

# ARMADA



IAN DAWSON



2 >24 MARCH 2013



**FIVE YEARS**

ACROBATS BUILDERS  
DARK MATTER  
PAINTED DESERTS  
THE LAST MAN  
DOGS COLLARS  
SUNSHADING  
OFFICE WORKING  
AGGREGATION ACCUMULATION  
VOLCANIC SIMULATION  
STEEL BRACE CHOCK STAY TACK PROP LAY  
ENTROPIC  
BATHERS  
CHANNEL ANGLE  
CONDUIT BOX  
ROCK CLIMBING  
COSMIC MEGA-STRUCTURE  
TILTING  
SUB PITUITARY INTUORY  
PROFESSOR INKLING  
EMPEROR IMPRESS  
FOLKS MORPHIC  
HEX BAR VASTER  
GLITTERING  
GRIME  
A DOG HUNTING FOR FLEAS  
PIPES DUCTING  
DISTRIBUTED INTELLIGENCE  
NECESSITY  
SCULPTURE  
SEPARATED DIVIDED  
PROTOCOLS AND DECENCIES  
BROWSING CRUISING SCAVENGING  
AND DYING FALLING STREA  
CLAY MUD MONEY  
ACRYLIC  
ULTRA-PRECISE DRUG DELIVERY  
PURSUIT CONFIDENCE  
SQUEEZING  
A MORBID SECRETION  
A BOMBSHELL  
MUMINUM  
DONKEY SAW STONED DRAWN PAINT PHONE  
CIRCUS  
APPENDAGE  
CEMENTIC  
CRUELTY  
STOCK  
WELDED  
EYES  
PIES  
POPKORNIAS



ACROBATS BUILDERS  
 DARK MATTER PAINTED DESERTS  
 THE LAST MAN WANGLE DOG COLLARS  
 SUNSHADING ORBITING OFFICE WORKING  
 LIQUIN TIQQUN  
 SWARF GRIT  
 ACCUMULATION ACCUMULATION  
 FERROUS SEA FERTILIZATION  
 SULPHUR VOLCANIC SIMULATION  
 STEEL BRACE CHOCK STAY TACK PROP LAY  
 SUPER EARTH  
 KEIKEA COLOUR QWFQW  
 ENTROPIC GRAPHOMANIA EUPHORIC BEHAVIOUR  
 BATHERS  
 CONDUIT BOX CHANNEL ANGLE  
 ROCK CLIMBING  
 COSMIC MEGA-STRUCTURE  
 TILTING  
 SUB PITUITARY INTUITORY  
 PROFESSOR INKLING  
 THWARTING THE BLOOD-BRAIN BARRIER  
 EMPEROR IMPRESS  
 ANTHROPO MORPHIC  
 FOLKS ONOMIC  
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 BIGGERING OF GLITTERING CRIME  
 BACTERIA  
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 ULTRA-PRECISE DRUG DELIVERY  
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 MORBID SECRETION  
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 ALUMINIUM  
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 KING  
 APPENDAGE  
 CIRCUS  
 KONG  
 COLLAGE  
 AUTOMATIC UNICORNS  
 CEROMANCIC  
 CRUELTY  
 STOCK  
 POT TO  
 WELDED WELDED  
 EYES  
 PORK PIES



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**THE MUTINY OF THE BOUNTY**

OLIVER PETERSON GILBERT & HAZEL ATASHROO

IN 1588, SPAIN'S 'ARMADA INVENCIBLE' WAS TORN TO RAGS AND FLOTSAM BY DIVINE TEMPESTS IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL. SURVIVAL REPLACED CONQUEST. THE SHIPS' CREWS, STARVED AND LONGING FOR A DISTANT HOMELAND, WERE SOON LOST TO THE SHIPPING FORECAST. ALL THAT REMAINED WAS TAVERN TALK AND SHIPWRECKS BOTH GATHERING LIMPETS: A BOUNTY WAITING TO BE FOUND.

IN 1956, ALISON AND PETER SMITHSON, EDUARDO PAOLOZZI AND NIGEL HENDERSON POPULATED THEIR REGION OF THE *THIS IS TOMORROW* EXHIBITION WITH THE PROFANE AESTHETICS OF THE 'AS FOUND'. FOUND OBJECTS, INCLUDING A RUSTED BUGLE AND A CLOCK WITHOUT HANDS, CLUNG TO THE CORRUGATED ROOF OF A MOCK SHANTY-TOWN SHACK. ROUGHLY HONED AND PROVOCATIVELY INCONGRUOUS IN THE WHITECHAPEL GALLERY, THE INSTALLATION SYNTHESIZED IMPRESSIONS OF POST-NUCLEAR FUTURES AND NEOLITHIC PASTS IN A DIALECTICAL VISION OF ITS PRESENT.

IN 2013, WE ENTERED DAWSON'S RAMSHACKLE STUDIOS. CROWDED WITH BITS, PIECES AND FRAGMENTS, HIS HABITAT WAS ONE OF ATOMIC COLLISION AND MATERIAL FUSION: THE WHITE HEAT OF MAKING. A 'MAKING' PALPABLY INFORMED BY A VAST KNOWLEDGE OF MATERIAL PROPERTIES, GAINED THROUGH PERPETUAL EXPERIMENTATION OVER YEARS OF PRAXIS. ON ENCOUNTERING THE *ARMADA*, WE FOUND ITS CONSTITUENT VESSELS GATHERING LIMPETS ON THE STUDIO WALL, BRACED FOR THE NEXT CREATIVE STORM...

