The New Accelerator

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Ruskin Gallery, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge
Thursday, 9th March – Monday, 3rd April 2023

Symposium and Private View: Thursday, 23rd March 2023

Co-curated by:
Hanz Hancock & Patrick Morrissey (Saturation Point)
Laurence Noga
Benet Spencer

Exhibiting Artists:

Katrina Blannin, Eric Butcher, Sandra Crisp, Natalie Dower, Tim Ellis,
Julia Farrer, Árpád Forgo, Hanz Hancock & Patrick Morrissey, Stephen Jaques,
Hans Kotter, Caroline List, George Meyrick, Ian Monroe, Jeremy Morgan,
Laurence Noga, Milly Peck, playpaint, Carol Robertson, Sarah Sparkes,
Benet Spencer, Trevor Sutton, Trisant (Julian Hughes Watts), Kate Terry,
April Virgoe, Adia Wahid, Mary Yacoob

Contents

Foreword: The New Accelerator

As a curated project, *The New Accelerator* presents a thematic range of ideas, based around key relationships between art, science and science fiction. Named after a short story by H.G.Wells [1], which acted as the starting point, the 27 artists in the exhibition share many underlying interests through their working processes or exploration of media. Alongside, the presence within the Fitzwilliam Museum collection of a series of key examples of structured and geometrical abstract work of the 1960s and 70s, provided a focus for how the Wells sci-fi story might be interpreted in the context of a Cambridge exhibition. Throughout the project, the evolving discourse within contemporary art for geometric, minimal or architectonic ideas is developed in a variety of ways, with innovative choices of media, presented alongside more traditional processes thought afresh, and how these compare and contrast.

An interesting point of reference for an artist-curated exhibition of geometrical abstract and science-related artwork, is a project El Lissitzky took on in 1926 when returning to Dresden, which came to be known as *The Abstract Cabinet* [2]. This innovative environment for presenting leading abstract artists - Mondrian, Picabia, Moholy-Nagy, Léger, along with Lissitzky's own work – included textured wood and metal surfaces, sliding panels, walls of various colours, unusual spatial positions for artwork, and areas of wire mesh partially obscuring the view of individual pieces. Echoing some of the compositional relationships often seen in Lissitzky's photographs, the architectural setting for experiencing the work became as much part of the viewing experience

Ian Monroe
Modern Ergonomics
Vinyl on Aluminium
201 x 161cm
2017

as the objects themselves. In this context, the work of key Modernist artists was presented in an unconventional installation, where the artist-curator had free reign to create a new set of rules and challenge conventions of the day. Pre-empting later curated projects, such as Richard Hamilton's *Man, Machine and Motion,* 1955 [3], this Dresden exhibition provides an interesting point of reference – how do artists consider and respond to the work of other artists, and what is the broader context which may inform the creative decision-making which results?

Co-curated by four of the exhibiting artists, it is in this context that *The New Accelerator* presents a snapshot of a range of current practices, often with an underlying technological interest, where questions around

structure, geometry or architectural form, generate a discourse which re-focuses our attention on the present. Questions arise, such as what extent do impulses behind optical or systems-based art of the 1960s continue to inform current practice, and how do artists adjust and to the context and challenges of 2023, such as continual advances in digital technology or artificial intelligence.

Benet Spencer, February 2023

1. *'The New Accelerator'* by H.G.Wells (1866 – 1946), first published in the Strand magazine in Dec 1901.
2. Originally created in Dresden, Germany by El Lissitzky (1890 – 1941), in the *'Internationale Kunstausstellung'* exhibition (1926-27), and the basis for a permanent gallery in the Provinzialmuseum, Hannover, from 1930.
3. Richard Hamilton (1922 – 2011): *'Man, Machine and Motion'* (1955), Hatton Gallery, University of Newcastle upon Tyne and ICA, London.
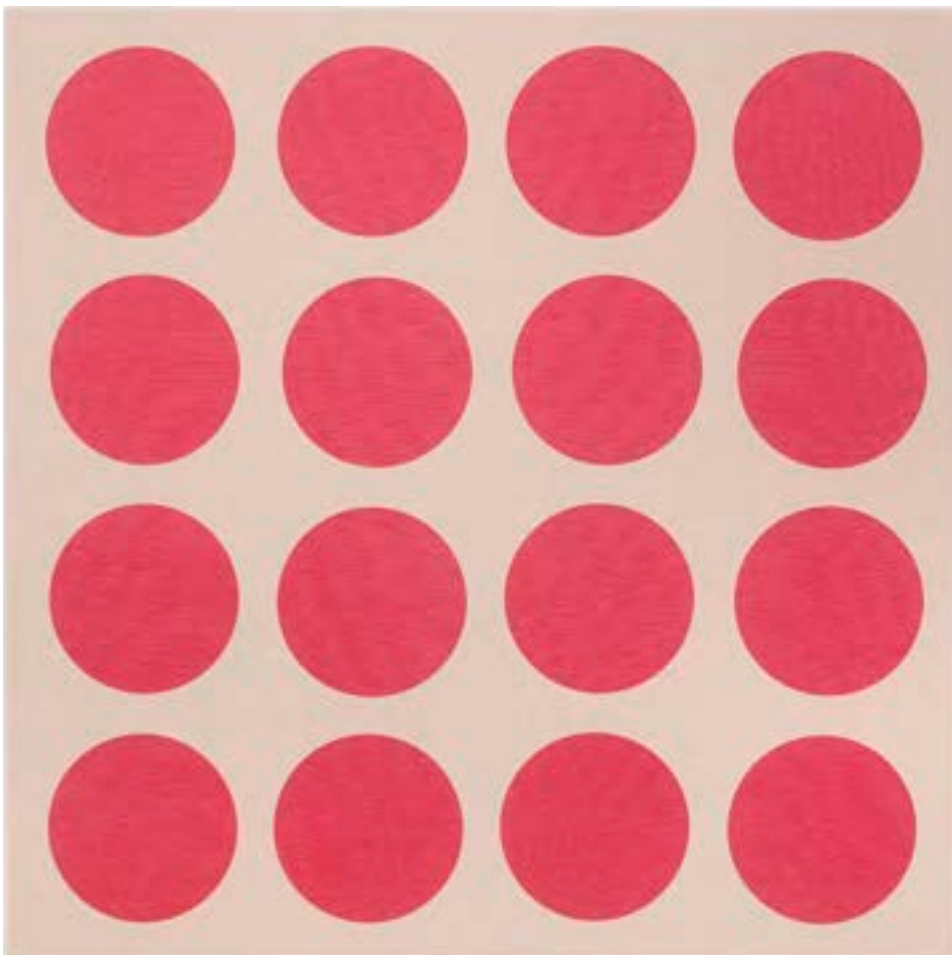
Katrina Blannin
Piero #3
Acrylic on linen, 55 x 55cm, 2021
2021

Carol Robertson
Madrigal.3
Oil on canvas
65 x 91.5 cm
2023
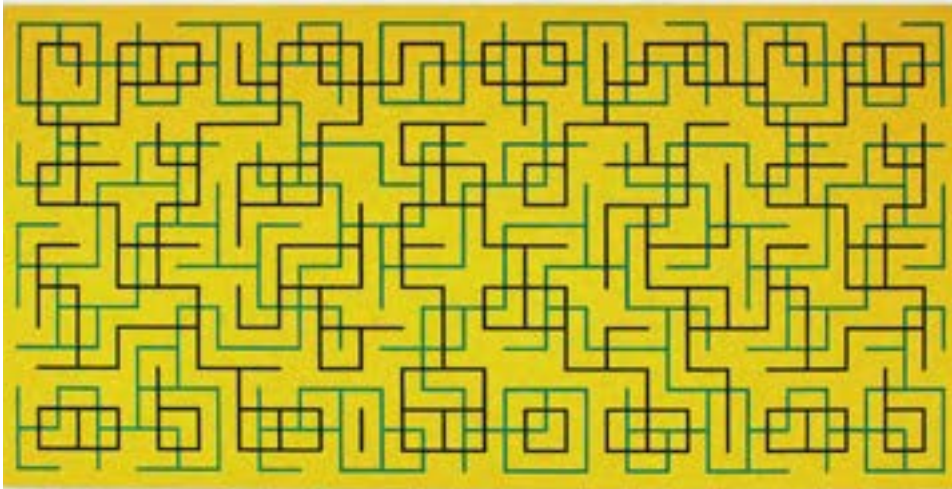
Patrick Morrissey and Hanz Hancock (Saturation Point)
Yellow Rotational Drawing
Acrylic, pen on wooden panel, 182 x 91cm
2020

Arpad Forgo
8CF
Acrylic on shaped canvas felt
17 x 42 x 5cm
2017

Mary Yacoob
Configuration 01
Cyanotype print 52 x 70cm
2022

Mary Yacoob
Configuration 03
Cyanotype print_52 x 70cm
2022

Mary Yacoob
Configuration 04
Cyanotype print_52 x 70cm
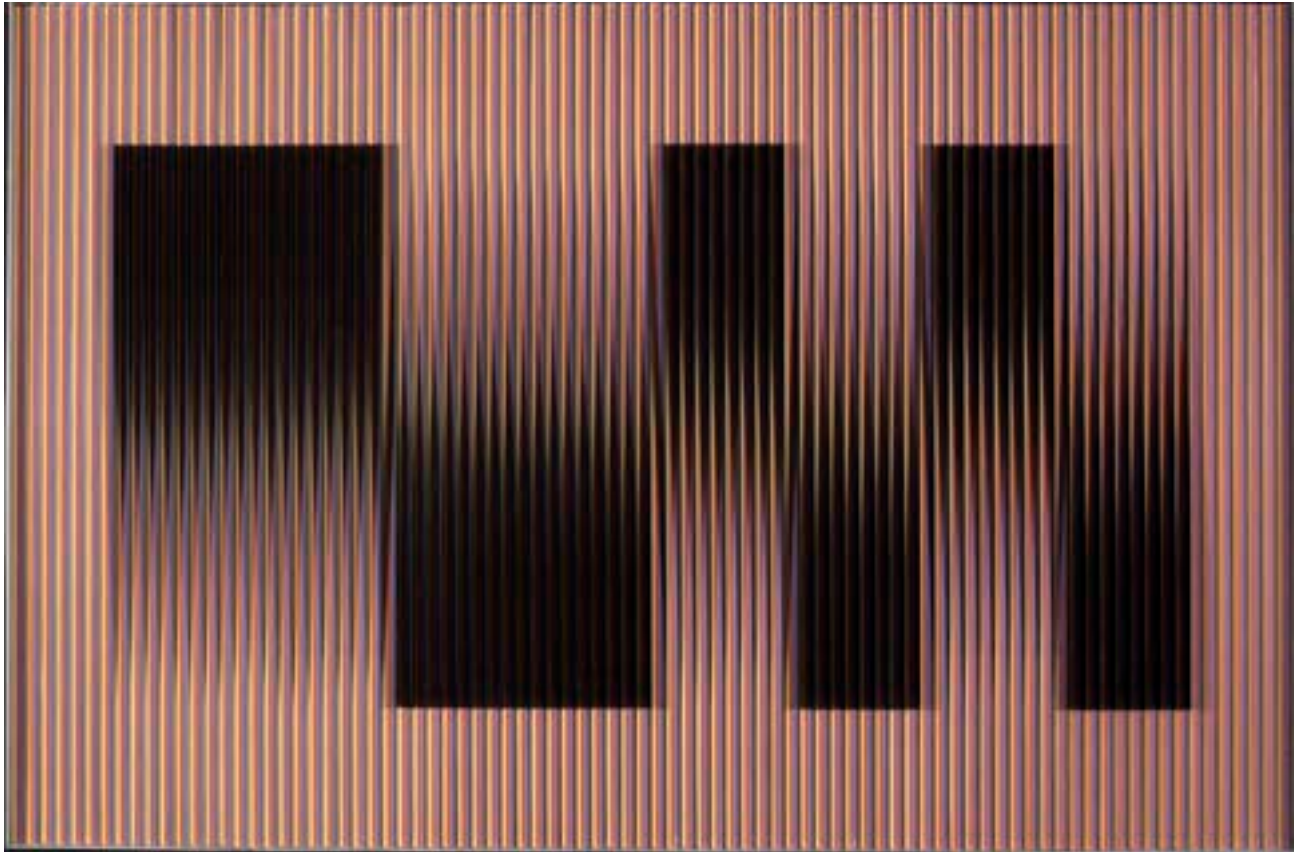2022

Carlos Cruz-Diez
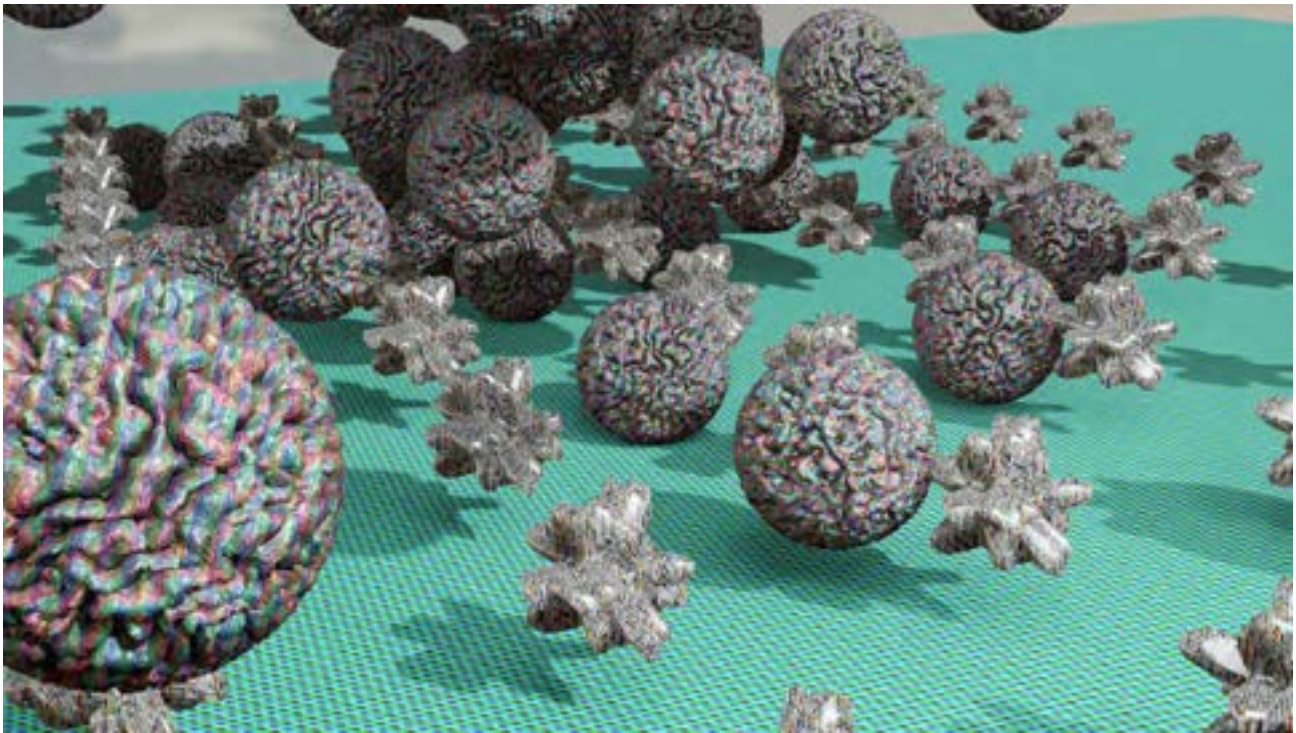*Physichromie No. 1.288*
Mixed media
61 x 91cm
1993
Collection of the Fitzwilliam
Museum, Cambridge

Sandra Crisp
E_Life
3D-generated animation,
2022

Abstract – Phil King

It is to this method of subjecting everywhere infinity to algebraical calculations, that the name is given of differential calculations or of fluxions and integral calculation. It is the art of numbering and measuring exactly a thing whose existence cannot be conceived.
Voltaire on Isaac Newton and the Calculus

The distinct artworks on show in *The New Accelerator* don't simply look like abstract art: they are abstract art. This abstract is not an encyclopedic study but rather a kind of intervention – the making conscious of a surprisingly unconscious abstract ground. Nothing is about predicting the future in line with speculative theorising, or simply a case of following existing rhythms, but is grounding our creative energies, and the new states that they find, firmly in our present state. That's to say we are dealing with a kind of rigorous, sometimes poetic, realism.
*

Living as we do in the backwash of the 1960's cultural revolution – in an eternal new-age realm dictated by personal computing – personal states based on disruptions of shared liveable life have become law. Common sense has become a discontented algorithm in which old countercultures are now the established culture to look at and read things within. An endlessly predictable state of ordinated truth without meaningful content in which we scroll pointlessly without reading or looking. In which everything merely counts.
*

The orders and laws of collective accounting – both conscious and unconscious – have broken down into algorithmic screeds that are intimately tailored to the directionless minutia of personal speculative impulses. In this always-forever state, conspiracy theorising runs away with people divorced from social values and actual connection.
*

In applied information science, we find ourselves primarily concerned with the form and organization of information, its underlying structure, and only secondarily with its content. In the sciences and humanities, it is the content that is of dominating concern.
Marcia J. Bâtes
*

The diverse artwork in *The New Accelerator* is often based on underlying computations, even if such calculi seem off, even if nothing apparently ends up calculated. Sometimes the underlying structure – a diagram of change itself – appears to be the content. There is a sense of exact measure created, one whose nature eludes us, but one that has been worked out.
*

In *Painting as Model*, Yve-Alain Bois recounts how Henri Matisse based the quality of his paintings on the intuitive reckoning of the quantity of each colour, and yet such form becomes a new pretext as final state. What colour <u>is</u> is the amount of it. Such art feels alive to the extent that it embodies a new rhythmic potential within itself. We move around art that counts. Looking – its difference programmed by photography's shutter as capture and static perpetuity – begins to move around again. Looking at a painting feels like a break,
*

With the current advent of software that generates images from other images reduced to data – reduced to verbal description recast as instruction – a general cultural debate has opened up as to what constitutes creativity in visual art. Is it really enough to just add word-images together?
*

