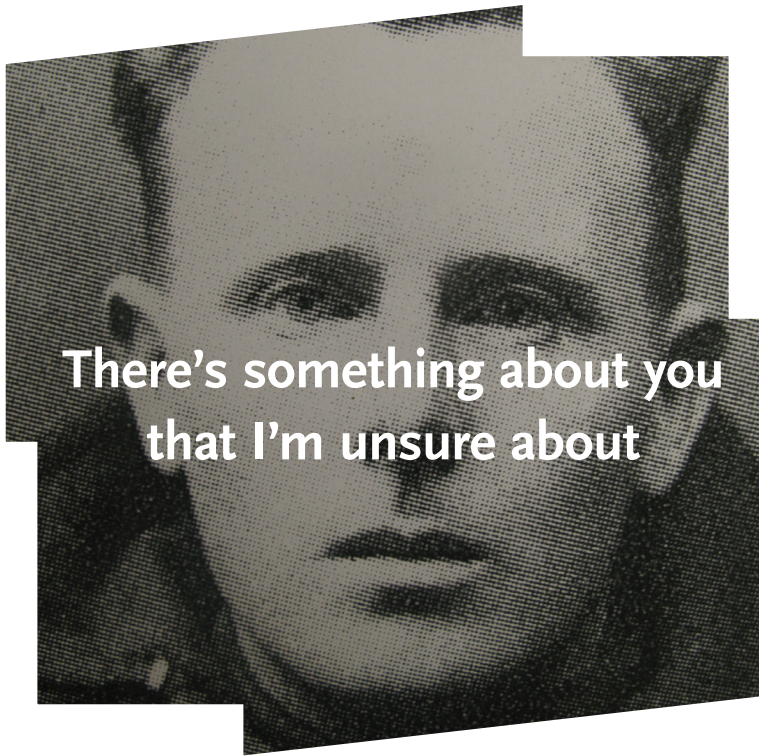


CONTEMPORARY ART | THE COLLECTION & USHER GALLERY



28th September 2013–2nd January 2014

There's something about you that I'm unsure about

Paul Johnson

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT YOU THAT I'M UNSURE ABOUT
PAUL JOHNSON

Do you ever have that feeling when something, someone, a face, or a photograph haunts you slightly? That man in the newspaper looks strangely familiar, or the old photograph in the museum seems to have one character that stares out at you, more intensely than the rest, connected, as if he was alive today. You can't put your finger on it but these interactions with certain objects and images just jolt you.

Paul Johnson takes this feeling as a starting point for making art works.

For this show Paul has worked with our collections to locate objects and artifacts that touched him or resonated with him long after his first visit.

Over the last six months these objects from the collections, the Kayak, the two paintings, the shells have become starting points for the creation of new collages and sculptures.

Paul has used the works he has produced alongside the museum artifacts to weave a new story for the objects. These tales are loose and you, as the audience are encouraged to make your own connections.

Paul's work is not about themes, it's about more than you can see, the feelings you get from the works, and how we try to locate the objects and images and create a history for them in our own minds.

'Imagine the idea of how we look at ancient stones erected by people and cultures, say by pre-Egyptian European Neolithic people, we don't understand the reasons for these structures, but we are interested in the many possible uses or needs for these objects. Imagine if our 20th/21st century was destroyed so much and what was left was only fragment of our cultures, we would be piecing these objects/images/people together in a loose associational way, creating these new ideas on these existing forms'

Paul Johnson 2013

The Collection and Usher Gallery are proud to present Paul Johnsons first solo show in a U.K. public institution.

1.

Portrait of A.G. Webster, 1881

George Clausen RA (b.1852-d.1944)

Oil on Canvas

LCNUG : 1927/2316

This portrait shows one of the early educators at Lincoln School of Art, it was painted by the sitter's brother in law, possibly explaining the intense feeling the portrait exudes.

2.

Partner, 2013

Paul Johnson

Papier-mâché and collage on board
Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern

What is the nature of the relationship between Webster and Partner? Do they work for the collector, are they dealers or collectors themselves? Webster was a tutor at Lincoln School of Art, do you think the object he is holding has a special meaning?