IAN DAWSON DRAWS ON REMAINS AND THEIR TENSIONS. HE REPOPULATES. *ARMADA* IS NOT A WORK OF CONQUEST BUT A WORK OF MULTIPLE SURVIVALS. THE WORK EXISTS AS A POLEMIC ACT. AKIN TO THE CLOCK WITHOUT HANDS, CONSCIENTIOUSLY OBJECTING TO ITS PRODUCTION LINE DUTY, DAWSON'S *ARMADA* REFUSES ITS COMPLICIT FUNCTION AS ART-OBJECT/END-PRODUCT. THE ALIENATION OF THE ART PRODUCT FROM ITS LABORIOUS 'MAKING' PROCESS IS FUNDAMENTAL TO ITS AURATIC EFFICACY: THE MAGICIAN'S TRICK STAYS THE CAPITAL OF THE CIRCLE; THE PROVERBIAL TURD GETS POLISHED IN SECRET. DAWSON EXPLORES MUTABILITY IN MAKING AS A RESISTANT PROVOCATION, ACTUALIZING ETHICAL CONCERNS OVER THE POLISHED-AESTHETIC HEGEMONY. HE ATTEMPTS TO REINVIGORATE THE DIALECTIC BETWEEN MATERIALITY AND INTERPRETABILITY THROUGH THE CARNIVALESQUE PARODY OF CEASELESS (RE)MAKING. *ARMADA* LEADS A MUTINY OF THE ART BOUNTY, ANCHORING THE WORK IN THE DIVINE TIDES OF PERPETUAL INCOMPLETION.

DAWSON'S WORK IS INFORMED BY A FASCINATION WITH THE FAR-REACHING MATERIAL BIOGRAPHIES OF EVERYDAY OBJECTS. THE MATERIAL LIVES OF MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS TEND TO FAR EXCEED THE BRIEF ROLES IN PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION WHICH WE DESIGNATE THEM. ACCRUING LAYERS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE THROUGHOUT THEIR VOYAGES, MATERIAL ATOMS ARE RECONFIGURED, THEIR SURFACES PAINTED, LACQUERED AND LABELLED; THEY ARE PACKED, SHIPPED, BOUGHT AND SOLD, ABUSED AND NEGLECTED. ONCE BROKEN DOWN BEYOND RECOGNITION, MATERIAL NARRATIVES PERSIST, EVEN WHEN LOST TO US AS FORGOTTEN PARTICLES CAST INTO THE OCEAN. FORGOTTEN PARTICLES THAT REPEAT IN US WITH EVERY MOUTHFUL OF FISH FINGER.

DAWSON'S STUDIO IS ITSELF AN ECOSYSTEM OF LIVING MATERIALS IN STATES OF TRANSFORMATION, BY NATURE OR NURTURE. A BOUNTY OF INDUSTRIALLY PROCESSED MATERIALS ARE BOUGHT IN OR SALVAGED, CUT DOWN TO SIZE, REFORMED AND REPURPOSED. A LUMP OF RED CLAY IS REBORN AS A SLICE OF IRON GIRDER, ITS LOAD-BEARING QUALITIES QUESTIONABLE. A CONSTELLATION OF PUNCHED METAL SHEETS IN POP COLOURS ARE REMINISCENT OF PROPS FROM LEN LYE'S 1935 *A COLOUR BOX* ANIMATION. WHEN PLUNGED INTO THE INERTIA OF DARKNESS, ARMADA'S REMNANTS, LIKE BIOLUMINESCENT SEA-CREATURES FATHOMS BELOW THE SURFACE, BEGIN TO GLOW. AND YET WE IMAGINE THAT IN AN OFF-CUTS BIN BEHIND THE WORKSHOP JIGSAW, A FURTHER PRIMORDIAL SOUP OF MISSHAPEN FLOTSAM IS WAITING TO EVOLVE. PAOLOZZI FAMOUSLY CHARACTERISED HIS PRODUCTION METHOD AS 'CONSTRUCT. TACK. DESTROY. RECOMMENCE'. THIS NOTION OF EXTENDED PRODUCTION IS EVIDENT WITHIN ARMADA'S MATERIAL BIOGRAPHIES AND IS FUNDAMENTAL TO ITS EFFICACY THEREBY EVADING ANY COMMODIFIABLE TELOS.

EVER THE *BRICOLEUR*, DAWSON'S REACH IS NOT LIMITED TO MATERIAL REPURPOSING. IN A FURTHER CARNIVALESQUE EXAGGERATION OF PROCESS AND MATERIAL ALIENATION, A CREW OF LILLIPUTIAN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ARE PRESSGANGED TO SERVE AS PAINTERS AND DECORATORS UPON THIS SCULPTURAL FLEET. TO US, AS ONLOOKERS, THESE DIMINUTIVE WORKERS APPEAR TO APPLY LAYERS OF OIL PAINT AND GLITTER TO THE UNITS, ENACTING A TRANSFORMATION OF SURFACE NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE MATERIAL BASE. THIS ACTION INTRODUCES A BENJAMINIAN AURATIC SENSIBILITY THROUGH ARMADA'S POLISHED POOP-DECKS. THEIR THEATRICAL GILDING SHATTERS THE CHAIN OF SIGNIFICATION, PARODYING THE HIDDEN STAGES IN THE COMMODIFICATION OF OBJECTS: A SEMIOTIC SLEIGHT-OF-HAND SPECTACLE WITH LASHINGS OF NEON SLUDGE AND GLITTER GLOBULES. WILL YOU ACCEPT THE KING'S SHILLING?

CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER, THIS NAUTICAL WONDERLAND IS ALSO POPULATED BY SCANTILY-CLAD MINIATURE BATHERS, LOUNGING AS THOUGH BRONZING ABOVE DECK ON SOME MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE. ARE THESE ART CONSUMERS BASKING IN THE REFLECTED HEAT OF THE ARTWORK'S GLITTERING PATINA? A TONGUE-IN-CHEEK REFERENCE TO THE 'CLASSICAL NUDE' OF TRADITION? RAY BAN'D CHERUBS IN AN IRONIC ROUSSEAUIAN ARCADIA? IS THEIR NARRATIVE OF LESS IMPORT THAN THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL SENSATION OF THE SCALE MODEL THAT THEY EVOKE?

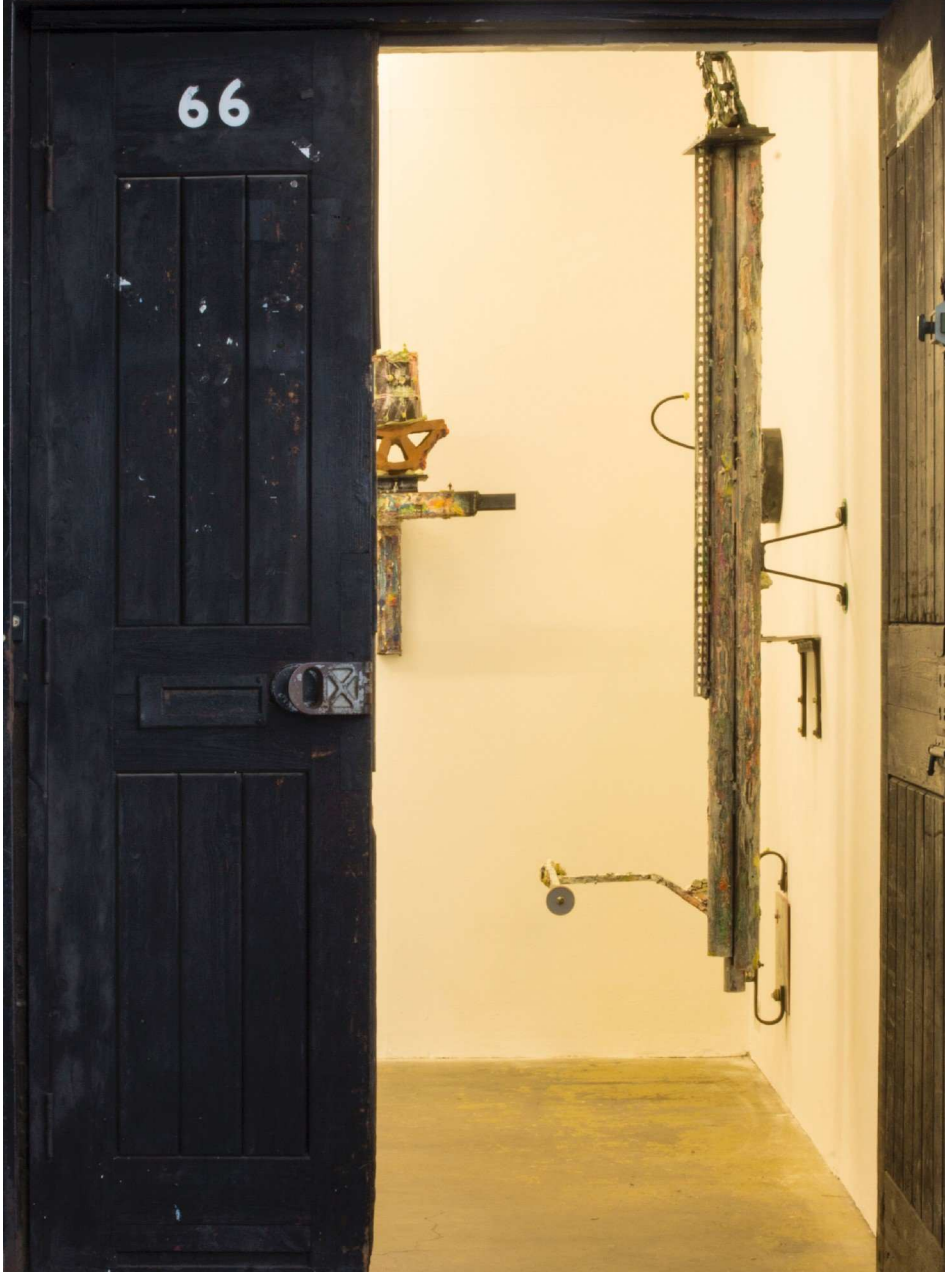
THEN WHAT OF THE GLASS EYEBALLS AND MONSTROUSLY EXPOSED BRAINS THAT CAN BE FOUND GROWING SPORADICALLY FROM THE SCULPTURES' UNDULATING SURFACES? TO OFFER ANY FINITE DIAGNOSIS WOULD SERVE MERELY TO STUNT THE GROWTH OF THIS EVER TRANSMOGRIFYING WORK. TODAY'S ENCOUNTER WAS BUT ONE MOMENT IN THE BIOGRAPHY OF DAWSON'S ARMADA, A HASTILY SCRIBBLED ENTRY IN THE CAPTAIN'S LOG. WE EXPERIENCED THE SCULPTURE IN ITS HABITAT, THE TEMPESTUOUS STUDIO ENVIRONMENT, KNOWING THAT WHAT WE HAVE OBSERVED WILL BE BUT ARCHAEOLOGICAL LAYERS, BURIED IN ITS OWN UNFOLDING NARRATIVE. DESPITE ITS SEEMING STASIS IN THESE CATALOGUE PHOTOGRAPHS, ARMADA'S FUTURE LIES IN UNCHARTED WATERS, A SLIPPERY BOUNTY NEVER TO BE RAISED.

THE ARMADA'S LOG BOOK AWAITS YOUR ENTRY, YOUR TAVERN TALK.

