

OUT OF CHAOS

Celina Teague: I Think Therefore I

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Text by Emily Steer

‘We are allowed to indulge 24/7 in this tortuous voyeurism.’ Emojis, segments of Charlie Hebdo cartoons and chockablock mobile screens clash in British artist Celina Teague’s grotesquely colourful, but invariably appealing paintings. Today, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery opens a solo exhibition of her work.

‘We think we see everything – but we are fed information and we should pay attention to who is feeding us.’ Teague looks at hashtags as a way of filtering and expanding upon current themes, creating swathes of people who are thinking and responding to events in exactly the same way. Whilst social media can be seen as a way for everyone to have a voice, do people really express themselves in an honest manner – or do they follow the trend, and enhance these few singular lines of thought? Further to this, do we even realise that we are losing our voice, or are these popular modes of thought now fully embedded in our responses to events, leaving us unable to step back from the chaos and consider something independently.

I think, therefore I # came about during the Charlie Hebdo media coverage, and subsequent social media response. These oil works are large scale (many almost 2m) and all have the same intense colour palette, that is a step up from the brightness of many of the artist's previous paintings. The line here has also become less painterly than former works, with smoothed out edges and defined forms catapulting them from the realms of painting, into the digital world.

The vulgarity of our greed for social media and the onslaught of content that is thrown at us is visualised in these paintings, where all of the colours are ramped up and all of the individual items fight for attention in a vast cacophony of instantly recognisable shapes and signs. Each individual element shouts for the attention of the viewer, but the surrounding noise means you can't focus on one key part in detail. 'Everyone wants to tell a story – you me, journalists, Isis – we all want to upload our story to an instant audience.' But, amidst the colour and chaos of everyone else's story, who is really being heard?

I Think Therefore I # is open until 5 September at Kristin Hjellegjerde



I AM NO ONE, 2015 Oil on canvas 190 x 170 cm 74 3/4 x 66 7/8 in Copyright The Artist



THE LAST SHARPENINGS, 2015 Oil and acrylic on canvas 120 x 150 cm 47 1/4 x 59 1/8 in Copyright The Artist



THE TOWER OF FABLE, 2015 Oil on canvas 150 x 170 cm 59 1/8 x 66 7/8 in Copyright The Artist



I THINK THEREFORE I # , 2015 Oil and acrylic on Canvas 150 x 170 cm 59 1/8 x 66 7/8 in Copyright The Artist