Discussions about *'creativity'* are not something familiar now in professional art-producing circles in which creativity tends to be pragmatically subsumed into the difficulty of creating consistency, and is therefore linked to the basic survivalism of ongoing
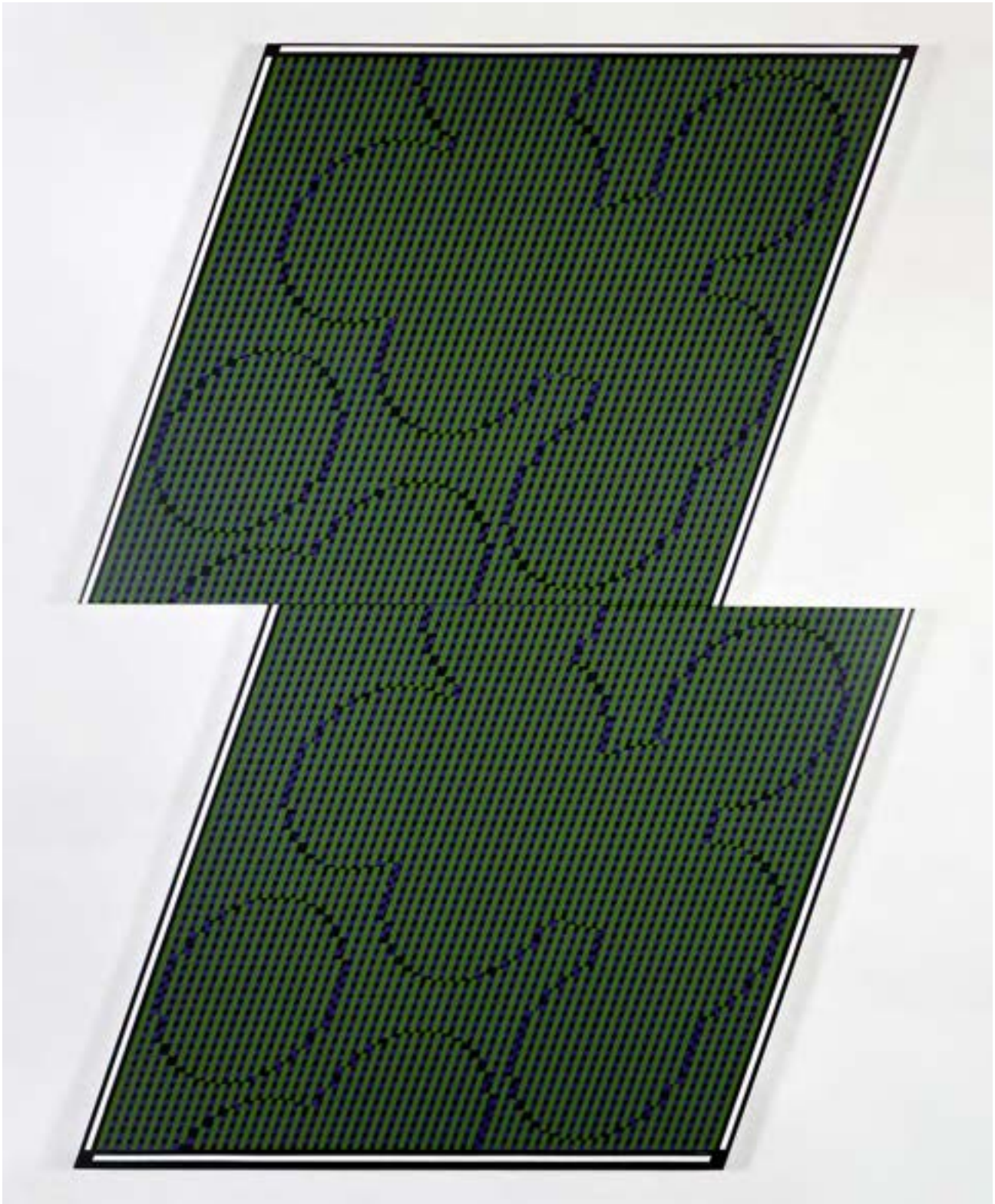
playpaint
Promising Naming Betting Agreeing Swearing Ordering
Predicting Declaring Insisting Refusing
Emulsion paint and acrylic varnish on canvas over ply panels
122 x 94cm
2021

Trisant (Julian Hughes Watts)
Product Range Repeat
Digital animation (loop)
2010

visibility. Artists need their work to feel recognised and it is telling that many abstractionists work in collaborations in which logic, languages, and intuitions can be implicitly shared and developed. So what we are given to see tends to be a result of shareable consistency as opposed to the thrill of God–like creativity. Instead of isolationist genius, we find repetition playing itself out. In art we can recognize the new.

*

Art's visually embodied wisdom is a form of trust: one hard to gain as wisdom implies that some kind of struggle is involved in order to attain it. I wonder if what is struggled against is disruptive creativity itself, and that what we know as art is actually a triumph against creative forces: a triumph with the ability to eventually provoke and inspire creative response and hence real content.

*

The scholar Marcia J. Bâtes, describing the *'under the water line'* aspects of the information technology paradigm, pinpoints the work of the philosophical cyberneticist George Spencer Brown who exploited the potential of a rich mix of influences and disciplines to write *The Laws of Form*.

*

The Laws of Form is an odd book that economically combines – amongst other things – Boolean mathematics; Spencer Brown's studies at Cambridge with Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein; his work engineering switching mechanisms for British Rail, and his relation with the psychiatrist/ anti–psychiatrist R. D. Laing. This transdisciplinary adventure – which he felt started as one thing and ended up another – was picked up with enthusiasm in cultish Northern California as it was felt to tune into everything from Jungian archetypes to intuitive computer language through linguistic logic. The transcript of a conference, organised by Stewart Brand (of *Whole Earth Catalog* fame) at the Big Sur *Esalen Institute* in 1973 – with the very Oxbridge Spencer Brown quizzed in a free–associative fashion by 'far out' luminaries of spirit and science such as Alan Watts, Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, and

John C. Lilly (the Dolphin boffin), amongst many others – has a certain comedic punch because no one seems to have a clue about anything anybody else is on about, and it really doesn't seem to matter.

*

What is encompassed (in mathematics) is a transcendence from a given state of vision to a new, and hitherto unapparent, vision beyond it. When the present existence has ceased to make sense, it can still come to sense again through the realisation of its form.
George Spencer Brown

*

Esalen acted as a backdrop in *Mad Men*, the US drama series, in a scene wherein 1950s advertising director Don Draper realises the coming of a new 1970s consumer age and how to address it. Meanwhile Human Potential Consciousness™ and cybernetic logic were merging in Northern California in a creative misinterpretation of *The Laws of Form* along with loads of other 'stuff'. Could human desire itself be calculated? This rich, mystical mathematical/ psychological stew was manna for young LSD– guzzling computer programmers, hard at work developing the predictive algorithmic underpinnings of the personal computing currently engineering our unconscious longings: form and structure as an unconscious foundation that clearly links to the most interesting currents of abstract art; art that often prizes itself on its relative clarity, if not purity. But the logical and intuitive coherence that the best abstract art achieves now, is actually gained by strategies that break with given logical causality and its instantaneous second–guessing. Instead it employs partial-logical systems – not as a measure of personally-ingrained new age utopian sensibilities – but tactically. Divisibly.

*

This is a kind of abstract that interrupts so as to form the basis of new consistencies. A kind of tuning fork.

*

Ludwig Wittgenstein once said that he felt as though "*he was writing for people who would think in a different way, breathe a different air of life, from that of*

present-day men." This sentiment echoes Paul Klee's insight that his prototypical mock-ancient Bauhaus abstraction was lacking the people that might give it traction. Abstraction becomes an empty frame awaiting unknown worlds: each formula, a new cut.

*

Spencer Brown opens his book with a Barnett Newman-like pronouncement of original division / 'severance'. Infinite chaos, interrupted, gives birth to a calculated logical order. Newman's zips interrupt larger fields: inform them. Time to start anew.

*

Back a mere thirty-three years before Newman's zip, three years before the Russian Revolution, Kazimir Malevich with his *Black Square* showed what a radical break in bourgeois painting's contradictory trajectories looked like. At the same time his *Zaum* collaborator and friend, the poet Velimir Khlebnikov, launched himself into inventing a proto-Dada-like system for predicting future history based on absurdly random calculations of past historical events. He wrote up his *Laws of Time* in 1915, in his polemical *Tables of Destiny* , a kind of delinquent precursor to Isaac Asimov's *Foundation and Empire* [4] science fiction series in which a mathematical foundation calculates the future of a failing intergalactic empire. Change, and the rate at which it happens, was programmed in. Galactic history and human longing calculated.

*

But now, at Cambridge, faced with works of cutting-edge wisdom – each distinct work, its own event and new form of experience – I feel compelled to work out an abstract proposal in which, surprisingly, we can (always) find mathematically-based logical philosophies which launch themselves beyond their computations into...
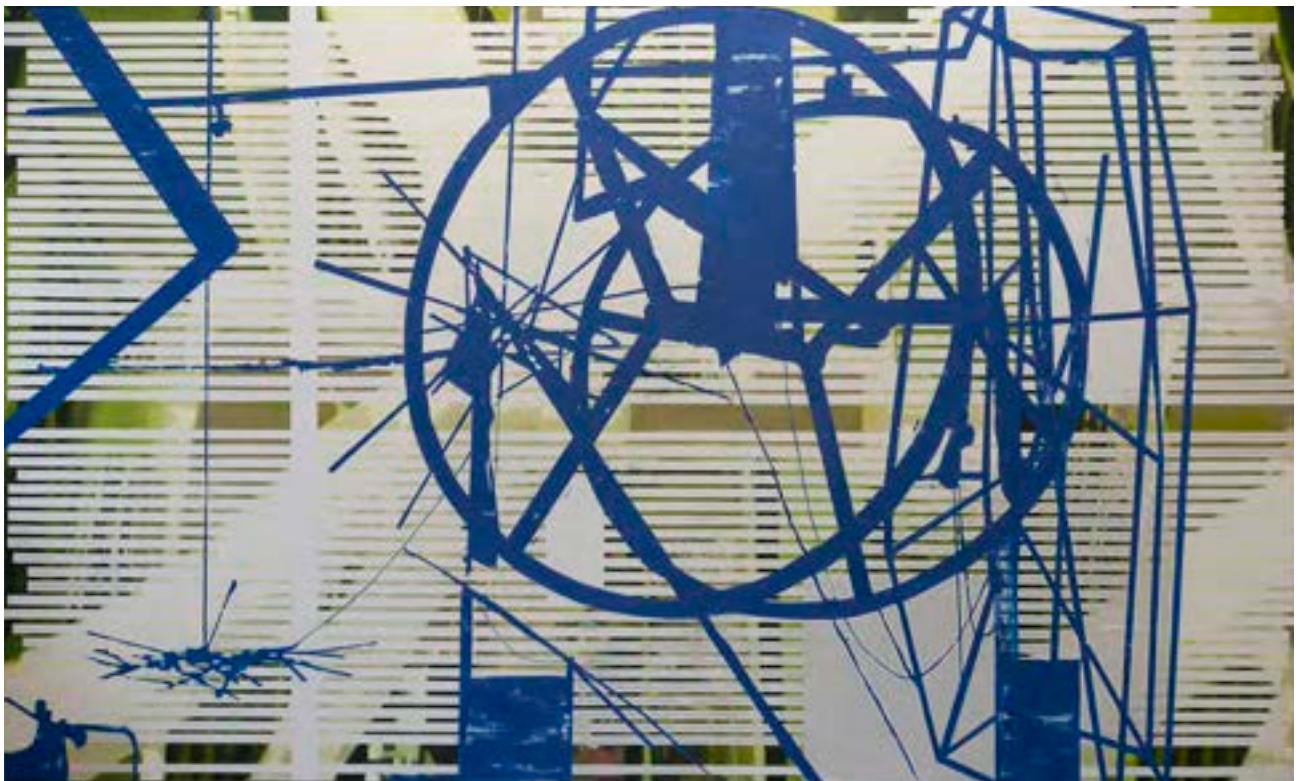
Benet Spencer
Modern Sculpture 2
150 x 250cm, oil and acrylic on canvas
2016

Voltaire, *Letters from England,* 1733
Marcia J. Bâtes, *The Invisible Substrate of Information Science*, 1999
Yve-Alain Bois, *Painting as Model,* 1993
Transcripts of The AUM Conference at Esalen Institute
https://www.kurtvonmeier.com/the-aum-conference

George Spencer Brown, *The Laws of Form,* 1969
Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir,* 1954
Paul Klee, *On Modern Art,* 1966
Velimir Khlebnikov, *Tables of Destiny,* 1915
Isaac Asimov, *Foundation Trilogy,* 1951-1953

Jeremy Morgan
Rebounder
Acrylic, emulsion on
reclaimed panels
33.5 x 29 cm
2021

The New Accelerator: Laurence Noga

In *The New Accelerator*, a short story by HG Wells, the acceleration of the human nervous system is facilitated by the introduction of a drug that doubles the speed at which one can move or think. Yet at the same moment everything is frozen in time. In the resulting chaos, the laws of perception are broken. With Wells' story we begin to ask ourselves are we capable of carrying out actions simultaneously, like watching several orchestras playing all at the same time. Maybe Wells is inducing an interior world beyond psychophysiology, where the boundaries of our imagination begin coping with multiple plans, purposes, and intentions. His life-long research into time travel, immobility, and the disruption of logic and syntax implies a sense of the in-between. A space in which things are undone. Perhaps orchestrating a loss of boundaries, or a locus for social and cultural transformation, allowing a space between identities, opening the door towards futurity, building an understanding of different temporalities and the capricious twists of life.

The artists exhibiting in *The New Accelerator* have all been part of a time recently where everything has stood still. A sense of distress and anxiety prevailed. Exhibitions were postponed or cancelled. Caught in this in-between space, perhaps their practice was altered or conflicted in some way. They themselves may have felt they were part of a hallucinatory dream with the impact of the virus and its suspension of time. Wells approach to this status in his story develops a new conception of reality, a moral and ethical upheaval. That sense of upheaval seems captured more recently through a complex set of lenses. Firstly, through the

politics of social media with its grid of descriptors (catching us standing there waiting for the likes to change) but also building the required tolerance to operate through a possible paralysis. The artists approach in this exhibition often comes out of an incubation of ideas or the realignment of different systems, bringing together a sense of fallibility in a continuous atmosphere of risk and innovation.

On first glance *Katrina Blannin's* work feels to have a machine aesthetic. But at the same time the compositional devices have an element of chance like a set of domino's collapsing and re-assembled. With Blannin, the process of manufacture by human hand is the absorbing focus. An extraordinary possible set of permutations seems to exist, drawing us deeply into a mathematical space. In *Piero #4 and #5* the perfectly crisp rendering of the colour mechanisms built through meticulous repetition (palindromic) start to activate colour resonance and dissonance between the carefully chosen colour system i.e. emerald green/black and the pink/blue. We notice the colour choice of each circle (all of the same diameter within each painting) meticulously executed. But the colour shifts are so close in tone, or the drying of the tone allows for a slightly different visual intensity. A relationship between the scale of the works (also the size of the circles) brings a tonal reading of the two paintings, as the smaller painting sits back hovering in behind its counterpart. Allowing a spectacular optical and temporal illusion. The history of colour theory (particularly the early renaissance) builds the differentiation in our minds eye in the underlying colours (for example *realgar* a soft reddish tone, greens

Trevor Sutton
Nothing But Time
Oil on board
38 x 38cm
2021

were *verdigris,* the yellows were *Naples yellow*). These are not passive or inert paintings. Instead they are innovative, temporal, and historical works.

George Meyrick's arresting sculptures operate concisely. The manipulation of flat surfaces into the third dimension employs a physiological and chromatic resonance. Working with at the intersection of processes, events, or modes of manipulation. Meyrick's sculpture can be read as linear, planar or solid. Often developing his approach through *Four Points,* as elements may appear as though they exist in one plane but act as if they belong in another. The work has no 'right side up' as often the orientation will be changed during its time on display, further extending the possible reading of the shapes. Elements may appear to exist in one plane but then shift into another. Resolutions feel important as part of the viewer's experience. Meyrick's use of projecting forms and exacted angles is uncompromising. He is aiming to interconnect the solid and angular, with the refined use of line, shape and colour. Connecting, juxtaposing re-arranging the lines against the 3D painted colour blocks to create his own sculptural impetus.

Trevor Sutton's interest in temporality and ongoing insistent and spellbinding development of interiority in his paintings develops a privacy, like a doorway to an unknown place. The approach feels about dividing time, tuning us into discrete moments and accents within the fragility of each harmonic division. Individual blocks of colour dissolve and regenerate, developing a state of compression through tonal variation. The 7 tonal blocks of colour in *Nothing But Time, 2021* are carefully orchestrated through oil based

glazes that initially seem to move or hover very slowly. However, as the three warm yellows pull forward in varying degrees the Payne's grey rectangle suggests a doorway that one can just edge between like an entrance to an Egyptian tomb. Perhaps the differently sized rectangular blocks suggest other intentions, as grids are underlying powerful structures in our lives activating formal implications to the reading of a landscape or a place. In defining perception and memory we recognise they work is phenomenologically routed, partially through the buried layers of memory suggested, but also how they evoke implications of passing time. *Heading West* takes on a new colouring, more transparent, subtler. Made in 2022 it conjures up a parallel approach in the way it also reflects ancient civilizations or the feeling for historical events. But perhaps the shape asks a new or different question for Sutton. A cursory glance into the past, prompting the idea of sound through painting, like an echo which heightens his mysterious and poetic world.

