... For me, there's a sense of loss, of the temporal nature of experience and a realisation about how quickly the moment of discovery moves on. My work is about the things that follow me, the things that accompany me from deep in my past, to moments yesterday. I have archives I do not know how to handle. I am haunted by them: the fragments, glimpses, the scraps. It is within the periphery that everything we experience resonates."* (Matthew Hunt)

Hunt's work over the last few years has concentrated on a very direct form of art production by paring things down to basic materials; paper, pencil, paint, in order to locate a purity or essence of what it is to be human. Hunt's work searches for simple forms because everything else is so complex. Yet within this framework Hunt has been forgoing the path towards formalism and beauty. Hunt believes that the collision of all these elements does not necessitate Art that people like. Hunt likes this because then, just maybe, there is another form or dialogue to be discovered. (quot. Molybdomancy)

WOLFGANG TILLMANS *Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 2010*

On the periphery of the Liverpool Biennial in 2010 was a surprising and deft series of interventions made by Wolfgang Tillmans in the Walker Art Gallery's permanent collections. Invited to respond to the Walker's impressive collection of art ranging from the medieval period to the twentieth century, Tillmans has chosen locations for twelve works, removing or repositioning other pieces around his own. Although Tillmans subject matter parallels traditional genres, with an emphasis on portraiture, landscape, interiors, still life and, more recently, gestural abstraction and the monochrome; he resisted such literal relationships at the Walker and instead drew more evocative and generous connections between the historical and the contemporary.

Throughout, Tillmans creates asymmetrical and uneven installations by removing selected works in the gallery and leaving others in their original positions, then inserting his own photographs. These highly authored configurations are a strong statement, but rather than overpower the works around them Tillmans' tactics have a lightness of touch, activating the spaces and the artworks within them. The inserted photographs are two abstract works by Tillmans, one a red work whose folds have cast shadows across the paper when exposed in the dark room, and the other a completely black work with one fold bisecting the paper. The whole wall itself works as an installation, the photographs, faded fabric and paintings engaging in a dialogue on abstraction, light and the physicality of painting and photography.

"I love the piece of paper itself, this lush, crisp thing. A piece of photographic paper has its own elegance, how it bows when you have it hanging in one hand or in two and manipulate it, expose it to light – I guess it is quite a gestural thing." (quot. Wolfgang Tillmans)

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CATHY WILKES

Coffin, 2006

Baby Moses, 2006

At the center of Cathy Wilkes's work lies an examination of the language of objects; it is a search that leads her beyond the physical world, into other realms, yet relentlessly returns to it. Her assemblages form a slowly emerging vocabulary of domestic objects and materials, and are born out of an uncompromising desire to question the self. Human, and particularly female, agency and labour are explored in this continually transforming process, resisting linear associations and narrative progressions. Intrinsically experimental, it is an approach to making art that is not separate from external day-to-day reality, but rather one that comes directly, organically and spontaneously out of the living itself. (quot. Sophie O'Brien)

Wilkes's paintings employ media and compositional techniques as varied as those used in her installations. In some works, materials like latex, rose petals, and saucers are combined with a loose, gestural application of oil and tempera paint. Others reveal the line as a means to create form in a traditional placement of representational figure on a ground. Sometimes text is scrawled in the work, offering the viewer deeper insight into what the primarily abstract works may reference for the artist.