
**BEN COVE, HOLLY CHAMBERS, ROBERT DOWLING, ROBIN FRIEND, ROBERT FRY, ALEXANDER GOUGH,
DAN McDERMOTT, JOANNA PAWLOWKA, TOONEY PHILLIPS, MARIA THURN UND TAXIS**

The Directors of Go Modern Ltd in collaboration with Loewe Contemporary are pleased to announce the launch of its art programme with a group exhibition showcasing the work of ten UK based artists at their new space at 565 Kings Road, London. Curated by Catherine Loewe, *Spirit Level* brings together a diverse group of talented artists whose work range from sculpture, painting, print and photography to display a cross-section of current contemporary art practice and preoccupations.

HOLLY CHAMBERS approaches drawing by simply drawing a line. However, through an obsessive process of repetition the line is contorted and a form, or rather a surface, is brought into existence. The work is thrown into the world of illusion, but remains rooted in a process that allows and encourages the compositions of the drawings to appear organically. The works exist as a testament of endurance, as often each line is repeated until the paper runs out. The surface of the paper is delicately marked with pen and ink or indented. The resulting drawings are minimalist experiments exploring the properties of the drawn mark, encouraging the viewer to look and look again.

Holly Chambers graduated from University of St. Andrews (2009) and City and Guilds of London Art School (2010). In 2010 she was Project Leader at London Zoo for the *Big Draw* event combining artistic instruction and environmental education and teaching art to over 300 visitors to the Zoo.

BEN COVE'S practice exists across different media. Though not directly site specific, works are often conceived in relation to a particular space or made with other works in mind. He trained initially in architecture and this pervades his practice in research, direct referencing or in an approach to making. Cove is concerned with the physical and cultural legacies of modernist practices and their presence in contemporary cultural experience. In particular architecture's need to bring together potentially conflicting concerns: usefulness and uselessness, structure and decoration, brash and sober. *Regular Work* is a series of 10 paintings, all of which share similar formal traits, each made on the same sized canvas with exposed bare linen and the image sits on the bottom edge of the canvas. These subjects are derived from the artist's collection of found images from varying sources: architecture, furniture, body parts, objects and artefacts.

Ben Cove graduated from the University of Nottingham (1995), Sheffield Hallam University (2001) and Goldsmiths College (2008). Cove has had solo exhibitions include *Tilted* Leeds Metropolitan University Gallery (2002); *New Plastic Universal*, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester (2004) and *Practical Mechanics*, Cell Project Space, London (2006). He has participated in group exhibitions in London and throughout the UK. Cove has won the Arts Council England Awards for Artists and is Associate Lecturer at Winchester School of Art.

ROBERT DOWLING uses simple shapes and reoccurring geometry as an initial starting point, experimenting with alternative ways of producing paintings and questioning their associated relationships, he creates works that are decidedly ambiguous in both their materiality and poise. Recent monochromes executed in black, silver and white combine selected fragments to form complex patterns, manifold possible configurations suggest an endless flexibility and yet the works' form and dimensions are resolute. The stark assemblages made from a variety of materials, cast canvas, card and sewn fabric through careful attachment transform the works flat plains. These paintings however rely not only on their own construction but the unfixed variables of light and space. Adopting a sculptural approach to making paintings, Dowling uses a variety of hand-made techniques to disrupt the common distinction between craft and mass-production, echoing and yet confounding the methodologies and processes of minimalism.

Robert Dowling graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art (2004) and the Royal College of Art (2008). In 2009 he had a solo show at Eleven Howland Ltd and has been in group shows including *Anticipation* at Selfridges curated by Kay Saatchi, Catriona Warren & Robert Dingle (2010) and *Early Drawing*, Engholm Engelhorn Galerie, Vienna, (2009); *Maximal Minimal*, Andreas Grimm, Munich and at Alexandre Pollazzon Ltd, London (2008). His work is to be included in *The Shape of Things to Come*, *New Sculpture II* at the Saatchi Gallery.

ROBIN FRIEND'S pictures capture a sensibility; an instinctive and primitive way of looking and thinking about the world. The physical experience of being in the world is what shapes our minds and makes us who we are. In living in a period of disembodiment and dematerialization, we have stopped engaging with the physical world and are in danger of losing touch with its capacity to keep secrets from us. Using a large format camera, Friend painstakingly controls light, colour, form, movement, and focus to create a heightened visual experience that nevertheless remains believable. The 'Belly of the Whale' series depicts a mythical landscape that transcends time and place, 'shipwreck', 'white horse' and 'light at the end of the tunnel' are archetypal images that resonate and reoccur throughout history; the arts, myth, and religion. What we are left with are these symbolic images, simple and instantly recognisable in design yet at the same time convoluted in their meaning.

Robin Friend graduated from the University of Plymouth, School of Art & Design and the Royal College of Art. This year Friend has been included in numerous group exhibitions including *reGeneration*, Pingyao Photography festival, China (and touring, Cape Town, Arles, Lausanne and Milan), *Anticipation*, Selfridges, *Familiar Visions*, Towner Gallery, Eastbourne. He has been nominated for the prestigious *Prix-Pictet Award*, has won the *Photographers Gallery Award* and been shortlisted for *New Contemporaries*. His work features on the cover of *Source Magazine* issue no. 62 spring 2010.