A polyphony of connections (techno culture/artificial intelligence) is interlaced with the colour and the allure of Pop Art in *Jeremy Morgan's* concrete and symbolic paintings. The simulated environments of the net and VR technologies spring to mind with his logic of invention through lurid colour combinations such as purple and lime greens. As Morgan suggests: *"I'm naturally attracted to ever-so-slightly inappropriate or 'louche' colour".* An interlocking of the past and the future slides the viewer into older technologies calling to mind 'lo-fi' games like Space Invaders. With *Rebounder, 2021* the frozen and virtual seems to exist in the way the pink and turquoise

Eric Butcher
Endgame Series
T/R. 1021
Recycled Paint Fragments:
Acrylic and acrylic gel on glass
140 x 104cm (including frame)
2022
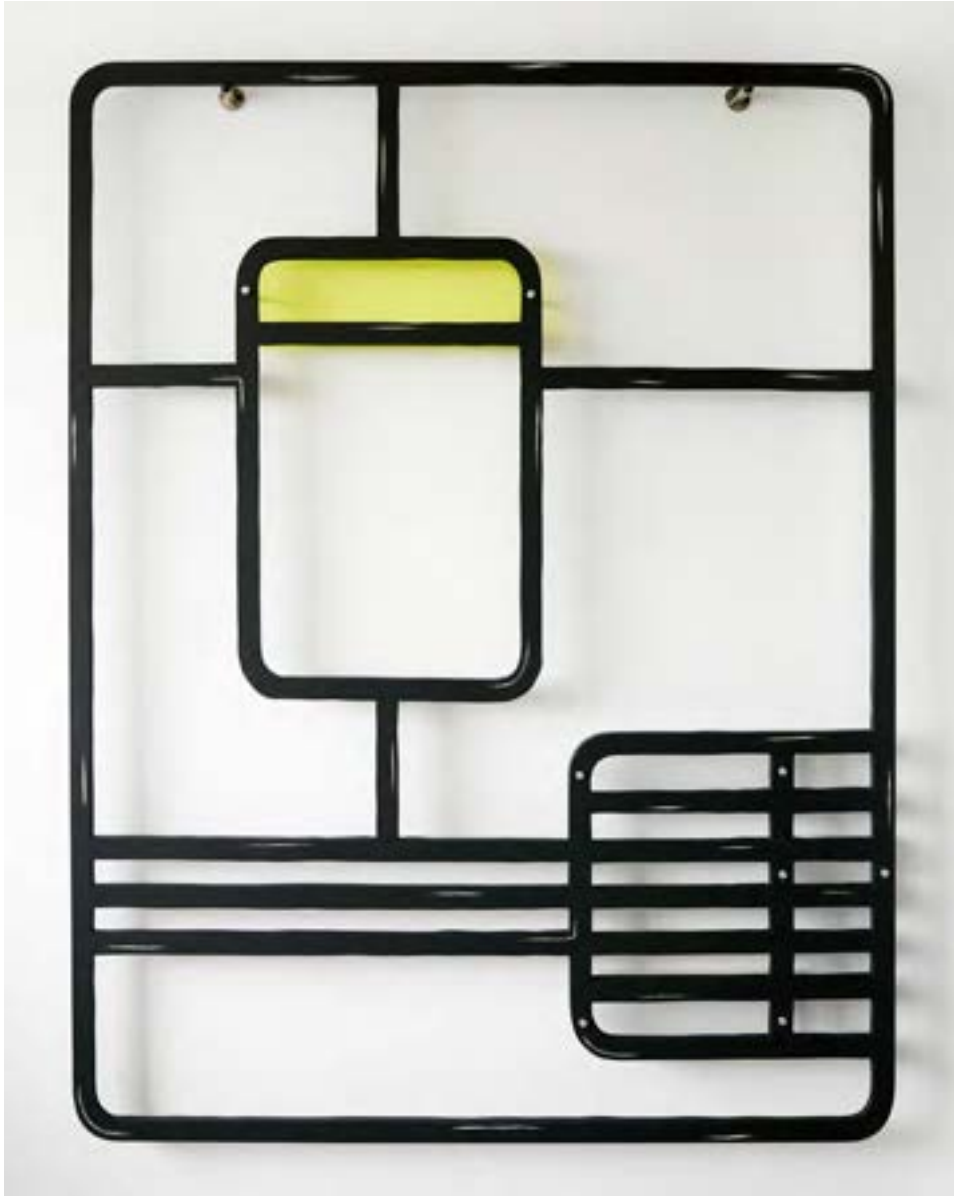
Milly Peck
Alight I
Emulsion on wood, coloured
Perspex, nuts and bolts
161 x 122 x 7cm
2020

Natalie Dower
Whirligig
Oil on wood, 27 x 30.5 x 5cm,
1984

radiate a slightly uneven intensity. We are pulled into their proximity in terms of nearness and farness. The composition uses both gravity and elasticity in a kind of slapstick or comic approach, where dots balance on ledges or roll down or smaller dots are trapped. This sense of destiny through actions and thoughts is further developed In *Internal Divine, 2021.* The painting gives off layers of electro sound through the painting's contraction and dilation. We are not sure how far we can go inside this work, where it starts or finishes. We empathise with Morgan's use of emotional intelligence and inherent vision and disruption but it is the element of fun and narrative that remains viable.

Slapstick and comedy seems provocatively routed in *Milly Peck's* approach to mimicry and construction in her paintings and sculptural installations. Cartoonish imagery or scenes exploring elements of fakery and imitation, builds for the audience a staging of illusion or representation. Peck's pared-back style calls to mind the Italian Artist Gianni Colombo with his staged environments and his abolishment of static boundaries

with industrially derived materials. Colombo series of tilting staircases *Bariestesia, 1974-5* with its tilting and sloping mobility of space asked questions of the audience and how they might make an intervention. In a recent work such as *Standing Passengers* Peck recalls a metro-station its benches and suggested traces of past and future passengers on their everyday journeys. *Alight* made in *2023* scales down the dimensions slightly perhaps framing culture or society and how they might be viewed as an individual or as a social island.

Echoes or reoccurring themes play into *Carol Robertson* approach of overlapping circularity. Everything feels continuous and durational. A sense of refinement is Integral to the overall feeling of transience and movement through time and space. Examining these relationships, we notice for example in *Eclipse no 7* the coloured circles or arcs have a built in collisions and crossovers which accents a bright spot, or points of light in your field of vision. This pinpointing of changes in tone or nuance is complimented by the use of atmospheric colour fields that are more flooded in their application. Robertson's blend of intuitive and

associative strategies frequently occur during the painting process, the possible outcomes in contrast deepening the combination of both. In *Madrigal 7* a sense of vocality (several unaccompanied voices) is suggested in the title. The emotional pitch calls to mind Laszlo Moholy-Nagy's *Segments, 1921*, where the half circles slightly fuse into each other. With Robertson the segments touch gently like moon parings. There is a taut sense of colour suggesting the physical changes of colour choice made frequently in the paintings process but also the unifying notions of symmetry through the system gives the impression that each colour is going to change colour, or pulsate fleetingly across one's vision.

An inexorable structural process feels at work in the paintings and constructions of *Natalie Dower*. Both the structure and palette grow out of mathematical principles that are deeply engrained through forces, connections and personal processes. This sense of complexity is developed in *Root Rectangles no 8, 2010* which is deceptively insistent, the abstract characterizations have an internal logic; the composition is developed by a set of maneuvers; the four rectangles that dictate the composition are dissected by a larger hidden triangle. Sitting inside this, Dower insets two diamond (kites) which reinforce the methodological system like a mask. The dynamic symmetry and mobility is increased through the relationship between the colour layering and interlocking forms i.e. 3 greens, two greys, and one black, which escalates the hypnotic sense of mechanics. Bringing a subtle use of opacity and directed tension. Jungle sphere painted in 1988 utilizes that relentless recomposed state of tension. The painting is constructed through using 3 levels that are each partially obscured giving the work a secrecy and atmosphere of other rules fostered, such as things far away that are as sharply defined as those nearby (but reduced in

scale). Her unified synthesis of painting and sculpture calls to mind Raul Lozza's concrete constructions, such as *Invention no 150,* 1948. Lozza speaks of the constructed through purely plastic elements (lines, planes, surfaces, colours) devoid of references to nature, lyricism, symbolism, and the unconscious; and with no significance beyond itself. Dowers approach feels beguiling because of its reference to nature. But perhaps Dower refers to the concrete jungle. The use of shadows and negative spaces pull us into the flatly rendered colour decisions and dynamic juxtapositions built up in a highly complex system which is hard to unpack or identify.

Tension of a different kind exists within a constant cycle of reinvention and discovery in the work of *Stephen Jaques*. Originating from a wall of intuitive freehand drawings, (executed at speed) Jaques develops combinations and iterations of structure and composition. The carefully modulated grids or forms interlock, stack, and build through articulated movement. Jaques explores an infinite set of combinations and the ambitious compositions have a measured flow in the approach to geometry, perhaps through sacred and natural forms or more generative decisions. These vast super structures seem to spin through an alchemical transformation – a perpetual unfolding. The colour feels drawn from ancient art and symbolism, Arabic design and calligraphy. Calligraphic gesture adds a fluidity to Jaques' approach in *Silsila Dancers, 2020, 160 x 195 cm.* Oscillating between refined flatness and illusionary form, this painting has a colossal presence. The operation of the physical movement feels combined with the trace of movement, the colours seem to switch on and off as Jaques superimposes negative space through illusion, repetition, iteration, and the arc of movement. In some ways the contour elements calls to mind Thomas Downing's approach in a work like *Infanta Sideways*, 1966 in the way the wall size (one hit) and the

Caroline List
Chroma Sphere Monochrome Colour
Oil and acrylic on aluminium
70cm diameter
2022

Tim Ellis
Spinning Plates
Recycled aeroplane parts, brass, copper,
found objects, and metal fixings
200cm (diameter) x 146cm
2021

optical movement shifts the viewer through the space with a majestic lightness of touch. The magnification of form seems to resonate with Jaques' ability with scale.

Magnification of form and spatial infinity also plays into *Caroline List's* approach. The density and translucent surfaces are slowly built up through acrylic grounds, allowing the hovering geometric compositional elements to float and jostle in a to-fro movement between the form and ground. I am reminded of artists such as Jules Olitski or Paul Jenkins in the choice of colour space, *Chroma Shape Ochre Light,* 2022 offsets sensuous colour against the spatial qualities and suggestions of the virtual screen. List brings together temporality through referencing a mechanical form of reproduction (photography) and her reference to landscapes, both organic and systematic. The vertical structure is held together through the five half circles that just cross over. Each of those half shapes have subtle tonal shifts within the space. The full circles using high key pigmentation feel fluorescent almost sprayed to accent further the

transparency and opacity her works. A sense of material presence permeates *'Chroma Sphere Monochrome Colour'* in successful integration of sensory inputs and underlying consciousness.

Morrissey and Hancock build on numerical systems that are interwoven with a direct physiological experience for the viewer. The grid or pattern is complex in its construction as the relationships often switch between old and new structures that derive from accrued samples. The generative mechanisms are to some extent algorithmic, but we begin to notice the geometric compositions as a journey as the artists often take long daily walks; Mapping place, noticing the unusual (perhaps taking the same route) or annotating new visual co – ordinates. The durational atmosphere in the work is developed by both artists taking part in the execution of the grid. Not only the under drawing, but the clarity of line and composition. For Morrissey and Hancock *Yellow Rotational Drawing,* 2022 brings a constant altering of focal point, between the paintings dialogue that is both animated

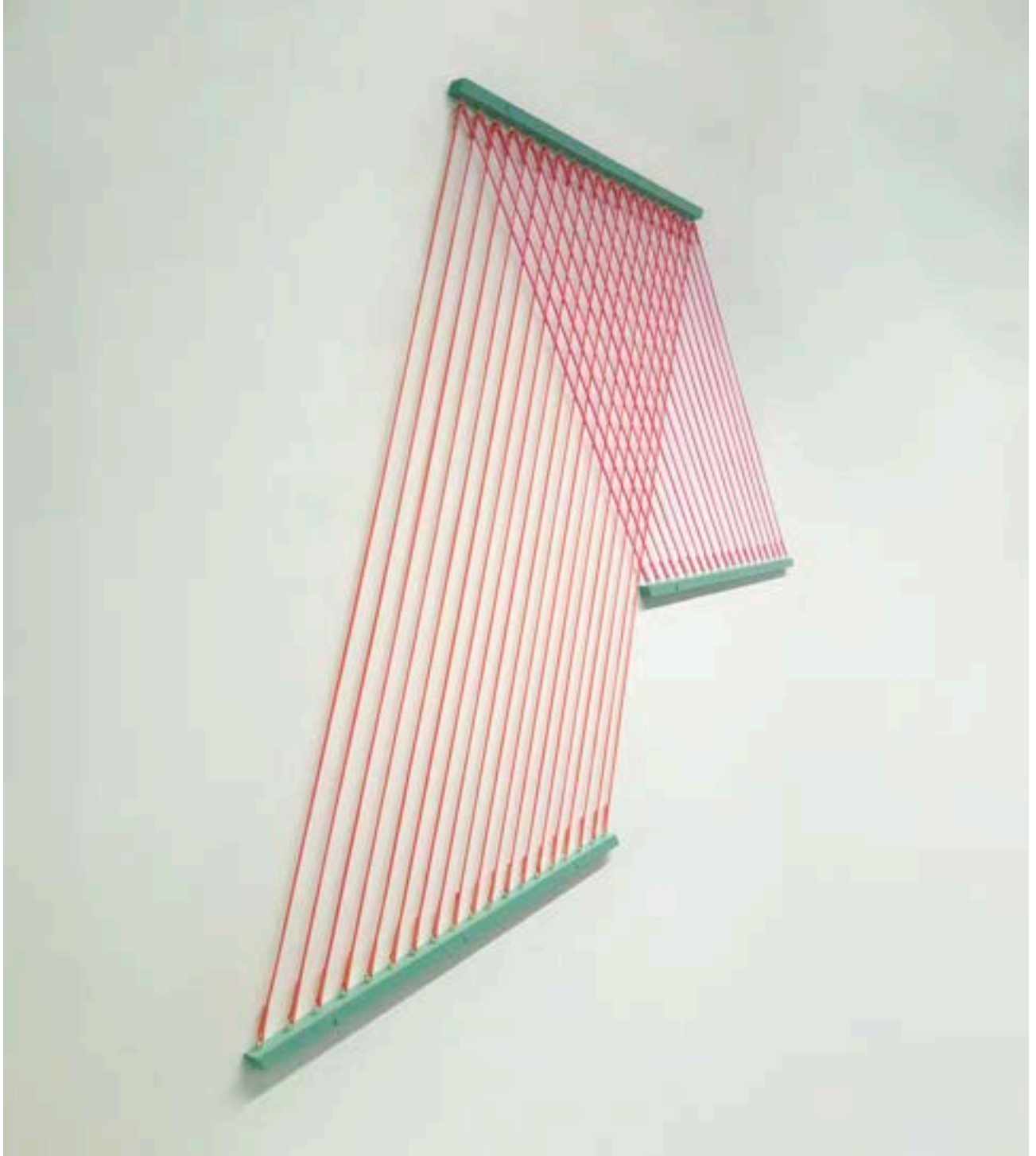Trevor Sutton
Heading West
Oil on board
38 x 76cm
2022

25

Kate Terry
Untitled
wood, paint, paracord, brass fixings
130 x 200 x 2.5cm
2022

and composed, and animated through the flickering intimacy that locks you into both time and space. We are not sure which route to take in the reading of the painting like a maze of possibilities.

The stages of production in *Benet Spencer's* paintings are key. A kind of montage occurs through preparatory drawing, combined with an ongoing and comprehensive collection of photographs and the construction of fictitious collaged spaces. With Spencer the hidden forms and ambiguous scale walks a tightrope between private lives and places of memory (through modulated tonal spaces and their implications for light and shadow) and the urbanization/industrialization creates a fragmentation of space. The use of hidden psychological insights in terms of memory and place and architectural

authority draws you into the structure, and how the viewpoint has been established. Calling to mind Albert Oehlen's layering and dynamics in a work such as *Rechthaberei in der Nahe II, 1986* in the way we are allowed to glimpse through its structure into a flood of unknown space beyond. In *Modern House 8*, 2023 we are drawn into the variable light sources with its dark toned interiors. The tension developed through the scale and built up layers creates an unsettled atmosphere, through the persistent interest in both formal and experimental collisions. Elements of paint and collage seem revised, rejected, or broken down as part of his editing practice. Mixed media processes immerse the audience into a physical space of shadow and refracted light.

Laurence Noga
Soft Red Filtered Turquoise
Acrylic and collage on panel
18 x 25cm
2021

Kate Terry's site-specific thread installations are explored systematically. The temporal dimensions are repetitious and this escalates the serial forms and gestures through her economy and restraint. The spatial manipulation perhaps explores the idea of dividing time, ordered and controlled, but not static. The Austrian artist Lothar Charoux springs to mind with her extreme sense of perfection, limitation of line, and complimentary colour choices. Rules are carefully adhered to utilizing symmographic construction. Terry's manual dexterity allows the work to visually move or vibrate letting the shadows become part of the work. The visual tension brings an instant dynamism through their interaction with the character of a particular space. In *Untitled*, 2022 Terry constructs a visual framework through an economy of means. The thread has a sense of strata through its opticality and trajectory. As the light in the space changes, elements visually fuse and mix.