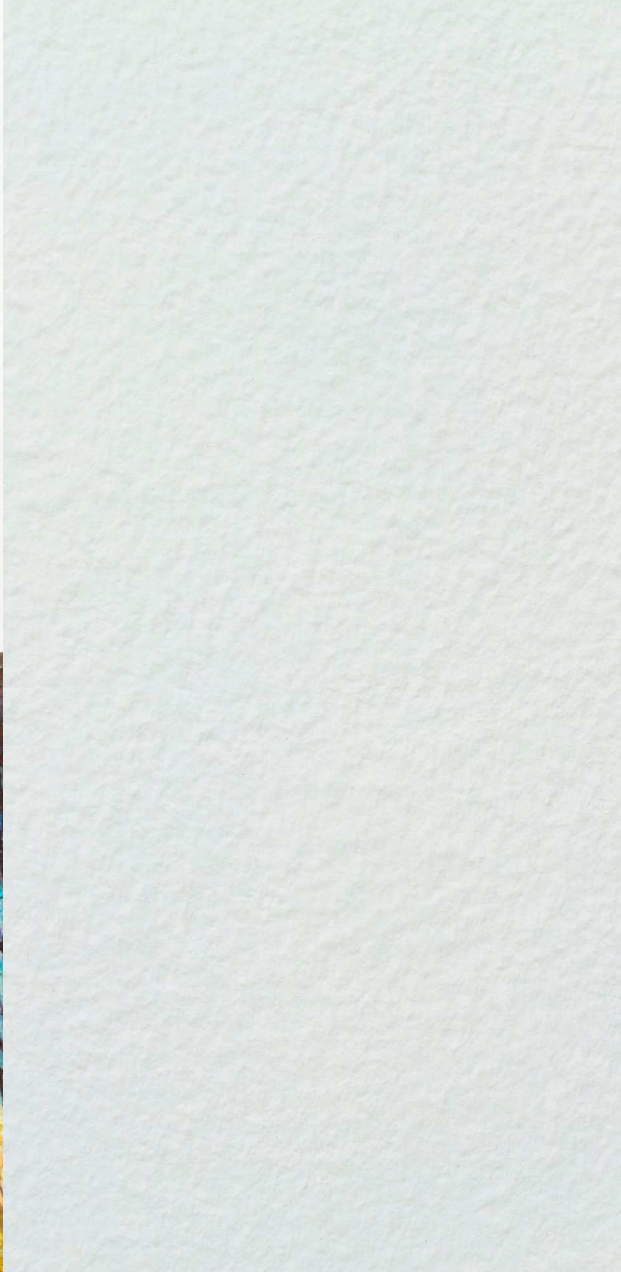




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ARMADA





BOCKS(A)ISLE, 2010-13, STEEL, PAINT, CERAMIC, MIXED-MEDIA, 48 X 50 X 41CM

ARMADA









ARMADA

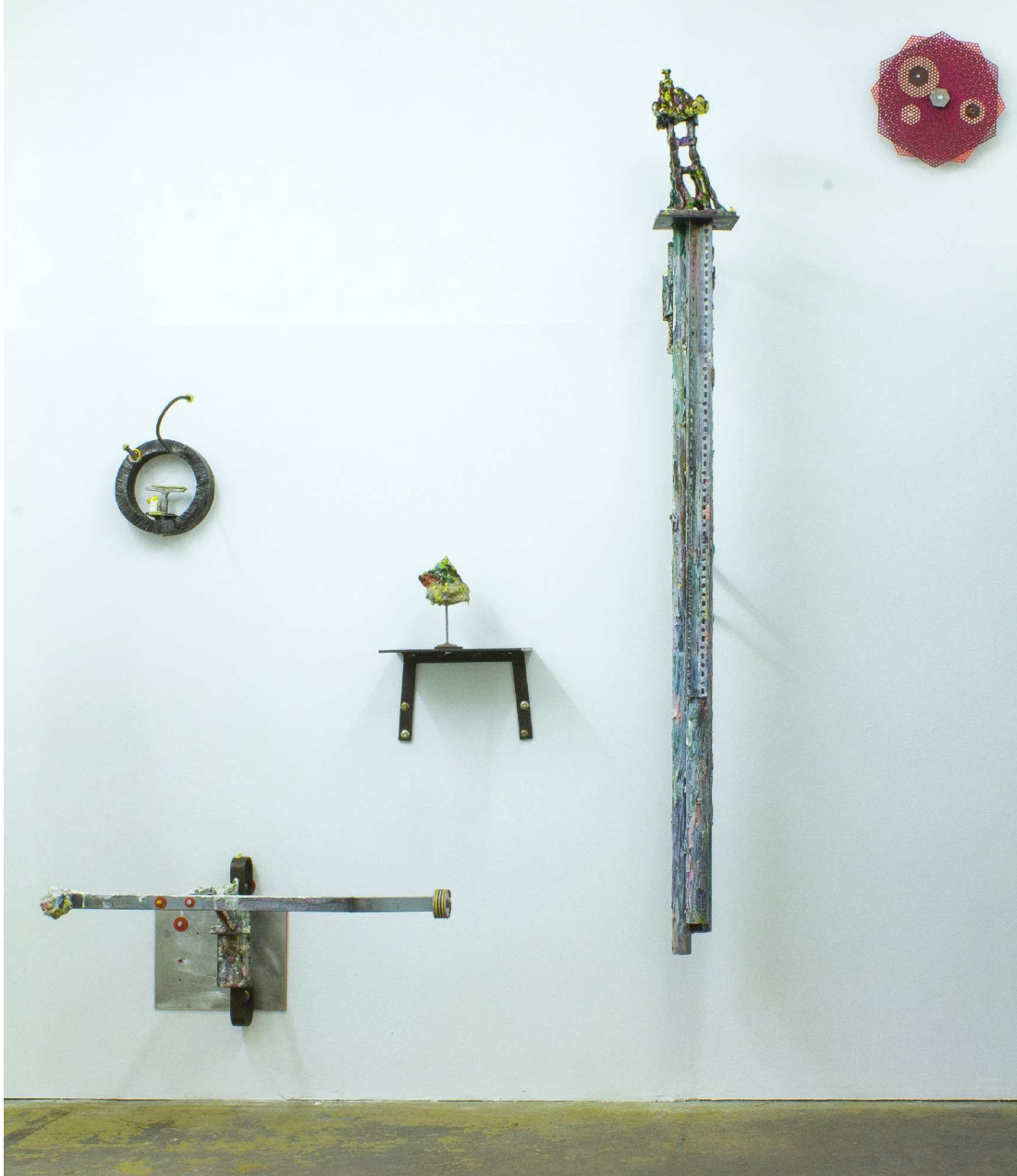


LEIBIG, 2011-13, STEEL, MIXED

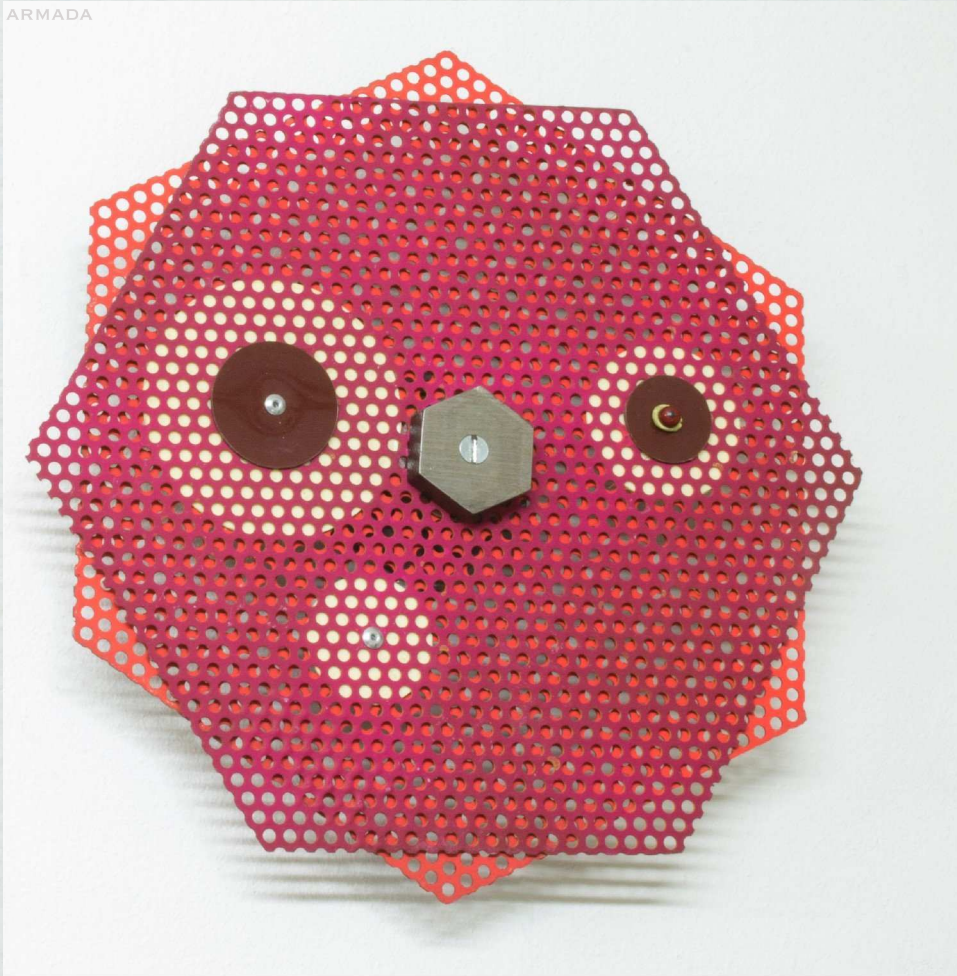




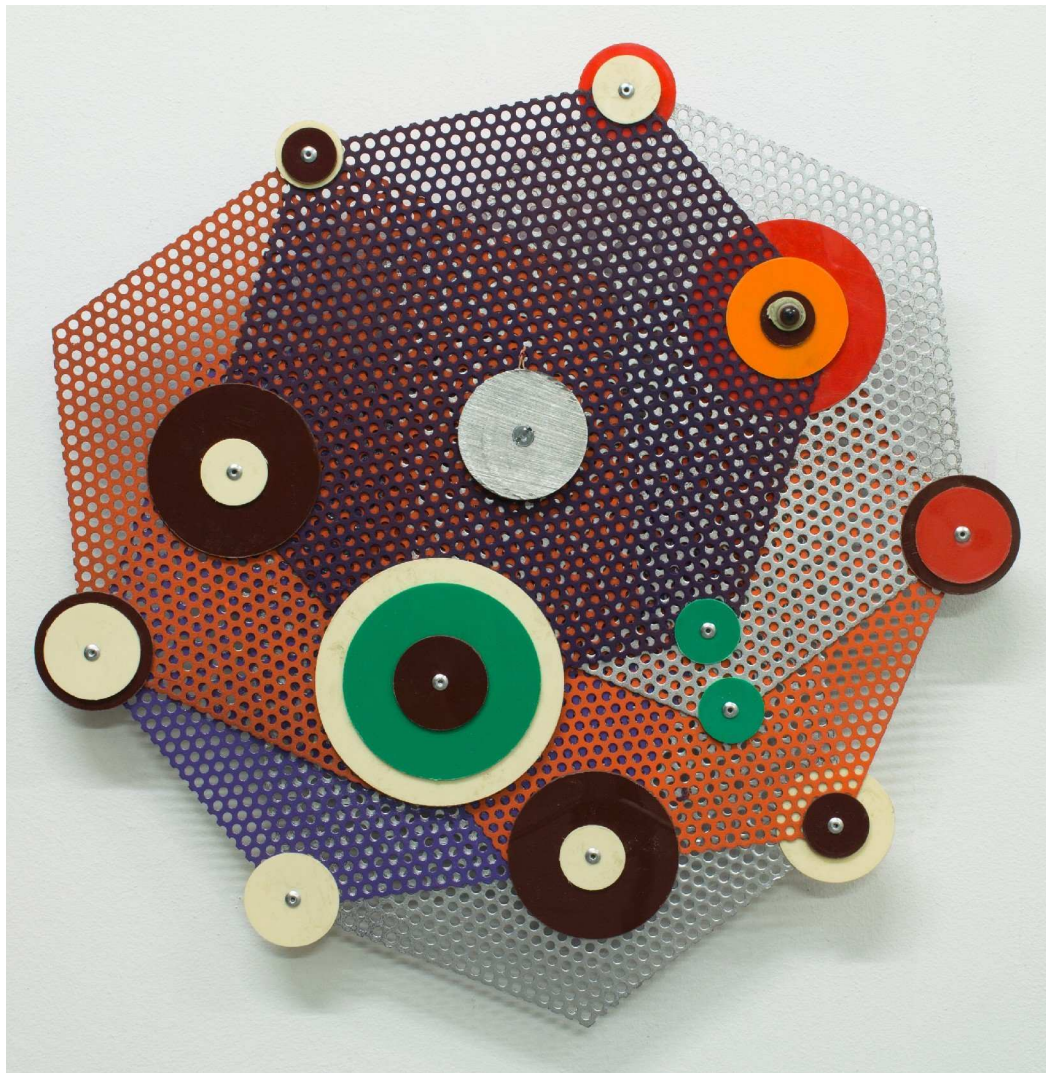




ARMADA



HEXHEAD, 2013, PAINT, STEEL, PESPEX, 30 X 30 X 5CM



MAESTROMO, 2013, PAINT, STEEL, PERSPEX, 50X50X5CM











ARMADA





TRINS, 2010-13, STEEL, CERAMIC, MODEL FIGURE, 40 X 55 X 17CM

ARMADA



HEXION TO DEVON, 2012-13, STEEL, PAINT, 160X60X15CM



ARMADA

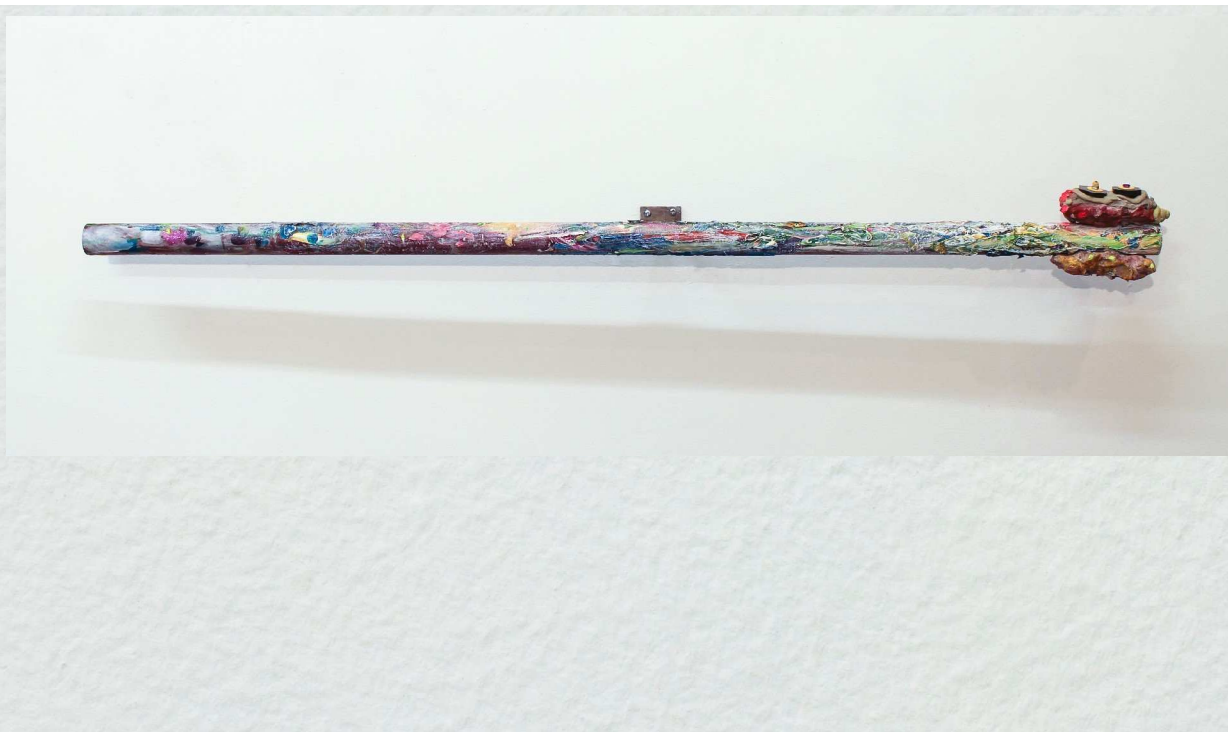


THE TOWER OF POWER, 2010-13, STEEL, CERAMIC, PAINT, 65 X 35 X 18CM









HORIZONTAL HOLD, 2011-13, STEEL, PAINT AND MIXED MEDIA 170 X 16 X 18CM

