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Royal Academy of Arts
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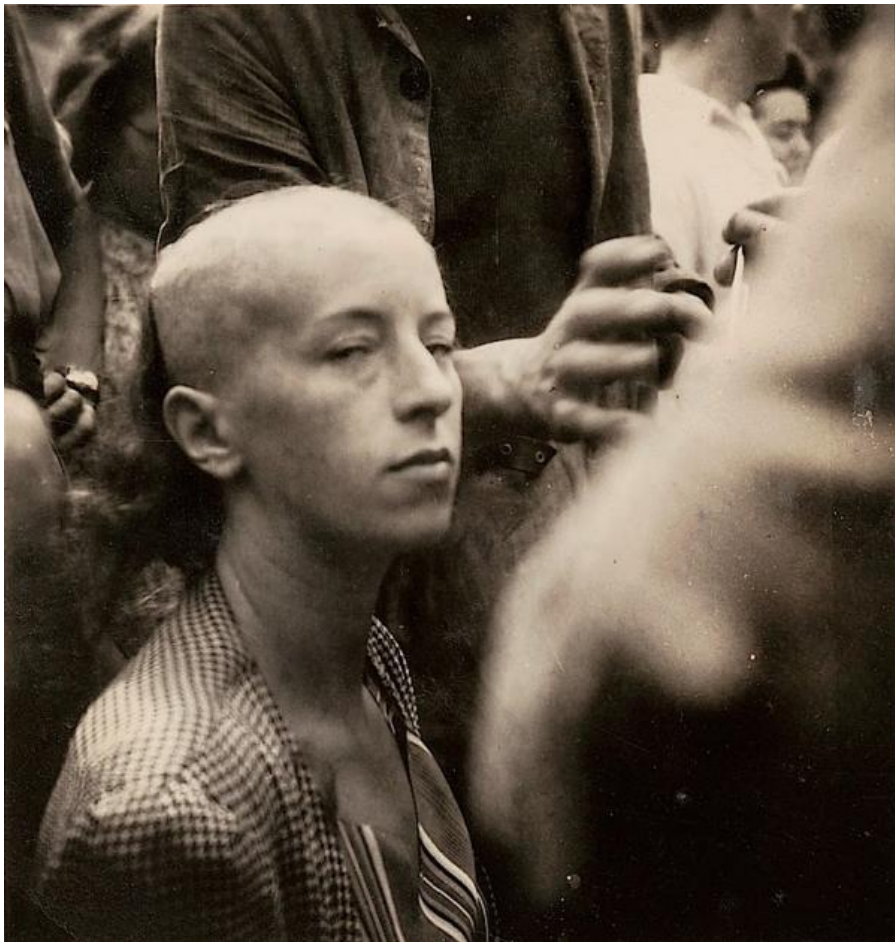
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London Art Exhibitions, Paul Carey-Kent



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London Art Exhibitions March 2015 Picked By Paul Carey-Kent

25-02-2015

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There's no doubt that the heavy hitters are hitting heavy just now (Marclay at

White Cube, Tuymans at David Zwirner, Sarah Sze quadruple at Victoria Miro, Rashid Johnson at Hauser & Wirth, Tony Oursler at Lisson etc). Yet that's not so hard to work out: here are some less obvious picks, including a bumper crop of Italians and - suddenly - a clutch of interesting photography shows...

Hair: Object of Desire and Culture @ Daniel Blau, 51 Hoxton Square

To 20 March: www.danielblau.com

Top Photo: Anonymous: Fontainebleau, 23 August 1944 from a collection of photographs of 'Femmes Tondues' at the Liberation of France

Satisfyingly bald French curator Adnan Sezer has spent the past six years collecting photographs which can be looked at for their hair – though that's not necessarily the first thing you'd notice otherwise in images of a severed head, nineteenth century nudes, Adolf Hitler or an extravagantly dressed transvestite from the 1920's. It makes for an original viewing experience, boosted by such striking finds as a family with hypertrichosis and 1944-45 sequences documenting the shaving of French women held to have collaborated or had relationships with the occupying Germans.



