

Behold Continues to Retreat

bethlem
gallery

Behold Continues to Retreat

Curated by Mark Titchner

27 May - 4 July 2015

Behold Continues to Retreat is an exhibition curated by Mark Titchner that combines artworks depicting uninhabited rooms, buildings and landscapes with a series of portraits and works that explore the representation of the face. These distinct groups of works are presented in opposition to each other each occupying half of the gallery space. Portraits staring into landscapes and landscapes absorbing their gaze. The eye's migration and back again. Bringing together Bethlem Gallery artists, renowned contemporary artists and works from the Bethlem Museum art collection the exhibition will explore the experience of observing and being observed.

The gallery invited artist Mark Titchner to guest curate this exhibition, to bring together artists from different backgrounds and experiences to explore common creative ground and bring different communities of artists together on an equal footing.

Mark explains *"In developing the idea for this exhibition I was struck by a description of the work of Bethlem artist Albert. Albert, whose work is included in the exhibition, produces stark, geometric pencil drawings which depict uninhabited spaces and architecture. One interpretation of these works would be that they depict threatening, institutional spaces but instead the artist's intention was to depict spaces within which he felt comfortable and to bring them to life."*

These spaces are empty in order to invite us in to them.

Another Bethlem artist Dan Duggan, again included in the exhibition and working with pencil, produces heavily rendered portraits that repeatedly depict the same rudimentary face. These faces appear in different stages of

construction or disintegration perhaps missing a mouth or the crown of the head but always with glaring eyes fixing the viewer.

These works do propose an interesting question. How does one portrait stare more than another?

If Albert's landscapes long to be filled what do these eyes invite? Do they ask us to empathise or do they confront us? Do they beckon us in or warn us away?

It is this projection of the artist or the viewer into an imagined space or physiognomy that is the crux of this exhibition. Of what is projected and of what is left behind. What response does an empty landscape elicit in the viewer that is different from the experience offered by a depiction of a face? Do we respond specifically to individual works or do we follow predetermined patterns that these genres demand. Does a landscape demand a pair of eyes upon it?

"So with this in mind, my proposition for this exhibition was that each empty landscape should be offered the unblinking gaze of a portrait and in turn each portrait should be provided a world for those eyes to fill. Or : If an artworks' nature resides in its completion by a notional gaze or space what happens when that notional gaze or space is offered by another artwork that in turn demands a notional gaze or space to complete it?" - Mark Titchner.

The exhibition will provide the setting for this year's Creativity and Wellbeing Week, hosted by London Arts in Health Forum. On the 6th June there will be a round table discussion with Mark, writer Iain Sinclair and Bethlem Gallery staff and artists. Booking available via the Creativity and Wellbeing website.

Works

The works throughout the exhibition are mostly placed in pairs opposite each other redirecting the viewer's gaze from artwork to artwork, wall to wall in dialogue with each other. A number of works stand alone including items from the Bethlem Museum's collection offering historic perspectives on observation from the hospital environment.

1

Simon

Imma Maddox

2013

Gesso board, wood, egg temporara, varnish
NFS

2

Untitled building

Albert

2014

Pencil on paper
£135

3

Dr Who?

Imma Maddox

1990

Wool weft, linen warp, berber wool
NFS

You are welcome to try *Dr Who* on. The mask goes over the head, the arms go across the shoulders with the fingers through the holes.

4

Moonlight

Anna Barriball

2013

Video Loop, 45:36

Courtesy the Artist & Frith Street Gallery

This work was produced by the artist taking

photographs through windows at night in an unlit building; Le Corbusier's Carpenter Centre for Visual Arts at Harvard University. In the darkness the artists camera focuses upon random details, sometimes it is the dust on a windowpane, at other times the vague picture of a world beyond the window, or simply the reflection of the camera flash.

4

Face off

Peter White

2014

Acrylic on canvas
POA

5

Typical Interior

Ewan Gibbs

2006

A3 Linocut

AP

Private collection

6

Untitled

Raymond

2012

Coloured pencil on board
£90

7

Untitled

Sam Sakya

2006

Pencil on paper

£90

8

Painted Form

David Musgrave

2002

Polyurethane, resin & enamel paint

Edition of 3 plus II AP

Private collection

9

Fiction A-E

Paul Noble

2003

Pencil, paper and frame.

Courtesy of the Noble collection

10

Notice

Courtesy of Bethlem Museum of the Mind

1931 notice instructing staff of St Bernard's Hospital Ealing (formerly Hanwell Asylum).

11

Glass Pane

Courtesy of Bethlem Museum of the Mind

20th century glass window pane from the door of the padded cell consisting of a single glass block. Date from inscription on padded cell wall, September 1935. St Bernard's Hospital Ealing (formerly Hanwell Asylum).