An Illusory sense of structure is explored within the pictorial organization and modification in *Julia Farrer's* recent paintings. The physical form often rotates or twists in space, building a set of compositional possibilities; the psychology of the colour is subtle and constructs a dramatic tension, developing process and scale together, allowing the compositions transformation. In *Mariupol II and III* an embedded sense of speed in the folding or rotating lends an integral

Natalie Dower
Root Rectangles no. 8
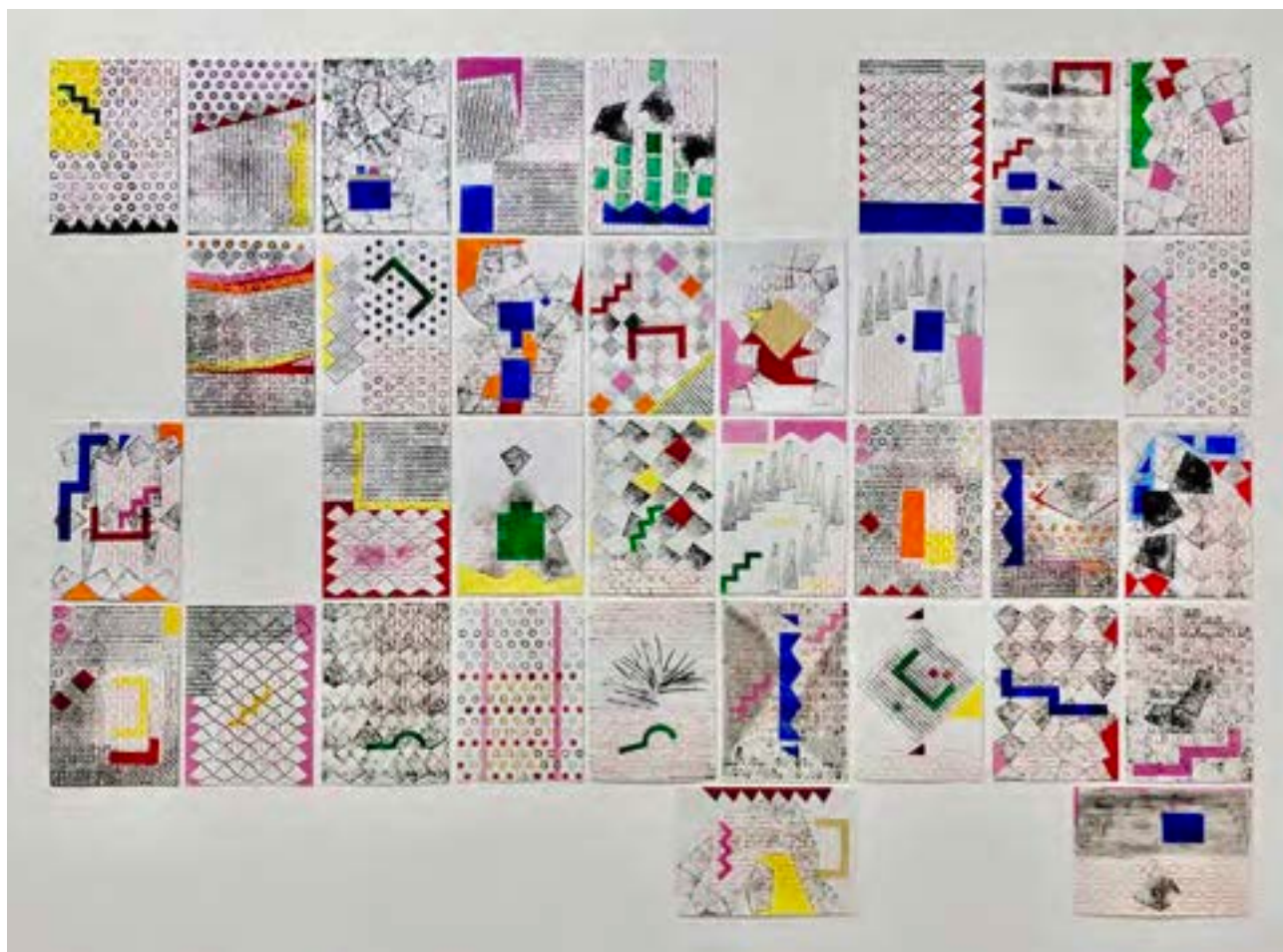Oil on canvas 61 x 86.5cm
2010

Adia Wahid
*Glitch Code Episode 1*
Oil on paper, variable dimensions
2022

syncopation to the geometry. Bringing to mind an artist like Adrian Heath with a work like *Composition - Black & Ochre with Blue,* painted in 1958, with his approach to segmentation, subdivision, and harmonious proportion. Farrer uses the close tonal colour to subvert the construction, perhaps releasing an energy in the process that suggests a virtuality; firstly, in the flatness of colour, but also in suggestion of a drawer, as a metaphor for the readymade, activating a phenomenological presence, developing neither clearly a space or time, but a leakage between the two.

Diagrams float on (or alongside) successive diagrams in a pile up of visual data within *Adia Wahid's* recent drawings. The colour for Wahid is often transparent and builds a

physiological chromatic resonance, allowing the rationality of the grid to sometimes divide the surface structure. Lines are cut to reveal other lines, developing patterns that interconnect between the drawings. Wahid splices drawings together, but spliced in ways that leaves gaps or striations. The handling of the materials is imbued with a personal and wider iconography such as discrete histories, carpet/textiles, weaving, cuneiform writing tablets, mathematical syntax, computing, and painting. All are combined in a looped and layered social order. We switch quickly into Wahid's visual language in our own way, unpacking the code from our own inherited sense of history. But perhaps the approach builds a sense migration, or a possible subversion of one language by another. The repetition, missed registrations and the sacral quality of place calls to mind the work of Lygia
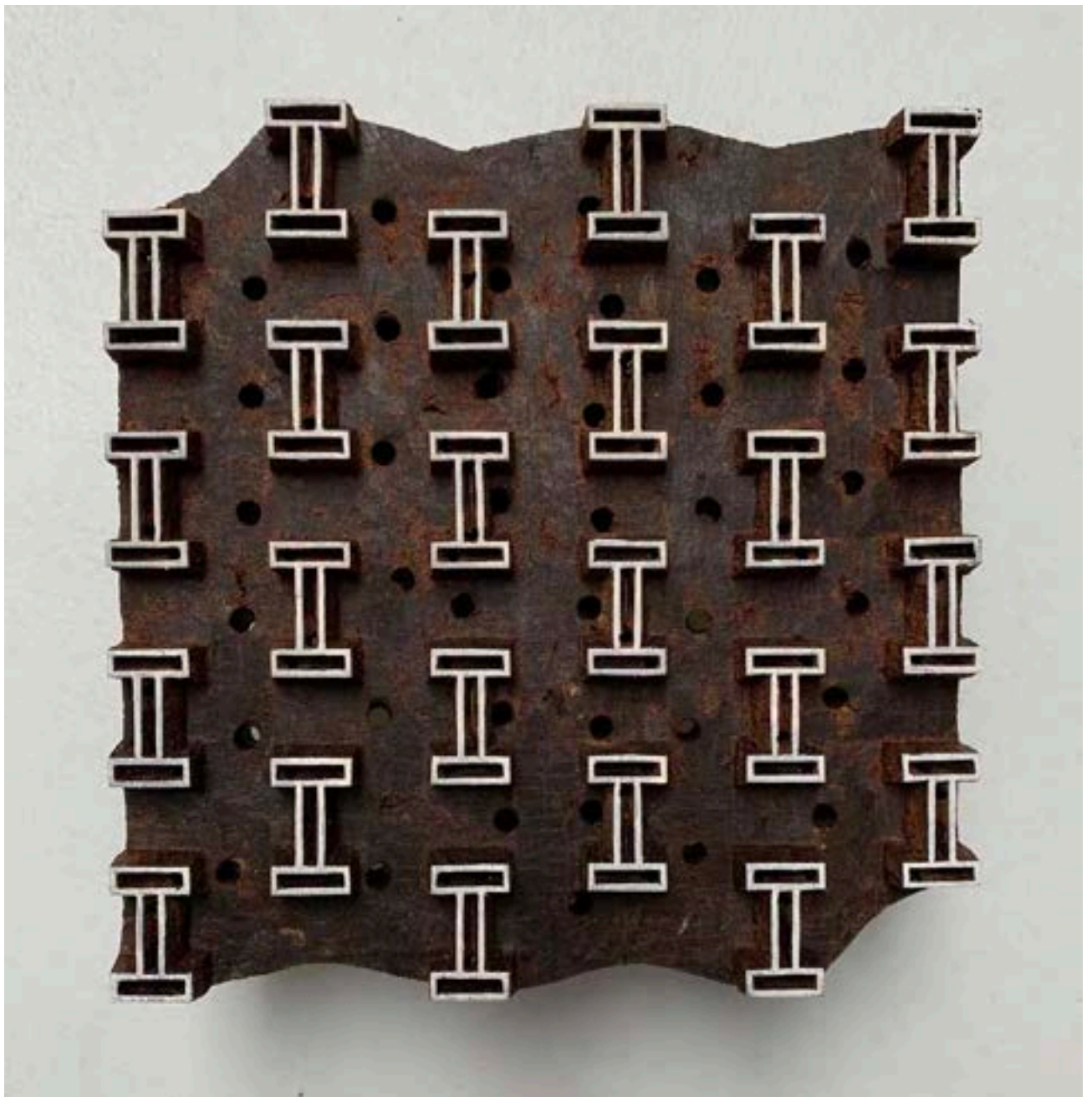
Adia Wahid
Glyph 2, The Glitch Code
Hand carved wood block, varied sizes
2022

Pape, particularly her Untitled woodcuts from 1958 which bring emblematic characteristics through the variations in surface facture. Wahid fashions her drawing tools (which are repurposed and deployed in the making of her painting) she is able to construct a set of alphabets or glyphs called the Glitch Code: *"I have 32 of these glyphs which when combined together through printing, repetition, mis- registration produce a unique Glitch Code. Whilst the number of glyphs is finite, the possible combinations are infinite."*

Reductive and rule-driven, *Eric Butcher's* approach is visceral and systematic. The process begins by suspending oil paint and graphite in resin, building a transparent monochrome which is spread across the aluminium support. Glitches or imperfections begin to occur as the metal blades peel or shift the skin away from the support. A density of the paint and the weight of pigment leaves the original paintings trace its residue and repercussion. The effect on the surface is unique and unrepeatable, as the reflective coating allows an examination from varied perspectives and changing effects depending on the light factors. The visual outcome is determined by three factors; the physical characteristics of the support, which instrument is used for stripping the paint, and the artist's hand. Butcher has systematised the
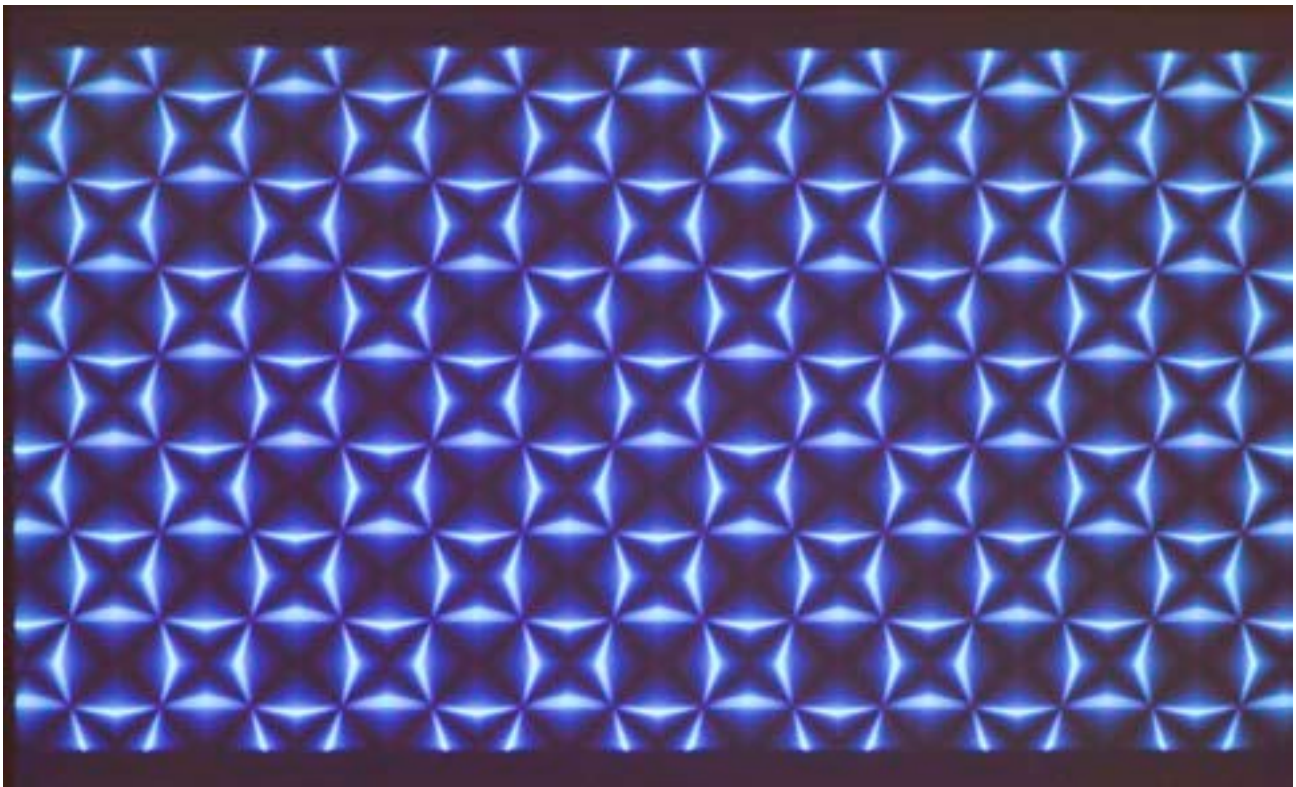
Patrick Morrissey and Hanz Hancock (Saturation Point)
Red Stripe Blue
Looped digital animation (video still).
2017

creative act building a differentiation and divergence for the viewer in the painterly everyday rituals. The possibilities for reconceptualization of space in the manual processing are perceptible in the way the paint is applied and the ingenuity and coherence in the way the work is displayed.

Mary Yacoob's work principally addresses an autonomous act of drawing, creating a new body of images built upon a rich source of primary images. With from material ranging from Euclidian geometric diagrams, musical notation, or fictionalised observations of the cosmos, the initial act of appropriation soon leads into her own independent process of creativity and decision-making. Her *Configuration* series of cyanotypes take the language of scientific astronomical data, reforming them into visual statements which re-order the pre-existing material into new compositional structures. The mode of representation of empirical data is retained, but chance and subjectivity enter the work. The resulting prints become independent compositional arrangements with their own internal dialogue, and engage with the pre-modern era of astronomy, where a combination of pagan or religious beliefs and early philosophy, directly informed a reading of the stars. As autonomous acts of drawing and transcribing, the resulting works are a speculative investigation of an individual's relation to established hierarchies for scientific research, relocating the image as part of an independent creative act.

The canvas which stretches around *Árpád Forgó's* wall-based constructions forms a skin onto which multiple layers of colour are applied. As the works accumulate density and develop into a resolved artistic statement, the bio-polar relation between opposing elements becomes more apparent – the hybrid 3d form asserts a sculptural and material presence, and through its alluring minimal and polished surface, made using a technique of painting in multiple layers of acrylic on a shaped canvas, succeeds in building association with more functional objects with a designer aesthetic of expensive living room furniture. Here, again, are the old/new qualities discussed earlier, with the simple geometrical structures suggesting classic modernist abstraction of the early C20th, or equally encoded corporate signs such as logos, whilst their small to medium scale and pristine

constructed form has echoes of an old-fashioned artefact such as a Bakelite lamp. These works hover in space which resonates with cultural modes of production from across the C20th, whilst also offering what Forgó has described as: *"a combination of sensual experiences".*

Sarah Sparks engages with magical or mythical narratives in her approach to installation, sculpture, painting, performance and more recently film. Sparks works with a metaphor for a portal. Developing a system of signs, of belief systems, the visualisation of anomalous phenomena and liminality. Her work is often research led and an exploration into the borderlands where science and magic intersect. A sustained awareness of the infinite. In the *GHost Tunnel,* 2021 Sparks collected Liverpool ghost stories and interviewed ghost researchers and paranormal groups. Sparks suggests that tunnels are reference portals, like black holes, they equate to time travel with death as another dimension that we may enter. In the New Accelerator, Wells characters operate through a lowering of nervous conductivity; the accelerator enhances a human's reaction time several-thousand-fold, allowing physiological and cognitive processes in the individual to distort or feel immobile, to interpret our own pattern of thoughts about the outside world.

Laurence Noga, 2023

Notes/References
Towards a Rational Aesthetic - Constructive Art in Post War Britain, Osborne Samuel
Natalie Dower - Line of Enquiry, EMH Arts
Imperfect Reverse catalogue - 2016, curated by Laurence Noga and Saturation Point Projects
Memory - Documents of Contemporary Art, edited by Ian Farr, Whitechapel Gallery
Foundation Cartier Pour l'Art Contemporain - *Exposition Geometries Sud, Du Mexique A La Terre De Feu,* 2018/2019
Possible Architectures - Stephen Lawrence Gallery, London, University of Greenwich, 2019

Sarah Sparks
Time Machine
oak, clock movement, infinity tunnel
2013.

 'Time Machine', a working clock made especially for LUMEN
exhibition at St Clement's Old Psychiatric Hospital.
The work was made in response to time spent in the building
and research carried out into the building's history. In 'Time
Machine' a glimpse of infinity can be viewed behind the
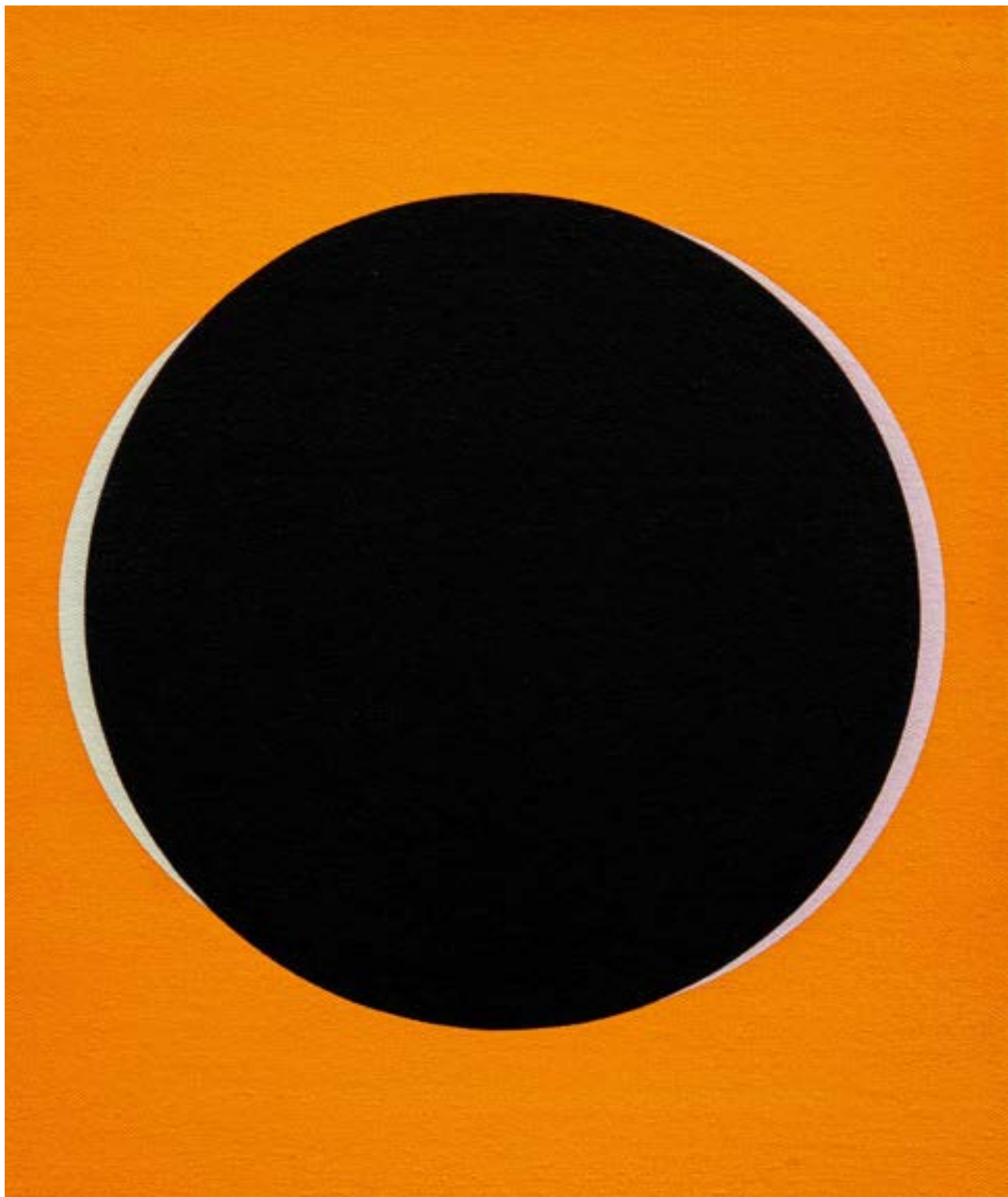*regulated hours of the clock face.'*

