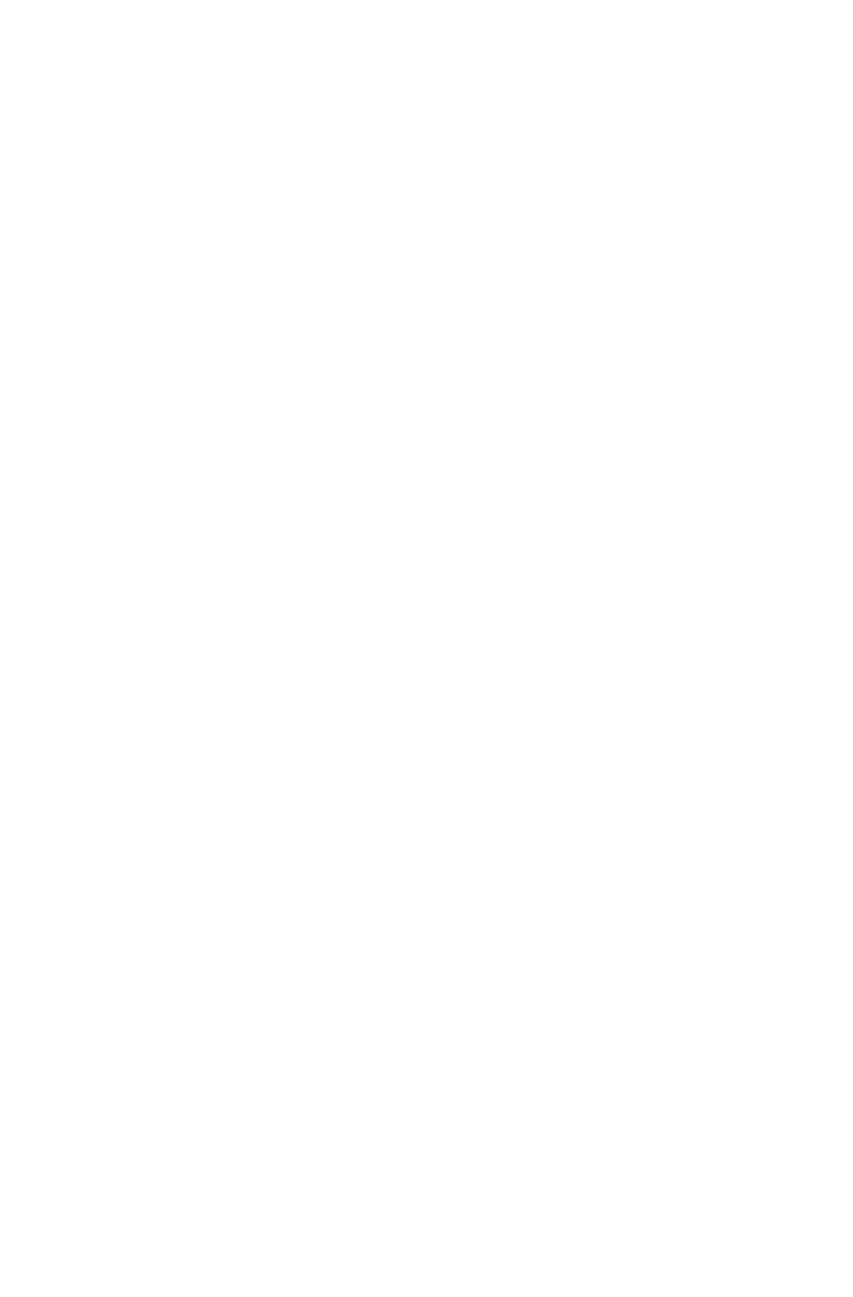


MINIMALISM: LOCATION ASPECT MOMENT

Dave Ball *Pink Wafer Equivalent VIII* 2003

Floor-based installation of 10,500 pink wafer biscuits arranged to same dimensions as Carl Andre's 1966 work *Equivalent VIII* ("The Tate Bricks"); 2.2 x 0.7 x 0.1m

