

Paradigm Store at Howick Place

23 October 2014 0



3rd Dimension reviews *Paradigm Store*, an exciting new group exhibition at Howick Place, London SW1.

Paradigm Store, features works by seventeen UK and international artists. Strong themes of architecture and design run through the exhibition which explores issues of the decorative and the functional, through a range of site specific installations, large scale sculpture, paintings and film; many works have never been shown in the UK before. On a tour of *Paradigm Store*, the curators, Tina Sotiriadi and Alistair Howick discuss the ideas behind the exhibition and the individual works with *3rd Dimension*.



1. Yinka Shonibare, *Wind Sculpture*, 2014, steel armature, hand-painted fibreglass resin cast, 6 × 3m.,

Howick Place, London SW1

(photo: courtesy of The Communications Group)

The starting point for this exhibition was Yinka Shonibare's *Wind Sculpture* (2014) commission opposite the building (fig.1), which through his use of 'African' textiles, the curators explain, was a springboard for their interest in the interface between art and design. On entering the reception area, the viewer is confronted with an abrasive counterpoint to the fluid, enveloping *Wind Sculpture* – Kendell Geers's five metre high concrete *Obelisk* (2008) piercing the space, its broken wine and beer bottles evincing a pervasive sense of danger. Geers references the traditional function and classical form of the obelisk as an entrance and boundary marker, engaging with notions of security and perceived security in his native South Africa's gated communities. This is contrasted with the sleek, highly polished bronze *Monument to the F-Word XI* (2010) where the object itself is the void between the letters, as the artist makes the area between the text tangible and solid (fig.2). Underpinned by Geers's confident command of materials and their associations, this work also alludes to engineering and machinery components, and possibly even the trajectory of a bullet.

An evocative discourse with fetishism and found objects characterises Geers's work *T.O.T.I. (121)* (2005) and its partner pieces, where the artist demystifies African figurines by wrapping them in hazard tape, which he has done with other figures of Christ and Buddha. Alongside these, are the equally provocative yet understated panels, *Brawl I* (2009) and *Brawl II* (2009), their delicate patterns of fractured surface betraying a



2. Kendell Geers, *Monument to the F-Word XI*, 2010, polished bronze, 118.5 × 25 × 25cms. (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London)

simmering and contained violence, as the glass was shattered by Geers firing a rifle directly at them. Although visually similar, and influenced by Marcel Duchamp's iconic single panel, *The Bride stripped bare by her Batchelors*, even, here the panels are placed at different angles, as if

turning away from each other, suggesting a disassociation and disconnect.

On entering the ground floor space with its wide windows, the viewer is immediately captivated by the play of light through the railings that bathes the sculptures, and the glistening floor which seems to suspend the works on a sea of white. Yutaka Sone's *Little Manhattan* (2007-2009) is a two-and-a-half ton carved depiction of the island, based on google maps and the artist's helicopter rides (fig.3). The city's rigid, geometric grid system contrasts with the classical undertones of the sensuous, soft marble bulge beneath, as if the city is melting into the floor.



3. Yutaka Sone, *Little Manhattan*, 2007-2009, marble 55.2 × 265.1 × 85.1 cms.

(photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of the Artist and David Zwirner Gallery, New York/London)

Sone's meditations on the architectural forms within nature such as snowflakes, are demonstrated in *Light in between Trees # 3 (tree trunk)* (2011) where he captures a burst of refracting light, juxtaposed with the densely

packed spiral forms of tree rings; the marble evincing both the ethereal and the solid. Behind these works, Ulla von Brandenburg's brightly coloured, theatrical *Segel (Sail)* (2012) looms above the viewer before gliding down to the floor, and signals the way to Cullinan Richards playful, intricate and engrossing installation *Contingent Exhibitionists; evidence of a connected approach like spaghetti and string* (2014). As a form of gateway to the main installation, the artists have adopted a training dummy for boxers, named 'Bob' which they use as a motif, here rendered functionless and staring blankly at a screen, conveying a disquieting sense of displacement and anonymity. The artists have laid out their work like a 'store' or extension of their studio, featuring many elements of their practice, including pasta and olive oil, referencing the produce they sell from their studio. Support structures such as tables become sculptures in their own right, and these products and other elements such as fabric and curtains are grouped as if to be sold, engaging with conventions of display, commodity and marketing. The work concerns the process of installation itself, where the viewer is not sure if the artists are moving in or moving out, increasing the sense of temporality, with some works unwrapped or propped up against the wall. Inaccessible to the viewer are two former cinema light boxes placed by the window, subverting the notion of the 'privileged few' inside the exhibition space, as the best view is from the outside looking in. Despite the detached 'display', many of the components are resonant with

personal memories, for example one of the paintings is based on Jeanine Richard's grandmother's circus act in Atlantic City, where she balanced on a horse which then dived into a pool!