"Time is an illusion."
Albert Einstein

33

Julia Farrer
Mariupol III study
Acrylic on plywood
40 x 43cm
2022

Julia Farrer
Mariupol II study
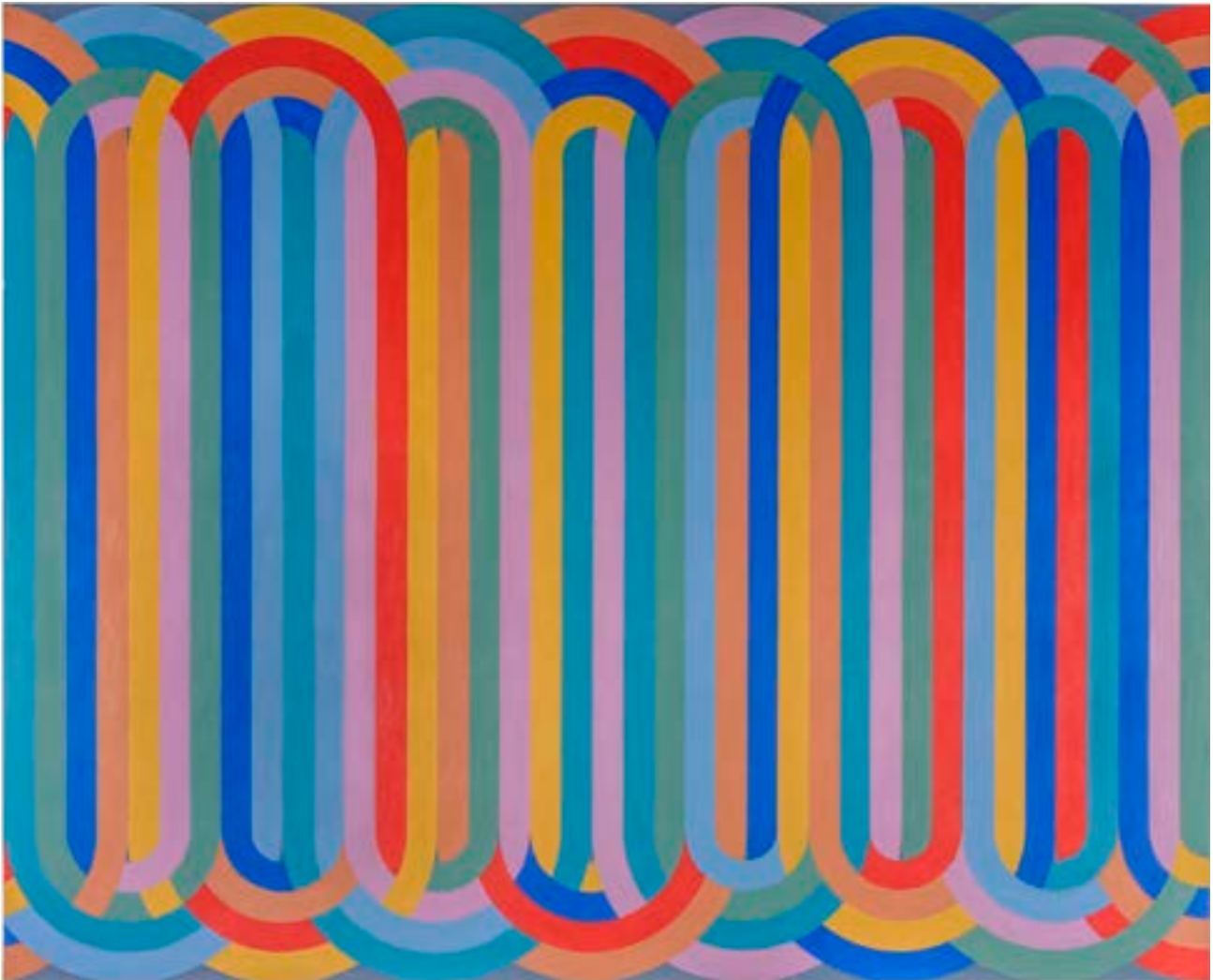Acrylic on plywood
41 x 49cm
2022

Carol Robertson
Eclipse N.7
Oil on canvas
30.5 x 25.5cm
2021

Stephen Jaques
Silsila (Script)
Acrylic on canvas
162.5 × 207cm
2020

Stephen Jaques
Silsila (Dancers)
Acrylic on canvas
160×195cm
2020

Natalie Dower
Jungle Sphere
Circular relief on 3 levels, oil on wood,
46 x 3.8 cm
1988

Jeremy Morgan
Internal Divine
Acrylic, exterior paint and
emulsion on panels
30.5 x 26.5 cm
2021

Caroline List
Chroma Shape Ochre Light
Oil & acrylic on linen
60 x 80 cm
2022

Kate Terry
Series IX no.4
Painted wood, plywood,
155 x 65 x 50cm
2015

Julia Farrer
Chain III
Acrylic on ply
68 x 36cm
2022

Hans Kotter
Colour Code 01
Polished stainless steel,
Slide, Plexiglas, colour
changing LEDs, remote
2021

The Machine Age – Benet Spencer

"This visit to America ... has brought about a complete revolution in my methods of work... Prior to leaving Europe I was engrossed in presenting psychological studies through the mediumship of forms I created. Almost immediately upon coming to America it flashed upon me that the genius of modern world is through machinery and that through machinery art ought to find a most vivid expression .... The machine has become more than a mere adjunct of human life. It is really a part of human life-perhaps the very soul."
Francis Picabia . [1]

On his second visit to America in 1915, Francis Picabia reflected upon the change which the experience had brought about, in opening up a *'complete revolution'* his working process. The resulting machine paintings, as described in this New York Tribune article, heralded a shift towards valourising the overlooked and under-valued aspects of modern urban landscape such as the motor car.

Fueled by an omnipresent connection with the new, which both Duchamp and Picabia identified on first arriving in the America[2], these machine paintings opened a dynamic relationship to modernity, one which laid the ground for developments which followed, such as Dada (first described as a movement in 1916) and also later innovations within American art, such as Precisionist painting of the late 20s and 30s[3] , in which the relationship to technological progress became a driving force behind various new modern art movements. This series of paintings and drawings by both Picabia and Duchamp, beautifully exemplified some of the complexities and paradoxes of contemporary society - the human and the machine co-existing. The personalised response which would take place, by way of a pseudo-erotic reformation of machines as portraits, often of women and of intimate encounters such as dancing, heralded an unmoderated celebration of technological progress, placing this aspect of society as a central driving force behind several new modern art movements.

Within *The New Accelerator* exhibition and its associated connections - the H.G Wells short story, science fiction, along with the legacy of structured and geometrical art of the 1960s – there is also a shared fascination with an articulation of art which is driven by technology. As a wider influence on society or through innovative developments in new media which have heralded alternative working strategies, the 27 exhibiting artists have an underlying interest in how to respond to a world where technological revolutions happen with increasing regularity.

*

While somehow defying the spatial parameters of the objects presented, an exhibition of Hans Kotter's light-based artwork create illusions which entice the viewer to enter a world of the technological sublime. One that engages through the sheer pleasure of an aesthetic experience, but also leading to thoughts of an eccentric scientist or inventor who has mastered the art of controlling the latest technology, creating prismatic optical effects for their own pleasurable end.

Although limited in outward physical dimensions and resolutely object-based, these works have the ingenuity to draw in the space around them. Against the backdrop of light-based artworks which are often large immersive installations (for example Robert Irwin, James Turrell, Dan Flavin), Kotter's pieces resonate with other traditions, such as the contained internal mechanisms of a futurist painting, bounded by the edge of a rectilinear canvas, or the wall-based paintings and reliefs of optical art. They are 'made' things, which engage partly through an ethic of patient construction in manipulating LEDs, Plexiglass and DMX controllers within such contained and beautifully articulated structures.

A discussion of Picabia's machine paintings is also relevant for Kotter's technology-related work. We are immersed in a world of alluring lights, fragmentary interior spaces and mechanisms, which retain an intriguing relationship to the compositional arrangements which Picabia developed in these early experiments with technology-inspired painting. Seduction, movement and temporality are qualities which are evident in the work of both artists.

Benet Spencer
Modern House 8
140 x 220cm
Oil and acrylic on canvas
2023

playpaint
Decomposed Utility #7
Emulsion paint, acrylic paint
and acrylic varnish on canvas
over 2 ply panels
52 x 74 x 2.5 cm
2022

The H.G.Wells story of *The New Accelerator* has Professor Gibberne accelerating his physical and cognitive self into the future, with a journey of discovery unfolding which is highly visual and built on both perception and sensation. This resonates on a number of levels with our current age and perhaps a work like Hans Kotter's *Triple Tube* (2012) that forms the most appropriate accompaniment, with shared qualities such as invention, mystery and optical experimentation. A childhood trip to a science museum is also conjured up, where moving examples of prototype machinery and scale models draw you into an earlier world of invention, almost as Wells might have planned it.

In his sculpture entitled *Coda*, Tim Ellis may have created the single most Wellsian artwork in the exhibition. It retains the old and new qualities made familiar in Wells' writing - a science fiction-orientated or supernatural event placed within a stuffy Edwardian living room - whilst also operating within the codes of display and construction associated with the museum archive. Containing an anachronistic quality which suggests obscure functionality, while revealing none of its purpose, Ellis creates a world of the exquisite fake, presenting objects which evoke the artisan crafts of an earlier period before mass-produced plastic, where the technology of the day was largely manmade. We lose

Tim Ellis
CODA (Time Machine)
Oak, teak, mahogany, brass,
steel, glass, mother of pearl,
silver, pewter and resin
2022

Sandra Crisp
perpetual browse_r_2
3D-generated animation,
2019

ourselves in the voyages and scientific investigation which these objects suggest. When viewed alongside his emblematic abstract paintings on bedsheets and pillow cases, within the series called *United in Different Guises*, the esoteric nature of the forms and images of Ellis's works is most apparent, often with a totemic quality which alternates in reading between diverse cultural reference points. In these drapery paintings on fabric, one reads the high-Modernist abstraction of Malevich alongside 1920s Art Deco designs, but also the art of the Inca civilisation, which the Edwardian gentleman might be researching within the imaginary journey that Ellis takes us on. We return in a loop back to the artist's studio and the artist's imagination, as a place where fabrication of objects and fabrication of meaning co-exist side-by-side.

The technology represented in Ian Monroe's work is of a very particular kind, which flips between analogue and digital readings. Through his super-flat expanses of cut vinyl, we open up to a crisp architectonic space which could be the fictitious world of the filmic imagi-

nation. Points of reference include the aesthetics of computer games and the pioneering 3d graphics of *Tron* (1982)[4], along with Autocad images, where architects typically present an uncomplicated view of a proposed new interior space. Within Monroe's work, the images remain an entirely self-referential game, connecting with early innovations such as a Renaissance perspective diagram which described a believable 3d representation of world for the first time. As explanations of an empty space, Hans Vredeman de Vries 1604 book of perspective[5] engravings might be a reference. This sits alongside much more contemporary associations – a diagrammatic rendering of a hi-tech environment such as a NASA research centre for testing the next generation of spaceships, or a science laboratory where a cure for a pandemic virus will be found. The pictorial invention of Monroe's articulation of space and immaculate handling of collaged materials has an obsessive quality which resonates with the way technology has infused creative practices across the history of art and science, which includes the methodical structures of systems painters of the 1960s, who form the backdrop to this curated project.

Laurence Noga
*Soft Brown Filtered Turquoise*
Acrylic and collage on panel, 18 x 25cm
2021

*

By the 1960s, the man-machine metaphor had broadened out to include the field of cybernetics, with theories around human behavior, information systems and causality all contributing to this area of social science. The term was first defined by Norman Weiner as: *"control and communication in the animal and the machine"* [6]. As a subject area this first laid a path that lead towards the current study of artificial Intelligence.

Within Sandra Crisp's work, the information systems at play exist in their own never-ending world of regeneration, representing continuous excerpts of media footage on a loop. It could be an algorithm that generates random formations and patterns of repeated images. This might characterise a similar idea of dehumanised machine intelligence, moving beyond the control of an individual.

perpetual browse_r_2 is a digital artwork which remodels sequences from newsreels and documentary footage, and evolves them into a 3d animation with extruded graphic forms. A new virtual space is created which connects with a holistic overview of the information society. As a former printmaker who has developed into a digital artist, Crisp occupies a position where the transition away from analogue processes towards computer-designed art, is mirrored by the changing technology available and the means whereby underlying ideas can be explored. The dense layering of the resulting digital prints and animations contain a level of detail which draws upon different sources of data and information which the digital technology allows. *perpetual browse_r_2* presents fragments of a world around us as a momentary glimpse of reality within some greater system which defines our existence, connecting to related
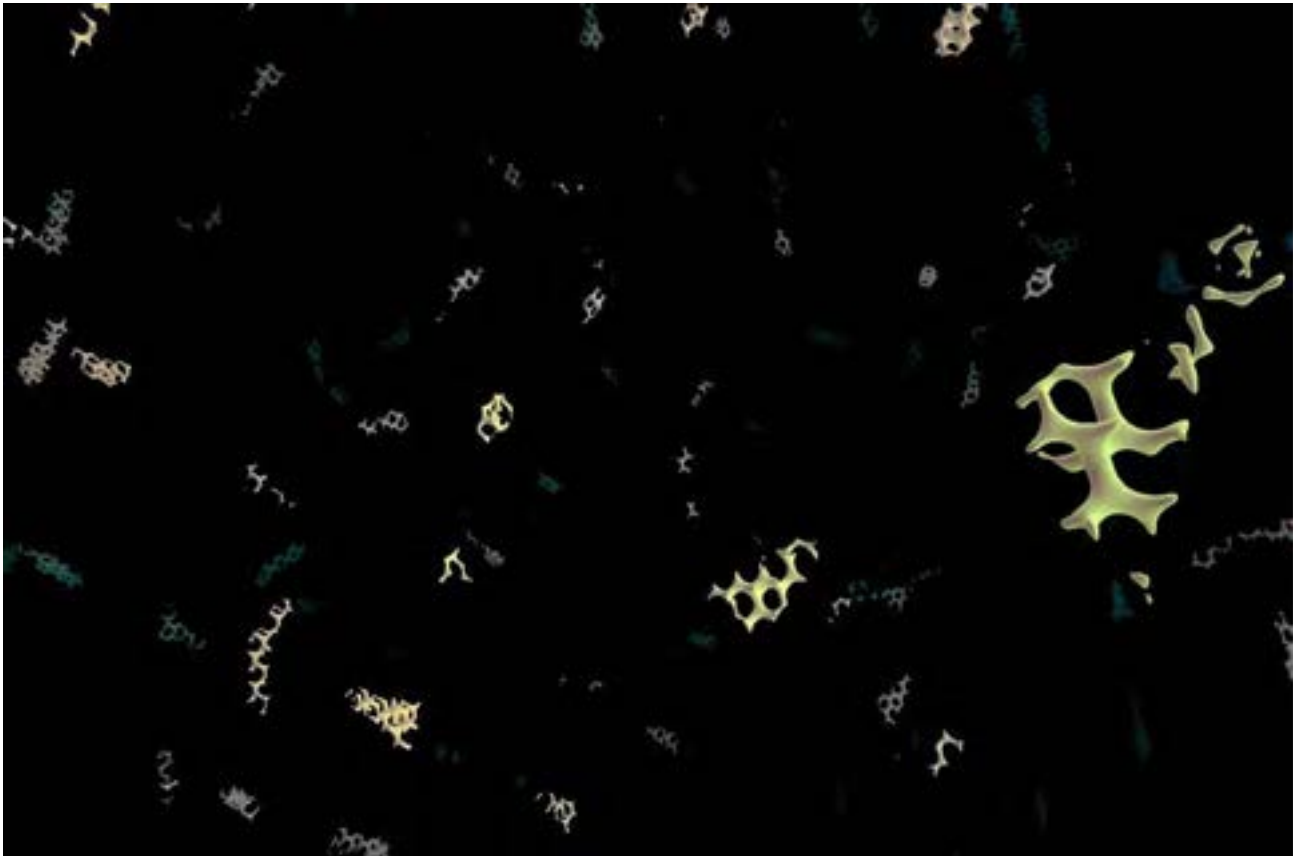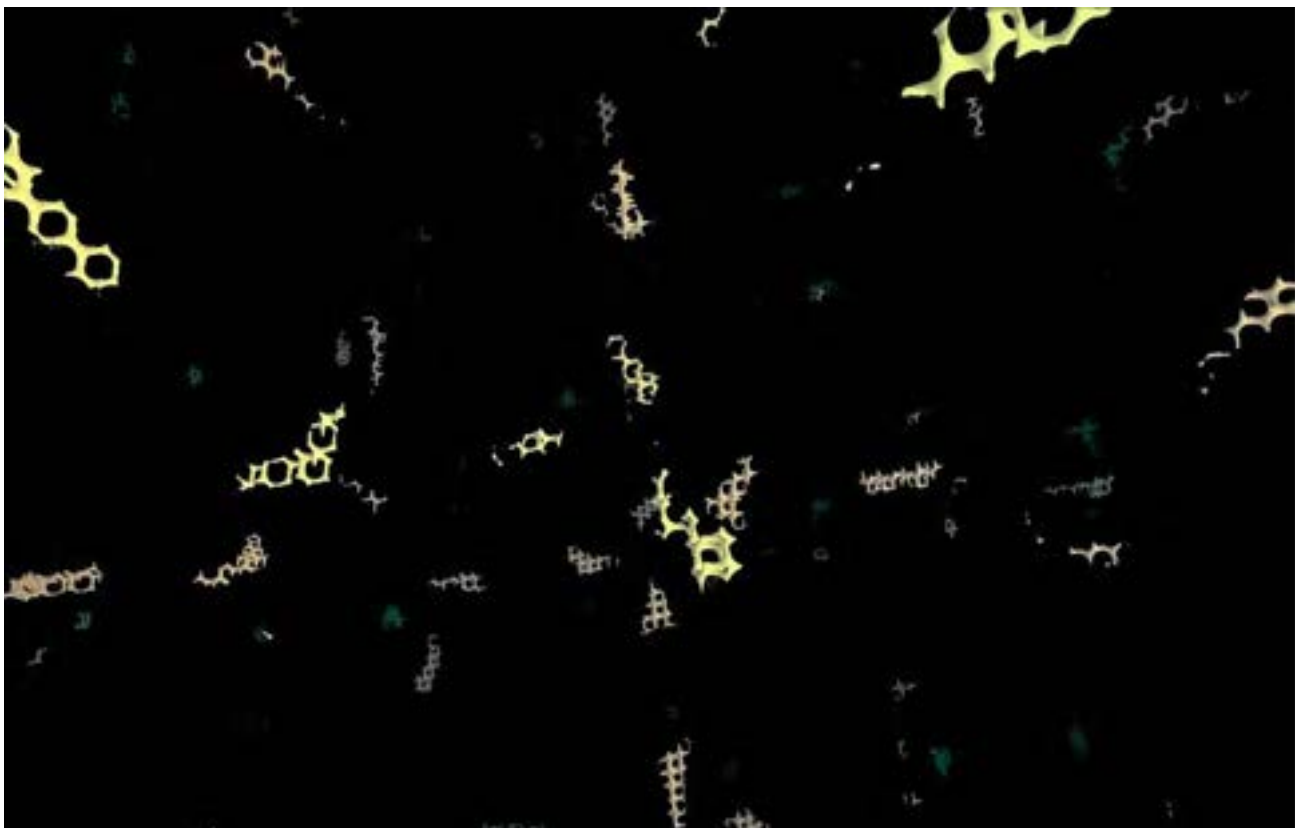
Trisant (Julian Hughes Watts)
Modern Archeology
Digital generative simulation on an AV screen
2023