ARMADA



SNA(c)K.E.YES, 2009-13, STEEL, PAINT, AND MIXED MEDIA, 140 X 30 X 30CM

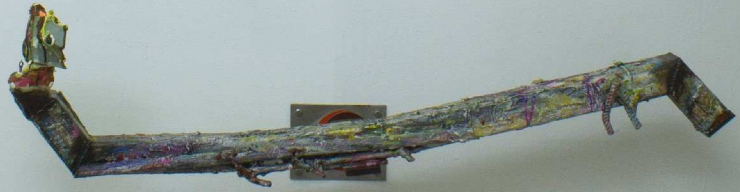


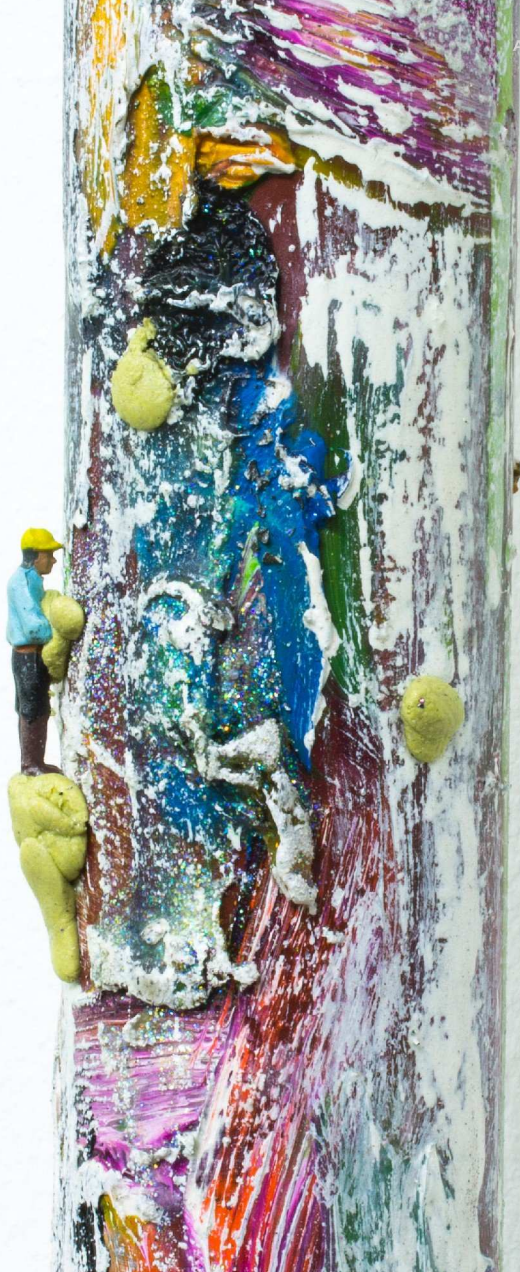
ARMADA





JOSHUA, 2012-13, STEEL, CAST IRON, PERSPEX, MODEL FIGURES, 46 X 32 X 18 CM



















**BIOGRAPHY**

BORN 1969, DARLINGTON, Co DURHAM, U.K.  
LIVES AND WORKS IN LONDON

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 2013 FIVE YEARS, LONDON  
2005 NAPOLEON GARDENS, HOLLAND PARK, LONDON  
2004 GALLERIE XIPPAS, PARIS  
2003 ARCHIMEDE STAFFOLINI GALLERY, NICOSIA, CYPRUS  
JAMES COHAN GALLERY, NEW YORK  
GRAND ARTS, KANSAS CITY  
2002 MODERN ART- STUART SHAVE, LONDON  
GALERIE GRIEDERVONPUTTKAMER, BERLIN  
2000 ART+PUBLIC, GENEVA  
JAMES COHAN GALLERY, NEW YORK  
HABITAT, KINGS ROAD, LONDON  