Eugène Brussaax: Mission

Henri Moll, Eré village, Moundan Woman, 1906. Silver gelatin print

Dominic Hawgood: Under the Influence @ TJ Boulting, 59 Riding House St – Fitzrovia

To 21 March: www.tjboulting.com



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2014 led light panel & arduino led strip, duratran, 102 x 76 cm

The sponsor gallery of the International Photography Award presents 2015 series winner Dominic Hawgood's photographs of people engaged in faith-based activities, the veracity of which we have ourselves to take on faith. His previous series (shown by South Kiosk gallery) depicted – if that's possible visually – speaking in tongues. This installation, requiring shoe-covers for entry and set atop a chancel-like platform, explores the intersection between voodoo and Christianity in London churches. We see people in the throes of exorcism, or casting away their no-longer-necessary crutches, knee supports or drugs. Or do we? Are they acting for the camera? Are they always acting? Or are they for real?

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James Ostrer: Sugar Sculptures

Kyle Barnes: I Love the Illusion That Can Be Achieved in Painting



This is where the

darkness lies, 2014 self adhesive vinyl, 203 x 152 cm

Thomas Joshua Cooper: Scattered Waters: Sources Streams Rivers @ The Fleming Collection, 13
Berkeley Street - Mayfair

To 11 April: www.flemingcollection.com



Twilight - Rapids on the River Ness, The Weir, Dochgarroch, Inverness, Inverness-shire, Scotland, 2002-
2014 - silver gelatin print

Thomas Joshua Cooper has restricted himself to a narrow process for the past 45 years, 30 of them in Scotland after moving there from his native California: he walks miles with a 30kg kit to make pictures of the outdoors, one shot per site. He uses an 1898 5 x 7 inch plate camera which he bought from the 70-year-old son of its original owner plus tripod. Cooper prints, avoiding any modern process, onto the world's last substantial supply of silver-rich paper, which he bought up when Agfa went bust in 2006. Why so? He finds slowness suits him, he explained at the opening of this welcome selection of his Scottish river works, as a way of paying respectful attention to the spirit of things - grass, trees, water, air - and saying thank you for place, time and light - often capturing the dark of dawn or dusk with long exposures. The 15 images here are certainly quick with the sense of water as life force for the land.



Early evening - Near the mouth of the River North Esk St Cyrus Beach, Kincardineshire, Scotland, 2000-2014

Henry Wessel: Incidents @ Tate Modern

www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/display/henry-wessel-0



Tate has a recent penchant for arguably underappreciated American photographers: I can't say I wasn't bowled over by Harry Callahan but Henry Wessel is more impressive. He moved from New Jersey to California in 1971 to chase the year round light, and his pictorially acute affirmations of interest in the world feed into the 27 photographs selected and ordered to make his summary work 'Incidents'. These work persuasively individual images of strangers, replete with shadow play, unexpected tilting and internal rhymes such as between grass and hair, crutch and railing, thoughts and branches; and as a group they emphasise vantage points as they move between youth and age, men and women, singles and couples to build a putative narrative.



..



The artists with the top of Renata's floor-ceiling piece and some of Ruben's photos (look hard to see him naked on the rock)

It's good to see that Lucinda Bellm now has a permanent space, after London various pop-ups, to add to her Sao Paulo links. Its three rooms are well-used for this globe-spanning match of romantic existentialists. Young French photographer Ruben Brulat tweaks his nude-in-wilderness theme with self-portraits from a geologically unstable zone of Ethiopia, including just his sulphured hands from a pool too acidic for full immersion. Brazilian Renata De Bonis exchanges soil between Brazil and England (and heartbeats between her and her boyfriend), paints selected Icelandic rocks and shows kerbstones neither up nor down as they pierce the floor / ceiling. What are we but human clay, elementally connected?



Here's a better chance to see Ruben Brulat in *Sous les murmures* (Under the whispers), 2014

Güler Ates: *Stilled* @ Art First Project Space, 21 Eastcastle St - Fitzrovia

To 7 March: www.artfirst.co.uk



Magic Lights, 2013

This show brings together 10 of the 16 photographs result from London-based Turkish artist Güler Ates (say 'Gooler Artes') 2012 residency at the City Palace Museum in Udaipur. That provides a particularly rich background for her photographs of a classical Indian dancer wholly covered by a sari in local textile - a set up which presents the figure colourfully and sculpturally and might be seen as an empowering of female privacy in an environment with male authoritarian traditions behind it, rather than more restrictive interpretation of the placed on the burka (see www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/24118241 for a neat summary of head coverings: the sari's never worn as Ates shows it). 'Magic Lights' is especially striking: look like a disco lights are in fact naturally lit 16th century stained glass. Since then, Ates has been working in a contrasting locations of Brazil and Eton College.



