



Alexander Bartleet

10,000 Objects

15th March - 9th April 2011

Light Brown Rough (Detail), 2011, Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 91 x 91 cm



Green Rough, 2011, Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 60 x 60 cm

ALEXANDER BARTLEET: 10,000 Objects

Preview: Tuesday 15th March 5.30pm - 7.30pm

16th March - 9th April 2011

Although this is Alexander Bartleet's first solo show since his graduation from AUT in 2007, he has already made an impact on the art scene as a finalist and winner in several art competitions. Right at the start of his career he attained one of the most difficult goals in contemporary art by developing an original, immediately recognisable style. Bartleet is an assemblagist, but he could equally be described as a painter, because paint is an essential element in his production process. He works with found plastic fragments, and plastics of different types are notoriously difficult to glue together. His solution has been to accrete everything with acrylic gel and paint. In the process the individual forms are unified and

appear to have settled into the matrix like debris tramped into a muddy field. Bartleet's illustrious European predecessors in this genre include Jean Dubuffet, Daniel Spoerri and Armand Arman.

In Bartleet's earliest works the obliterated forms were redefined by overpainting in a dark colour and rubbing back, resulting in shaded crevices and a timeworn appearance. These works operated outside their rectangles, like a Jackson Pollock. One felt that one was looking at snapshots of some enormous wasteland of human detritus, fragmented and scattered by a catastrophe – war, storm or nuclear blast. Bartleet moved rapidly



on from these monochromatic beginnings by adding subtle touches of colour or dots, or by outlining the forms with thin black lines. More recently he has introduced new colours into the monochromatic works and in other pieces has repainted all the elements in different colours, at the same time adding details alien to the original forms,

turning the whole picture into a surreal smorgasbord. He has also ventured into sculpture.

In this exhibition he has restricted himself largely to works that align closely with his original concept. The coagulated elements are larger than in his 2007 work, operating almost as close-up snapshots of those remarkable pieces. Bartleet has scaled things up further with his major wall-sized piece; remarkable for both its restraint and its complexity. Scale is an element that the artist has only just begun to explore. For example, elements can be bigger or smaller within rectangles that can themselves vary greatly in size. Other individual works in the exhibition hint at ideas that will no doubt be further developed in the future.

Warwick Brown, February 2011



Spectrum, 2011, Acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 91 x 91 cm



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