1999 MODERN ART- STUART SHAVE, LONDON  
1998 HALES GALLERY, LONDON  
1995 LONDON ARTFORMS, LONDON

**SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2012 THE PERFECT NUDE, WIMBLEDON ART SPACE LONDON THE PHOENIX CENTRE EXETER  
AND CHARLIE SMITH GALLERY, LONDON  
2011 'TWO AND A HALF DIMENSIONS' PANGOLIN LONDON  
THE PERFECT CRIME, No.4A GALLERY, MALVERN  
2010 AGAINST GRIDS, MILK AND HONEY, RIBA LIVERPOOL  
HOUSE OF FAIRY TALES, MILLENIUM, ST IVES  
2009 COLLAGE LONDON/NEW YORK, FRED LONDON  
TWISTED CHRISTMAS, BARBICAN CENTRE, LONDON  
THE HORN OF PLENTY, VIKTOR WYND FINE ART, LONDON  
EXQUISITE TROVE, THE NEW ART GALLERY, WALSALL, UK  
HOUSE OF FAIRY TALES, ARTE POVERA LONG WEEKEND, TATE MODERN  
COOL AND COLLECTED, WEATHERSPOON ART GALLERY. NORTH CAROLINA  
EAT ME DRINK ME GOSS MICHAEL FOUNDATION, DALLAS, TEXAS  
2008 'END GAME' MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS , HOUSTON, TEXAS  
'NATURE IS A WORKSHOP ' TURNER CONTEMPORARY, MARGATE  
PALIMPSESTE UN BON PRE-TEXTE GALERIE XIPPAS PARIS  
2007 LIGHT, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL, UK  
RUMMAGE WINCHESTER GALLERY, UK  
2006 METROPOLIS RISE: NEW ART FROM LONDON, CQL DESIGN CENTRE, SHANGHAI & 789  
SPACE, BEIJNG  
COLD CLIMATES, LIVING ART MUSEUM, REJKAUVIK, ICELAND  
MIMOID, LIMEHOUSE ARTS FOUNDATION, LONDON, UK  
SUMMERIZE, WORKPLACE GALLERY, GATESHEAD, UK  
2005 THE LAW OF LARGE NUMBERS, CELL PROJECTS LONDON, UK  
NICE TO MEET YOU, MARK MOORE GALLERY, LOS ANGELES  
DESSINS D'ARTISTES A L'ECOLE, LE MUSEE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN VAL-DE- MARNE/VITRY