The artist viewed the painting of Webster as having a repressed nature, a sensitive man softly holding an object, by placing the partner next to him, who was made especially for the Webster painting. Johnson creates a new relationship, is this partner in fact a figment of Webster's imagination, a dream partner, as precious as the vase in his hand - a beautiful object to be admired?

The work is created by producing an under-drawing, almost like a puzzle, this is then used to create the correct shapes of paper which are then all hand cut and colored using a selection of paints including glass paint. Once the pieces are coloured they are put back together to form a flat collage, creating a structure closely related to inlaid wood and marquetry. This technique, which was fashionable in the 17th and 18th centuries, gives Johnson's work a timeless feel.

3.

Collector, 2013

Paul Johnson

Papier-mâché and collage on board
Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern

In this work we are presented with a female portrait, but when associated with the rest of the installation many questions come up. Why is the lady collecting? Is this portrait in her collection made to compliment her, or is this an illustration of the collector as owner of the other items in the room - like a photo on the back of a book of the author.

Are the kayak and the paintings of the ship forms of transport, demonstrating the way in which the collector explores? Or, are these objects in her collection - is she a maritime enthusiast? Does she collect for money, science or love?

The artist said in our research phase:

'The finished portrait has a yellow face/head and is slightly blurred, which in a way is an attempt to suggest she herself is a found object, almost like she has been discovered by a future generation who do not know her history or have a clear history of the people or culture she has come from. This portrait is an attempt to idolise her, by taking her out of context she is a lone example of a whole lost civilization, making this person into a precious object.'

4.

Moonlight Barque, 19th Century

Oil on Canvas

Charles Pears (b.1873-d.1958)

LCNUG : 1927/672

This painting of a ship at night conjures ideas of adventure and exploration. Sailors are heading into the unknown, returning with objects that are alien and strange. These objects become the basis of the understanding of this new world. The beautiful stars in this painting are the starting point for the group of circular images spread across the room. What secrets do these patterns in the darkness hold?

5.

Planet io, 2013

Paul Johnson

Papier-mâché on board

Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern

'This earth like planet I believe is visually the closest looking object in the solar system to Earth, I have considered this collage to be positioned above the Moonlight Barque painting. This painting is of a ship in transit moving towards you with a constellation of stars floating subtly above, I am interested in interrupting this piece and extending its landscape beyond its golden frame. Almost trying to suggest this is a voyage from the past and it is heading towards the future. In the book Time Binds (queer temporalities queer histories) Elizabeth Freeman talks about something called Temporal Drag. The idea that an artist takes something from the past, that he or she feels is unfinished and temporarily drags this object / image into the present, thus creating a possible future. This is something I am interested in, in placing these works together. A similar idea is in place in relationship of the kayak and its new badge'

Paul Johnson

6.

Portrait of Mars, 2013

Paul Johnson

Papier-mâché on Board

Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern

This image of the planet Mars dominates the space; the installation has been designed so that the kayak seems to be drawn towards the red planet. What is the relationship? Was the kayak found on Mars, used to travel there in a future or past we are unaware of? The artist sets up these interactions between objects to make the objects unstable. We know what Mars is, where it is even, but when placed with other objects, we suddenly become unsure.

'I am interested in Mars being a fiction, this images looks like Mars, but has been produced by filters and telescopes... does Mars actually look like this? Up close it's a reddish dusty looking place. Every filter either mental or physical changes its reality. My collage is shaped to form a rough outline of a possible head/face, distorting its image even further from reality into a fictional space.'

Paul Johnson

Note - This is an image taken from photograph of an image on a computer screen.

7.

*Hey...Hey...Hey...Let Me Be Your Only Love...You Won't Be Sorry...
We Will Be Happy...WAIT...Until We Go Back...Until We Go Back...
Until We Go Back To The Stars.*

2013

Paul Johnson

Papier-mâché sculpture

Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern

8.

Shell Collection, 2013

Paul Johnson

C-type print on board

Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern,
Shell collection courtesy Lincolnshire Archives.

A constellation of images fills the gallery, but look more closely and each one is unique, depicting a collection of shells - just as from our viewpoint on Earth the stars all seem similar but are actually unique and wildly different.

