

CONTEMPORARY ART | THE COLLECTION & USHER GALLERY



28th September 2013 – 2nd January 2014

Colour Love

*Décosterd & Rahm Associates, Joe McKay,
Garry Fabian Miller, Terry Shave*

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COLOUR LOVE

Do you love sunsets, folded coloured fabrics, and glowing embers, neon lights in the dark or the lustrous paint of a newly sprayed car? Where do colours take you?

Artists have explored this most seductive element of visual experience for centuries. Colour can entice, delight, repulse, signal, signify, identify, reveal, conceal, dazzle, stimulate and sooth. Colour can alter our feelings and perceptions.

The four contemporary artists in this exhibition use colour in an elemental way; colour is the subject, the material and the primary medium of communication in the works.

Terry Shave

Terry Shave is fascinated with the process of painting and the language of image making. Shave uses intensely-coloured abstracted photographic imagery combined with acrylic paint and resin to present the viewer with a set of visual clues; clues with which to build a web of associations and to meditate on the acts of producing and looking at paintings.

1.

Taboo series: *Milk in its time*, 2010-2012

Acrylic paint with photograph & resin on board
Courtesy the Artist

Terry Shave's paintings provide the viewer with many delights; brilliant colour, shiny surfaces, translucent layers, intricate texture, bold pattern and subtle modulations. The works are painstakingly built up layer upon layer over a period of time. His processes of making are both highly controlled and subject to accident and chance.

As might be guessed from the title Taboo series: *Milk in its time*, Shave is exploring a complex personal narrative through his painting. Likewise, he invites viewers to read their own meanings into the works. Does red suggest blood or a sunset? Is that striped ticking a crumpled pillow for uneasy dreams?

You can see two more works from the Taboo series in Stokes, The Collection Café.

2.

Forbidden fruit series: *Morning*, 2013

Acrylic paint with photograph & resin on board
Courtesy the Artist

3.

Forbidden fruit series: *Noon*, 2013

Acrylic paint with photograph & resin on board
Courtesy the Artist

Shave has been making triptychs, works in three parts placed next to each other, for over 20 years. The triptych is a traditional configuration often used for alter-pieces and other religious paintings. The three sections, like frames in a movie film, allow for the idea of movement, the passage of time or setting of a scene.

The pure, clear colour emerging from shadowy corners in the left hand panel of *Morning* leads to an expansive, misty 'sky' partly obscured by a casual mesh of lines across the front of the picture plane. On the right hand panel the monochrome silhouette of leaf shapes suggests a curtained window.

Shave works on more than one piece at once, building up series of several works, developing motifs and creating variations on a theme. In *Noon*, the second of the Taboo series the progression from one painting to the next can clearly be seen, like verses in a poem.

Shave says his recent works 'involve inspections of place, both real and imagined. Place as a negotiation of who we are and how we are understood.'

Joe McKay

4.

Sunset Solitaire, 2005

Video 28 minutes, documentation of
live performance *Sunset Solitaire*
Courtesy the Artist

In *Sunset Solitaire*, here shown as the filmed record of the original 'performance', Joe McKay pits his digital colour manipulation skills against nature to match a projection with the real sunset behind his studio.

With a background in conceptual art, participation and gaming McKay explores the relationship between the digital and real world in a playful, engaging way. A digitally simulated sunset could never equal a real sunset, but the magic of recreation and a fresh way of looking enhances our perception and heightens our senses. In another of his works two players vie against each other to match colours on a screen using hand held controllers.

Garry Fabian Miller

5. *Burning (with Gwen) 1.1*, July 2002

Oil, light, dye destruction print
Courtesy the Artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh

6. *Burning (with Gwen) 1.2*, July 2002

Oil, light, dye destruction print
Courtesy the Artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh

7. *Burning (with Gwen) 1.3*, July 2002

Oil, light, dye destruction print
Courtesy the Artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh

Garry Fabian Miller's works of pure colour are made using photographic processes but without cameras or film. Like the earliest photographers he passes light through objects or filters of oil and coloured water onto photosensitive paper. Fabian Miller investigates our most visceral perceptions of pure colour.

The series, *Burning (with Gwen)* was made as a result of an invitation to the artist from the Graves Gallery, Sheffield to produce work in response to the gallery's collection. Miller chose Gwen John's painting *A Corner of the Artist's Room*, Paris (1907–9). Her painting depicts light flooding into a room, diffused by a curtain across the window. Fabian Miller researched her biography while working on the photographs. Gwen John took great pleasure in her little room, which she occupied as a young artist during a period of her life during which she enjoyed intense relationships.

Décosterd et Rahm, Associates

8.

Placebo Paint©, 2001/2004

Paint, Orange blossom oil

Set of instructions, site specific installation

Courtesy the Artist and Franc Lorraine

We see a colour when light of a certain wavelength falls upon our eyes, but there's more. We can make colours appear by pressing our closed eyelids in the dark; we can remember a colour or imagine a colour. Some people think they can see supernatural colour; can we hear, smell, taste or touch colour as well as see it?

In *Placebo Paint* Décosterd & Rahm Associates play with our subjective experiences and associations stimulated by mixing a miniscule amount of orange blossom oil into the paint used on these gallery walls.

Placebo Paint

‘There has been tremendous interest of late in so-called “natural” medicine, the irrational adjunct to the incredible scientific developments that have taken place in genetic engineering and chemical therapy. These natural modalities include aromatherapy, homeopathy and flower-based remedies, not to mention anti-stress perfumes, birch-juice depurates, linden relaxing massage cream and tonic hydrating oil with green mate and ginger. The alternative medicines and other natural therapeutic methods, which are termed “irrational” because they have no scientific foundation, are unquantifiable, and cannot be reproduced experimentally; seem to be the expression of a superstitious ideology celebrating harmony of the senses, ecology and a certain form of humanism that resists the reductive technicality of modern sciences.

To avoid thinking of magic in order to understand and accept alternative medicines on a rational basis, we must revert to the scientific notion of the placebo, which although still quite mysterious, nevertheless points to certain neurobiological and endocrine mechanisms at work in this type of therapy. A placebo stimulates the production of endogenous substances. By this fact, and since their action is completely dependent on the psychological make-up of the individual, the placebo seems to be a humanistic key within the organic nature of man. As such, it is an expression of free will.

Given the disconcerting simplicity of action of genetics and its terrible efficacy, its effective reduction of human nature to the organic level, the notion of the placebo restores to a scientific context the elements of freedom and humanism that seem to have been marginalised for a number of years. The placebo paint offers the kind of stimulation characteristic of a placebo. By incorporating

an infinitesimal amount of orange blossom oil into industrial paint, we seek to designate the intended purpose of a room outside the realm of any visual or plastic representation. For the painting of this gallery, Décosterd & Rahm, associés offer a paint containing a high dilution of orange blossom of $1/10^{30}$, i.e. 15 CH. At this dilution ratio, no active ingredient can be documented by pharmacology.

Placebo paint© acts solely by the placebo effect by imparting a psychological attribute to the space.

It is our ambition to act on a presensory level, to create a sort of infrafunctionalist architecture, generating its forms within the neurological and endocrine space of the body. The orange blossom will be relaxing.'

Décosterd & Rahm, associés.

Thank you:

Ingleby Gallery
Frac Lorraine
Joe McKay
Terry Shave

for the loan of artworks