- 2004 'MATERIAL FAITH', KONTAINER, LOS ANGELES  
 'SHAPESHIFTERS', GALERIE M-PROJECT, PARIS  
 'SUMMERTIME IN THE CITY', ARCHIMEDE STAFFOLINI GALLERY, NICOSIA, CYPRUS
- 2003 'MESMER', TEMPORARYCONTEMPORARY, SEAGER DISTILLERY, LONDON  
 'ON', GALERIE XIPPAS, ATHENS, GREECE  
 'URBAN BAROQUE', PLANE-SPACE, NEW YORK  
 'ONE WORD-PLASTIC', WEATHERSPOON GALLERY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA,  
 'POP THRU OUT', ARARIO GALLERY, CHEONAN, S. KOREA  
 'RENDERED', SARA MELTZER GALLERY, NEW YORK
- 2002 'THE NATURE OF THE BEAST', CAREN GOLDEN FINE ARTS, NEW YORK  
 'PER SALDO', HET NOORDBRABANTS MUSEUM, S-HERTOGENBOSCH, NETHERLANDS.  
 SCULPTURE BY THE SEA, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA  
 CRAFT', CELL PROJECT SPACE, LONDON  
 4TH GWANGJU BIENNALE, GWANGJU, S. KOREA
- 2001 'GIARDINO', GALLERIA DEL ARTE CONTEMPORANEA, BERGAMO, STUDIO D'ARTE RAFFAELLI,  
 TRENTO AND CENTRO CULTURALE DI SASSUOLO, MODENA, ITALY  
 'LETS GET TO WORK', SUSQUEHANA ART MUSEUM, HARRISBURG, ROSENWALD WOLF  
 GALLERY & BASEKAMP, UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS, PHILADELPHIA, USA
- 2000 'LETS GET TO WORK' MARCEL SITCOSKE GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO  
 'ABSTRACT ART', DELFINA GALLERY, LONDON

#### SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- 2012 'MAKING CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE' IAN DAWSON, CROWOOD PRESS  
 ISBN: 9781847974303
- 2011 TWO AN A HALF DIMENSIONS, PANGOLIN LONDON- ESSAY MARCUS HARVEY
- 2010 AGAINST GRIDS, BRANDON TAYLOR, ISBN: 978-0-947608-30-92009
- 2009 BLIND HANDSHAKE, DAVID HUMPHREY, ISBN: 9781-1-934772-32-4  
 WINCHESTER RESEARCH ANTHOLOGY, THE WINCHESTER GALLERY PRESS  
 ISBN978-1-873452-61-82008
- 2008 COLLAGE, ASSEMBLING CONTEMPORARY ART, BLACK DOG PUBLISHING  
 ISBN: 9781906155391  
 NATURE IS A WORKSHOP/SELECTED WORKS FROM THE ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION, TURNER  
 CONTEMPORARY  
 END GAME, MUSEUM OF FINE ART, HOUSTON – ISBN-13: 978-0300142013
- 2007 LIGHT, WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL
- 2006 METROPOLIS RISE: NEW ART FROM LONDON, ANTHONY GROSS AND JEN WU/ ARTS  
 COUNCIL ENGLAND
- 2004 'CONTEMPORARY BRITISH SCULPTURE' GUY PORTELLI, SCHIFFER PUBLISHING,  
 ISBN: 07643211102001  
 'NEW LABOUR', THE SAATCHI COLLECTION
- 1999 'YOUNG BRITISH ART: THE SAATCHI DECADE', BOOTH-CLIBBORN
- 1998 'NEW NEUROTIC REALISM', THE SAATCHI GALLERY

WORK IN THE COLLECTION OF THE WEATHERSPOON GALLERY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA,  
 ARARIO GALLERY, MICKEY AND JANICE CARTIN COLLECTION, THE SAATCHI COLLECTION, LONDON,  
 ABN AMRO COLLECTION, AMSTERDAM, SEI COLLECTION, USA & UK, TI GROUP, LONDON, SKADDEN,  
 ARPS, MEAGER & FLOM, NEW YORK, WEST COLLECTION, CHANEY FAMILY COLLECTION, GOSS  
 MICHAEL COLLECTION, KEITH TYSON COLLECTION, V22 COLLECTION, ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION  
 AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS WORLDWIDE

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FIVE YEARS

GRATEFUL THANKS: HELEN  
HAYWARD, AVA AND NANCY  
HAYWARD, LOUISA MINKIN,  
OLIVER PETERSON GILBERT,  
HAZEL ATASHROO, CHRIS  
HAWTIN, AUGUST DAVIS,  
CLARISSE WISSER, LESLEY  
BLAKELOCK AND ALL AT FIVE  
YEARS GALLERY INCLUDING  
SILVIA, NESSA, LUCIE,  
MICHELLE, ANTONIO, BETHANY,  
ADAM AND HEN.

blurb