Flames, 2013

Sebastian Helling & Richard Schur: Verve @ Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, 533 Old York Road -
Wandsworth

To 21 March: kristinhjellegjerde.com



Richard Schur, Bridges, from the Manhattan Series, 2015

This pairing of painters seems at first like order and chaos: a welcome return to London for Munich-based Richard Schur's layered refractions of geometry and place versus Norwegian Sebastian Helling's mash-ups of Ab Ex and streetishly sprayed marks inspired, he says, by his musical icons of the 70's, notably Led Zeppelin. Look more closely, though, and you'll see dynamising little accidentals in Schur and a fair amount of structure behind Helling: a seducively colour-filled combination, but also a meditation on how much of its apparent opposite so many conditions actually contain.



Rare self-appearance with Richard Schur!

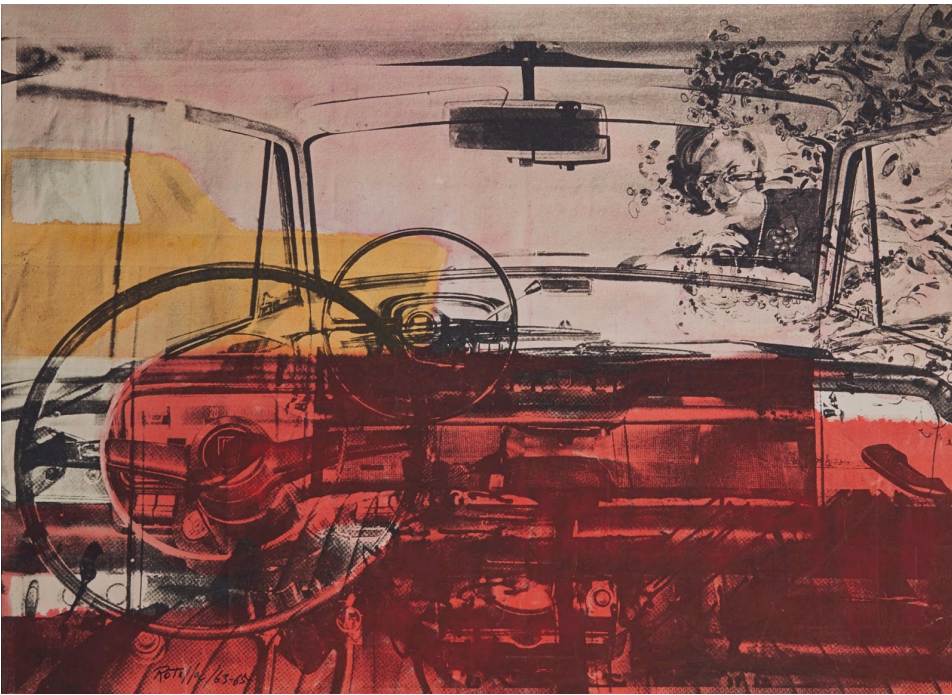
Mimmo Rotella @ Robilant + Voena, 38 Dover St – Central

