

Alex Dordoy

The Moss is Dreaming

Curated by Tom Morton

4 October — 11 November 2017

Private View: Thursday 5 October, 6-8pm

Blain|Southern
4 Hanover Square
London W1S 1BP

For the first in Blain|Southern's new series of exhibitions, collectively titled *Lodger*, its curator Tom Morton has invited the young, London-based artist Alex Dordoy to develop a new body of work exploring a central characteristic of twenty-first century visual culture: the restlessness of the image, and the instability of the surfaces on which it manifests.

While Dordoy's sculptures, paintings, and silicon 'skins' are preoccupied with their own materiality – their unique and bounded 'thingliness' – they are also deeply porous. Poised between representation and abstraction, the organic and the digital, his work appears to have been pollinated, or perhaps infected, by stray data. The broken Moebius strips of his sculptures employ wet jesmonite to absorb gestural passages of paint, the impress of corrugated card, and printed imagery including kimono patterns, alchemical symbols, and the artist's own digital photographs of forest landscapes. Is this density of visual incident at odds with these sculptures' modest – indeed domestic – scale, or is it only natural in an era in which that most commonplace of objects, the smartphone, seems to suck a whole universe of information out of thin air?

Hanging from the gallery walls, and existing at an ambiguous point between painting and sculpture, Dordoy's 'skins' are made by using liquid silicon to cast the interiors of old photocopiers. Once dried, this fleshy material picks up not only the machinery's inverted form, but also the streaks of ink and dirt that have built up in its hidden ridges and gullies – traces of its history of use. For all the ghostly charge of these works, they also reflect on photocopier technology's enduring place in daily life, despite its long-predicted obsolescence. Notably, the artist has described the lumbering Xerox machines that linger in our offices, libraries and copy shops as 'human' presences. Perhaps what we value in the photocopier – and the paper document – is not convenience, but the way it affirms our own physicality in an age of weightless, endlessly reproducible code.

The images that appear in Dordoy's paintings are initially composed using cut paper. Next, they undergo countless digital tweaks in Photoshop, until the relationship between their bold colours and simple, abstract forms achieve the necessary tension, and they are finally transposed to canvas. While their large size insists on their object-hood, the precision of their formal elements speaks of their genesis as much-overwritten files. Perhaps a painting, today, is simply a technology for freezing the restless image, for fixing its coordinates in time and space. And yet, as the title of Dordoy's exhibition, *The Moss is Dreaming*, suggests, even the most immobile of objects still fizz with lively data – on their surfaces, or deep within themselves.



Alex Dordoy, *Svalbard Soil 6*, 2017
Courtesy of the Artist and The Modern Institute /
Toby Webster Ltd, Glasgow
Photo: Malcolm Cochrane

Notes to Editors

About the artist

Alex Dordoy (b. 1985, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, lives and works in London) was educated at Glasgow School of Art and de Ateliers, Amsterdam.

Selected solo exhibitions include: *Alex Dordoy: From Svalbard Soil*, The Modern Institute, Glasgow (2017); *Alex Dordoy: Sleepwalker*, Gemeentemuseum, The Hague (2014); *Alex Dordoy: persistencebeatsresistance*, Inverleith House, Edinburgh (2014); *Alex Dordoy: Caster and Krast Crack Autumn*, GRIMM, Amsterdam.

Selected group exhibitions include: *Future Eaters*, Monash University Museum of Art, Caulfield East, Australia (forthcoming 2017); *Use/User/Used*, Zabludowicz Collection, London (2016); *Office Space*, Yerba Buena Center of the Arts, San Francisco (2015); *THE NOING UV IT*, Bergen Kunsthall, Norway (2015); *GENERATION: 25 Years of Contemporary Art in Scotland*, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh (2015).

About Lodger

Lodger is a new series of exhibitions at Blain|Southern, conceived by the writer, independent curator, and Contributing Editor for frieze magazine, Tom Morton. Running concurrent to the exhibitions in the central space, *Lodger* will expand Blain|Southern's programme into new territories, often spotlighting a younger generation of artists. Alex Dordoy's inaugural exhibition will be followed, in late November 2017, with a solo show by the performance artist and sculptor Sophie Jung (b. 1982, Luxembourg). Details of the following exhibitions in this series will be announced shortly.

Tom Morton's exhibitions include *Äppärät* at the Ballroom Marfa, Texas (2015), *British British Polish Polish* at the CSW Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw (2013) the touring survey *British Art Show 7: In the Days of the Comet* (2010/11, with Lisa Le Feuvre), and *How to Endure* at the 1st Athens Biennale (2007). He has worked as a curator at Cubitt Gallery, London and the Hayward Gallery, London, and his writing has appeared in numerous exhibition catalogues and anthologies.

About Blain|Southern

Blain|Southern is a contemporary art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an international roster of contemporary artists and is the world-wide representative of The Estate of Lynn Chadwick. The gallery's recent exhibitions include Bernar Venet, Mat Collishaw, Jonas Burgert, Amy Feldman and Tim Noble & Sue Webster.

Blain|Southern would like to thank The Modern Institute, Glasgow, and GRIMM, Amsterdam for their cooperation with this exhibition.

Blain|Southern
4 Hanover Square
London W1S 1BP

Monday to Friday: 10am - 6pm
Saturday: 10am - 5pm

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