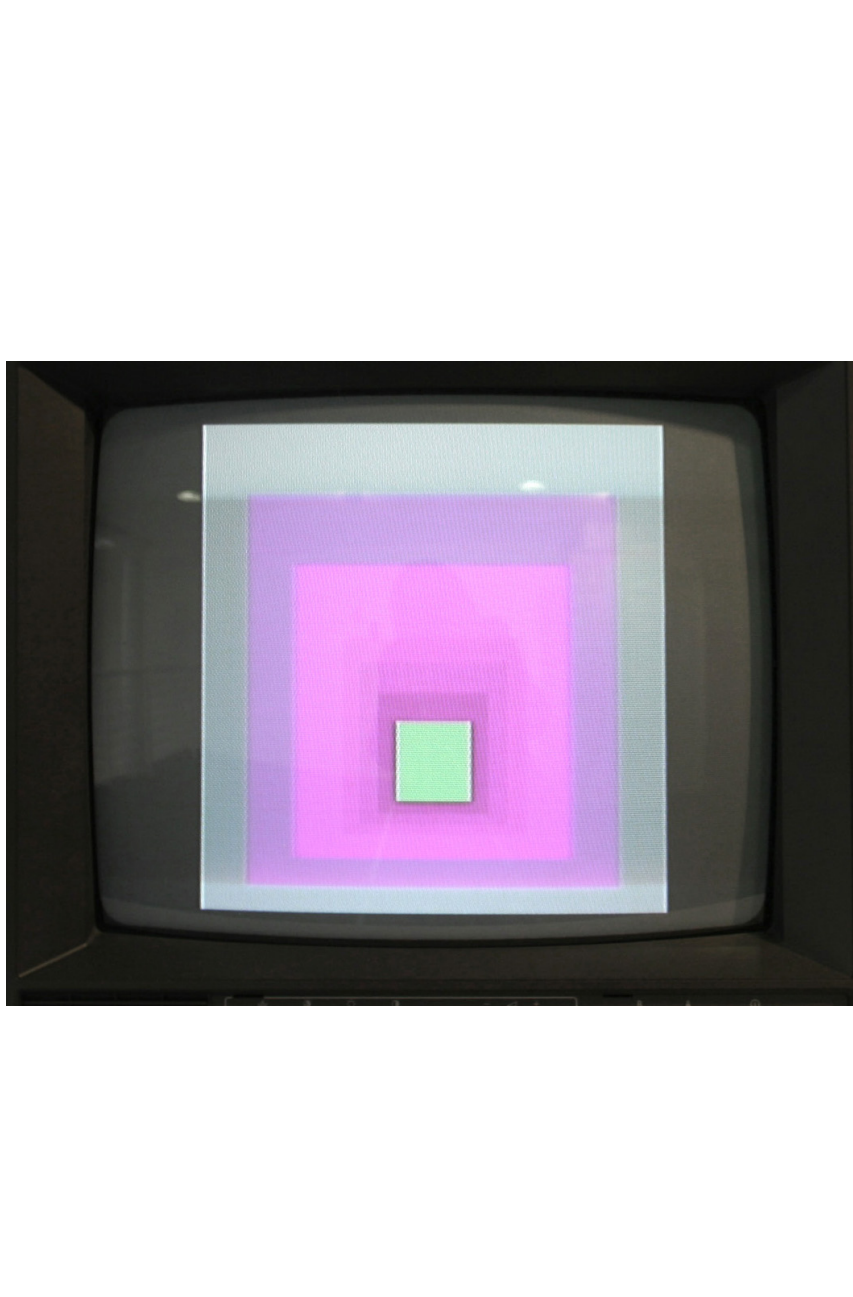


'Dave's tickled pink!' announced the headline on the cover of *Carmarthenshire Journal*. There was something inevitable about the way the local newspaper chose to focus on this one particular work in its coverage of a group exhibition at Oriel Myrddin Gallery in Wales entitled *The Joy of Kitsch*. Carl Andre's original had, of course, triggered something of a media storm back in the 1970s when the Tate purchased it. 'What a load of rubbish!' exclaimed the Daily Mirror's indignant article, beside a series of photographs of the work – which was low, reproduced on the pages of some art history textbook or other, I first encountered it.

I had recently finished art college and scholarly exegeses on minimalism were still echoing around my head: it was about one's own phenomenological presence as a spectator in the room; it was an intentionally uncompromising experience that denied conventional aesthetic pleasure, narrative interest, and symbolic content; it had since been (mis-) appropriated as a vacuous interior design concept. But for me, it also had a kind of compelling banality. I had been using biscuits a lot in my own work at the time, drawn to their resolute lack of seriousness; as a sculptural material they seemed a bit pathetic: the polar opposite of the austere minimalist brick. If minimalism sought to exclude everything that detracted from the facticity of the object in a space, then pink wafers were wholly inappropriate, filling the room with their sickly saccharine aroma, gaudily pink, initiating semi-ironic discussions of what's your favourite biscuit? But still, they were sort of brick-shaped, and they stacked quite nicely...