To 24 March: www.robilantvoena.com



Materia 5, 1956, retro d'affiche on cardboard, 32 x 50 cm

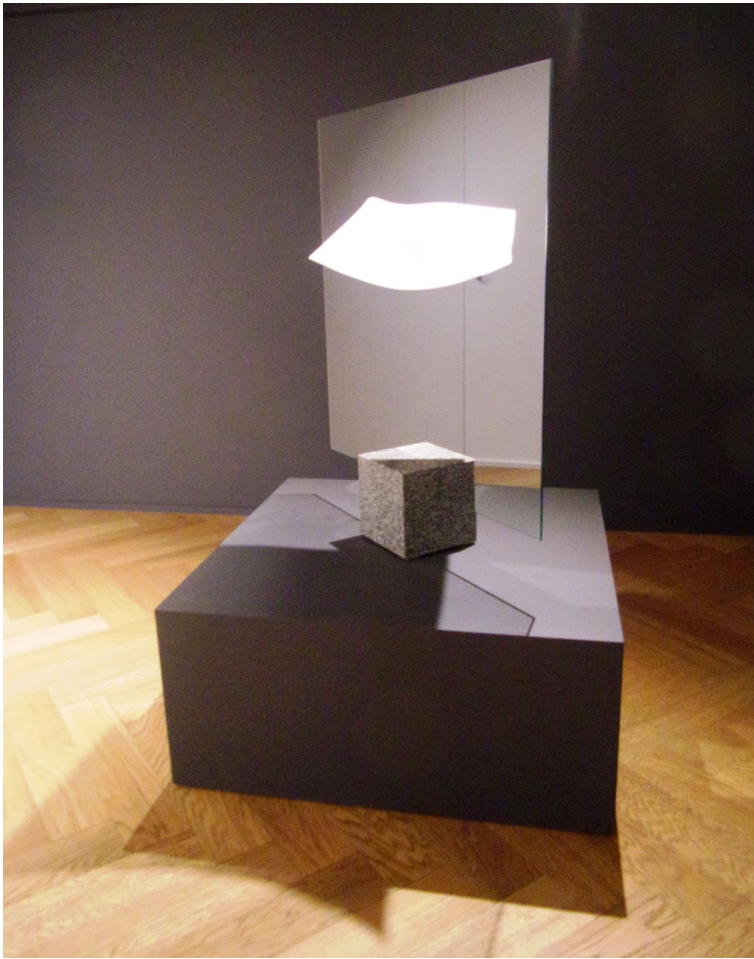
This revelatory show is the first London survey of the breadth of Mimmo Rotella's practice. The Italian artist (1918-2006) is known for his often cinematic torn poster *décollages*, but actually worked in several other ways linked to advertising posters. Here are his *retros*, the backs of posters with look of peeling walls; the *blanks* in which he shows posters almost wholly obliterated by a monochrome cover prior to the next layer being applied; the *artypos*, taken from found poster proofs used to test out colours, often with superimposed images; and the *sovrapittura*, in which torn posters are overpainted.



Posso? 1963-65, photographic reproduction on canvas, 89 x 123 cm

Agostino Bonalumi - Sculptures @ Mazzoleni, 27 Albermarle St - Central

To April 4: www.mazzoleniart.com



Rapporti, 1978 -

glass, resin and marble

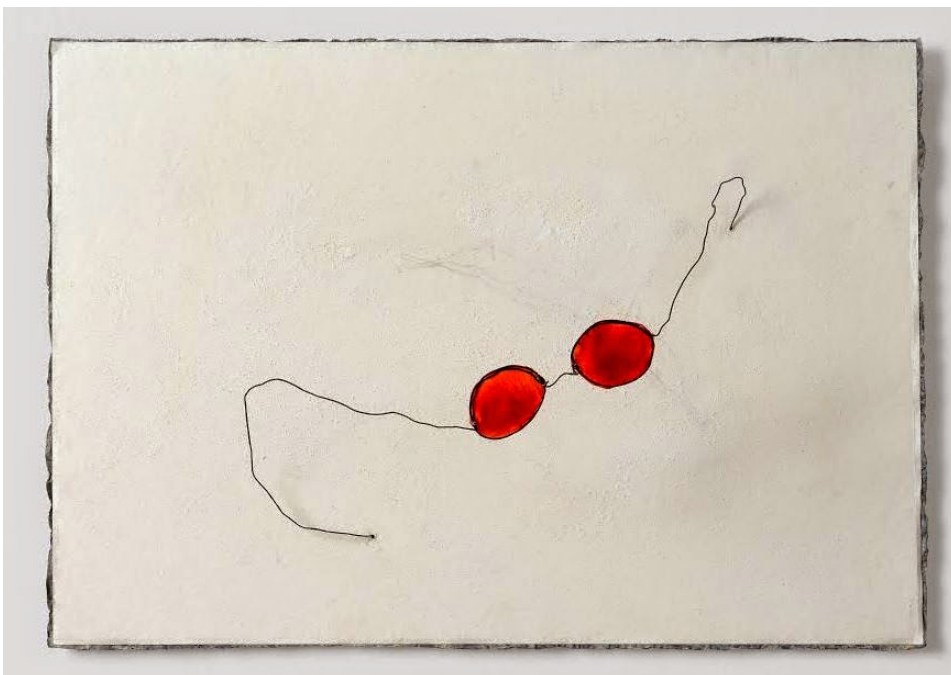
Two years ago Francesca Pola curated a magisterial survey of Agostino Bonalumi's earlier decades at Robilant + Voena. Now she's back at a new Italian gallery with a chronologically fuller sample from the estate, concentrating on Bonalumi (1935-2013) as a sculptor - which is after all only one step out from his constructed paintings. The later years contain such underappreciated experiments as enamelled metal sheets; relational pieces (here one in which a resin formation takes flight over marble); and extravagantly shaped self-standing canvases along with bronze, ceramic and fibreglass variants.