12

Guy Ward Dormitory

David Beales

2008

Pencil on paper

£200

13

Caligraphy Face

Peter White

2014

Acrylic on canvas

POA

14

Untitled view

Matthew

2014

Gouache on Board

£125

15

Metallic Year II

Alexander Tucker

2010

Oil on Canvas

Courtesy of the artist

POA

16

Cipher Series #3

Dan Duggan

2013

Pencil on Paper

£120

17

Untitled building

Albert

2015

Pencil on paper

£300

18

Untitled view

Matthew

2014

Gouache on Board

£125

19

Face on a walk

Anthony Green

2015

Pencil on paper

Courtesy of the artist

POA

20

Ishbel

Chantal Joffe

2015

Oil on board

Courtesy the Artist & Victoria Miro

21

Untitled

Barrington

2014

Watercolour on paper.

£100

22

Model centrifugal apparatus

Courtesy of Bethlem Museum of the Mind

19th century wooden (other materials metal, cloth, horse-hair, varnish and paint) model of a centrifugal treatment apparatus. Made by a patient at St Bernard's Hospital Ealing (formerly Hanwell Asylum).

Events

Saturday 6 June

3.30 pm

The exhibition will provide the setting for this year's Creativity and Wellbeing Week, hosted by London Arts in Health Forum. On 6 June there will be a round table discussion with artist Mark Titchner, writer Ian Sinclair and Bethlem Gallery staff and artists. Booking available via the Creativity and Wellbeing website.

creativityandwellbeing.org.uk

Wednesday 17 June

2pm

Artist and poet Dan Duggan will lead a workshop that explores the gaze in portraiture. All are welcome and materials are provided. Please RSVP to book your place - info@bethlemgallery.com.

Wednesday 24th June

2pm

Join artist Matthew for a workshop based in the beautiful hospital grounds that explores the landscape and the ways in which we observe it.

Wednesday 24 June

12pm

Exhibition Curator Mark Titchner will be delivering a practice workshop on themes within the exhibition. Please RSVP to book your place - info@bethlemgallery.com.

Saturday 4 July

12-5pm

Join the gallery and museum for an afternoon of walks, talks, workshops tea and art cake!

Artists

Albert

Albert's pencil and pen drawings depict visions of imaginary buildings, homes, fences and structures. With a clear methodology for constructing his works, he begins with a few lines and lets the building or structure develop from there. Albert's work exists in public collections such as Pallant House Gallery, The Bethlem Museum, ABCD Collection, Paris, the Museum of Everything and Henry Boxer Gallery.

Anna Barriball

Anna Barriball's work hinges on minimal interactions with objects and often steps between the parallel languages of drawing and sculpture. Much of her practice explores and depicts the accretion of time – from the length of time it takes for a candle to burn down, to the repetitious activity of taking graphite rubbings from objects that bare the traces of their use or function. Anna has exhibited widely and is represented by Frith Street Gallery.

Alexander Tucker

Alexander Tucker is an English musician and artist from Kent who writes, records and performs alone and in collaboration with a varied array of artists. His art practice covers graphic novels and painting, often illustrating his album artwork.

Anthony Green

Born in Welwyn Garden City 1973, he studied at the University of the Art Chelsea and he now lives and works in Kent. His work contains meticulously produced components, which are brought together in assemblages of drawings, sculptures and reliefs. *"The elements or segments in the individual reliefs are not in the service of a particular meaning or*

narrative, but rather they are in spatial relationships with each other and within themselves. In a very real sense, desire is the material of the work." - Anthony Green.

Barrington

Barrington has been painting and drawing for over 15 years. His work draws on his childhood memories of Jamaica providing a backdrop for imaginary landscapes and mythical scenes. He has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery, Pallant House Gallery and the Koestler Awards.

Chantal Joffe

Possessing a humorous eye for everyday awkwardness and an enlivening facility with paint, Chantal Joffe brings a combination of insight and integrity to the genre of figurative art. Hers is a deceptively casual brush stroke. Whether in images a few inches square or ten feet high, fluidity combined with a pragmatic approach to representation seduces and disarms simultaneously. Born in 1969, Chantal Joffe lives and works in London. She holds an MA from the Royal College of Art and was awarded the Royal Academy Woollaston Prize in 2006. Joffe has exhibited nationally and internationally and is represented by Victoria Miro Gallery.

Dan Duggan

Dan has been developing his Cipher Series and his reoccurring leitmotif of a head for an extended period of time, drawing from personal experience of hospital environments and his fellow patients. The repeated image functions as a cipher, developing certain elements and emphases through each incarnation. His work has been exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery, Royal Festival Hall and is amongst collections throughout Europe.

David Beales

David Beales studied at Croydon College of Art in the 1970s. Since then he has developed a sophisticated body of work examining the experience of life in asylums in the 1980s and wider social and cultural perspectives on mental illness. David has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery and Pallant House Gallery, and has written a book entitled *The Road to the Asylum*.