Jane Birkin *Air Show* 2016

Cardboard 3D viewer

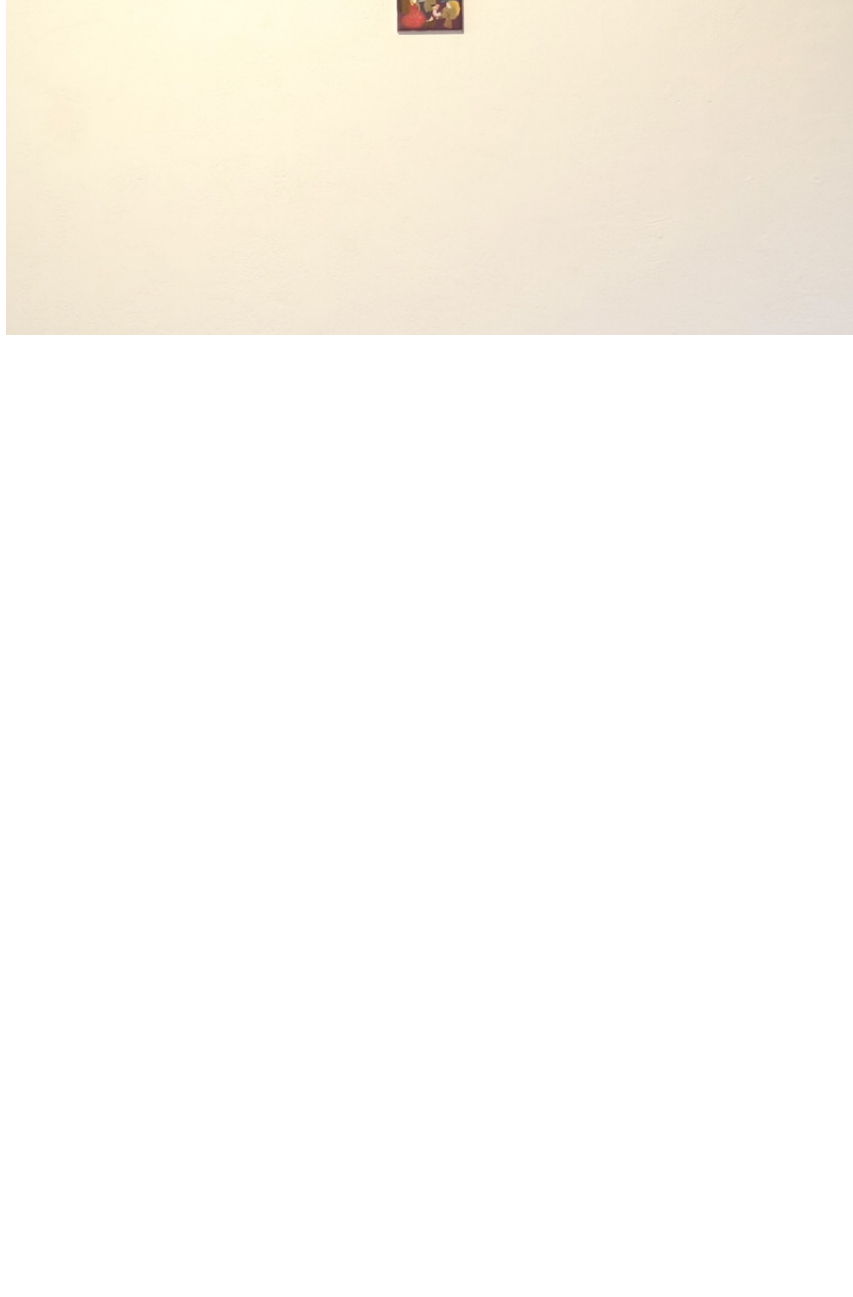


The rather playful reference to the work of Art & Language is confirmation that this minimal object belongs within the conceptual rather than the formal tradition. As Lucy Lippard argues, Conceptualism and 'what came to be called Minimalism' met from quite different places before going off in other directions. The situation between the two is not perceived here as a binary, but rather as a binomial, an exchange and a meeting.