Francesca Polka explains Giallo, 1969 - vinyl tempera and shaped canvas

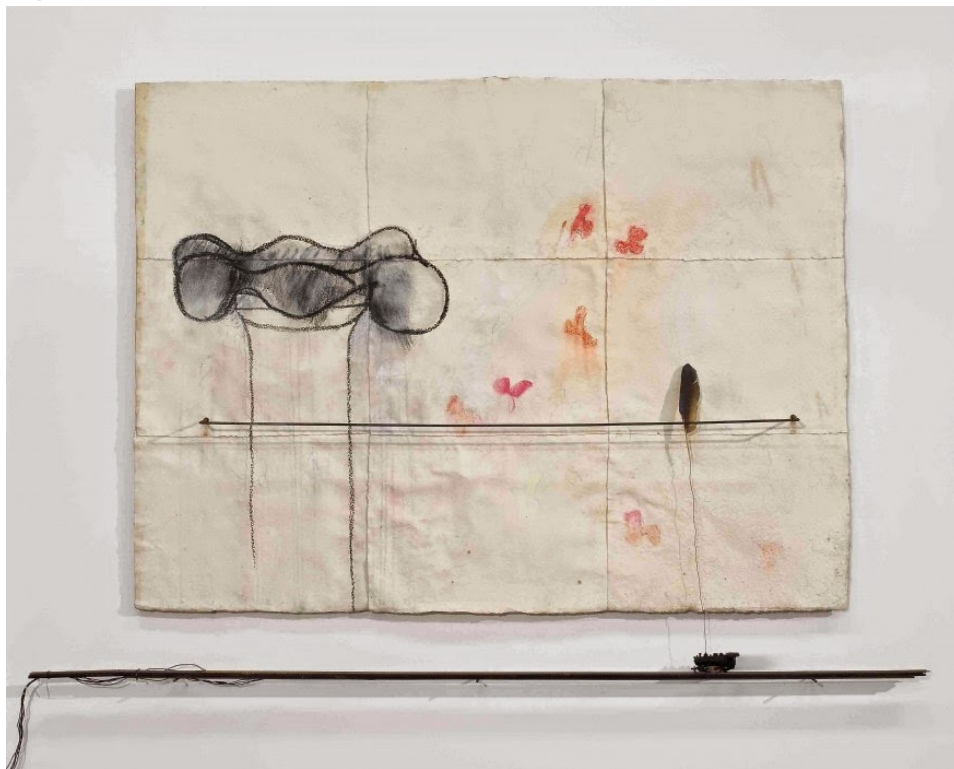
Pier Paolo Calzolari @ Ronchini Gallery, 22 Dering St – Bond St

To 7 March: www.ronchinigallery.com



Untitled [collage], 2012 - Graphite, talc, iron, rose petals, lead Photo: Michele Alberto Sereni

One could lose track of how many Italian artists of the 1960s have been presented as discoveries in London over the past few years. Though pleased to see Pascali, Bonalumi, Dadamaino, Paolini, Schifano, Scheggi and Zorio, we might reasonably have been asking: why not Pier Paolo Calzolari? And here he is, not with the signature frosted works (which hum with refrigeration to produce delicate surface whites) but with a good cross-section of his classically-tinged take on Arte Povera. Calzolari sets up, one might say, delicate pseudo-alchemical processes in search of the absolute: a toy train pushes a feather; flames illumine salt; and the septuagenarian seems to take a literally rose-tinted view of failing sight through a pair of glasses in which the lenses are petals.



