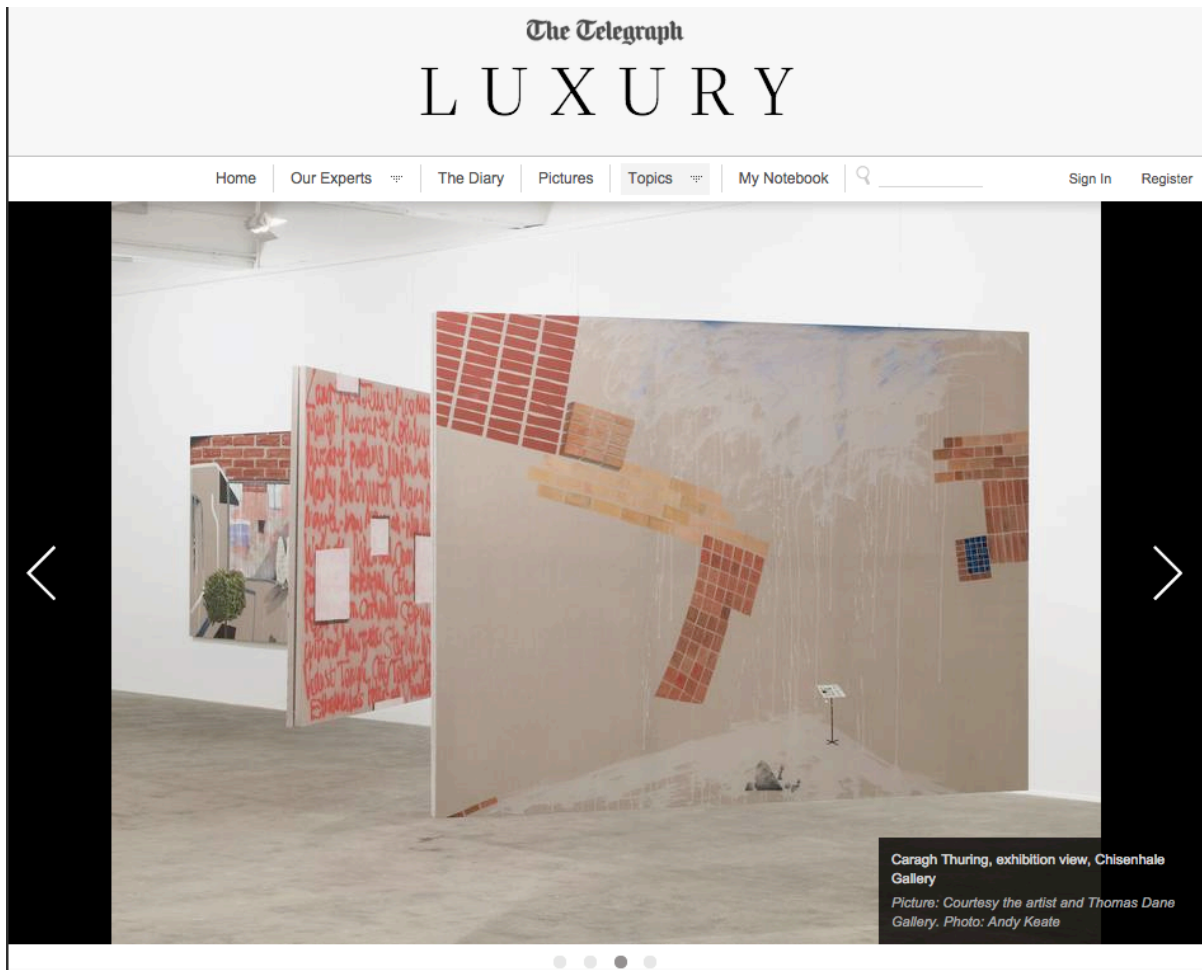


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Louisa Buck, 'Caragh Thuring slices up the Chisenhale', *The Telegraph*, 9 January, 2015
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/luxury/art/57811/caragh-thuring-slices-up-the-chisenhale-gallery.html>



ART

Caragh Thuring slices up the Chisenhale Gallery

London-based artist Caragh Thuring goes to great lengths to get visitors involved in her intriguing new exhibition, says Louisa Buck



BY LOUISA BUCK
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THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Entering Caragh Thuring's show of new paintings at the [Chisenhale Gallery](#) you are literally stopped in your tracks by the back of a very large canvas which has been hung right in front of the entrance. "The space had to be blocked, otherwise you could just stand in the doorway and see the whole exhibition all at once having to make any effort to go into the space," the artist declares. "It's this question of how to get people involved in the work...it's also about wanting to retain that sense of excitement, which is difficult to do with a painting that's stationary."

Once the back of this giant canvas has been negotiated, its front is no less intriguing. Across an expanse of unprimed canvas a close-knit group of four larger than life-sized figures has been built out of painted bricks and printed chicken wire, their jocular gestures and jauntily sporty outfits bizarrely at odds with the fact that they have been created from building materials.

"Everything I make is about how people are experiencing the world," says the London-based artist, whose enigmatic works are now eagerly sought after by collectors worldwide. Apparently the original source for this group was a Ralph Lauren ad from the 1990s, which she has now reinterpreted on her own terms. "These are just such ridiculously perfect images and I also liked the way the figures were interacting, they were linked up but not really engaged – they all looked so gormless."

In her quest to involve her audience, Thuring hasn't only blocked up the entrance to her show, she has also taken the unorthodox decision to suspend two pairs of canvases back-to-back from the ceiling, which slice up and choreograph Chisenhale's extensive chamber still further. Two of these dangling paintings list all the names of all the churches within the City of London's square mile; densely sprayed, graffiti style, in bright red industrial line-marking paint. "I wanted to make a map of London's square mile with these precious buildings that are untouchable and almost rebellious in this cramped, high value space."

Whether she is using words or images, Thuring makes a point of distilling the information in her paintings down to the bare minimum. She never makes preparatory sketches and rarely discards a canvas, preferring instead to accommodate rather than conceal mistakes: in any case, working on unprimed canvas means there can be no cover-ups. The result is a powerful sense of immediacy and also, in the deliberate expanses of empty space, an opportunity for

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the viewer's imagination to roam. "It's about economy of language – everything leads onto the next thing, you don't want to arrive anywhere, there is no destination."

This open-ended view extends to Thuring's sources, which can range from magazine adverts to Italian Renaissance paintings – in one painting a mountain range is created from the zig-zags of a day on the stock exchange. The source for several works in the Chisenhale show are suburban picture windows in a small Dutch town, photographed by Thuring whilst visiting her family, and which she sees as portraits or self portraits of their inhabitants. "I'm fascinated by the things that people choose as a means to represent themselves," she says.

However she also concedes that she does not want these Dutch interiors to reveal all about their subjects. "There's very little painting in the exhibition that you can look at and think, oh that's that. You have to look and try and fathom what's there." For the strength of these compelling paintings lies in their power of suggestion and in what is absent as much as what is shown – here less really is more.