

And the beat goes...

Lyndsay Mann's practice moves cohesively between drawing, painting, film, sound, sculpture, text, needlework and ultimately installation. These distinct methods of production, which are frequently and explicitly labour intensive, provide an essential correlation between the diverse references that underpin her work.

Although process is intrinsic to the work, it cannot be separated from several other regularly occurring motifs. There is a strong presence of repetition from reconfigurations of singular forms to the ongoing series of appliquéd text works, of which the two exhibited here, are the latest in a long 'conversation'.

The use of repetitive processes informs another fundamental aspect of Mann's practice: the scrutiny of ritual, from the ritual of the individual to the ritual of the masses, and the sometimes complex lack of distinction between the two. The points between observer and participant, believer and infidel, submission and resistance are all given rigorous consideration. The hinterlands of reason, belief, choice and responsibility are trawled through by whatever means and the ritual may lead to answers for which the question remains elusive.

Mann, however, is certain of her questions and it is precisely her questioning that leads to articulate 'suggestions'. It is important not to consider the works as conclusions, as this would infer an end point; another element of Mann's work is fragmentation or more appropriately the essence of interruption. The text works can be seen as excerpts, the maquettes as an ongoing process of explorations of choice, and if there is an overarching sensibility it is one of displaced or repositioned narrative.

Mann's use of text provides an infrastructure for her entire practice but does not offer an explanation of other works. In previous text works Mann has explored the relationship between command and submission more explicitly: presenting apparently authoritarian statements of fact as a series of confident and indubitable certainties that when more fully considered become confusing mantras.

Here, the words used and sentences formed, appear to have been lifted from a larger whole and it is up to the viewer to rebuild the narrative that surrounds these interjections. A statement becomes a question, but remains a statement and certainty becomes doubtful. The nuances of language and the fragility of interpretation are further enforced by Mann's exploration of the translational discrepancies that occur between languages.

Mann's selection and combination of materials give further insight to her intentions: light toile holds on to heavy felt words - could it be more appropriate that 'felt' and 'toile' are themselves derived from words meaning 'filter' and 'web' respectively. Sentences are held in place by a few strategically sewn threads, 'barely there' wire armatures struggle to support ever-growing felt geometrics, and the play between 'reality' and 'fiction' is emphasised through the use of film and the inclusion of the artist's voice.

The maquettes initially appear as formal investigations into the infinite possibilities deriving from one form. The form, however, that has expanded and now betrays its original inherent 'perfection' is the icosahedron: one of the five Platonic Solids, revered originally for their acceptable, rational beauty but in this instance reason has succumbed to ritual... As with Mann's other works the process allows insight into the battleground of choice, decision and belief: hand stitched felt in recalcitrant contradiction to the original Platonic form.

The calling into question of such a diverse range of fundamental states is not an easy task. However as discussed previously, Mann *is certain of her questions* and crucially does not draw conclusions. This is essential as she presents the opportunity for the viewer to be involved in a manner that moves beyond observer.

Jennie Temple, November 2008

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