

Jennings Kerr

False Machine

again and again

The works in *False Machine* may appear diverse in medium and style, varied in approach but what connects these works is a series of repeated gestures. Some of the work is painstaking in detail, some is more minimal but the works are calm, meditative and offer up surfaces, material and patina to perhaps consider our 'wake, rinse, repeat' lives. There is woven fibre, pinched porcelain, knotted wire, poured pigment, there is carving, primal gestures in paint, studies of light and time in film, meticulous detail in still life. These pieces could just as easily not work together but for a sensitive understanding of how the artists are able to sink into their material with rhythm and purpose. The works, despite the control and repetition in making, always sing in the signing of the hand, or a touch that reminds us how the story lies in the variation. The patterns, the missed knot, the different angle or the alternate arrangement. One thing that I considered in bringing these works together is how the hand of the maker operates in the work and the different ways it does so in each of the artists' practices. The skills and processes are in many ways mechanical in their repetition but the magic lies in between the layers, the pinches and the knots, it is in the everyday and how life seeps into these works.

Samantha Dennison paints objects and arrangements, moments of the everyday. The ceramic vessels which are repeated across the three paintings have been made by hand, shaped, glazed and fired, paused in place and then rendered in oil. This transference of energy and balance of medium is another form of repeated gesture and these paintings hero light with deft skill. This bouncing from the hand made, to the painted surface is also reflected in the room. The sculptural work of Asahi So sitting in relationship with Samantha Dennison, a little letter to Morandi, arrangement and depiction, sculpting and painting. In these sculptures, So is able to bind the mediums of weaving and ceramic in perfect harmony. I love the echo of Ruth Asawa, once again the rhythm and repetition can be seen in the hand built ceramic and then transitioned into the cursive entanglement of copper wire. Harriet Goodall presents two works in this show that also bring metal and weaving together, here I include the medium description of the work 'Devotion, 2022'; 'Reclaimed Copper & Iron, Seagrass dyed with Wattle Bark, Mistletoe, Eucalyptus and Wool dyes, Silk, Leather – riveted, twined and spliced'. This doesn't help define how or why this work is so successful but it aids in explaining the attention to detail, the time given and the melding of skills. It also reminds me of the enjoyment I get from reading the eclectic material listings of the works of Robert Rauschenberg. Perhaps I link them in the shared acknowledgement of the found, beaten by time and embedded with tales.

The two photographic works in this show are so wonderful in their simplicity, raw stories of time and its ability to create beauty. We see it in the light and its movement through space but also over a greater period in its ability to share history through patina. These works show the same wall twice, a subtle shift in angle and captured again, closer. Despite the mechanical in camera, the pieces operate in the subtle shift, the repeated scene, observed by Ryrie. There is a meeting of hard and soft, concrete and light, paint and a craquelure patina. I love how the image, despite its dedication to architecture and space still feels like it has as much of a dialogue with abstract painting as it does architectural photography. These painterly photos sit alongside the minimal colour field paintings of Tanya Wales. I have also recently related these paintings to the meticulous and minimal in the architecture of Tadao Ando. There is no place to hide and it is only through a great patience that these endless fields of light and colour are born. The films of acrylic are laid flat over many days and weeks. This slow practice of pouring paint is a way for Wales to be mindful of her surroundings, to let daily life and adventure get trapped in between these pours.

Ceara Metlikovec has always responded to architecture and in many ways is inspired by the ancient, Mesoamerica and the beauty that is born through history. The work speaks to relic, dust, cracked forms and time faded artefact. These works are part of a series that the artist imagines as large beacons in the landscape. The forms settled into nature, channeling their surroundings, here they sit as the most detailed and delicate of sculptural relief. These pieces are carved, scratched and formed by hand with a surgical scalpel through ironstone. This control and precision is contrasted by the raw and wild mark making in the painting of Imbi Davidson. The primal marks in this case a little interrupted by the repeated triangular shapes in 'Lungs Landscape Lockdown', 2020-2021. These formed in more immediate gestures than the triangular motifs in Metlikovec's 'Seed January', 2021. Despite the difference in mark, form and medium, both Metlikovec and Davidson explain the urge for these gestures as deeply ingrained in their lives and who they are. The urge and all the time like many streams feeding into a river. Julie Pennington presents four pristine white porcelain sculptural forms that are equally delicate and precise, exquisite and restrained. Where Wales is able to conceal her layering and show time through depth of colour we see Pennington reveal the building block, the single pinch in porcelain, again and again and again.

There is a sort of mechanised process, a trance like rhythm in repeated action but these works are false machines, the beauty is in the gaps, the moment the pattern breaks or the process is interrupted by life. This is where these works come alive and show their nature. They accommodate the organic and invite stories into material through hand, by repetition and variation the pieces celebrate a slowing down in a fast world. There is some chaos in this room but I hope people find the thread and see the time, see the lives and feel the energy fed into this work.