On the lower ground floor, *Unbound* (2013) by Claire Barclay has not been seen in Britain before, as it was made as a site specific installation for the Neues Museum, Nuremberg. However the artist felt that the piece is very site specific here, and almost works better because of its strong horizontal and vertical lines. For *Paradigm Store*, the curators selected individual works by particular artists which they thought would directly relate to the various spaces in the building. Although this is an unusual space, the taut slither of material in *Unbound* responds well when seen from above, and then the work unfurls – revealing itself to you in a different way when experienced from below. The tension of the stretched out fabric, and the interplay between the architectural structure with its flints and machine made objects, and the gestural hand painted panel, challenges the viewer to question the nature of these relationships. Indeed, one can look at the whole and say that is the sculpture, but one could also observe that the structure represents a museum or gallery and the real sculptures are the elements within it; Barclay's works are delicately balanced within this ambiguous slippage.

Around the corner from *Unbound*, Elizabeth Neel's paintings are inspired by the ditch around the Sphinx in Egypt. Whilst tourists focus on the monument itself, Neel is pre-occupied with that mysterious almost negative space around the Sphinx, which has recently been cleared and re-discovered. In the enigmatic work *Slept and Slept* (2011) Neel alludes to the palpable space within the ditch suddenly coming to life, by punctuating the corner with a set of very long, low balance bars, between which hangs a limp sheepskin – at once accentuating and defining the space between the bars.

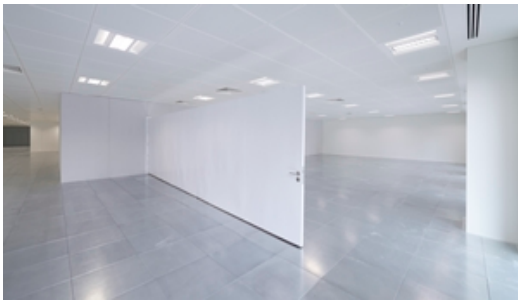
On the third floor the viewer is greeted with the conundrum of Tobias Rehberger's 'word sculptures'. Here, Rehberger's work effortlessly combines humour, an intriguing use of language and a dramatic sense of elastic space.



4. Tobias Rehberger, *Anne Frank*, 2011, wood, paint and photoprints, 2 parts: 220 × 110 × 80cms. & 195 × 110 × 150 cms.
(photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects and Pilar Corrias, London)

Rehberger's works are characterised by their determination to engage the viewer both visually and psychologically, stimulating both eye and mind. Fascinated by Op Art, in *Take Care* (2012) Rehberger delights in creating an atmosphere of illusion, where the sculptor disrupts reality by bringing to life a corner with his immersive use of dots; luring the viewer

in with a compelling manipulation of wall space and abstract form. In the two part work *Untitled (Anne Frank)* (2011, fig.4), *Anne* is presented at eye level, as Rehberger encourages investigation of the work's 'hand-made' quality and painterly surface – although these belie its complex spatial configuration and understated poignancy, as the word 'Anne' is cast in shadow below. This contrasts well with the more Constructivist style *Frank* with its controlled and harmonious ballet of circles and ovals, provoking the viewer to contemplate the dialogue between the two works.



5. Theodoros Stamatogiannis, *Untitled*, 2010, wood, door handle, hinges (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

Walking round the corner from the Rehberger works, the viewer perception of reality is again challenged by Theodoros Stamatogiannis's *Untitled* (2010) a

22ft oversized door that completely bisects the corner space (fig.5). Every time the viewer moves the door, his sense of perspective and position within the room changes, as the sculptor cleverly plays with space and architecture. The curators designed this wall especially to support the door, and from this very white subverted reality, the viewer then walks through the corridor to an explosion of colour – with the Brazilian sculptor Maria Nepomuceno's work *Untitled* (2011). Here, organic tendrils and biomorphic forms created from brightly coloured beads relating to her culture and the tribes she worked with, almost seem to crawl up and pulsate from the wall. Bursting with energy, her entrancing rich, tactile profusion of forms evoke local market stalls and native costume. Although the whole effect is of a precious jewel, the sculptor also incorporates rough, primitive clay vessels – a beguiling conversation of opposing textures.

