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## AN INSULAR ROCOCO

**JULIE BECKER, K.R.M. MOONEY, JACK O'BRIEN, CHARLOTTE PRODGER, ANNE TALLENTIRE**

Preview: Thursday, 7 July, 18:00 - 20:00

Exhibition: 8 July - 24 September 2022

Hollybush Gardens presents *An Insular Rococo*: an exhibition featuring Julie Becker, K.R.M. Mooney, Jack O'Brien, Charlotte Prodger and Anne Tallentire. The exhibition brings together practices which are intimately connected to site and space, often relating private and public realms as epistemic and experiential containers. Such negotiations involve processes of translation, fragmentation and fascination, considering areas and forms of enclosure through a situated, bodily register. *An Insular Rococo* affirms alternative subjective readings of environments, attending to material, relational, somatic and uncanny aspects of one's surroundings.

The reflections at work in *An Insular Rococo* vary from the formal and indexical to the contingent and atmospheric, encompassing direct encounters or traced afterlives. The sculptures of K.R.M. Mooney involve the exchange of spatial, temporal, and material bodies as an unstable site to reflect on notions of difference, embodiment and care. The autonomous works occupy interstitial positions within the gallery's architecture. *Citations* (2021) recasts the base objectivity and intermediary operation of a kick plate by reorienting the object into a vertical position, as though extruding from the surface to which it is attached. The plate is laced in verdigris, a patina inherited from the large body of salt water of its original site at the Coastal Salish land near the Puget Sound. Mooney's sensitivity to these material qualities includes the object's use as a protective barrier, absorbing contact points and facilitating transitional movements at once. Through this subtle and alchemical denaturing of space, Mooney detects variances of material behaviour in lavish proximity. In Mooney's *Detrition (i)* (2021) a specialised jewellers vice supports a fragment of silver couched in a tablet of delft sand. Affixed to the existing architecture, *Detrition (i)* becomes a formal extension of the gallery while containing its own material information.

Charlotte Prodger's work explores affinities between the body, landscape, technology and time specifically through the lens of queer subjectivity. *Forest Hills/Oregon Dacite* (2015) features two identical monitors facing opposite directions. One monitor depicts the fetish of sneaker-slave subculture with a man repeatedly scraping his Adidas trainers against a slab of bedrock; the other features a ripped YouTube video by an amateur flintknapper who demonstrates the ancient process of whittling down a large rock to create a biface – a Paleolithic flint too. Prodger's voiceover details the visually obscured flintknapping video; throughout these formal observations, Prodger recounts fragments of her autobiographical history that shaped the evolution of her identity. *Forest Hills/Oregon Dacite* forms a reading of time and space which parallels prehistoric, archived and geologic time within temporalities of language and eroticism. Prodger's screen prints, *Orca Matrilineal Pod Yakat* and *Orca Matrilineal Pod Tsitika* (2016), use data and found imagery of matrilineal pods compiled by marine biologists from orca pods off the coast of British Columbia. The biologists identify the orcas by their individual fins and their monochrome markings, as indexical objects. Prodger has overlaid the screen prints with ventilation hole patterns from specific monitor and DVD players. These ventilation holes ensure longevity of the machines by allowing them to breathe while also serving as a kind of thumbprint of identification for the device. The prints attest to Prodger's compositing of time that meditates on formal, indexical and spatial particularities.

Jack O'Brien's sculptures trace presences and afterlives of queer sociology by dilating loaded material into a malleable network of motifs. As an archetypal symbol of late capitalism, the white shirt is altogether framework, variously elongated and fastened. As a formal container punctuated by lenses, the shirt holes turn into false invitations for the voyeur. This porosity, immersed within a shell of late capitalist power, correlates to inherent tensions between condition and individuation, structure and essence. The orifice, lens or aperture in O'Brien's sculptures become potential punctuations, viewfinders or glory holes – vestiges which ornament or underpin realms of visibility.