Little Trains (Large Paper), 1972 - Paper glued on wood, wax pastel, oil pastel, tempera, iron, tracks, electric wire, feather, transformer Photo: Paolo Semprucci

PREVIOUS CHOICES STILL ON

The Presence of Absence @ Berloni, 63 Margaret Street - Fitzrovia

To 14 March - curator's tours 2 pm on Sat 21 Feb & 2 pm on Sat 7 March: www.berlonigallery.com



Anni Leppälä: Evening

(Embers), 2013

The last place I look to describe a show is the gallery's press release, lazily compliant trend as that is. Yet, having written this one, I shall claim with it that 'it's often said that negative space is as important as positive shapes in a composition. The works in this show turn around a parallel feature of content, as opposed to form: namely, what is not present is at least as important as what is present – and so it is that a key role is played by the paradoxical sounding 'presence of absence' in work by fourteen artists across a wide range of media'. And having chosen such artists as John Smith, Nika Neelova, Giorgio Sadotti and Anni Leppälä, what can I do but recommend it?



Kirk Palmer: Remembering Absence @ the Daiwa Foundation Japan House, 13-14 Cornwall Terrace – Baker Street

To 26 Feb: www.dajf.org.uk/events/current-exhibition



Still from War's End: An Island of Remembrance, 2012

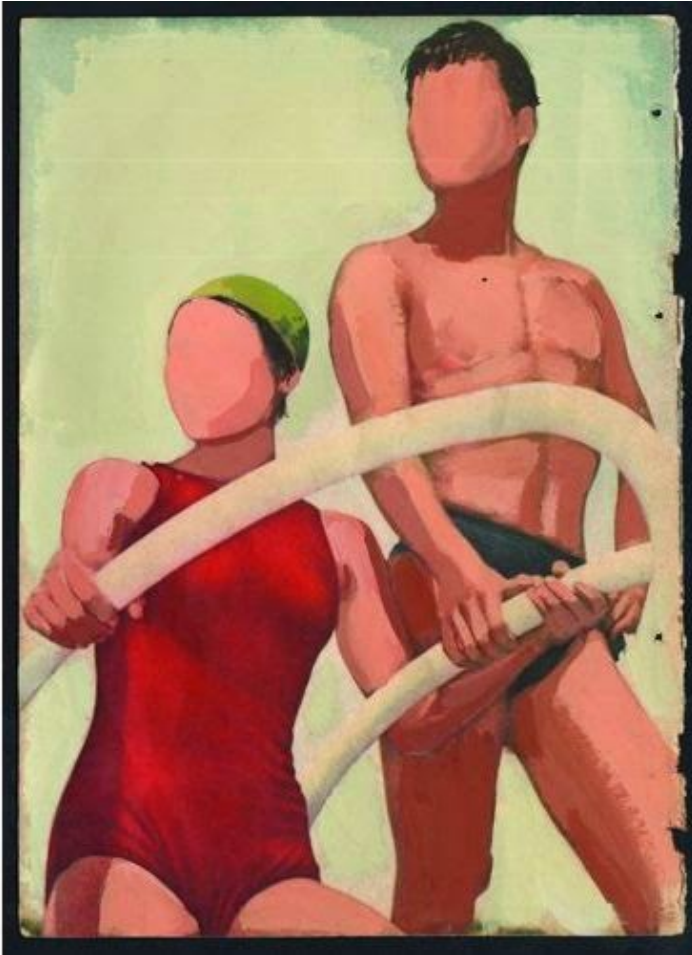
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A 'sister show' for The Presence of Absence might be Kirk Palmer recurrent meditations on what we can and cannot now reach of the nuclear calamity which befell Japan in 1945. The photographs and two of the films in this unhurried show do that at one remove, by concentrating on the landscape of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. War's End: An Island of Remembrance proposes, in effect, that the mountainous Yakushima, in the Ryuku Archipelago, be seen as a memorial garden as the mission planes used it as a reference point and circled overhead for 40 minutes before proceeding, due to changing weather conditions, to bomb Nagasaki rather than the original target of Kokura. Primeval views of nature are accompanied by a deep rumbling. That proves to be a recording of the bell from Nagasaki's destroyed cathedral, but slowed down to last the 40 minutes of the film.