David Musgrave

David Musgrave lives and works in London. His practice is an exploration of the uncertainties of representation, expression and process. The anthropomorphic forms that structure his work are at once figures and abstractions; a carefully nuanced interrelationship of image and material result in a play between the actual and the fictional, identification and estrangement. David studied at Wimbledon College of Art and Chelsea College of Art and Design, London. He has exhibited in London and internationally including Tate Britain, Arnolfini and is represented by Greengrassi

Ewan Gibbs

Born in London in 1973 Ewan studied at Hertfordshire College of Art and Design and Goldsmiths College, London, he now lives and works in Oxfordshire. Ewan Gibbs creates intricate pencil renderings of familiar tourist sites and city scenes. His drawings are composed of multitude of tiny slash marks derived from knitting patterns, in which he varies the density of each mark to delineate light, shadow, and form. At very close range, Gibbs' drawings recede into abstraction, but from afar, the representational image emerges from the pencil marks. In this way,

Gibbs simultaneously deconstructs, abstracts, and represents, recognizable places and monuments. This transformation is central to his practice. His drawings are included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Tate Gallery, London amongst many others, and represented by Timothy Taylor Gallery.

Imma Maddox

*Dr Who? a performance art image woven in 1990 on a 24 inch harris loom
there was no pressure and i simply warped up
with rug remains and
then wove also as i wished
the length came out just right to go from hand to
hand wrist to wrist
the mask was supposed to be an opera mask
but grew
dr who? has no mouth the doctors who talk to us
cannot be free to talk about their persons*

Imma has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery, Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, and has work in the collections of the Bethlem Museum of the Mind. *Emmastale* is a 30 metre long tapestry and now belongs to the Museum of Everything, it traveled with imma to winchester cathedral in 2002 and Hay-on-Wye in 2001 among other places.

Mark Titchner

Mark Titchner was born in Luton but now lives and works in South London. He studied at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London and was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2006. Mark's work explores the tensions between the different belief systems that inform society, be they religious, scientific or political. His work is held in the permanent collections of South London

Gallery, United Kingdom Government Art Collection and Tate. He is represented by Vilma Gold.

Matthew

Matthew has been painting for four years. Whilst he has painted in a more realistic style in the past he prefers abstracting his subject matter, enjoying a more intuitive process; “without thinking, it feels like the pencils draw the images themselves.” Some of the abstract forms have come from transcendental meditation. “I like to listen to music, meditate and then the images can come from that.” Describing his work Matthew points out that some visual elements reference films or things he has seen on TV. He has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery and the Koestler Awards.

Paul Noble

Paul Noble is an English painter, draughtsman and installation artist. After completing his degree in Fine Art at Humberside College of Higher Education in 1986, he moved to London, where he was a founding member of the artist-run gallery City Racing. His is internationally known for his intricate narrative paintings and drawings suggesting dream-like worlds, utopian and dystopian visions. Paul regards his own work as ‘town planning as portraiture’. He has exhibited internationally, was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2012 and is represented by Gagosian Gallery.

Peter White

Peter White’s fluid brush strokes depict abstracted dreams and visions. He likes to work fast and choose colour intuitively. He is primarily interested in exploring emotion,

memory and mind through colour and form. Peter has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery and the Guardian Gallery.

Raymond

Raymond uses various lifestyle and interior design magazines as a point of reference, working from these images, Raymond draws the basic outline for rooms, furniture and objects all the time carefully expressing his very unique and individual sense of perspective and angles. Raymond’s use of pencil to colour the different forms gives the work a beautifully rich and velvety quality. Raymond has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery and has work in private collections.

Sam Sakya

Sam Sakya’s intricate and expressive pencil drawings explore portraiture and still life. She usually chooses specific subjects, but occasionally amalgamates several individuals into one work. Sam has exhibited with the Bethlem Gallery.

Afterword

The Bethlem Gallery is situated on the grounds of The Bethlem Royal Hospital, the oldest psychiatric hospital in the world still functioning today. The small artist-led team that runs the gallery works with individuals to develop their practice and professional opportunities, by making time, space, resources and support available. Collectively we strive to develop the careers, experience and expertise of the gallery artists by creating opportunities for professional development during a person's time in hospital and beyond. Our successful artist- in-residence projects also works with patients and staff on site to improve the experience of the hospital environment. The gallery works with a broad range of artists and art practices. It provides a space for high-quality artwork and a platform for experimentation, collaboration and skills exchange.

The gallery invited artist Mark Titchner to guest curate this exhibition, to bring together artists from different backgrounds and experiences to explore common creative ground and bring different communities of artists together on an equal footing.

Mark has been supporting and promoting the arts at Bethlem for several years. He has had a long-term interest in the historic collections, and holds our contemporary artists in high regard. It's been a pleasure working with him on this project

Behold Continues to Retreat provides the setting for this year's Creativity and Wellbeing Week, hosted by London Arts in Health Forum. On the 6th June there will be a round table discussion with artist Mark Titchner, writer Iain Sinclair, Bethlem Gallery staff and artists. Booking available via the Creativity and Wellbeing website.

The gallery would like to extend our warmest thanks for the kind support and generosity of the following contributors: Mark Titchner, the contributing artists, Victoria Miro Gallery, Frith Street Gallery and Greengrassi Gallery.

Beth Elliott
Gallery Director

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