Unlike Atkinson and Baldwin's works, this is not a text-only documentation of a fictional entity that positions itself on the side of dematerialization (although it can be argued anyway that text is wholly material), but it is an object, a machine for viewing that emphasizes its own materiality – and the materiality of air – through the denial of normal function. Connections can be made to discussions on the material and immaterial in digital culture: it is clear that pure information is an impossible notion and that the machine for viewing (software, hardware, network organization) is fully material and worthy of consideration in its own right.

Jaygo Bloom *Albers Time Tunnel* 2016

Single channel video, Stereo audio, Scale 1:10. 480 x 480 pixels



Throughout the 1950s Josef Albers created the works in his *Homage to the 'Square'* series in sizes ranging from 16 x 16 inches to 48 x 40 inches. When asked by a leading critic on a visit to his Connecticut studio 'Professor Albers, in 1962 you suddenly began to work in the size of 48 x 48, and I wondered if this was your reaction as a European to the vaster scale of life in America or in fact to the American attempt to conquer space and reach larger dimensions?' Albers looked at him and said: 'Young man that was the year we got a bigger station wagon.'

Andrew Carnie *One Plus One* 1993

Pass 1991

Cut suitcases

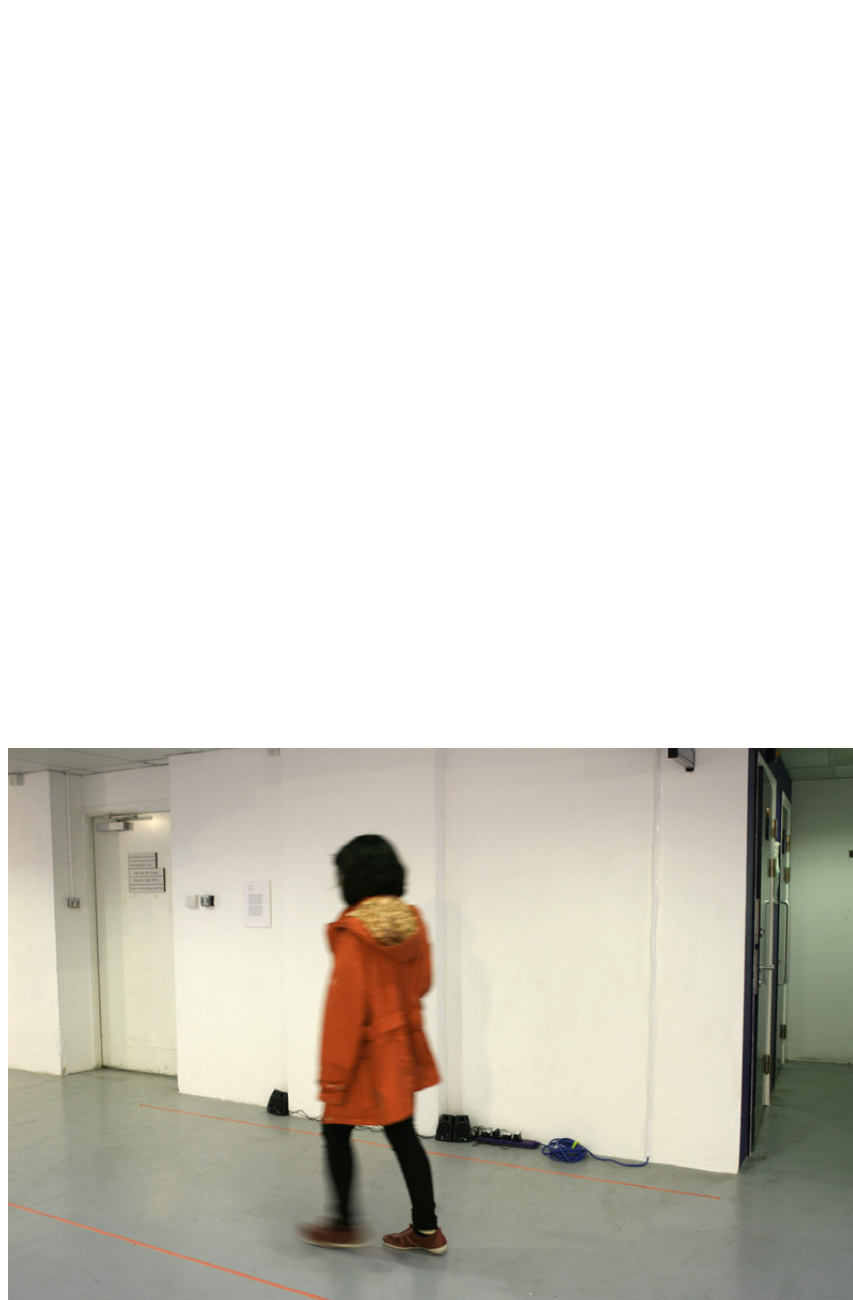


Although the peak of the minimalist movement had passed when I was studying in the early 1980s, I was being taught by those that had been deeply enmeshed in the movement. While influenced mostly by 'post-minimalism', the ethos of minimalist work stuck. The teaching at Goldsmiths gave a sense of reduction, 'keep it simple' and have 'truth to materials' were core ideas. This has in later times meant also keeping to a 'truth to ideas'. That 'matters', thoughts, can only be conveyed by what is exhibited and that what is exhibited should relate to the content one wants to purvey and be inherent in the materials one is using; the narrative to the work has to be in the work itself.

In the period from 1990 to 2001 I made work from old and new suitcases. I kept entirely to the materials of the suitcases; making alterations to them, cutting and edging them, and remoulding or laser cutting plastic cases. Simple operations were made to these vessels, bringing to the pieces wit and a concern about travel and globalization. Significant to these works is the act of travel away from one location and seeing, to seeing from different places and vantage points. The sense of humour of these works is something I feel I gained from the American artist Joel Shapiro, certainly a post-minimalist artist, with his dynamically composed sculptures of simple rectangular shapes. Echoes of this early work haunt my current practice, working on pieces related to senses of the self through experiences in the science lab, working with neurologists or transplant surgery teams.

