

Mary Mary

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Alistair Frost - 'AZQ < > \$@£•^'

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As part of Mary Mary's presentation for Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art, the gallery is pleased to present an off-site project by London-based Alistair Frost. His most ambitious project to date, Frost presents, amongst a body of new paintings, prints and objects, a functioning nail salon which sees a professional nail technician painting onto visitors' nails, motifs that Frost has designed, and that visitors will pick from the paintings installed in the exhibition.

Drawing on his interest in motif, imagery, and the 'mechanics' of the art world, Frost seeks to examine particular leisure activities, fashions, concepts of 'cool' and ideas of high and low culture as well as the idea of imagery and art as a social tool. A quote taken from a nail-art blog, states -"10 nails, like 10 small canvases" - it is this cross-over, this merging of imagery, motif and context that holds interest for Frost. Visitors will be able to book an appointment through the exhibition's website or drop in during the exhibition opening times, as the space will be open to visit outside of nail appointments as an exhibition space in its own right.

Frost's work put simply, presents pictures of pictures. Focusing on imagery that relates to leisure, fashion, lifestyles and digital pop culture - hifi speakers, cocktail glasses, palm trees and clothing, Frost hones in on the accessories and emblems of a contemporary visual landscape. These images sourced from stock design and Clip Art are remodelled and recontextualised by Frost and pitted against each other, highlighting a tension between imagery, representation and motif.

These images are not incorporated to illustrate or possess a specific emotion or narrative, but merely for their own sake and by consequence our thoughts are drawn and focused on the image's own making. Neither purely representational nor purely non-objective, the resulting work is personal and optimistic, a collection of shapes, colours and surfaces carefully composed, always pursuing ambiguity.

Frost focuses on communication and presentation, an interest which goes beyond the medium of painting and looks to social environments where opening drinks, cocktail bars and snacks become as much the subject at stake. In recent work, Frost has presented paintings alongside water-coolers filled with cocktails, constructed drinking bars and sushi bars within the gallery space and included massage tables and aloe vera plants into installations. Through this, he further pushes the boundaries of such a historically layered medium as painting whilst shifting the experience and expectations of the viewer. We are no longer solely voyeurs but our presence forms an equal part of the experience, and in this a balance has been upset. We see this also in the works' titles: what we see is not what we read and so on, and we are left not quite knowing how to unpack the mood or the joke. In recent works there has been a firmer focus on 'unsettling' the medium of painting and creating a strange relationship between the modes of display and the 'situation' Frost places his works in.

Born in 1981, Frost lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions include 'AFK < > AZQ < > ART', Boltelang, Zurich (2013); 'Image coming soon', Mary Mary, Glasgow & 'Out of Office Auto Reply', Christian Andersen, Copenhagen (both 2012) 'Schhh...Hieroglyphics', Hotel, London (2011); 'Laser Eye Correction', Galerie Micky Schubert, Berlin (2009). Group exhibitions include 'Open Heart Surgery', The Moving Museum, London; 'Signs and Messages II', Kate MacGarry, London; 'Febreze', Kinman, London; 'The Writings on the Wall', Jonathan Viner project space, Margate; 'Managing Bounces', Cell Projects, London (all 2013).