

DORIS

Nicky Coutts, John Holland, Fiona MacDonald, Liz Murray

Exhibition: 18 June - 17 July 2010, Wed - Sat 2 - 7 pm

Opening: Thursday 17 June 2010, 7 - 10 pm

Artist talk: Friday 18 June, 2010, 6 pm

The talk will be held in english and will reflect on the current show and also discuss exchange projects between artist run spaces in general.

Doris is the result of an ongoing exchange of ideas and exhibitions between Stedefreund and Standpoint Gallery – a leading artist run project space in East London. Doris plays on the multitude of associations that the name carries in both German and English culture.

Nicky Coutts works with film, video and photography, sculpture and installation. She employs elements of collage and the use of found objects, appropriating materials such as film clips, paintings and photographs. Recent work includes *A Tower in the Minds of Others*: a stack of three garden sheds, styled to become reminiscent of a pagoda. These overlooked the Japanese Garden as part of the Tatton Park Biennial in 2008.

The film *Passing Place 2009*, recently shown in Multichannel at Artsway, is set at a remote crossroads in Northumberland - local people re-enact scenes from films where the crossroads is significant, including Pasolini's *Oedipus Rex* and Zemeckis's *Castaway*. In Eastern 2010, locals who visit a park in the suburbs of Tokyo re-enact the final scene in Sergio Leone's spaghetti western 'Once Upon a Time in the West'. The cultural translations, interpretations and misinterpretations at work in Eastern are key to Coutts' intentions. For **Doris** Coutts will make new work using the spa town setting of Bad Ems in Germany (via her six-month stipendium at Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral).

Coutts has worked as a writer, editor and lecturer most recently in critical and historical studies at The Royal College of Art, London and as Fine Art Fellow at Middlesex University. Her work has been shown widely in the UK and internationally. This coming year she will show at Ha Gamle Prestegard, Norway, Youkobo Art Space, Japan and at Danielle Arnaud Contemporary Art, London.

John Holland primarily makes large complex installations from out of context materials – sawn timber, plasticine, silicon rubber, gaffer tape, fibreglass, polystyrene, vaseline, house paint, fur, air freshener. These alternate realities are often 'landscapes' which realistic birds and animals inhabit. These highly controlled and inventive habitats thus become backdrops for potential dramas to unfold, or to re-investigate the lived experience of being this human creature at once embedded in and alienated from the natural world. Holland generates his work through mixed media collages often displayed alongside the installation – at **Doris** he shows a new series of works that for the first time are completely abstract. Dealing in complicated geometries and varieties of texture and colour, these works incorporate fluorescent paints, glitter and foil built up on sheets of translucent baking parchment. They have a celebratory and inventive beauty.

John Holland's solo shows include *Food Production*, curated by Celia Davies, Hastings Art College 2008, *Maybe nature gets bored too*, La Petite Surface, Lille 2006; *Here Are Some Facts*, Le 118, Lille, Culture, Phoenix Arts, Brighton, both 2004. Group shows include *Damned and Saved*, Studio 1.1 2008, *Dirty Nature* Standpoint Gallery 2007.

Fiona MacDonald's interconnected paintings and sculptures emerge from her inquiry into inhabited and visceral form in Nature and in art. Recent works take elements of art historical canon to investigate the boundaries of the discipline of painting versus sculpture, and respond to the baroque precedent of the close interaction of both. MacDonald is fascinated by the quality of an object when it begins to acquire personality, while remaining at another level abstract. For **Doris**, she presents new sculptural works made from unfired clay, covered with a cloying skin of pigmented rubber in colours alternately suggestive of mud and confectionary. These works reference particular tableaux from paintings by Goya and Titian, and their dynamic compositions feed into the idea of matter in continual motion and revision. Undergoing a similar transformative process as her earlier organic and vegetal forms, the works emerge as raw evolving events, with an emphatic grounding in the material.

Fiona MacDonald's solo shows include *Morphology* 2009, Maddox Arts, London, *Anthropoflora* 2007, Long and Ryle, London and *Habitat* 2006, Phoenix Arts Brighton. Group exhibitions include *A Point in the Field* 2010, Exeter Phoenix; *Who is Telling the Story?* Curated by Kunstvlai and Basement Art Projects at Galata Perform, Istanbul and the 1st International Artist Initiatives, Istanbul; *Not Portraits*, The Water Tower Project, Sofia, Bulgaria. Upcoming, a 2 person show with Phyllida Barlow at Co-exist, Southend.

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Liz Murray works with moving image, performance, sound and installation, often in response to site and situation. Inherent within the work is a questioning of how matter, labour, status and authenticity are classified. She is interested in systems of value and in how they are perceived and maintained. Her work often involves a process of salvage. Found, everyday objects and materials of little value are reconfigured, temporarily elevating the status of the overlooked. Feature films are re-spliced and assembled anew; the contents of a stately home's disused stables are inventoried and stacked to form a precise cube. Some of the work is more time-based and processes of labour are examined eg. four artists dig a 2m deep hole over an eight hour period, or a collaborative project where the voices of trance mediums at a séance are edited to form a disembodied soundtrack to goad passers-by on a busy Newcastle street. Murray undoes the purpose or intention of things, to unlock the unseen potential for a new comprehension of the world.

Liz Murray completed her MA Fine Art at Chelsea in 2005. She was the recipient of the Red Mansion Art prize, which took her to Beijing in 2006. Recent exhibitions include 2010 *Pack of Fifteen*, Lucky Strike, London, *Is Mary Here Again?*, 2009 Waygood Gallery, Newcastle Upon Tyne; 2008, *Terminal*, Tate Britain, London; *Jess Flood-Paddock / Liz Murray*, Standpoint Gallery, London. Murray has been selected for a three-month residency at Futura, Prague to explore the transformation of the Golem from Jewish myth to city souvenir emblem.