Rima Dunn *Dollhouse Painting* 2016

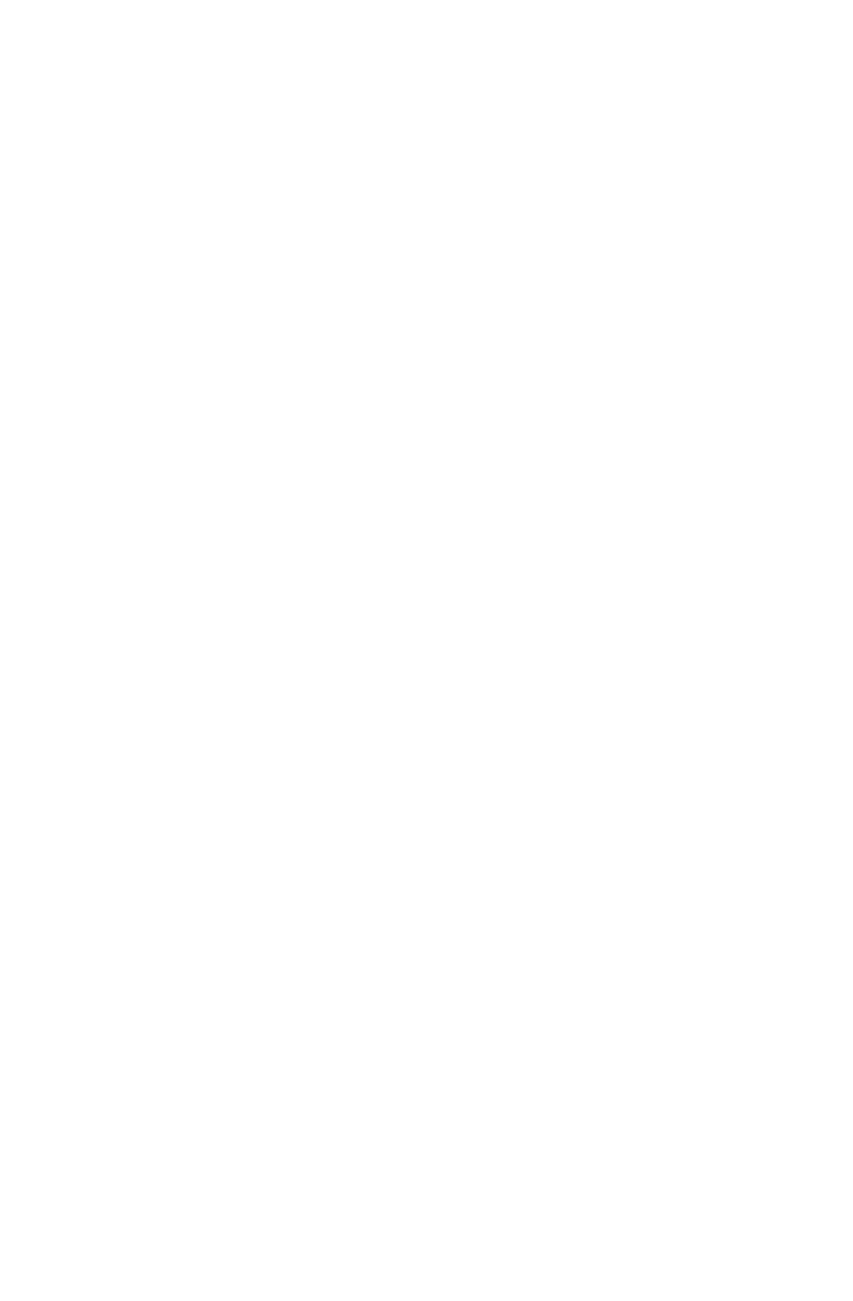
Oil on canvas, 10 cm x 9 cm



The painting presents a playful perspective on minimalism. The painting plays on the complex structure of the dollhouse and its intertextual relationship to concepts of the miniature. Drawing on Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*, this painting inspires an uncanny presence of images and realities. 'Dollhouse Painting' is a literal presentation of the materialistically minimal. The miniature scale of the painting provides canvas space enough for a minimal amount of paint. The miniature scale of 'Dollhouse Painting' also projects fictitious experiences with the real. The painting is associated with an extraordinary living space and the various domestic roles in that space. It portrays a family of dolls and their pets inside a dollhouse interior. Each doll, each character in the painting, is posing as if displaying their parts in this imagined scenario. The layout of the characters is further displaying the directors' vision for the interior of the dollhouse for which this painting represents a piece of furniture in. 'Dollhouse Painting' unfolds relationships of the interior and the exterior. The work illustrates an elaborate temporal image preserved through time. 'Dollhouse Painting' is intended to re-awaken various meanings of minimalism inspired by the miniature world.

