

Karen Tang David Ben White

it's for me, it's for you
25 January - 11 March 2017

Private View: Tuesday, 24 January, 6.30 - 8.30pm



Karen Tang, *Magnetic Combo: Otherwise*, 2016. David Ben White, *Not at Home 6*, 2016.
© Karen Tang and David Ben White, courtesy of l'étrangère.

it's for me, it's for you, presents sculptures by Karen Tang and paintings by David Ben White. The artists produced these new pieces independently, discovering by chance during the making process that shared influences existed. This two-person exhibition offers connections between the works, emphasising formal and conceptual aspects of each artist's practice.

Tang's *Magnetic Combo* series consists of modules that can be reconfigured in response to the scale and type of environment they are sited in. Some of her previous sculptures and installations have been site-specific, but this body of work is a departure in terms of proposing physically interchangeable and multiple variations. Tang's geometric steel structures allude to high-modernist sculpture, but submit to acting as supports for magnetically-held forms, which seem to invade with their eclectic mix of references from pop-culture and the natural world.

David Ben White's paintings depict interiors, doubling as geometric abstract patterns, that appear spatially complex and flat at the same time. These ambiguous territories act as containers from which individual narratives can flourish. The range of characters, or performers, within these choreographed set-ups are purposefully economical. Sundry domestic items are recast as two-dimensional screens onto which different forms of modernist inspired painterly languages appear projected. Quoting from a plethora of different painterly fine art references, the set-ups present fractured moments of what might be seen as heroic modernist painterly gestures, fossilised within unexpected domestic framing devices.

it's for me, it's for you links the works of Tang and White to double-up, and amplify, their paradoxical visual languages.

Karen Tang

Karen Tang's sculptures and installations explore themes from science, sci-fi, architecture and city life. Her works present surprising, often humorous, structural and material combinations; industrial steel with fibreglass with fluid, painterly surfaces. Colour is intrinsic to the works' physical presence and the perception of their sculptural forms in space. Tang's sculptures tend to include apertures, patterned and/or perforated surfaces, creating uncertain boundaries and physical entry points for viewers to peer into. The sculptures pay careful attention to controlling the levels of surface and formal information the viewer can access from different angles and distances. A variety of making processes are central in Tang's practice, including epoxy 'glassing', carving, modelling, painted or powder-coated metal.

David Ben White

David Ben White works with painting, sculpture and photography in addressing the question on 'how do we define space and how does space define us?'. White's work, absorbed within the language and aspirations of modernist architecture and design, seeks to undermine its self-enclosed logic. White explores the dynamic between the utopian idealism of modernist architecture and design in contrast to the domestic, personal decorative objects and elements. Profoundly influenced by his grandmother who was a committed modernist architect, White questions the belief in the utopian grand aspirations of modernism and its didactic governance. By introducing 'rogue', individual, decorative kitsch elements White aims to destabilise the modernist didactic authority and to subvert the modernist dream. This play with a 'bricolage sensibility', brings together different ingredients to open up a conversation with modernist formalism.

Gallery is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 6pm or by appointment

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