Using everyday materials, Anne Tallentire scrutinises lived structures to consider conditions of habitation and displacement in societies. Tallentire destabilises a politics of spatiality through methodical gestures such as mapping, translation or deconstruction, where analytic assembly retains poetic specificity, often revealing the intimate patterns which inform social and sensory experience. Tallentire's *Fence* (2021) is a schematic drawing of an upturned fence in masking tape, based on a photograph taken during a research

visit in Belfast. *Fence* acknowledges creative agency at the edges of public life and continues Tallentire's attention to a phenomenology of provisional infrastructure. Tallentire's wall drawing is accompanied by a floor-work from her *Turn* series (2016). This series comprises industrial materials of film fabric and gaffer tape to mediate on qualities of coverage, impermanence and shelter through gestures of folding and securing.

The work of Julie Becker is informed by the material circumstances, cinematic qualities and psychological apprehensions of her home city, Los Angeles. Through a diverse body of work including video, installations, sculpture, drawings and photographs, Becker mused on the dark mythology of the late 20th-century American dream, creating charged articulations of spaces brimming with psychological import, fantastical refuge and escape. In 1999, Becker began working on the open-ended series *Whole*, which centred on the Echo Park building where she lived – a bungalow owned by the California Federal Bank. Becker occupied the space at a reduced rent in exchange for clearing out the remaining belongings of a previous tenant, who died of AIDS. Instead, Becker created a collection of works around the former occupant's belongings, with the building functioning as both studio and stage for a series of photographs. The social and economic precarity witnessed and experienced by Becker informed her urban imaginary, entangling the mythic, psychic and material. Approaching the basement as a 'metaphysical-conceptual lab', Becker cut a hole in her living room floor to the basement where the previous occupant had lived, manifesting the apartment as a portal.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Julie Becker** (b. 1972, d. 2016) lived and worked in Los Angeles. Solo and two-person exhibitions include *I must create a Master Piece to Pay the Rent*, MoMA PS1, New York (2019); and the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2018); Greene Naftali, New York (2016); Seville Biennial, Seville (2006); *Sightings*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2003); Greene Naftali, New York (2002); *In Sync: Cinema and Sound in the work of Julie Becker and Christian Marclay*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2000); and *Julie Becker: Researchers, Residents, a Place to Rest*, Kunsthalle Zurich (1997).

Her work is in the collections of the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; Denver Art Museum; Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, among others.

**K.R.M. Mooney** (b. 1990) lives and works in New York. The artist's work often occupies intermediary positions between abstract, autonomous, and site-specific sculpture. Distilling observable and imperceptible properties by installing works directly on the floor, overhead or in passageways, their work inherits architectural details such as the conditions of light or a site's neighboring morphologies. Each project is a means to consider the affective, embodied and relational aspects of site and space. Grounded in cultural theory and foundational metalsmithing techniques, Mooney's practice uses sculptural material and its inherent information to offer various forms of engagement on behalf of the viewer, examining physical and sensory states as a way to address issues of difference, embodiment, and care.

Mooney's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Altman Siegel, San Francisco; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco; Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig; and Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin. Group exhibitions include Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York; i8 Gallery, Reykjavik; Bureau, New York; Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Stadtgalerie, Bern; SculptureCenter, New York; and KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin.

**Jack O'Brien** (b. 1993) lives and works in London. Recent solo and group exhibitions include Ginny on Frederick, London; clearview.ltd, London; V.O Curations, London; Becky's, London; White Cubicle Gallery, London; Pola Magnetczne, Warsaw and Peres Projects Berlin. Writing on his work has been published in magazines such as *Frieze* and *The Arts Newspaper*.

**Charlotte Prodger** (b.1974, United Kingdom) is a Glasgow-based artist working with moving image, writing, sculpture and printmaking. She was the winner of the 2018 Turner Prize and represented Scotland at the 2019 Venice Biennale. She received the 2017 Paul Hamlyn Award and 2014 Margaret Tait Award.