Ian Monroe
Memories
Powder coated aluminium,
vinyl, bamboo, paper, glass
68 x 61cm
2017

Arpad Forgo
Yellow Gap
Acrylic on shaped canvas
and wood
30 x 50 x 4cm
2015

theories around simulation and the internet. As a poetic self-contained animation of autonomous moving forms, Fernand Léger's film *Le Ballet Mecanique* (1924) [7] is a further point of reference. The abstractions in Crisp's animation are snippets of secondary media footage of everyday scenes, embracing everything from the tragic to the mundane, and showing a form of suspended reality seen in small cross-sectional samples of TV and internet footage. Again, one is drawn back to the HG Wells story, where in its central section: *"...Frozen people stood erect; strange, silent, self-conscious-looking dummies hung unstably in mid-stride, promenading upon the grass...."* In Crisp's work, the most banal aspects of consumer culture are remodelled as a form of orchestrated dance, as if the medium itself heralds the future and the content is inconsequential.

Also involved in a sampling process, Laurence Noga's small collages contain fragmentary shapes with blasts of high-key colour, which are presented within an accumulated range of forms that are implicit of familiar spaces, one that is urban, constructed, rhythmical and poetic. Within his two pieces *Soft Red Filtered Turquoise* and *Soft Brown Filtered Turquoise* the vertical structures which striate each horizontal section, at times align with parallel section below but more often do not. Intersected by neutral areas of flat negative space, the variety of forms represented have echoes of the view when visiting Noga's Deptford studio, where the fleeting primary colours of passing DLR trains on a nearby viaduct afford momentary signifiers of the temporality familiar in a city such as London. The layered and geometrical relationship to the surrounding window

frames and to the dense architectural setting, helping form the compositional arrangement of the view. The found and accumulated scraps of paper and card which make up these pieces create their own type of simulation, where corresponding memory of the shapes, sounds and sensations of a fleeting urban existence, are distilled into a small-scale artwork. With a relation to early modernist archetypes, including the segmented spaces of cubist paintings, these works are suggestive an accumulated experience of past and present, which is refined and articulated within elegant compositions.

As part of the first generation of artists who grew up with computer games within mainstream culture, Trisant (Julian Hughes Watts) occupies a position which fully-embraces digital technology as a context for developing each new body of work. As an abstract painter whose practice freely adopts digital animation and generative processes, he is in a position to absorb a wide range of influences. With earlier high-key geometric abstract paintings, developed in the 1990s through Aldus Freehand software and Pantone colour charts, digital processes and painting have become complimentary areas of his work.

Modern Archaeology casts repeated rhythmical forms into space, which are randomly distributed across a black ground as they glide or fall across the screen. It could be a virtual recreation of a spaceship moving through and asteroid belt made up of segments of broken 3d musical notation. Evolving and changing indefinitely, this piece of generative art uses code to create emergent patterns, with chance events in forming wide variations in a final work with no beginning or end. The empty void of the limitless flat space is complimented by the rhythms created by the flow of randomly spaced forms, creating an experience which alternates between poetic serenity and a disconcerting abyss.

Previously the collaborative product of two artists, work of playpaint is now the sole output of Mike Gittings, whose disciplined studio practice has steadily shifted in recent years towards a subtle interplay of material and process. The associated glitches of layers of intervening colour and form seen in earlier paintings are now less evident. With geometrical structures of one type or another consistent throughout the work, it is the combination of two parts which often characterises each piece. The dynamic internal friction of these two contrasting

forms, with angles askew or colours in sharp contrast, may be the result of the interaction of a subsequent layer of patterned form with a very different design. While each component part alludes to something more clearly ordered and potentially calm or serene, perhaps resonating with an earlier analogue period of high-modernist abstraction, the collaged matrix of the painting's formation becomes something undeniably contemporary. Are these abstract paintings the result of an age of anxiety where the interplay between two incompatible systems generates a hybrid prototype, which becomes the new model defining our existence?

Within these latest works, the transitions may have become subtler but the intentionality remains clear, where the possibility for improvised moments of decision-making and shift in registration, broadly signify the expressive potential of the work - the artist's intervention and subjectivity. The discussion which results may open up to broader conversations around systems and processes such as the digital glitch, with the misaligned geometry of the painting's structure resonating with our current age of broadband communication, and a virtual landscape which presents as many problems as solutions.

Northern European in atmosphere, April Virgoe's small paintings of interior spaces on aluminium retain the sense of familiar space, which seems rooted in the public areas of brutalist architecture - stairwells, forecourts, facades and balconies - each being renegotiated in ways which contradict any real or believable environment. With a nod to Piranesi's prints of illogical spaces[8], or early cubist still lives and landscapes, these works draw you into an equivocal space of low key muted grey tones, where the articulation of each form is just out of focus and confounds the ability to fully enter in a conventional way. The viewer remains locked into a vortex of the not quite readable or believable ambiguous location, where habitation is not a possibility – a psycho-geography which is connected to the mechanics of the painting itself – the surface form and the materiality of the painted mark. These small works are resolutely engaged in a painter's vision of the inherent possibility for the base material - oil paint - to conjure up alluring environments.

The art-technology relationship is apparent throughout these artist's work, embodying a variety of discourses,

April Virgoe
Over, Under (3)
Oil on aluminium
8 x 12cm
2020–21

April Virgoe
Over, Under (4)
Oil on aluminium
8 x 12cm
2020–21

which often lead back to early modernist experiments in response to the machine age. As the background hum of our lives, shaping and reforming society, technology provokes multiple ways in which artists think, leading to distinctly individual developments in their work. Formulating strategies or an *ethos*, the resulting output often shows a broad meditation on technological progress, whilst balancing an inner need for their own creative process, and presence.

Notes:
1. Francis Picabia - New York Tribune, 24 Oct 1915 [cited in Karmel.P. 2001. *Francis Picabia, 1915. The Sex of a New Machine*. in Sarah Greenough, ed., Modern Art and America. pp. 203-219]
2. Picabia first arrived in the America in 1913, and after returning to Paris, then travelled again to New York in 1915, and in the same year Duchamp first visited America.

3. *Precisionism*, a term first coined in the mid-1920s, was also known as *'Cubist-Realism'* [cited in Brown. M. 1955. *American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression.* Princeton: Princeton University Press]
5 Hans Vredeman de Vries (1527-1606) book of perspective engravings (1604), became a major guidebook on perspective for designers, painters, and architects. The Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer said to have a copy in his library.
7 *Le Ballet Mecanique*. 1924. Fernand Léger, Dudley Murphy (co-directors); Georges Antheil, Man Ray (contributions), premiered in Vienna, at the International Exhibition of New Theatre Technique, 24 Sept 1924.
8 Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-78) – his first cycle of engravings: *'Prima parte di architetture e prospettive',* published in 1743.

References:
4 *Tron*. 1982. [Film], Steven Lisberger. dir. USA: Walt Disney Productions
6 Weiner. N., 1948. *Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, Paris, Hermann & Cie, (2nd revised ed. 1961. Camb. Mass. MIT Press).
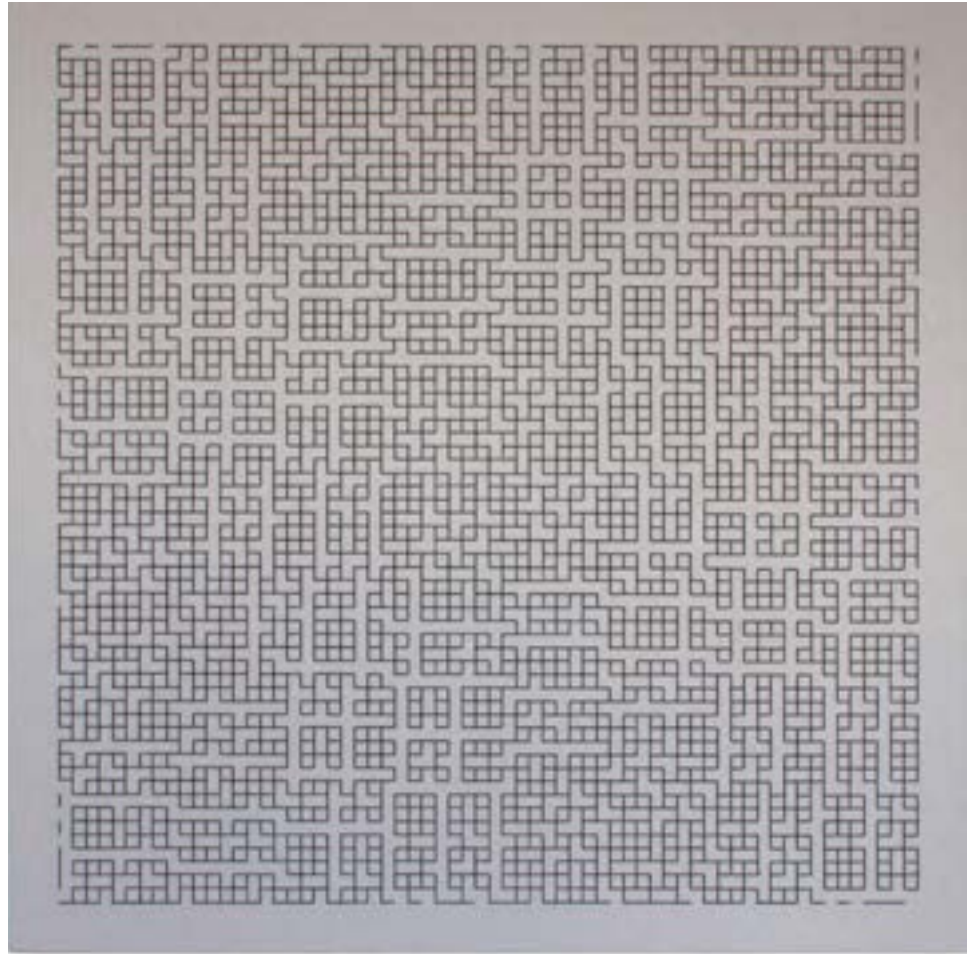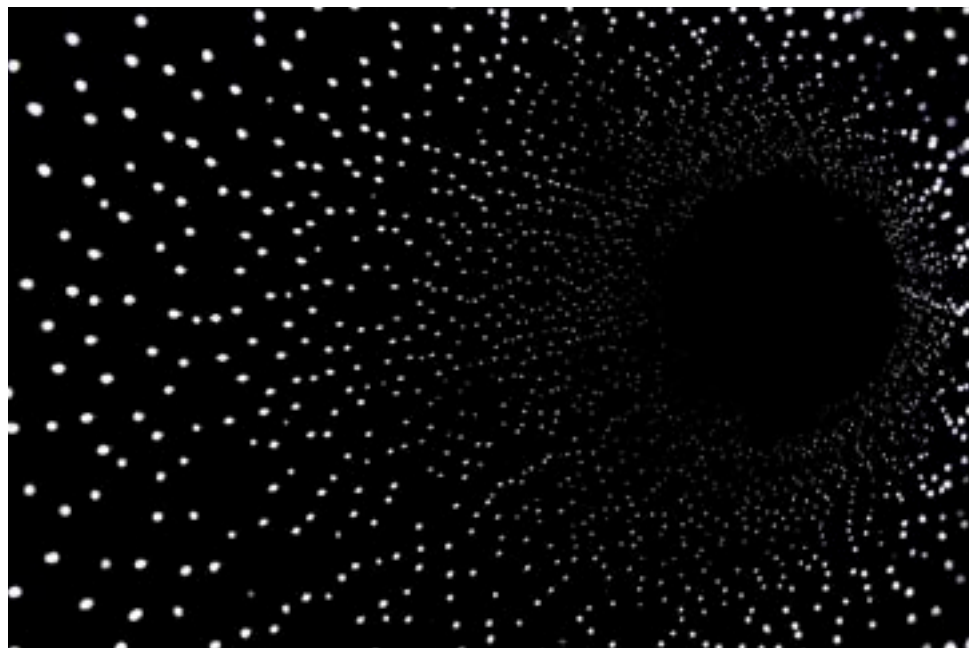

George Meyrick
Offset
Plywood, 40 x 46 x 60cm
2021-2

Morrissey + Hancock
Rotational Drawing
Mixed Media
90 x 90 x 50cm
2021

Sarah Sparkes
The GHost Tunnel
Giclee print on Aluminium,
62.3 x 41.6cm
2021

George Meyrick
Lowered, Aligned, Offset,
Raised, Paired
installed at Touchstones,
Rochdale
2021

Eric Butcher
*T/R. 945 (Incidental
Fragments)*
Graphite, Bronze + Acrylic
Gel on Glass
55 x 44 (inc frame)
2021

Interview – Katrina Blannin + Jeffrey Steele

Jeffrey Steele in conversation with Katerina Blannin for Turps Banana

I remember my tutor Jeffrey Steele as a lone figure in Portsmouth's painting school where back then we were experimenting with personal narrative, allegory – and lots of upfront sexual politics.

Since then, a total 'sea change' has occurred in my work and when I saw that Steele was 'in conversation' with Andrew Bick one evening recently I had to go and say hello. It had all been bothering me: geometry, mathematics, logic, Gestalt – intuition or calculated – how far to take it? Furthermore, questions still remain, that he remembers me asking back then, about painting itself being a political act.

In a statement concerning his work Steele proposes: 'to abolish as far as possible subjective, contingent and random factors in favour of a principal of necessity; to develop a pictorial context conforming to this principal and to render this principal as intelligible as possible...and to develop a formal situation which induces the viewer to make determined movements in the real space round the objects.' I was intrigued to find him at the age of 80 still enthusiastically researching, writing and painting:

Jeffrey Steele
Syntagma IV 146
Oil on flax, 50 x 50cm
A panel from *Large Transformation Group.*
(Tg IV 1, Sg IV 135 to 149)
comprising 15 panels
Courtesy of the Jeffrey Steele Estate
2010

KATRINA BLANNIN: You have talked recently about how the English Constructionists working in the 1950s were working with utopian or idealistic values and that attempts to integrate their work with new architecture, in fact the greater 'new' social environment, was just a 'cosmeticising' process. Would you even use the word 'adornment'? You feel that these ideals avoided a more coherent progression towards the 'rational'. Had you come to these conclusions by the late 60s when you began to bring together the Systems Group?

JEFFREY STEELE: Yes, but in a much more intuitive way and since then I have developed these ideas in a more precise and detailed way. It was Malcom Hughes, who at the time was clearest in his mind about rejecting the utopian content of the earlier movements associated with Konkrete Kunst, Constructivism and of course the Bauhaus. So, what are the grounds for this rejection and the implications of it? The conditions of the argument are fairly clear. There is of course no absolute right or wrong but take the earliest context of the Aubette. This was a large restaurant and leisure complex in the main square of Strasbourg, designed by and realised by Theo van Doesburg, Hans Arp, Sophie Taeuber-Arp and others, hoping to demonstrate the constructivist ideal of 'art into life', and the Gesamtkunstwerk integration of the visual and musical arts, architecture, the urban environment and so on.

This was in the later 1920s, but within a very few years it had fallen into disrepair. It didn't work and people hated it. At one time Richard Lohse led a campaign to have the Aubette restored, and there have been other such attempts, but I have always been sceptical about this type of project. I am glad it happened of course, because it sets up a definite aesthetic marker in history, and the absolute heroism of the artists involved is incredible, but its socio-political effect is that of an imaginative fiction and all the examples since then such as Pasmore's Apollo Pavillion, Peterlee, Caracas Airport in Venezuela and so on have all been imaginative fictions.

Quite a lot of fine scholarship is coming out around this problem but the way I rationalise it at the moment, from a socialist's point of view still, is that these are ideas about society, in fact a social economic order, that can't come about under a capitalist order. There is no way of telling what kind of architecture socialism would produce - in terms of a utopia. This is still on the other side of the river – ha - beyond the revolution! This was the great fault of the Bauhaus of course. You can't expect to build a little bit of beautiful socialist architecture for it to then become the opposite; solely the province of a sub-fraction of the capitalist class and this alongside a lot of decaying crumbling tower blocks which just give modernism a bad reputation. The cosmeticising process of Constructivism is then deeply, deeply ugly in terms of its social aspirations. That is not to say that it hasn't produced some beautiful art.

KB: In the light of this can you clarify the importance for 'Systems' art of staying with painting – as opposed to say relief, sculpture or architecture inspired installation pieces which became an important new vocabulary for the Constructionists? Why is it important to develop or advance the historically charged process of 'paint on canvas'?

JS: I hadn't worked this out theoretically during the 1950s and although it seemed sometimes as if I had been producing constructivist art then in fact I spent the whole time experimenting with how to be a painter: talking about it and exchanging ideas with whoever would participate and avidly looking at everything.

