

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

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Anthea Hamilton Re-imagines Kettle's Yard



'Anthea Hamilton Re-imagines Kettle's Yard', 2016, installation view, Hepworth Wakefield. Foreground: *British Grasses Kimono*, 2016, part of an ongoing series of Kimonos, silk, cotton, linen, wicker, metal. (print by Roger Phillips), 160 x 160 x 30 cm. Courtesy: the artist

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Anthea Hamilton, *Spiral stair case*, 2016, steel. Courtesy: the artist

one could write letters [or] make phone calls'.) Among the stair's displays are several posthumous bronze casts of angular figures by Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. Thus positioned on their perches, they seem about to make spectacular leaps, like divers at the Aquacade. (This image becomes tragicomic in the context of the artist's death on the Western Front, aged 23, and his wife's subsequent madness). On a lower step rests a pair of Daniel Sinsel's *Butzenbrille* (2007), concrete spectacles inset with thick discs of red glass (the 'bull's-eye' panes from which the work's title is derived) that come across as sunglasses imagined by Hieronymus Bosch. Sinsel's red lenses prove foils for the piercing blue eyes belonging, unsettlingly, to both of the titular subjects of another painting by Wood, *Boy with Cat* (1926).

Spirals, lenses, circles, eyes – for all their subtlety, these assonances and repetitions have an almost mechanical relentlessness (an uncanny thing to conjure, given the pre-industrial, handcraft-y aesthetic of so much of the Kettle's Yard hoard). Reflecting on them later, however, the image that came to mind was the snake Kaa hypnotizing Mowgli with his helter-skelter eyes in Disney's *The Jungle Book* (1967). Like the hypnotist's, Hamilton's art is one of effects from slender means, suggestive rather than explicit and resulting in an intended semi-confusion: a state of being both disciplined and docile.

There are two chairs here for visitors to slump into and a Gaudier-Brzeska bronze mask lies flat on a geometric mosaic 'daybed' by Laetitia Badaut Haussmann (*DB16*, 2016). So much of Hamilton's art – as with Ede's at Kettle's Yard – is a decision about how things rest, what sits or lies on what. Another supine figure to close: Nicholas Byrne's blocky

While its premises are refurbished, the holdings of Cambridge's Kettle's Yard – the home-cum-gallery that Jim Ede founded in 1957 as 'a living place where works of art could be enjoyed' – have come to the Hepworth Wakefield. For a portion of its tenure, Anthea Hamilton 're-imagines' the collection as a one-room display. At its centre, Hamilton has strung dozens of pebbles gathered by Ede and arranged on a circular table in Cambridge, to form two mobiles. These hang high in the air, appearing like a jumbled galaxy or a discordant trill on a stave.

The pattern of a jumper worn by Christopher Wood in a self-portrait from Ede's collection has also been dislocated and reproduced in the intricate patchwork of *Christopher Wood Kimono* (2016). In the same vein, *British Grasses Kimono* (2016) is printed with blown-up reproductions Roger Phillips's photos from a 1980 handbook, *Grasses, Ferns, Mosses and Lichens of Great Britain and Ireland*. The whole display is infused with a grassy scent – enough to set off an allergy – from the presence of vast grass mats, some of them five metres in diameter. The mats are Hamilton's reproductions of ones seen in some archival images of Kettle's Yard: here, three have migrated from floor to wall, allowing proper inspection of the great rings that run through each.

In another tribute to the house's interior, Hamilton creates a freestanding version of its spiral staircase in dark steel. The narrow steps of *Spiral Stair Case* (2016) are put to use as shelves for sculptures and objects. (This is not the only functional art here: a label insists that Hamilton's 2014 *Vulcano Table*, dripping with plumes of Ferrari-red blown glass, is also desk 'at which

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wood carving *Love Pillow* (2016), which appears like a swaddled baby, placed on a shelf that juts out in front of another enormous grass mat. Wide eyed, it seems to be staring up at the mat above it, as if that coiling form were the whole world.

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