The shells are sorted into categories but all unique and varied. The notion of the way in which images are viewed in extreme close up and from a great distance (macro/micro) is an ongoing interest in Paul's work.

The images are taken from the shell collection of Lincolnshire Archives. The Victorian collectors were extremely keen on taxonomy (the process of categorising museum collections) the display of natural specimens in ornate patterns as in the shells was also popular in creating displays of butterflies and birds.

9.

A key to understanding the hidden meaning of the true way... WAKE UP... WAKE UP... WAKE UP... to the true way. No man will save you.

2013

Paul Johnson

Hand coloured paper and Kayak LCNCC : 1909.176
Courtesy the Artist and Ancient and Modern

A kayak with a distinctive emblem sits facing Mars. It is unclear where the kayak comes from and where it is heading. What was its use? Ceremony? Hunting? Who does this emblem belong to and what does it represent.

The artist by placing the kayak in this installation utilises the objects as a medium just as others use paint or pencil, allowing us to construct a story around it all of our own.

See the hand out for the history of the object.

Thankyou to:

The Artist
Ancient and Modern
Lincolnshire Archives
Jennifer Veron

NOTES ON THE ARTIST

Paul Johnson studied at the Royal Academy Schools and Glasgow School of Art.

Paul has shown at the Armoury, New York; Freize, London; Saatchi Gallery London; Zabłudowicz Collection London.

This is his first Solo show in a public institution in the United Kingdom.

NOTES ON THE PLANET IO

Planet Io - (/ai.oʊ/) is the innermost of the four Galilean moons of the planet Jupiter and, with a diameter of 3,642 kilometres (2,263 mi), the fourth-largest moon in the Solar System. It was named after the mythological character Io, a priestess of Hera who became one of the lovers of Zeus.

With over 400 active volcanoes, Io is the most geologically active object in the Solar System.^{7 8} This extreme geologic activity is the result of tidal heating from friction generated within Io's interior as it is pulled between Jupiter and the other Galilean satellites—Europa, Ganymede and Callisto. Several volcanoes produce plumes of sulfur and sulfur dioxide that climb as high as 500 km (300 mi) above the surface. Io's surface is also dotted with more than 100 mountains that have been uplifted by extensive compression at the base of Io's silicate crust. Some of these peaks are taller than Mount Everest. Unlike most satellites in the outer Solar System, which are mostly composed of water ice, Io is primarily composed of silicate rock surrounding a molten iron or iron sulfide core. Most of Io's surface is composed of extensive plains coated with sulfur and sulfur dioxide frost.

Io's volcanism is responsible for many of its unique features. Its volcanic plumes and lava flows produce large surface changes and paint the surface in various shades of yellow, red, white, black, and green, largely due to allotropes and compounds of sulfur. Numerous extensive lava flows, several more than 500 km (300 mi) in length, also mark the surface. The materials produced by this volcanism make up Io's thin, patchy atmosphere and Jupiter's extensive magnetosphere. Io's volcanic ejecta also produce a large plasma torus around Jupiter.

Io played a significant role in the development of astronomy in the 17th and 18th centuries. It was discovered in 1610 by Galileo Galilei, along with the other Galilean satellites. This discovery furthered the adoption of the Copernican model of the Solar System, the development of Kepler's laws of motion, and the first measurement of the speed of light. From Earth, Io remained just a point of light until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when it became possible to resolve its large-scale surface features, such as the dark red polar and bright equatorial regions. In 1979, the two Voyager spacecraft revealed Io to be a geologically active world, with numerous volcanic features, large mountains, and a young surface with no obvious impact craters. The Galileo spacecraft performed several close flybys in the 1990s and early 2000s, obtaining data about Io's interior structure and surface composition. These spacecraft also revealed the relationship between Io and Jupiter's magnetosphere and the existence of a belt of radiation centered on Io's orbit. Io receives about 3,600 rem (36 Sv) of radiation per day.[10]

Further observations have been made by Cassini–Huygens in 2000 and New Horizons in 2007, as well as from Earth-based telescopes and the Hubble Space Telescope as technology has advanced.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Io_\(moon\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Io_(moon))

