

REVIEW

Stirling The Poets Still Throwing Up Their Hands

THE CHANGING ROOM 29 APR - 10 JUN

The Changing Room's latest offering is a confident show of hands - or perhaps a defiant throwing-down of the gauntlet - by three impressive visual poets. It consists of predominantly two-dimensional works, some of which verge on sculptural intrusiveness. Overall, the mood is one of confident reserve; the viewer has to look closely to see both morbid passion and surreal humour lurking beneath the surface.

For those who recall Kalin Lindena's last Scottish show (at Transmission in Glasgow three years ago) her current work might come as something of a surprise. The German-based artist has diverted from her customary line in graffiti-inspired wall-drawings to the savage use of found fabrics, many of them with a fading baroque-synthetic gleam. The sartorial *pièce de résistance* is a darkly spectacular floor-based work in the centre of the main gallery space. Recalling the melted Witch of the West in the *Wizard of Oz*, and composed of numerous small gussets, taken from a variety of garments, sewn together, its outstretched arms branch into splayed fingers. This is both a dissection and - by violent implication - an autopsy of clothes; to use Duchamp's wonderful phrase from his notes to 'The Large Glass', a veritable 'cemetery' of uniforms and liveries.

Lindena's fabric pieces are serenely complemented by Jane Topping's ongoing investigation of visual fragments that have been cryptically displaced from their sources. Her latest series portrays mouth-and-nose forms extracted from anonymous portraits. Each portrait is clearly of a different person, but the fragmentation obscures the subject's identity, turning the isolated features into ciphers or hieroglyphic marks, implying speech, smell, communication, sensory experience - and blindness - all at once. A rotating brush-mark of ink or black paint creates a kind of halo around the features in many of the works, leading to the impression of a frame, or the loose outline of a cartoon head. These eyeless creatures are perversely witty symbols to flash - mirror-like - at gallery spectators, yet they are also beautiful, rendered with a delicate touch in charcoal and ink.

Lotte Gerz's layered and intriguing wood-cut prints on Japanese paper and book-binding paper draw inspiration from surreal poems by the Danish writer Benny Andersen. In some works, the material is allowed to bend out into



ABOVE Kalin Lindena, 'Ohne Titel (Schöpferin)' / 'Untitled (She-Creator)', 2004, detail

jutting relief, and these sculptural qualities augment the layering of the printed images themselves. The rough spherical forms portrayed are abstract, but dense enough to evoke solidity, depth and the illusion of a tactile surface, like that of balled-up wool or crumpled paper. If you stare long enough, you can begin to see other, more mythic symbols emerging through the layers of ink and torn paper. In one piece, entitled 'Still Life with Bottle and Long Distance Throw', a John Wayne-style cowboy emerges in a blood-coloured silhouette beside a paint-covered rope wound like a lasso. The works have evolved through an all-encompassing approach to the material involved in their production, and their inventive, lively structure is a vigorous camouflage for their own subtle narrative illusions.

Laurence Figgis is an artist living in Glasgow

Glasgow Jacqueline Donachie and Darren Monckton: Tomorrow Belongs to Me

HUNTERIAN MUSEUM 9 JUN - 2 SEP

Appropriately showing in a museum setting rather than a gallery one, this is an exhibition which documents illness. A very particular one.

Susan Donachie's second child was born premature and sickly. Tests were done and it transpired that not only the new baby girl, but also her mother, her uncle, her grandfather and her brother are all affected by a disease that 'grows and repeats itself throughout your lifetime, and the severity of the symptoms multiply as it passes through the generations.' Affecting all the muscles of the body in varying degrees, it is incurable. In this case, because older members of the family have the later onset variety, none had known they were carriers until baby Rhona arrived with the news.

RIGHT Jacqueline Donachie filming for 'Tomorrow Belongs to Me'



PHOTOS: ALAN DIMMICK (ABOVE); COURTESY THE ARTIST (BELOW)

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