

SATURATION POINT

The curatorial and editorial project for
systems, non-objective and reductive
artists working in the UK

ABOUT

Sunday Salon 9 | Impartial Iteration: Piers Veness, Mary Yacoob, Zhao Huaidong

REVIEWS

Curated by Marco Calí

INTERVIEWS

9 - 23 February 2020

A Saturation Point project hosted by Patrick Morrissey and Hanz Hancock.

VIEWPOINTS

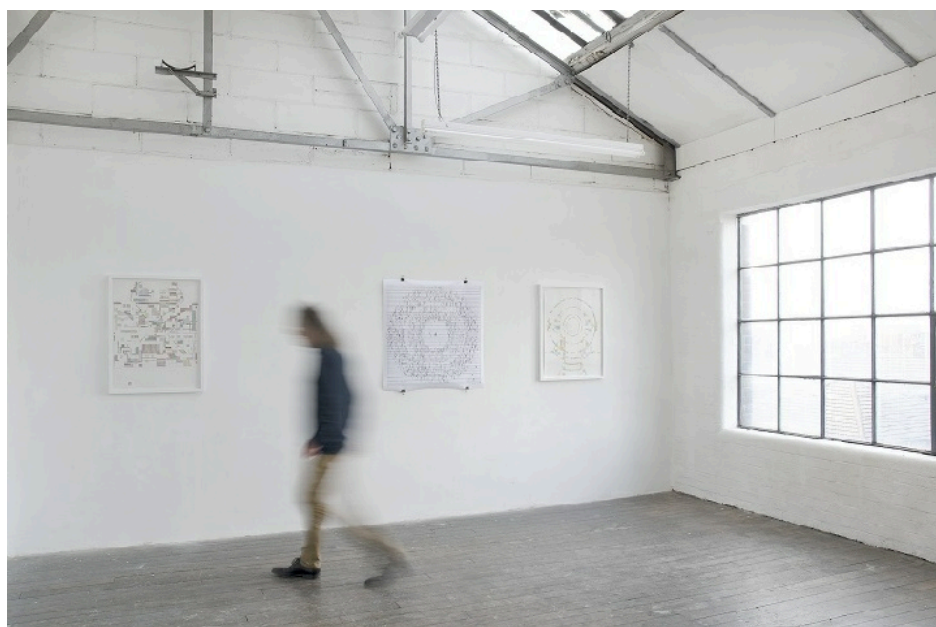
Three contemporary artists whose work has beginnings already abstracted from the visual world.

PROJECTS

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Website: Chestnuts Design



In this exhibition the viewer is asked to move through space, mentally and physically. When looking, ask yourself: "Where am I, physically, with respect to what I am seeing?"

With Veness, the image seems to be an object that exists as a solid. The bold lines flow and stop abruptly. Or perhaps they continue beyond, and to what? Perhaps the colour relationships between each band (stripe? swatch? fragment? ..it is difficult to be certain) is something which can guide us.

In any case, there is a kind of relationship between each canvas, and from one colour to the next.

Close to, they are obviously painted by hand, but even at a short distance, they seem as though they might be windows in the gallery wall, revealing what is beyond. There is something almost scientific about this work, with colour and form boiled down to the basics. As with physics, this concentration on the particular leads directly to the universal, so that we are able to observe the image but also be within it.

Yacoob's painted drawings revel in the fractured space, a space that exists both on the page and within the structures from which the source material originates. The drawings in this exhibition take as their source material architectural drawings of real buildings, two national libraries in this instance, in Paris and Tianjin. The buildings themselves exist, and have the solid reality of concrete, steel and glass. Looking at these works we are both here and not here - the 'here' of the gallery, and the imagined 'here' of the representation before us. Yacoob reworks the architectural drawings, streaking colour and breaking lines with a visual logic that is liberated through experience. So, we are also before a drawing that both is, and is not, a technical exercise in conveying information, one that is

both suggestive and didactic. Maybe the colour conveys the many voices that stem from the shelves in these buildings, full of books. Or perhaps it's more akin to buildings that are lived in and remembered, not as pure aesthetic objects, but as circus.

And so I have written in this way, a way which is somehow painterly and chin-strokingly considered. Zhao is much more direct when talking about his work. This image is the fleeting passage of time, he says. He tells of a word in Buddhism where this moment is now, at this very instant and gone in a flash. The work he makes is a direct illustration of this. In a sense there is no further meaning beyond these words, which for us here in our western art viewpoint means a lack of intention or even, heaven forbid, seriousness. But of course, the picture stays with us; it's impossible to ignore, unforgettable even. Once he says what he says, we have our moment: "oh yes, that is all there is, but it's not what we asked". And of course, it doesn't matter in a sense, what is ultimately important is that Zhao has found a way to make an interesting image, and that is all we should care about. But there is this reality with us as we see the work - the Buddhist notion that there is nothing in the end, but this nothing is everything, everyone and everywhere. So, in terms of the image, there is nothing beyond it but the surface in this sense, this very strict sense. Because even the blah-di-blah theory that the painted image is the picture plane and nothing but, is itself just more noise that, once stilled, reveals the infinite universal 'nothing' beyond.

There is a moment with abstract imagery where the safety of regular pattern has been left behind and the mess of chaos has not been reached. In between these two extremes bubbles up a myriad of visual possibilities. The three artists in this exhibition each have a distinct practice that puts themselves, and hence us, the viewers, at a different place with respect to their specific viewing solutions. The frame of reference is reconstituted by each in turn.

Piers Veness

In the work of Piers Veness there are three major considerations: line, colour and surface. Hard-edged forms with clearly defined shapes tread the line between abstraction and representation - the forms are what they are, but at the same time they can evoke something else. Veness is fascinated by the possibilities and interactions between colours and their tones, and black always features heavily. In terms of surface, his paintings are haptic: the trace of the brushstroke or a palette knife on the paintings draws attention to the materiality of the paint itself.

Piers Veness received an MA with distinction in Theatre Design at the Slade School of Fine Art, London, and a first-class BA in Fine Art and Drama at University College Northampton. He is a founding member of Square Art Projects, an independent artist-run initiative which presents contemporary art exhibitions on an international level.

Mary Yacoob

Two central threads in Mary Yacoob's practice are drawing and visual languages. She appropriates visual languages from architectural plans, maps, geological and engineering diagrams, and from alphabets and musical notation. Yacoob takes as a starting point something that exists in the world as coded thought and discovers how she can express her relation to it through her own visual language.

Mary Yacoob is based in London; she studied at Central Saint Martins and the Cass School of Art.

Her solo exhibitions include the Hospital Club, the Centre for Recent Drawing and Five Years Gallery.

Zhao Huaidong

In Zhao Huaidong's recent works the subjectivity of time is emphasised in order to discover the unnatural passage of time and the graphical concept of time. Time is intangible and complicated, but it also creates a visual material response, through change, so that our understanding of time is linear and naturally progressive. These recent works aim to present a subjective image of time by transforming the concept of digital sequence numbers into the identification of image. Like the rendered images of time tunnels or black holes, it brings us to a place of more imagination and a deeper perspective on time.

Zhao Huaidong is a digital artist and senior virtual art designer, teaching at the art school of Xi'an University of Architecture & Technology. His work includes virtual animation design, digital painting, and digital graphic design. He has exhibited at the Aste multimedia exhibition, Norway, the New Horizon Art Exhibition, Xi'an, and the Asia New Digital Art Exhibition, Shanghai.