Bevis Fenner *Vigil for the Death of Free Time* 2016

Performance installation

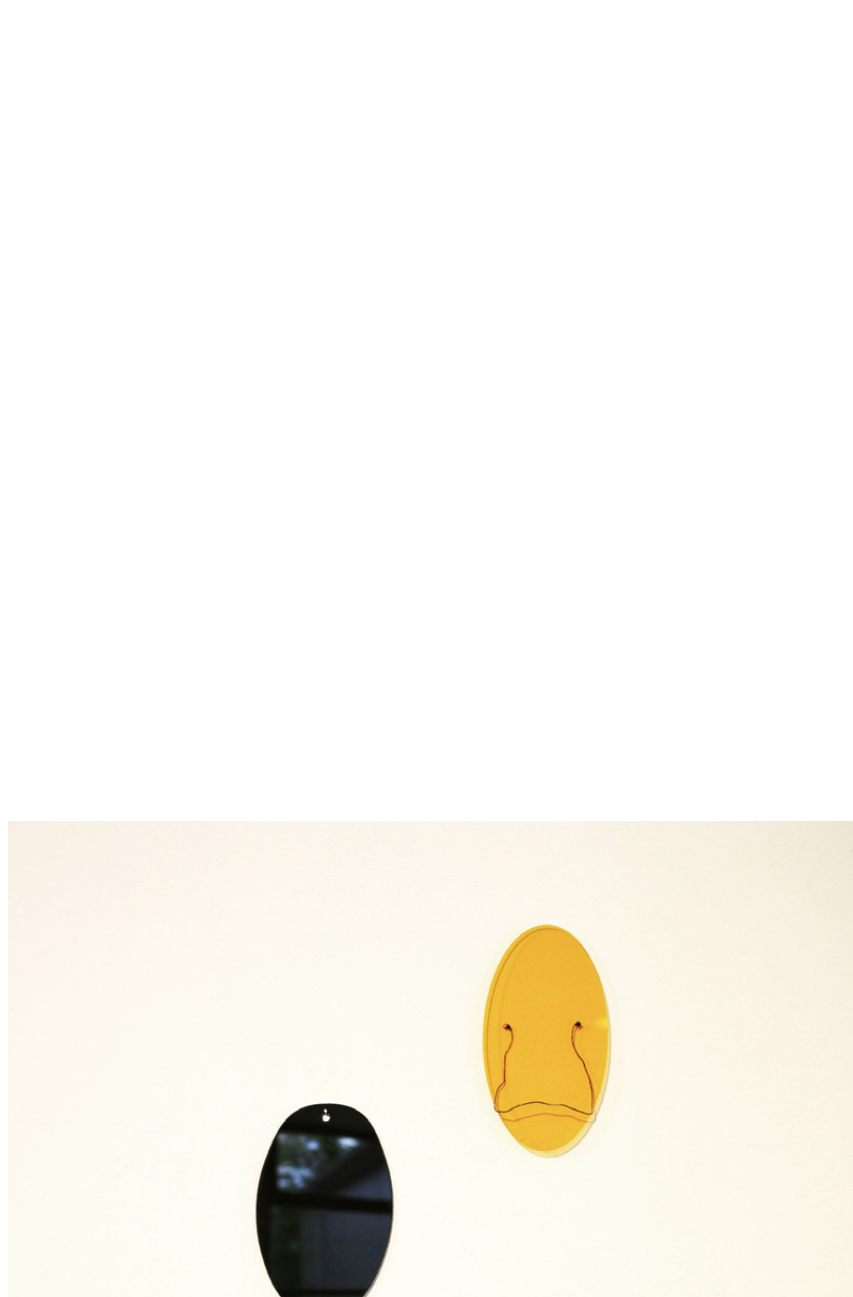


Minimalism was originally a reaction to the individualistic excesses and bank-friendly ambivalence of Abstract Expressionism – which Nelson Rockefeller's once described as 'free enterprise painting'. If it were to emerge as a new movement in 2016, then it would undoubtedly represent a similar stance towards the flexibility and obedience of today's instrumentalised artistic labourers. For today's culture of voluntarism and precarity is kept alive by nothing less than the ghost of modernism. Whether they like it or not, artists are sustained by their egos and the myth that they are making a difference. In reality, they are instrumental in creating a post-welfare culture of voluntarism, sustained by the endless labour of self-masking.

Bevis presents no alternatives or outsides to the labour power that artist's frequently misrecognise as capital, except for a futile call for the withdrawal of labour. The clock is an ironic counter-point to this act, representing the end of clock-time in an age of self-regulated / self-surveilled labour, in which there is no 'free time' and the tick of the clock is subsumed into the heartbeat of subjective labour. Performing the act of 'killing time' highlights the futility of non-participation. However, in the context of a conference, only a fool would refuse the opportunity to network, because without social networks we are adrift in a sea of signs and possibilities, and unplugged from the cybernetic feedback systems that sustain our labour. The performance serves not only as a reminder that refusal of work is a dangerous and potentially suicidal game but also an act of labour in itself; turning away from the shadows of illusion and language, and towards the shadow within and the potentiality of Jung's 'dark night of the soul'.

Jason Kass *Untitled* 2016

Digital c-prints