Still from Hiroshima, 2007

Gideon Rubin: Delivering Newspapers @ Rokeby Gallery, 16 Roseberry Avenue – Clerkenwell

To 26 March: www.rokebygallery.com



Untitled,

2012

Gideon Rubin has such a penchant for blank faces we'll probably never know if he can paint them in full. The effect is to anonymise, ambiguate and universalise the place and time of his sources. Here he dances around modes of representing people culled from 1950's magazines hunted down during his recent residencies in Israel and China. Sometimes he paints over the page, sometimes relocates a figure to an independent canvas or transfers it to a different news context. Enough clues remain for us to puzzle out what comes from where, but without the potentially lazy short cut which facial features can provide.



Margo Trushina: Borderlines @ Erarta Galleries, 8 Berkeley St – Central
To 14 March: www.erartagalleries.com



Margo Trushina with her heartbeat in Waves, 2014

London-based Russian Margo Trushina explores a plethora of borders in the elegant

flow between works here, all rooted in the landscape, even – unusually – when they use neon. The boundaries range from the political to the personal. An irregularly descending line of red light, which could be the falling oil price or rouble, turns out to be the border which the Russians authorities draw within the Ukraine as their claim on its land. That's in dialogue with a Trushina's own heartbeat set in neon against the more outward waves of the sea. The wave form is then picked up more abstractly in stainless steel, while sculptural combinations play on the borders between natural and man-made, posing stone against metal, glass against wood.



Borderline Series, Untitled 4, 2104

Katy Moran @ Parasol unit, 14 Wharf Rd – Old Street

To 8 March: www.parasol-unit.org



Rock Face with a Face, 2013 - collage and acrylic on canvas

Katy Moran's approach to figurative painting is sufficiently un-illustrative she's often taken to be an abstract artist. Maybe that's why, over the decade spanned by this 51 work spread, bits of reality are increasingly collaged in directly, and her titles have become more descriptive of what you can see. Moran doesn't vary colour and scale drastically, and most of the paintings arrive at a comparable way of balancing their accidents, energies and incidents – yet there's a freshening sense that they might not have done, that they're rediscoveries rather than applications of a formula. All of which reminds me of Morandi. That said, there are curveballs: Panther Cat is on glass, the ursine presences of bear fun almost varnish into its board, Travelling Mercy is a triptych on found canvasses, and Slide out of View feels like Howard Hodgkin on the moon.



bear fun, 2010 - acrylic and varnish on board

Vicky Wright: Poor Joys Asylum Level 71 @ Josh Lilley Gallery, 44 – 46 Riding House Street - Fitzrovia

To 12 March: www.joshlilleygallery.com



A Silver Branch Can Drop Without

Seeds I, 2014

Vicky Wright, like Moran, is a non-illustrative figurative painter with a distinctive language, but to such different effect that I was reminded of Polke. Wright emphasises her supports by painting on what look like the backs of panels. That suggests a subversive take on more conventional images on the unseen side, and here that's a feminist agenda linked to a 19th century practice of confining women on the grounds of 'hysterical' tendencies. The paintings mash up witch lore, video games and degradations of classic male modernist forms to haunting post-Gothic effect, complemented by painted sticks referencing the geological (and implied psychological) taking of core samples. Perhaps the witch, standing for positive female energies historically repressed, is also the magical mixer of paints. Whatever, the spell is strong.



Installation view with Path of Exile: Poor joys Aylum IV (the sticks) and Path of Exile: Poor joys Aylum II

Richard Serra: Backdoor Pipeline, Ramble, Dead Load and London Cross @ Gagolian Britannia St - Kings Cross