It was a 'given' that painting was the thing and I have always wanted to try to justify the supreme importance of painting. As Biederman said: art is the evolution of visual knowledge and visual knowledge is knowledge. And then knowledge or cognition affects our actions and this in turn is political. It is the fundamental question in its widest sense. I am interested in what happens to psychology and the collective ideation or ideology borne out of encounters with painting and imagery in all its visual manifestations: comic strips, mass media, advertising, different sections of fine art, in fact the whole notion of Bildlichkeit as set out by Feuerbach, who influenced Marx and Engels when they wrote The German Ideology in 1846. It was Feuerbach who recognised the crucial effects of Christian images on society. Painted images of the Madonna and Child were for instance key to the forming of German Romanticism and this impact could not have been created by anything except through the art of painting – and it's inescapable – to this day! To turn one's back on painting and all its political effects throughout history would be foolish. Rather than taking a stand against painting, as Anthony Hill and the Martins were said to have done at the time, I became interested in Tachism and painters like Michaux and Hartung. In 1960 when I was living in Paris I saw a group exhibition with the wonderful title Antagonismes which included Vasarely's 1950s paintings and they influenced me greatly. Although I am not a complete Vasarely apologist, (earlier and later works were inferior, rather tinselly and cheap), here I could see everything, the geometric, the mathematical, the Cartesian and a bid for rationality. Here was everything combined from the history of painting: Poussin, Uccello, Chardin and Watteau and crucially the pictorial architecture of Cézanne. Here you could see the birth of Cubism in Cézanne's last paintings. Here was Tatlin and Malevich. Here was a realist facing all the problems of picture making and dealing with the clash of mimetic and constructed imagery. Of course, I pretty soon realised that this interpretation was my own, and very much exaggerated - that neither Vaserely, nor most of his followers and associates actually delivered the effects that their art had seemed to promise. Also, a large Poussin exhibition in Paris at that time was just as important to me as the Antagonismes exhibition, the events in cinema, theatre, music etc., and the political context of the cold war, the war in Algeria and so on.

KB: **I have seen your works in the setting of a gallery and they are so much more pleasing to the eye than reproductions with regard to materiality and sensation – I would go further and say that they are beautiful. Can you say something about the aesthetic values that we might bring to Systems painting?**
JS: This is a very fine question because I can't answer it readily at all. It is a central problem but I don't really know the answer. Take my newest painting for example, which is a set of 15 square paintings, each 50cm x 50cm, the culmination of many years of research. We were just talking about the white, which is actually the priming of the canvas and then there are 4 colours. In a sense they are like a set of drawings and the whole piece could be seen as a prototype for a work which could go on to be realised again in different materials – I don't know, I don't have an engineer's outlook. It is like a mine of visual structural information and is, I think, perfect. Yes, there is perfection here in the offing, waiting in the wings. This perfection of course raises problems and to clarify I just mean that nothing can be added or taken away without damaging the whole. Now, why should the prototype be superior to the eventual product in the case of a painting, when this is obviously not the case with an aeroplane or other utilitarian object? The question begins to

answer itself doesn't it? The artists who I was influenced by or working alongside in the early 60s, such as Getulio Alvani, were interested in having their works made for them in a factory. They were against the idea of the artist's touch. They believed that the artist was the manager in a way: a Bauhaus idea of course. However, in this process you lose the evidence of the 'journey'. And for me the 'journey' is worth knowing and the traces of that 'journey' are important to see. Trevor Clarke set me straight on this matter quite recently. But ok, maybe there is an aesthetic sensibility in these factory-made pieces and their materials: these 'products' can sometimes look beautiful enough but...

KB: **It speeds up the process perhaps – you can produce more work?**
JS: Yes, but maybe it then becomes too quick – the fact that it is slow is very important. If you are going to do it yourself then you really have to commit yourself to it. And then there is the money - you have to pay someone. And I don't like the lifestyle of giving orders. I don't want to give orders or take orders - and this also fits with the fact that I have always been a pacifist and a conscientious objector. I may take suggestions and negotiate with people but that's a different thing – even if it came to fighting a war. Somebody needs to give me a convincing argument before I would pick up a weapon and join an army and certainly nobody is going to give me instructions. I don't believe in that kind of hierarchy. I believe that people should come to together to discuss and collaborate – this is basic socialism; in fact it is the fundamental communist ideal. I have always been a communist in the literal sense.

So, going back to the work there are many projects that I would like to do, and which of course I will now never have the time for, so I have to choose the one that will be the most interesting, and likely the most problematic. I am certainly not going to work towards satisfying any kind of art market in that 'professional artist' kind of way.

KB: **How do you respond to ideas of 'intuition' and 'perception' or the notion that artists have or can acquire 'a good eye'? Could you further clarify the inherent use of the mathematical and logical systems in your painting?**
JS: Well, it's a large philosophical question. I don't like the word 'use' in this way: using methods, say mathematics, in the way that you might use an assistant. There is nothing that is translated from the abstract to the concrete. Aesthetic values are 'dispersed' throughout the whole process; there is no instrumentality involved. Yes, it is a process of 'dispersal' and I am against the idea of the sublime – it should be more graspable than that. In the context of discussing Bridget Riley's use of assistants and her role as 'manager' in a kind of 'factory' she was asked in an interview if a moment came when she would have to judge 'by eye' whether a painting was good or bad when finished and if so, did she have a room full of rejects somewhere? She didn't of course and, well, this moment doesn't actually arrive does it? No, there is no final moment of aesthetic judgement or revelation in this way.

KB: **But do you have a 'good eye' – perhaps better than someone who is not an artist?**
JS: No, no– there is no such thing I want to demystify all of that. There is only one world and we all see the same things. Ok, maybe I exaggerate - we could say that artists are trained and perhaps notice things that others don't and have a certain

kind of education but really, I would love it if the whole category of the sublime and the genius would go away! This is the sort of thing people like that terrible man Edmund Burke talked about; such a bourgeois class-ridden concept and just a form of mysticism that we need to be rid of.

KB: **Do you find it easy to plan your day and work with a routine?**
JS: No not really, I am terrible – I don't have a talent for it. I am not good at living although nowadays I try to prioritise a good diet so that I can get into better shape and stop myself from feeling ill. But yes of course with regard to materials I do have time to do things. I have time to stretch and prepare my own canvas and I make my own oil paints using pigments – it is important that I do the whole process. There is the endless round of menial tasks, but also definite programmes of disciplined reflection: reading, record keeping, note taking, archiving - even dreaming.

KB: You said that you make and plan your work as slowly as possible?
JS: No, I didn't quite mean that but things have to be ready. You can't start something until it is ready. My acquaintance with a work has to come at its own pace. Going back to the idea of 'using' the 'mathematical or logical system', in relation to linguistics Chomsky used the term 'generative grammar'. In this case it was when talking about generating sentences: the idea that something generates states of itself. For me it's the 'system' that 'generates' possible paintings.

KB: Is there anything you could say about the choice of colour in your paintings? You have said that you are sceptical about colour theory.
**JS:** I need to explain how I have arrived at a position of dismissing the whole notion of a theory of colour. I was recently reading something by the difficult and crazy philosopher, mathematician and rationalist Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716) who stated: 'Moreover it must be confessed that perception and that which depends on it are inexplicable on mechanical grounds. That is to say by means of figures and motions. And supposing there was a machine so constructed as to think, feel and have perception, it might be conceived as increased in size, while keeping the same proportions, so that one might go into it as into a mill. It being so we should, on examining its interior, find only parts which work one upon the other and never anything by which to explain our perception.' So, there is colour perception and hence visual perception, if not 'all' perception, and this perception is not subject to explanation. Merleau-Ponty came close to this too when he talked about the idea that what breaks down first is the process of explanation itself.

KB: So colour theory is just a notion?
JS: Newton's experiments with light and the prism and the spectrum are all very interesting but they don't tell you anything about the actual phenomenology of colour. Colour is its own thing and it's not a function of anything else. These colour theories get you nowhere, absolutely nowhere. But, let's be careful again. It is only because I have been through all of these issues concerning colour, perception, cognition and so forth that I can allow myself to make such a preposterous statement. Let's say that classical colour theories need to be superseded, rather than dismissed out of hand.
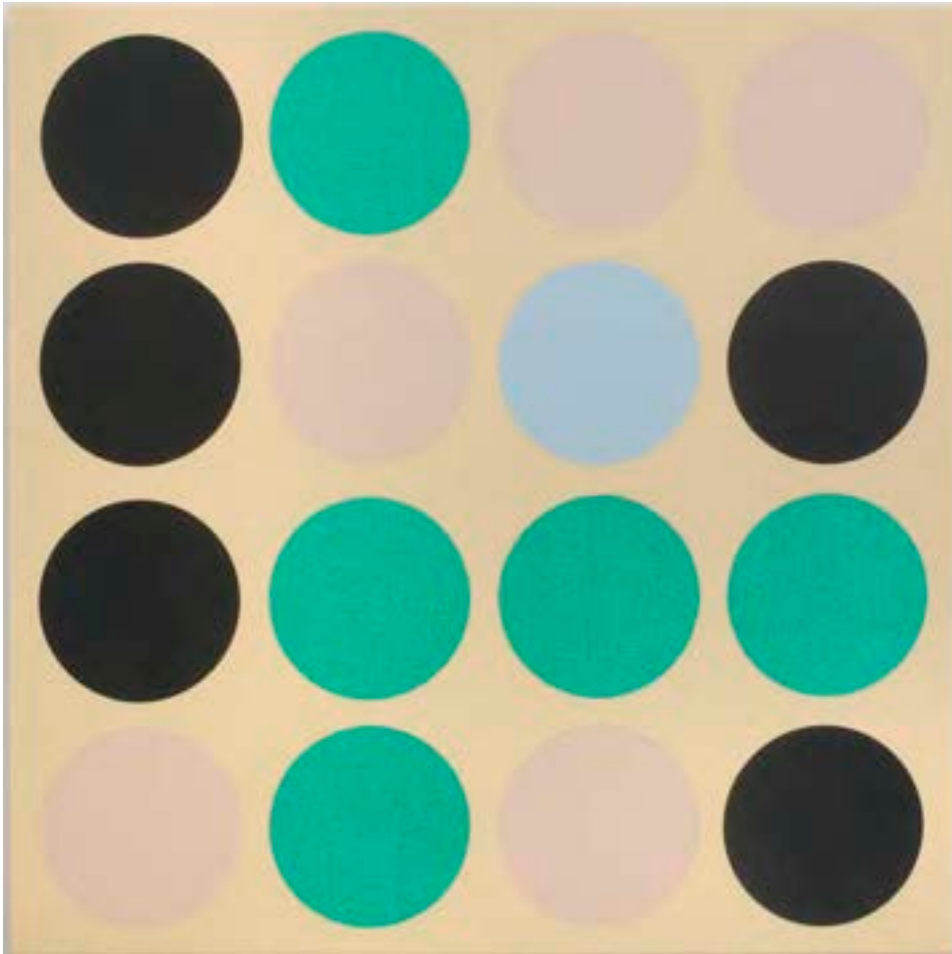
Katrina Blannin
Piero #4
70 x 70cm
Acrylic on canvas
2021
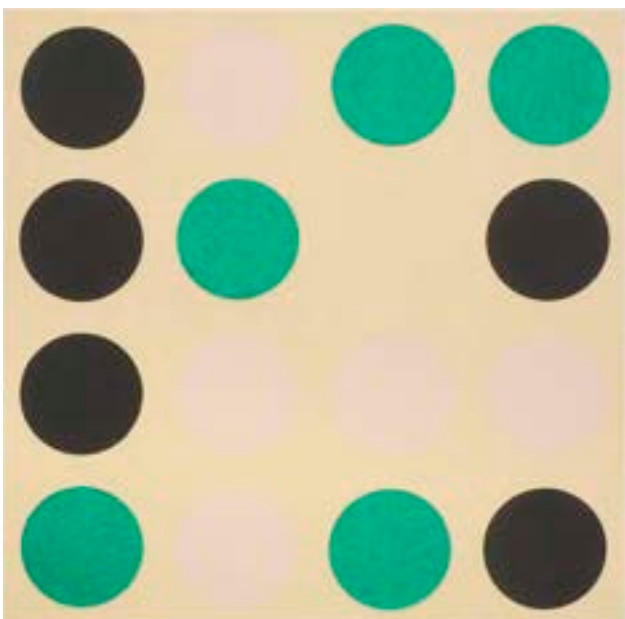
Katrina Blannin
Piero #5
40 x 40cm
Acrylic on canvas
2021

KB: So where is the starting point?

JS: The starting point is your actual experience: the actual aesthetic sensation of the colour. The phenomenological experience is the most important thing to grasp.

KB: So in this painting you have 5 colours including white?

JS: Yes they are the nursery colours red, yellow, blue and green and a black – a kind of Guinessy black - and I am thinking here about their dynamics. They are not the primary colours in the traditional sense. I suppose that Goethe, dismissed often as too romantic, is still the best that there is. His thinking has not been superseded and there is no way it can be superseded.**KB:** The titles of your paintings often clearly describe what we are looking at or what is happening eg. Four sets of Chromatic Oppositions in a System of Rotation or Square in Cinematic Rotation through 90 degrees. How essential is it for the viewer to have access to the titles?

JS: The simple answer is that it is absolutely not essential for people to know the titles of the paintings and furthermore they can be a complete pain in the neck sometimes. The titles are really like nicknames – you need to give a painting a name so it can be referred to. I have always criticised the idea of poetic titles that refer to something other than the painting itself but I do like some of the words I have used. I came up with the word 'tsunami' a long time ago for instance and now everyone knows what that is.

KB: They are often beautiful words?

JS: Yes, another one is 'syntagma': you may have heard about all the riots now taking place in Athens in Syntagma Square. This word and others, like 'syntactica', are in fact all technical terms used by the Ancient Greeks for shaping their armies and planning military adventures. The word 'cosmetica' means the captain of an army, who organises the 'cosmos' or 'order' of the regiment, and 'syntagma' means 'constitution' or 'regiment'.

KB: So 'syntagma' is a set of individual parts?

JS: Yes, but what is important is that it is also an organisation of a group of parts in a space – and the space is also important. You will see words like this in the studies of linguistics by people like Roland Barthes. A word like 'syntax' is a combination of 'syn' meaning 'with' and 'tax' (or 'tagma') meaning 'arrangement' as in 'taxonomy'. And as you say they are beautiful in spite of their military origins but have also often proved to be very useful not only in linguistics but also in areas of study such as for example botany, for classification purposes.

KB: 'Syntax' is to do with meaning?

JS: Well, it is really to do with arrangement, and 'taxonomy' is to do with the laws or principles governing this arrangement: the arrangement of the arrangement! So the syntax is when you can separate out the words (verbs or nouns etc.) or different elements of the 'syntagma' and then place them or arrange them together. You can arrange the words in different ways in a space – an abstract space – in order to form a sentence and hence meaning or sense. And as I said this space around them is also very important: this is where it gets to the nitty gritty. Here we could go on to ask a Leibniz type question: what is the relationship between the space and the different elements within? Does the space derive its character from the elements or the other way around?

KB: **So in relation to abstract painting?**

JS: Well, if you have something that is completely abstract, a mathematical structure like for example a Euclidian triangle, in order to make it concrete you need to invent a syntax. Ah, and this is where it gets genuinely problematic. Cézanne, in one of his letters to Emile Bernard (Aix, 26 May 1904), uses the word 'concrete' probably for the first time in relation to painting. The phrase he used was '…le peintre concrét…' which when translated would seem to mean 'the concrete painter'. But no – note the final 'e'. He was using it as a verb – not as in 'concretises' as in the English meaning to concretise from the abstract – turn the abstract triangle into a drawing - but something else – it's a different meaning. He didn't mean 'to concretise' it but to 'make' the triangle or 'concrete' the triangle.

KB: **So if I understand this correctly could you say that we don't just 'draw' the abstract triangle or materialise it in some way, we 'create' the triangle? Is that a good word?**

JS: Yes, that's it – I think you've got it. And this is where the syntax becomes important. It is the syntax that brings it from the abstract to the concrete.

KB: So the syntax is the tool?

JS: Yes, precisely in this case it is the tool – something you invent, in order to have it available for use, 'to hand' in Heidegger's sense. This is what Cézanne was doing, he had these materials available, the things he was seeing, the things he was thinking and a copy of Virgil in his pocket and devised his syntax……….finding things in the abstract and using the syntax to create. Cézanne's great contribution to epistemology – which, by the way, would not have been possible without the work previously done by Manet – was to bring to our attention the elementary fact that initially, at the 'starting point' of the cognitive procedure, the physical 'woman in a blue costume' seated before him, has exactly the same status-in-reality as his canvas, brushes and paint tubes. The transaction, so to speak, sets out from a plane of equitability. And this fundamentally democratic impetus in Cézanne's art is the one that tends to get overlooked in the mass media-type presentations and celebrations of his work.

KB: So what is the space in the painting then?

JS: The space remains mysterious. It is empty, infinite and undefined. We might as well use Plato's own words here, from the Timaeus: '…that which is going to receive properly and uniformly all the likenesses of the intelligible and eternal things must itself be devoid of all character…we shall not be wrong if we describe it as invisible and formless, all-embracing, possessed in a most puzzling way of intelligibility, yet very hard to grasp'.

KB: Can you tell us why you became interested in the Gestalt theory of visual perception?