The relationship of my work to Minimalist practice comes out of an interest in affect, or I should say 'affectlessness' within the experience of works of art. Flatley speaks to the work of Judd (and then Warhol) vis-a-vis 'a cool, non-composed, affectless art to which "meaning" is difficult to attribute'. It is in this 'affectlessness', however, that the viewer can access a space in which to experience the affect inherent in everyday life. In Fried's terms we might speak of a literalness that, devoid of the expressive, projects the experience of the viewer inward (albeit theatrically).

Minimalism has been framed within 'aesthetics of boredom', or as producing a polarity between boredom and interest. In my own work I am curious about exploiting this polarity as an affective entry point for the viewer or by providing, through boredom, what Benjamin calls 'the egg of experience'. I explore this in the first instance through photographic practice that documents the affect of (my) everyday life but that results in imagery that might otherwise be considered boring. I also experiment with the language of seriality and the production of affect from multiple instances of otherwise mundane forms.

Sunil Manghani *Aisles 1-16 (Keio Store)* 2016

Sound installation



The supermarket is oft deemed a 'non-place', yet it's precise construction, regime of cleanliness, array of consumer goods, and diffuse distributed lighting make for a determined set of cognitive coordinates. While seemingly the opposite of the unmarked, unlit, and unstructured turnpike famously described by Tony Smith, the supermarket (experienced from within) coincidentally reveals 'art' to be absurdly small (it is no coincidence Warhol returned to us the products found upon its shelves). Viewed from above, it's many aisles can be deemed a set of limiting frames, yet our necessary means of navigating this space makes for a singular gliding frame; a quotidian experience that exceeds the delimitations of art.

