

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

'Zabludowicz Collection Presents Three Top Exhibitions Worth An Afternoon Visit', *Artlyst*, April 13, 2014

The Zabludowicz Collection is mounting three thought provoking exhibitions concurrently. Stuart Whipps (Just opened) presents an installation of three new works that bring together disparate strands of his ongoing research into the history of monuments. 3D Installations by New York-based artist Trisha Baga and a mixed exhibition curated by Elizabeth Neilson. All are worth a look in.

Whipps exhibition (Top photo) delves into a 200ft concrete tower in the New Forest built between 1879 and 1885 by spiritualist Andrew Thomas Turton Peterson led Whipps to the figure of Sir Christopher Wren. Peterson claimed Wren had instructed him through a medium on the correct proportions for his ambitious tower, and recorded the dialogue in the spiritualist newspaper 'The Medium and Daybreak'.

A System For Communicating With The Ghost Of Sir Christopher Wren (2014) resurrects a primitive form of sign language developed by Wren in the 1650s. Using the digits of both hands, individual letters are represented rather than fully formed words, and particular colour coding was devised by Wren as a teaching method. Whipps' work presents 160 new medium format slides across two slide projectors, one showing a left hand, the other a right. Potential messages generated by the random combination of letters will be recorded throughout the exhibition.

A more tangible ghostly presence in the exhibition is Birmingham Central Library. In 2013 the new Library of Birmingham opened to the public, signalling the final nail in the coffin of its predecessor; which itself only opened in 1974. Despite a recommendation from English Heritage that the building should be granted grade II listed status, it is due to be demolished in 2014/15. Whipps unsuccessfully proposed to the Library authorities that a decorative brick wall from Central Library be relocated within the new library. Despite this rejection he set about removing the bricks, which travel to London to form Birmingham Central Library Wall (2014), and will be reused by Whipps in a number of different contexts in the future.

Stuart Whipps (b.1979) lives and works in Birmingham. His practice explores the relationship between the photographic image and object, between photography and narrative, and the slippery nature of archives. Whipps creates installations and books that tease complex narratives out of historic artefacts and moments. Recent bodies of work have utilised diverse material such as the collected speeches, interviews and statements of Margaret Thatcher, pieces of Scottish shale and found negatives from redundant South African photographic labs. Selected solo exhibitions include: Birth Springs, Death Falls, Flat Time House, London, 2013; Tick, Tack, Tick, Tack, Tick, David Dale Gallery, Glasgow, 2012; Why Contribute to The Spread of Ugliness?, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, 2011; New Wooabbeleri, Focal Point Gallery, Southend-On-Sea, 2010.

New York-based artist Trisha Baga (b.1985), featuring a number of new installations, alongside pieces from the Collection and key early works from her career. Baga combines video,

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painting, sculpture and found objects in immersive compositions that flood spaces with light and sound. Alluding to the ways in which technology alters perception, Baga uses 3D projections and the rhythms of online browsing to produce installations that suggest shifting chains of association. The artist positions herself as a material through which information is filtered – with the present-day contents of her studio, apartment and computer spilling out into the space of the viewer.

Baga has had recent solo exhibitions at Dundee Contemporary Arts, Whitney Museum, New York and Kunstverein Munchen, Munich, and featured in major group exhibition such as Speculations on Anonymous Materials, Fridericianum, Kassel, 12th Biennale de Lyon, and New Pictures of Common Objects, MoMA PS1, New York.

Infinite City is an exhibition exploring the city as material, site and situation for the contemporary lived experience. Curated by Elizabeth Neilson, Director, Zabłudowicz Collection and Joseph del Pesco, Director, Kadist Art Foundation, the project was initiated as a collaboration between two significant international contemporary art collections.

Works by nine international artists are drawn in equal measure from the two collections, encompassing a diverse range of media and approaches. Linking these artworks together is the question of whether cities are shaped by their inhabitants, or if inhabitants are shaped by the cities in which they live.

Since 2007 the majority of the world's population has been urban. The physical and spatial experience of a city is a global language —a language of architecture and affluence, crowds and traffic, poverty and noise. Whether we extol or condemn particular features of a certain city, it feels increasingly urgent to consider the multiple meanings 'the city' might contain.

The Zabłudowicz Collection is also running a curated mixed exhibition titled Infinite City. It involves three distinct but integrated elements: a solo display devoted to one artist from each collection, and a room in which artworks of different mediums are shown together. From the Kadist Art Foundation there is Berlin Remake (2005) by the New York-based artist Amie Siegel; this two-channel work juxtaposes preexisting films of Berlin with contemporary footage of the same locations. From the Zabłudowicz Collection comes the hard-hitting reportage Mexico City-based photographer Enrique Metinides.

The show includes a newly configured sculptural installation by the Scottish artist Martin Boyce, and video, painting, and photography by Slater Bradley, Yelena Popova, and Kelley Walker from the Zabłudowicz Collection and Michel Auder, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, and John Menick and Amie Siegel from the Kadist Art Foundation.

Two books acted as catalysts for the curatorial framework of the exhibition - Iain Sinclair's London: City of Disappearances (2006) and Rebecca Solnit's Infinite City (2010). Sinclair's sprawling "anthology of absence" includes texts by 60 contributors, and is richly evocative of London as an ever-shifting stage for personal narratives. Solnit's Infinite City is an almanac of maps and essays created in collaboration with artists, writers, and cartographers to illuminate

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diverse aspects of San Francisco's social and political history. Both authors explore the ebb and flow of the spacial and psychological development of a city, and the antagonisms and tensions that emerge.

This exhibition has toured to London after being shown under the title City of Disappearances at CCA Wattis, San Francisco, 10 September – 14 December 2013. Curated by Elizabeth Neilson of the Zabłudowicz Collection and Joseph del Pesco of the Kadist Art Foundation

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