Prodger will present a solo exhibition at Secession, Vienna in September 2022. Recent solo exhibitions include *Blanks and Preforms*, Kunst Museum Winterthur (2021); *SaF05*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2021); *SaF05*, Scottish Pavilion, Venice Biennale (2019); *Colon Hyphen Asterix*, Hollybush Gardens, London (2018); *BRIDGIT/Stoneymollan Trail*, Bergen Kunsthall; *Subtotal*, SculptureCenter, New York (2017); *BRIDGIT*, Hollybush Gardens, London; *Charlotte Prodger*, Kunstverein Düsseldorf (2016); *8004-8019*, Spike Island, Bristol; *Stoneymollan Trail*, Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin (2015); *Markets* (with The Block), Chelsea Space, London; *Nephatiti*, Glasgow International (2014); *Percussion Biface 1-13*, Studio Voltaire, London; *Colon Hyphen Asterix*, Intermedia CCA, Glasgow (2012) and *Handclap/Punchhole*, Kendall Koppe, Glasgow (2011).

Group exhibitions include *Language Is a River*, Monash University Museum of Art, Caulfield East, Australia; *Dislocations: Territories, Landscapes and Other Spaces*, Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow, Scotland; *Conflicts*, Eugster Belgrade and Drugstore Belgrade (all 2021); *Nine Lives*, The Renaissance Society, University of Chicago; *A Sculpture & Six Videos*, Wesleyan University, Connecticut; *Freedom is Outside the Skin*, Kunsthall 44 Moen, Denmark (all 2020); *Palimpsest*, Lismore Castle (2019), Ireland; *Turner Prize*, Tate Britain, London; *Always Different, Always the Same: An Essay on Art and Systems*, Bunder Kunstmuseum, Chur; *ORGASMIC STREAMING ORGANIC GARDENING ELECTROCULTURE*, Chelsea Space, London (2018); *British Art Show 8* (2016); *Weight of Data*, Tate Britain, London; *An Interior that Remains an Exterior*, Künstlerhaus Graz (2015); *Annals of The Twentieth Century*, Wysing Arts, Cambridge (2014) *Holes In The Wall*, Kunsthalle Freiburg, and *Frozen Lakes*, Artists Space, New York (2013).

**Anne Tallentire** (b. County Armagh, Northern Ireland) lives and works in London, UK. Her practice encompasses moving image, sculpture, installation, performance, and photography. Tallentire has presented solo exhibitions in the UK and internationally, including *But this material...*, The MAC, Belfast, Ireland (2021); *As happens*, Hollybush Gardens, London (2020); *Plan (...)*, Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria (2019); *Shelter*, Nerve Centre and Eighty81, both Londonderry, Northern Ireland, Ulster Museum, Belfast, Northern Ireland, and FabLab Limerick, Ireland (all 2016); *This and Other Things*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2010); and Irish Pavilion, 48th Venice Biennale (1999), among others.

Group exhibitions include *IMMA 30 Setting Out*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland (2021); *REFUGE*, Green on Red Gallery, Dublin, Ireland (2021); *Extrospection*, Pi Artworks, London (2020); *Truth: 24 Frames Per Second*, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, USA (2017); *Keywords: Art, Culture and Society in 1980's Britain*, Tate Liverpool, UK (2014); *Publish and be Damned*, ICA, London (2013); and *Anthology - for Lucy Reynolds, Film in Space*, Camden Art Centre, London (2012), among others. Her work is held in significant public collections, including Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Government Art Collection, UK; British Council Collection; and Arts Council Ireland Collection.

From 1993, Tallentire has also made work as part of the artist duo work-seth/tallentire with artist John Seth. She is also the co-organiser, with Chris Fite-Wassilak, of the peripatetic event series 'hmn'. She is Professor Emerita at Central Saint Martins, where she taught from the early 1990s to 2014. In 2018 Tallentire was the recipient of a Paul Hamlyn Award for Artists.