The installation, based upon the 16 aisles of Keio Store in Komae-city, Tokyo, is a literal transposition of the acoustic space of a small, local supermarket. If we imagine ourselves a short-sighted person, *without* glasses, we encounter a repeating array of glistening colours from the hundreds of products upon the regularised shelving, combined with the soft reflection of fluorescent lighting upon the smooth flooring. This hypnotic image is carried by the repetitive, out of kilter supermarket musics that modulate and mix across the store. A postmodern twist, 'Aisles 1-16' is a live, remixing of music's indeterminacy, returning to us – each time we enter the store – the hypnotic, gradual musical changes formerly associated with an avant-garde music.

Sunil Manghani and Cheng-Chu Weng *Moikkai [Once More] (after Saburo Murakami, Bōru. Nage dama ega [Painting executed with throwing a ball], 1954)* 2016

Ink on paper, with ball

Murakami made a series of works by bouncing a ball smeared with black ink against sheets of paper. The ball's imprint on the paper resembles an explosion of black ink. The name *Haboku* (splashed ink) would have been appropriate – actually the name of the painting style of Sesshu. Not that Murakami made a typical Zen painting. He worked with the same material and comparable spontaneity, yet his work was primarily 'Zero'. He believed that it was typical for Zero to start with nothing: no subject, no paintbrush, no composition, no tonal values (just black ink on white paper) and completely original [...]. Nor was any artificial meaning involved. He merely called the works 'Bōru' (ball).

– Helen Westgeest, *Zen in the Fifties*

Saburo Murakami was a member of *Zero no kai*, or Zero group, and indeed he gave the name to the group. 'Zero means "nothing", he observed, 'start with nothing, completely original, no artificial meaning'. The group formed in Japan in the 1950s. It existed for less than three years and only held one group exhibition. However key members of the group went onto be influential members of the well-known *Gutai* group from 1955. The work of the Zero group varied in styles, yet much of the work could be termed as 'minimal', and there was much interest in combining aspects of both Western modern art and Japanese aesthetics. As Westgeest remarks, the Bōru series 'can be seen as an original integration of Western and Japanese elements, since it combines the characteristics of traditional Japanese ink painting with the Western artist's "striving for something new"'.

Moikkai recreates Murakami's act of throwing a ball smeared in ink, but does so in the full knowledge that it is a repetition of what went before. Bōru becomes more than nothing, more than zero, and less than minimal. Black ink on white paper here becomes 'artifact'.

Mia Taylor *Untitled*

2016 Perspex, wire and nails

A smile, a hard arc repeated that is also a chin and a forehead, an egg, a window, a bad wheel, a bad apple, a grape, a shape. An architectural mark that loops, a template that steadies the hand when drawing a seamless curve. A machine following a predetermined pattern scoring the edges with heat until the grape pops out. A transparent slidey surface that reflects the smiling arc right back as honey drips over it, scoring furrows later to be filled with the crystallised goo. A light bouncing from wall to floor to ceiling shunting it into a different dimension, it's tough but scratchy, high maintenance; gets old quick.

Cheng-Chu Weng *Shoji III*

2016 Japanese tissue paper, PVA glue, dimensions variable

The elements of grid and shadow in Weng's work recall an 'original' or primary scene, a specific memory that she holds of an experience in her childhood of an earthquake. This scene is not drawn upon in a representational sense, but rather underpins the installation. Following this Weng approaches a conceptual consideration of how bodies are mediated through both the tangible and intangible elements of space – the latter, for example, relating to matters of light, air, and fleeting temporalities. While not referring to her work as minimalist, the work is inevitably haunted by its influence in contemporary context.

At the heart of the scene is a moment in which Weng witnessed the silent shadow of her parents through the shoji panel at the threshold of her bedroom. It is a fleeting moment that has led Weng to examine painting (in the expanded sense) beyond modernist accounts, and instead to return to an earlier consideration, going back to Pliny's *The Origin of Painting* (the story of *The Maid of Corinth*). Along the same line as Pliny, the painting/ practice is founded in myth; in other words, the memory becomes the myth of the practice. Furthermore, to analyse the essence of myth and memory, the characteristics of her painting are ungraspable and ambiguous, equally as myth and memory. The process of production is haunted by both personal memory and art history.

CURATED BY CHENG-CHU WENG

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