JS: Gestalt - it's a key word and has always been important – from quite early on actually. One needn't go into Rorschach inkblots and the whole psychology thing really, but the idea in the first instance is about 'perceiving' and then 'naming' something. Then it means you have to draw a line round it so it stands out or is isolated from its surroundings in a successful way. It is all about 'figure' and 'field' and people noticed that you could also switch the 'figure' with the 'field'. You can
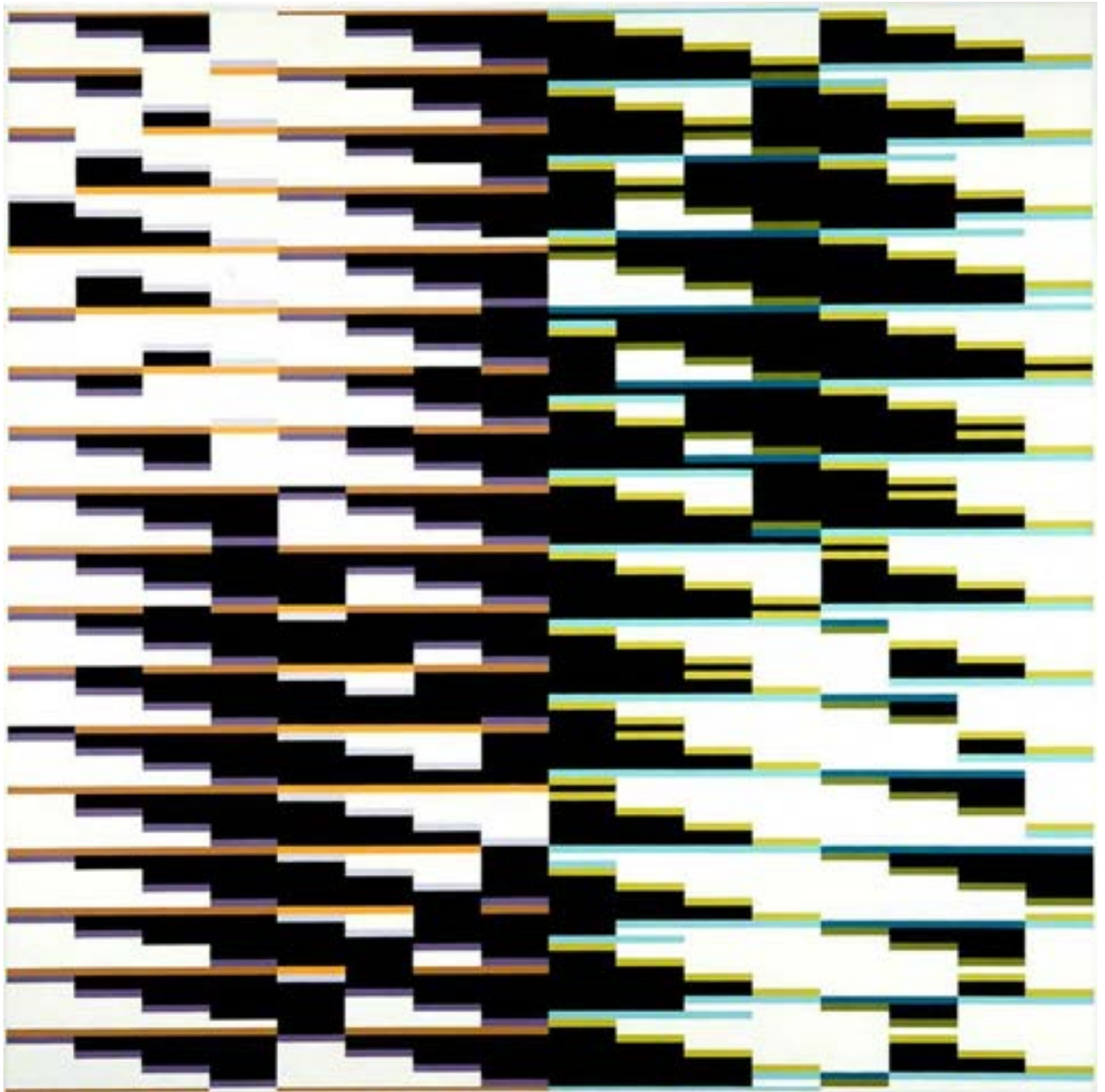
then start to think about whether something has good Gestalt or bad Gestalt – has it got a clear shape to it? Basically, I can look at one of my paintings and see whether it has good Gestalt - or bad - and this has happened occasionally. To clarify, my idea is utterly simple. A clear process of abstract thinking should lead to a satisfying visual Gestalt. I don't necessarily 'reject' or stop work on a project when this is not happening, but it bothers me, and I want to know what's going wrong.

Jeffrey Steele
Sg III 103
152 x 152 cm
Oil on canvas
1988
Collection of the Fitzwilliam
Museum, Cambridge.

KB: Does Systems painting have the idea of a universal language at its heart? How important is the 'readability' of your paintings?

JS: Yes, that's a key question. Well, I have been thinking about all these horrible TV programmes about art I have watched recently and I argue with friends about the fact that people are taking their families along to the Tate for a day out these days and about the new accessibility or popularity of art. I have, of course, been accused of being a hypocrite and an elitist. But really, I do hate it when people insist on avoiding talking about art or music in more depth. A supposedly friendly critic wrote recently about Kenneth and Mary Martin: 'This kind of constructivist art might initially bring back bad memories of tedious afternoons of double physics, but the Martins built on something more idealistic and irregular than just angles and fractions'.

I have also noticed this kind of thing on the radio when they talk about new or experimental music. They seem to think that discussing the work seriously is not as important as actually listening to it – and I think it is. What I object to is that they are treating ordinary members of the public as fools. It's an authoritarian set up. And of course, there is always something intelligible there that 'would' add to the understanding of what's going on. It is insulting to the public, and the art, on the one hand to exclude them or on the other hand to try to deliberately give them a difficult puzzle to figure out. Art is not something to just be received unquestioningly by people. Furthermore, questions should be raised about the reasons 'why' art is being produced here, now or then, and for instance 'why' is Waldemar Januszczak making a supposedly popular, but in fact rather infantile, series on the Impressionists at just this point in time and who is it for?

But, to come to the main point of your question, in the Systems Group discussions in the early 1970s we used to talk about the principle of 'recoverability', that is the retrievability of the structural information contained in a work, and the accountability which, by the way, nobody has asked for, and from which artists are traditionally supposed to be exempt. Now this type of information might be easy or difficult to retrieve, and in my own case it lies at the difficult end of the spectrum, but the idea is that whether the art form is easy or difficult, popular or esoteric, something intelligible is going on, perhaps something counter-intuitive which might repay closer attention and critical work on the parts of the recipient.

And if a work presents such an object of knowledge – something relatively invariant under scrutiny – then indeed a high level of consensus about its nature becomes conceivable, something like the 'universal language' you mention. But this, in its turn, would require the cultivation of different habits of viewing and reading from those currently encouraged by the mass communications industry.

Artist Biographies

KATRINA BLANNIN was born in London where she currently lives and works. She graduated from the Royal College of Art in 1997 and in 2021 completed a Painting by Practice PhD at the University of Worcester where research centred around ideas about systems and painting with a focus on the British Constructionists. She is a Senior Lecturer in Painting at UAL Camberwell and works both on the editorial board and the mentoring program for Turps Banana, London.
www.katrinablannin.com

Born in Singapore, 1970, **ERIC BUTCHER** lives and works in Oxfordshire. He studied Philosophy at Cambridge University and an MA in Painting at Wimbledon School of Art. He has exhibited extensively in the UK and internationally for over 25 years. He currently shows with Galerie Robert Drees, Hanover, Patrick Heide Contemporary Art, London and Nancy Toomey Fine Art, San Francisco.
www.ericbutcher.com

SANDRA CRISP was born in Cheshire and lives in London, graduating with an MA Fine Art, from Wimbledon School of Art in 1995. She was elected 2018 member of art collective The London Group and exhibits with them regularly. Other recent exhibitions include; AOS – Arebyte on Screen, Artebyte Gallery, London and video work screened international festivals including FILE, São Paulo, Brazil, ADAF Athens Digital Art Festival, Greece and EMAF European Media Arts Festival Osnabrück, Germany.
www.sandracrispart.com

CARLOS CRUZ-DIEZ (1923 – 2019) was born in Caracas, Venezuela and studied at the School of Fine Art, Caracas. He lived in Paris from 1960, and spent his professional career working and teaching between both Paris and Caracas. He vivid studies of colour, light, pattern and perception helped pioneer Optical and Kinetic art. A major international figure, in 1965 Cruz-Diez was included in the landmark MoMA exhibition 'The Responsive Eye', which focused on Op Art. Cruz-Diez collections include the Tate Gallery, the Pompidou and MoMA, New York.
www.cruz-diez.com

NATALIE DOWER was Born in London. She studied at St Martins Camberwell and Slade 1948-54. Recent exhibitions include: Geometry Rhythm Constructivist Art in Britain since 1951 Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art 2021, LAF Project 2020 with Andrew Bick, Katrina Blannin, Fiona Grady, Morrissey /Hancock, Charley Peters, Reflections and Echoes Greene and Stone 2019 (solo), Process,Order, Chance Eagle Gallery 2018, Abstract Syntax Eagle Gallery 2018.
www.nataliedower.com

TIM ELLIS, born in Chester, 1981, is an artist and lecturer who lives and works in London. He studied at Liverpool John Moores and the Royal Academy Schools, London, where he graduated in 2009. He has exhibited internationally in solo and group exhibitions at museums, commercial galleries and public spaces. His work is held in various public and private collections, including the Saatchi Gallery.
www.timellis.org

JULIA FARRER, painter printmaker was born in London 1950. After studying at the Slade School of Fine Art she was awarded the Harkness Fellowship to New Mexico and New York, 1974-76. In 1978 she exhibited at the Second Hayward Annual and since then has had numerous exhibitions in England and Europe showing paintings and artist's books.
www.juliafarrer.com

ÁRPÁD FORGÓ, born 1972, lives and works in Budapest, Hungary. He studied at: Eszterházy Károly Teachers' Training College, Hungary, Faculty of Visual Arts. Solo exhibitions include: Suspended Time, Hybridart Space, Budapest, Hungary (2022); Colliding Parallels, Anya Tish Gallery, Houston, Texas, USA (2020); Summer is not over yet, Milano Gallery, Warsaw, Poland (2019); he also received a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (2019-2020) and has completed an artist's: residency at: Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, Bethany, CT, USA (2019).
www.cargocollective.com

STEPHEN JAQUES was born in Derby and studied at Derby College of Art and Canterbury College of Art, and moved to London in 1980, where he has worked since. Subsequently becoming a founder member of APT Studios in1995. Recent exhibitions include: Construction Industry, APT Gallery 2015, Harder Edge, hclub London 2018, Harder Edge 2, Saatchi Gallery 2018/2019, The Sherbet House, Lewisham Art House, London 2019, Identity, St.Botolph, London 2020.
www.stephenjaquesstudio.com

HANS KOTTER, born in Mühldorf, German in, 1966, and lives and works in Berlin. He studied at Art Students League, New York and MediaDesign Akademy Munich. Recent exhibitions include: Osthaus Museum, Hagen Germany (solo 2023), MAKK Museum, Cologne, Germany (solo 2020), Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul, Turkey (2022) Villa Datris, L´Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, France (2022).
www.hans-kotter.com

CAROLINE LIST, born Nottingham (1964), is a British painter who lives and works in London. She graduated with an MA in painting, (1988) at Chelsea School of Art. Recent exhibitions include 'Shape Chroma' at Tension Fine Art (2022), 'Al(L)one', Marie Josie Gallery 2022, 'Horizon & Beyond, Cello factory 2022, 'Small is Beautiful' Flowers Gallery 2023. Caroline teaches part time at Central Saint Martins, UAl, and the Art Academy, London.
www.carolinelist.com

GEORGE MEYRICK, born in London, 1953. Lives and works in West Yorkshire. Studied at St Martin's School of Art, Brighton Polytechnic and Chelsea School of Art. Public collections include The Arts Council Collection, The British Council and The Henry Moore Institute. Recent solo exhibitions: Drawing Projects UK, Trowbridge (2019); Touchstones, Rochdale (2021-2) and Saturation Point, London (2022). Recent publication, 'an A-Z of George Meyrick's sculpture', written by Jon Wood.
www.georgemeyricksculpture.com

IAN MONROE was born in New York and currently lives and works in London. He received his BFA from Washington University in Saint Louis and his MA from Goldsmiths College, University of London in 2002. Monroe is currently the Course Leader for MA Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts, his most recent solo show was at FOLD gallery in 2017 and in 2021 completed a major permanent public commission on London's Leicester Square.
www.ianmonroe.net

JEREMY MORGAN was born in Barnet in 1967 and lives and works in Oxford. He studied graphic design at The London College of Printing, graduating in 1993, and works as a visual designer and an artist. Recent solo exhibitions include Tipping Point, Darl-e and the Bear, Woodstock (2022), and Resolution Dissolution at Saturation Point Project Space, London (2022).
www.jeremy-morgan.co.uk/

MORRISSEY AND HANCOCK
PATRICK MORRISSEY, born 1957 Bromley, Kent. Currently lives and works Greenwich, London. Studied at Goldsmiths College University of London graduating BA hons, Fine Art 1981. Recent Exhibitions include Imperfect Reverse, ARU, (curator), Revisions: Imprints Galerie, Crest, France, curated by Matthew Tyson. Hard Painting 2', Phoenix Gallery, Brighton. Co-founded and curates Saturation Point Projects with **HANZ HANCOCK.**

HANZ HANCOCK, born Carlisle 1958. Currently lives and works in London. Former musician, no formal art education. Co-founded and co-curates the Saturation Point project in London curating exhibitions, publishing on matters related to Systems, non-objective practice in the UK and internationally. Co curating New Accelerator with Benet Spencer, Laurence Noga and Patrick Morrissey.
www.patrickmorrisseyhanz.co.uk
www.saturationpoint.org.uk

LAURENCE NOGA was born in London and lives and works in London. He studied at Wimbledon College of Art and Byam Shaw/ Central St Martins graduating in 1991. He currently lectures at University of the Arts, London (Camberwell). Recent Exhibitions include Strange Windows (the found and forgotten) Standpoint Gallery (2022 solo), Small is Beautiful Flowers Gallery (2022), The aesthetics of enchantment in abstract art : Aleph Contemporary The In and Out Club (2022).
www.laurencenoga.co.uk

Born in 1990, **MILLY PECK** is an artist currently living and working in London. She studied at The Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, and completed an MA in Sculpture at The Royal College of Art in 2016. Recent projects include: Front of House, (solo) VITRINE Gallery, London (2022) and The Bridget Riley Fellowship at The British School at Rome, Italy (2021).
www.millypeck.com

playpaint is a collaboration formed in 2008 by **MICHAEL GITTINGS** and **DAMIAN NELSON**. Damian left in 2015. Solo shows: Amplifier (Parts 1,2 & 3) London, (2011-14): Recent curated/co-curated shows: Autocatalytic Future Games, London (2015), Optic Dub, No Format, London (2019), Modern Finance, Thameside Gallery, London (2019): Recent group shows: An Elixir of Photons, London (2013), Painting Inside The Matrix, DOK, Edinburgh (2018), Dear Painting, Nordic Art Agency, Malmo (2021).
www.playpaint.co.uk

CAROL ROBERTSON was born in 1955 in Berkshire. She lives and works in London. She studied at Cardiff School of Art and did an MA at Chelsea College of Art 1980-81. She was a Visiting Lecturer at Cardiff for 25 years, and Research Fellow there from 2003-08. She is represented by Flowers Gallery in the UK and USA and elected as an RWA in 2018. Her public collections include: Arts Council England, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.
www.carolrobertson.net

SARAH SPARKES (UK, 1964). London based artist and curator. Sarah Sparkes, holds a BA from Kingston University and MA from Chelsea School of Art. Recently commissions include AHRC funded 'Revenants and Remains' for Photoworks and English Heritage (2023) and 'Thinking About Tomorrow', moving image work for 'Day One', an ACME' commission (2022). She exhibits with New Art Projects, London.
www.sarahsparkes.com

BENET SPENCER (born in St Albans, 1969), is an artist and lecturer who lives and works in London. He studied at Birmingham Polytechnic and the Royal Academy Schools, London, where he graduated in 1995. He is Course Leader in BA Fine Art at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. His recent co-curated projects include: of Phase I - painting, drawing, architecture (2016-20), and Collision Drive (2019).
www.benetspencer.net

JEFFREY STEELE (1931 - 2021) grew up in Cardiff, Wales, and studied at Cardiff Art School. From 1968, he lived and worked in Southsea. In the 1960s he was one of the founding members of the Systems Group and has participated in more than 100 group exhibitions in Europe and America, and had 17 one-person shows. Publications of collections include: Tate Gallery, Government Art collection, National Museum of Wales, Walker Art Gallery and the Fitzwilliam Museum. He lectured in Fine Art at Portsmouth Polytechnic, from 1968 to 1989.
www.jeffreysteele.co.uk/

TREVOR SUTTON was born in Romford Essex in 1948. He lives and works in London. He studied at Hornsey College of Art and Birmingham Polytechnic, graduating in 1972. He was Senior Lecturer in Painting at Chelsea College of Art & Design for 27 years and was a Research Fellow there from 2000-2003. His work is in numerous public collections including: Tate Britain and UEA Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.
www.trevorsutton.com

KATE TERRY was born in Alliston, Canada, 1976, and lives and works in London. She studied BA Sculpture at Manchester Metropolitan University (1996-99) and MFA Fine Art at the University of Guelph, Canada (2000- 02). Solo exhibitions include Broadway Gallery, Letchworth (2018); Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, USA (2016-17); Volker Diehl Cube, Berlin (2016); Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar (2013) and Ruby Cruel, London (2020).
www.kateterry.co.uk

TRISANT (JULIAN HUGHES WATTS) was born in Wales / Cymru in 1969, and currently lives and works in Mallorca. He studied at Birmingham Polytechnic and the Royal Academy Schools, London, graduating in 1994. He is a multi-disciplinary artist working as a painter and with digital media such as computer games, 3D simulations and generative art.
www.trisant.xyz

APRIL VIRGOE was born in Singapore, and is an artist and lecturer based in Leeds. She studied at Hull and the Royal College of Art, graduating in 1994, and is currently working towards a practice-based PhD at Anglia Ruskin University. Recent exhibitions include Paint Edgy (2022), A Little Painting Show Leeds (2019), Typologies, ARU, (2019). She is a recent contributor to The Journal of Contemporary Painting.
www.aprilvirgoe.com

ADIA WAHID was born in Karachi, Pakistan, and lives and works in London. She studied at Chelsea College of Arts and Design and an MA at Royal College of Art, graduating in 2018. Recent exhibitions include: Glitch: The City as Palimpsest, Cooke Latham Gallery, London (2022), Iris, Large Glass Gallery London (2022), Wabi Sabi, Kristin Hjellegjerde London (2021); Adia Wahid, Alice Black Art, London (2017, solo).
www.adiawahid.com/

MARY YACOOB is an artist and lecturer who lives and works in London. Her current PhD studies at the Slade, UCL, centre around art and diagrams. She graduated in Fine Art at Central Saint Martins and London Metropolitan University. Group exhibitions include the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, Laurent Delaye Gallery, Gallery 46, and Bobinska Brownlee gallery. Solo shows include: Surgery Gallery, Five Years and The Hospital Club.
www.mary-yacoob.com/

Tim Ellis
CODA (Time Machine)
Oak, teak, mahogany, brass,
steel, glass, mother of pearl,
silver, pewter and resin
2022

Acknowledgements