Mirroring the vibrance of Nepomuceno's works are Nike Savvas' adjacent wall pieces *Sparks* (2014) (fig.6). With similar themes of energy and eruption, the Savvas works are site specific, and these 'wall paper' pieces ignite the clinical white space with their 3d sculptural imagery of



6. Paradigm Store Installation view, Foreground : Maria Nepomuceno, Background: Nike Savvas (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

molten suns and dying stars. Nepomuceno unofficially calls *Untitled* (2010) her 'volcanic piece', suggests a seething mass of bubbling mud pools and intricate crystalline formations, but again references her culture with associations of overflowing produce baskets. The sculptor's work also encompasses a plethora of dualities – formed yet unformed, crafted yet un-ravelling, as Nepomuceno conveys an unstable state of transition and metamorphoses. This effervescent corner is complemented by the hypnotic Beatriz Milhazes installation/ film *Les Paradis Mathematiques* (2011) a mesmerising, hermetic sculptural installation/film, presented in a pitch black room on a round white screen that extends forwards into the space, immersing the viewer in a hallucinatory experience. Here, the film absorbs the viewer in a constantly evolving world of geometric pattern, mathematical problems and interrelated natural phenomena, revealing Milhazes's fascination with Japanese Sangaku tablets and the concept of sacred geometry; there are obvious links to Nepomuceno's nearby spiral baskets and to Anne Harild's geometric architectural forms on the fourth floor (fig.7). The curators wanted these discourses to emerge as the viewers go through the building, making connections even after they have left the exhibition, as they filter through the ideas and images. Although every floor has a different atmosphere, many of the artists deal with similar themes so there are perceptible threads running through the exhibition.



7. Anne Harild, *Paradigm Store*, Installation view, (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

On the fourth floor, Anne Harild's aloof yet compulsive architectural installation is anchored by her stop-motion animation *Taking Time* (2013), which signals her concern with space, light and time and above all – architectural construction. In *one:one* (2014), similar to

architectural ground-plans and drawings about buildings, these are collages of sculptural 'objects' that denote the exteriors of buildings, and Harild reduces the building into a sculptural object by simplifying and stripping it down to just the surface texture. Three immaculately constructed panels form a screen, displaying the collages amidst empty sections, as Harild gently manipulates the viewer's spatial experience as he moves around the sculpture. This use of negative space is reflected in Harild's fascination with scaffolding, 'some of my forms borrow their language from scaffolding...which beautifully describes form without any solidity'. Despite their regimented construction, as the collages themselves have been 'built' strip by strip, the almost painterly effect is complex and subtle, and they shimmer with an inner radiance.

Harild's exploration of architecture invites a stimulating dialogue with

Theodoros Stamatogianni's adjacent *Untitled* (2014) which explores the boundaries of public and private space, with the concept of a 'shop front' as an architectural threshold between the two



8. Theodoros Stamatogianni, *Untitled* 2014, wood, door handle, hinges (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Project)

(fig.8). Here, the shop front is inlaid as a relief into a raised herring-bone pattern floor section, that references how reliefs decorate architecture, and the differing levels of human interaction in public/private spaces. It links to the title *Paradigm Store*, which the curators chose because it fuses ideas which are at play within many of the artists' dominant themes. When the viewer turns round from the intricate, ordered world of Anne Harild, they are plunged into the shifting jostling world of Simon Bedwell's 'store' which he envisions as an eclectic antique shop in Paris. Amidst the remains of found furniture, the sculptor mischievously interweaves sprawling and collapsing clay objects with casts of his head, challenging notions of purposefully 'distressed' mass produced 'interior design' objects for the home. The viewer is encouraged to move around the pieces questioning their exact status, as Bedwell gleefully subverts function and design, where a head may also become a vessel. The sculptor also relishes the unpredictability of the firing process, pushing the medium to its limits, with some works disintegrating in the kiln. The installation also has a feel of the Pitt Rivers museums in its use of fragments, and Bedwell questions the boundaries between sculpture and furniture by featuring a seat where you can contemplate the work you are sitting on, and then view the installation as a whole.



9. Simon Bedwell, *Untitled: No Inside*, 2014, variable dimensions (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of the Artist and HS Projects)

On the other side of fourth floor are three enigmatic Claire Barclay sculptures.

When *Flat Peach I* (2010), *Flat Peach II* (2010) and *Soft*

Group (2010) were originally shown in Stephen Friedman gallery, Barclay wanted to give the impression of the works either oozing out of the floor or melting into it, but here they seem to float on the surface, giving them an ethereal, fluid quality. Engaging with ideas of fashion, costume and function, the sculptor was inspired by the tailoring business in Savile Row, but in this context the pieces now reference and relate to this

building previously being part of The House of Fraser. One of Barclay's main concerns is the materiality of objects and their implicit and posited meanings and associations. In these works, tensions permeate her highly choreographed juxtapositions of fabric, machine-made and hand-crafted objects, where exquisite details such as an aluminium cone might suggest the heel of a ladies shoe. We also detect Barclay's gentle irreverent humour, as they seem like *Fashionistas* exhausted after London Fashion Week!

