

Our pick of what's showing in galleries around town

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RICHARD GIBLETT: INDUSTRY

Richard Giblett's paintings and collages drift knowingly between modes of intuitional and corporate critique, and a kind of guilty veneration and awe. Long known for his highly precise sculptural, drawn and otherwise rendered depictions of geometric networks, structures and architectures, this latest show makes more literal connections between the forms and the capitalist and consumerist icons that underpin them. The main space is dominated by a remarkable, vastly scaled gouache triptych titled *Sump system* (2015–2016), which spans more than six metres. It pictures an unholy network of futurist industrial edifices and factories, their precise likeness reflected in the lagoon of slick, black oil they rise from. Recognisable symbols and icons emerge from the ordered clutter – IBM, Chanel, Hilton, Ikea and McDonald's among them – as we peruse the inky cityscape, each oozing further oil into the delta below. At first glance, it's easy to mistake for some kind of digital print, so meticulous are Giblett's painted details. But the painstaking nature of his practice – which also manifests in his internally lit Chanel Warehouse sculpture and a pair of gorgeous painted collages – seems to speak directly to its conceptual premise. For all its voraciousness and amorality, the uber-capitalist structure's scrupulous web of nepotism, price rigging, tax avoidance, exploitation and environmental degradation is a kind of wicked masterwork of its own.

Until May 14; Murray White Room, Sargood Lane (off Exhibition Street, between Flinders Lane and Flinders Street), city, 9663 3204, murraywhiteroom.com



CAVES, 2016 sculpture and painting by Sean Bailey at the group show at Caves. *Photo: Sean Bailey*

SEAN BAILEY, NAOMI ELLER, DAVID NOONAN, HEATHER B. SWANN, ANNA WHITE

Though minute in size, city gallery Caves is punching well above its weight. In yet another fantastic group show, directors Storm Gold and Kez Hughes have pulled together a clutch of unlikely pairings, resonances and counterpoints here. Most of these works feel their way around each other, hinting at and echoing qualities, connections and inflections. Sean Bailey and Anna White's works deal in the currency of abstract gesture, texture and formalism, with Bailey's bright colour flashes of colour and geometry amid wonderfully sludgy acrylics and White's fluid, stuttered smears of blue, grey and white proving unconventional yet highly rewarding expansions on the act and outcomes of painting. A gorgeous 2004 owl painting by David Noonan is both an accumulation of detail and tone, and a carrier of great beauty and sorrow, while a nearby sculpture by Naomi Eller assumes the form of a kind of prehistoric coral cave echoing the hue of Noonan's owl. Heather B. Swann's works take things in a typically ghoulish, absurdist direction, with a large ink drawing and a peculiar sculpture of a small male head, a large finger protruding upward from his mouth. Like so many of Caves' shows thus far, this collection of works points to art's more mysterious and lateral continuities rather than some kind of quasi-academic justification. Sometimes, art is just for looking, feeling and letting the mind wander.

Until April 23; Caves, suite 18, level 6, Nicholas Building, 37 Swanston Street, city, 0413 205 929, cavesgallery.com



Julie Fragar, *Floreian Australian in Fiji*, 2016, at NKN. *Photo: Carl Warner*

JULIE FRAGAR: GREY PAINTINGS

The fact that Brisbane artist Julie Fragar's name doesn't ring out more loudly in Melbourne art circles speaks to the strange and tiresome provincialism of the Australian art world. Her paintings are almost frightfully complex, layered and downright sublime in their active slippages between perceptual planes, visual fields, histories and realities. While known for her astute use of often-blazing colour, this series of Grey Paintings at NKN Gallery represents one of her most realised and intriguing bodies of work to date. These works read like loosened, psycho-personal histories. Scenes seep insidiously from beneath others; figures emerge from deep shadow; history mixes and matches with the present – all in Fragar's subtle shades of grey. Where her more colourful paintings are visceral in their pictorial dissections of the body – often folding out into a cacophony of images, scenes and landscapes – these works are far more quietly spoken. Narrative strands lurk and burrow through wormholes and our clarity of mind is left wonderfully muddled. Fragar has created a significant collection of paintings here - she is an artist we should be talking about and writing about.

Until April 23; NKN Gallery, 208 Lennox Street, Richmond, 9429 0660, nkngallery.com

This is the final Galleries column.

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/our-pick-of-whats-showing-in-galleries-around-town->