ROBERT FRY uses a variety of methods to engage with the complexity of painting and 'deconstruct' the process employing paint, scale and colour. In addition to acrylic, oil and enamel, he frequently uses marker pen along the bottom of his canvases to create a contrasting frame consisting of letters or numbers scrawled in a near obsessive manner. The physicality and emotion of his large-scale canvases test the boundaries between abstract and figurative painting. Fry explores simultaneously the relationship between materials and the psychological tension that exist between the mysterious figures that appear in every work. He locates these figures in a non-space, a vacuum lacking the naturalistic elements of the human environment and absorbing the viewer into his visceral world.

Robert Fry graduates from Oxford Brookes University (2002) and has had solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle@ M&B with Francois Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles (2010) Alexia Goethe Gallery, London and Atelier 2, Moscow (2009) and is currently participating in the exhibition *Newspeak – British Art Now* at the Saatchi Gallery, London (and previously at the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia). He has also been included in the Macmillan Contemporary Art Auction and Exhibition and was recently shortlisted for the John Moores Painting Prize.

ALEXANDER GOUGH'S paintings are concerned with the notion and sensation of the sublime, in its traditional and modern sense. His Scandinavian heritage and excursions into the forest of Finnish Lapland in midwinter have deeply influenced his work. The experience of being in a place of isolation, precious light and the beauty of nature are translated into the possibilities and materiality of paint, layer of transparency, colour and raw pigment as mastered by Mark Rothko, Callum Innes and Graeme Todd. His paintings cross the figurative to abstract divide, with fir trees downward drooping from the weight of the snow, the sense of gravity and the flux of organic forms - plants, streams and snow - echoed in the paint flow.

Alex Gough graduated from Chelsea College of Art, London (2002), Camberwell College of Art (2005) and was included in the MA City and Guilds of London School of Art show (2010). He is currently Resident Artist at *The Centre for Recent Drawing* in London. He has had solo shows *Arctic Blue*, JP Jahan Fine Art, London (2009) and *Sinen Syvyys*, The Arts Gallery, London (2006) and in group shows in UK, Ireland, Helsinki & USA.

DAN MCDERMOTT'S work investigates a very specific notion of time, described by the French philosopher Henri Berson as 'duration'. The nature of the present is one of continuous change. It can be seen as 'pure becoming' which is to say that, at every single instant, it is outside of itself as it becomes past. McDermott sets out to 'freeze frame' time in such a way that the viewer becomes aware of the duration that we exist in and connect to that of the past. These moments in time also remind us of our own history. Using a personal archive of collected photos taken from television, film and the internet McDermott attempts to journey further into those images using paint, canvas, projection, distortion and repetition. Through distortion of the image, ambiguous spaces are created that lie in between the past moment of the film-still and the present moment of viewing the canvas. So the activity of painting merges with the fluidity and distortions of memory and perception.

Dan McDermott graduated from Camberwell College of Art (1992), the University of Northumbria (1995) and City and Guilds of London Art School (2010). He has had several solo shows at Northcote Gallery, Chelsea and Alon Zakaim Fine Art, London and exhibited extensively throughout the UK and Internationally including London-Paris-New York at Collyer Bristow Gallery, London; Andara Gallery, Jakarta, Indonesia and the Silas Marder Gallery, NY, USA.

JOANNA PAWLOSKA'S multimedia practice uses digital art with her own photography as the basis for her work. Painting and printing exclusively on aluminium using porcelain varnish as her main medium. The aluminium's smooth mirror-like surface emanates coldness, hardness and impenetrability, an ideal material for themes exploring the relationship between the stranger and the community that he or she tries to infiltrate. The straight lines and geometrical forms create an illusion of control and order. Like Paul Winstanley, this is the imagery of 'No Place', deprived of human presence where nothing was happening to the point of banality, but stirring the viewer's imagination through choices of light and colour, the settings for potential human drama.

Joanna Pawlowska graduated from John Cass School of Art and Design (2004) and Central Saint Martin's School (2010) where she received the *Winner of Kate Barton Painting Award*. In 1976 she left Poland and moved to London, where she became co-organiser of the Polish Women's Forum supporting Solidarity.

TOONEY PHILLIP'S works are devised from observations of the fragmented landscape of the Provencal limestone quarry and the build environment of the Andalucian white village street. The 'same' places are returned to repeatedly, initially recorded with photographs that are then manipulated with the use of transparency and photo-montage. The resulting prints and paintings are abstractions that play on the ambiguity between the formal characteristics of the space created when blocks of stone are extracted, and what remains of the stone, while simultaneously setting up fluctuating readings between recessive space and flatness in the two dimensional surface.

Tooney Phillips graduated from University of Manchester School of Architecture (1990), The Bartlett School of Architecture (2001) and City and Guilds of London School of Art (2010), winning the Norman Ackroyd Prize for Etching and the Anstruther Prize for Artistic Excellence. Her work is to be included in the Clifford Chance Post-Graduate Printmaking exhibition.

MARIA THURN UND TAXIS' drive to paint is inherently an emotional one, exploring deeper psychological meanings and the responses from the viewer. Confronting the way in which the human mind rationalizes and suppresses raw emotion evoked through certain events such as patients who have undergone heart surgery or the atmosphere of a lethal injection chamber. These are questions that relate to life and death, pain and happiness and the ways in which we experience what it is to be alive.

Maria Thurn und Taxis graduated from the American University of Paris with a BA in Film and Media (2005) before enrolling in painting classes at Camberwell College of Art (2007) and an MA Fine Art from City and Guilds of London School of Art (2010). In 2005 she produced a documentary film at the Sushma Koirala Hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal which was shown at a charity event in Paris in 2006.