The haunting and edgy *Fault on the Right Side* (2007) has never been shown in UK before. It consists of a long dining table where the diners are represented by oval mirrors with silvered paint dripping down them, and the effect is as ghostly and unsettling as if it had



10. Claire Barclay, *Fault on the Right Side*, 2007, oak, glass with mirroring paint, brass and screen-printed fabric 275 x 696 x 152 cms. (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London)

been blood. The work has an unsettling, almost gothic feel to it, as the viewer glimpses a warped reflection of himself in the mirror, as if he is an unwitting guest at the dinner party. Similarly, Barclay subverts suggestions of a luxurious fabric table cloth by her surreal guts and eighteenth-century wigs patterns. This sense of unease is accentuated by the work's barbed form, as the table itself is peeled back in sections, with the tension of a coiled spring. The piece is very much about function, ritual and performance so the curators felt it was important to orientate the work in a wide space, allowing the viewer a uniquely atmospheric, spatial experience.



11. Harold Offeh, *Arcadia Redesigned (again)*, 2014, wood, fibreglass, metal foam and toy cars (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

Nestled in the corner of the fifth floor is Harold Offeh's *Arcadia Redesigned (again)* (2014), originally created for Ham House as a prop for a theatrical performance, here it becomes a sculptural object layered with historical and social implications (fig.11). With these notions of

role-play and performance, Offeh has placed his 'grotto' facing the window, so that the weary office worker may escape and contemplate his fellow workers in the building opposite, as Offeh also explores the

idea of a modern 'hermit'. Although the rocks surrounding the grotto are stationary, the viewer can see they are raised up, and soon realises that they are mounted on motorised toy cars, as the artist was inspired by Diane Arbus's photograph *Rocks on Wheels, Disneyland* (1962). During the eighteenth century when gardens were being designed with follies and temples, often villages and land were cleared, which links to Paula Roush's work, on the same floor, which references the destruction of suburbs and villages in her native Portugal.

From the idyllic shelter of the grotto, the viewer is startled by David Shrigley's eerie *Tent* (2007), where he utilises expanding foam that oozes threateningly out of the



12. David Shrigley, *Tent*, 2007, polyurethane foam, dimensions variable (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

opening to imply either a toxic disaster, mud slide or lava flow (fig.12). Adjacent is his equally disturbing *Bird Table* (2007) in which the feeding tray is engulfed by the same menacing foam, with Shrigley subverting expectations of benevolence and refuge that also relate to *Tent* (fig.13). Indeed the foam itself seems somehow like a creature still creeping towards the viewer. Looking back towards Offeh's grotto, the viewer can compare the way in which each artist treats the concept of 'shelters', and their functions and forms. The curators are very excited to have these two Shrigley works, as they have never been seen in the UK before.

Nearby is the quixotic Beatriz Olabarrieta installation *Blue Coat and Yellow Vest* (2014). This is a site specific piece, where the artist worked with found objects to create a spatial intervention that incorporates the pre-existing bar area, triggering ideas of a meeting point yet also a sense of separation. Based on Roland Barthes 'A Lovers Discourse', on the subject of clothing in an amorous liaison, the artist described the work as functioning like an abstract painting rendered in three dimensions that you can walk around; she also uses sound and video to complement her floor 'composition' of elements such as branded trainers, and even socks! Moving round the corner, the viewer is immediately drawn in to Paula Roush's complex, absorbing installation, *Participatory Architectures* (2014) which almost acts as a *cri de coeur* (fig.14). This work is based on the period after the coup d'état in Portugal in the early 1970s when there was a surge of utopian building projects and creativity. Then after the economic setbacks of 2008, Portugal began selling these communes to developers, effectively for land clearance. Here, laid out dispassionately on makeshift tables that span the room, are poignant photographs, objects and memorabilia that resonate with disillusionment. Roush's



13. David Shrigley, *Bird Table*, 2007, bird table with foam, 150 × 75 × 75 cms. (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects and Stephen Friedman Gallery)

bricks are a metaphor for construction /destruction and also challenge the government with rebellion. She creates individual collages of all forty-one houses on the Apeadeiro estate in southern Portugal, and with a bitter irony, wraps them in the same ribbon the government uses to fasten its official documents.

The atmosphere is then lightened for the viewer as he is confronted by David Shrigley's dark but

humorous *Cheers* (2007) perhaps the sculptor's monument to the average workman. The sculptor places this oversize figure, bursting with industrial foam high on a plinth, subverting ideas of homage and yet also conveying imminent danger for the viewer below.



14. Paula Roush, *Paradigm Store*, Installation view (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

Paradigm Store is a thought-provoking array of sculpture that challenges on many levels, and continues to permeate the viewer's consciousness, long after he has left the exhibition.

Main image: Tobias Rehberger, Installation view, *Paradigm Store*, 2014 (photo: Sylvain Deleu, courtesy of HS Projects)

Paradigm Store at Howick Place 25 September – 5 November 2014

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