To March 5: www.gagosian.com



Ramble, 2014

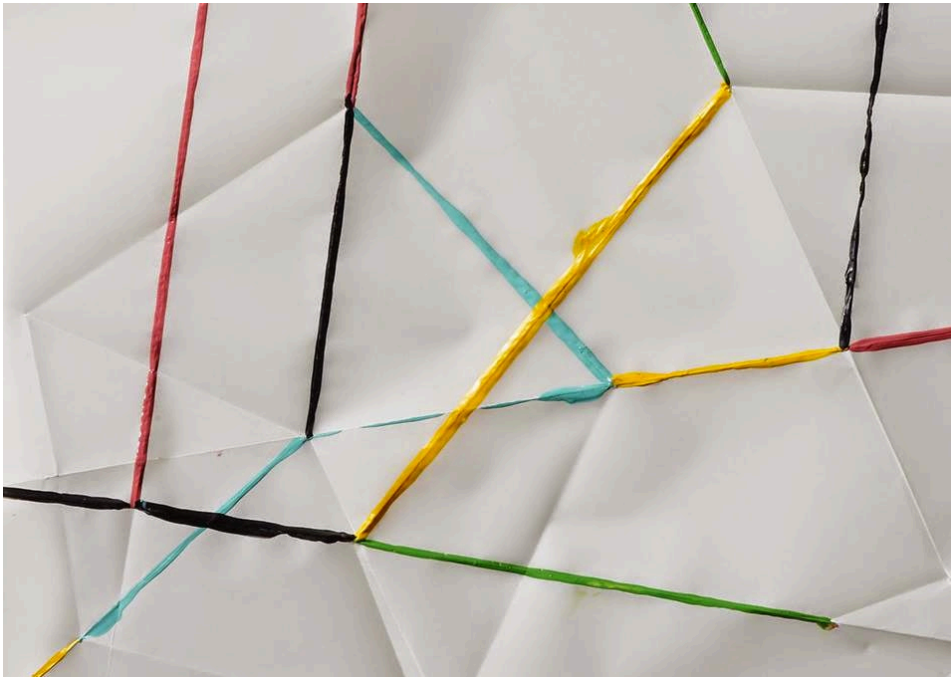
It's easy to forget that the Richard Serra show still looms at Gagolian - fair enough, perhaps, given the effort required to install it. Yes, five uniformed guards continue their arduous business of making sure that no one walks off one of the smallest parts, which are mere five tonnes of steel. That said, the combination of weight making space with the seductive surface bloom of the Corten is a winner in each of the four formats adopted: vast walk-through curve; cemetery of super slabs; dangerously balanced overhead cross; and the ultimately heavy sarcophagus. It's as if the Britannia Street Gallery was built for it - and in fact, it was, being engineered with Serra's equally imposing show 2008 show in mind. Catch it (and I don't quite mean as in Serra's seminal 1968 video 'Hand Catching Lead') in these last two

months.



Dead Load, 2014

Beat Zoderer: Fold & Dip and Other Incidents @ Bartha Contemporary, 25 Margaret St – Fitzrovia
To 28 Feb: www.barthacontemporary.com



Dip and Fold (detail), 2014

Swiss artist Beat Zoderer has the happy knack of achieving a distinctive aesthetic through an ever-changing variety of methods and a characteristic way of using not-quite primary colours as if they were primaries. This survey includes two of his long-running steel band series together with three main new streams, focused on folding (a circle is squared by that means, and vellum is successively folded and dipped into paint to make chance concatenations with a structural logic); the castings of balls in a range of sculptural ways; and multiple watercolour applications of a templating process which yields intricately colourful results in on Japanese paper, including as the fold-out book shown.



Leporello, 2012

Indeterminacy @ large Glass, 392 Caledonian Road – Barnsbury

To 27 Feb: www.largeglass.co.uk



Window with Kathy Prendergast: Mt Fuji (2), 2014

John Cage is an empathetic figure for many artists, and Charlotte Schepke is a sensitive curator, so there was paradoxically little chance that 'Indeterminacy' wouldn't be an interesting show. Cage's spirit is present in the sound of his short stories and invoked by such as Ana Prada's happy conjunction of plastic spoons; the unknowable time of Roger Hiorns' crystal-covered clock; John Smith's film

combining cityscapes with lost sounds on the now-lost medium of cassette tape, drifts of which are filmed where it snagged around the streets of London; and the beautiful Penone-echo of Kathy Prendergast's conversion of the contour map of Mount Fuji into the rings on a tree and a fingerprint, which she's blown up into a big painting for the gallery's - large glass - window.



John Smith & Graeme Miller: still from Lost Sound, 1998-2001

Images courtesy / copyright the relevant artists and galleries + Mike Bruce (Serra)

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