

PRESS RELEASE

FIONA SARISON

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Come On, Let's Go

This isn't an archive as reassurance. It's an archive as interference.

Fiona Sarison's work arrives here as a working cache: print matter, collage, moving-image traces, performance residues, graphic experiments. It is assembled less to prove a coherent "practice" than to show how coherence gets manufactured in the first place.

If the retrospective is meant to offer comfort, the reassuring arc of an artist's career, a practice you can catalogue, this display refuses it. Instead, it follows Sarison's productive misalignment: the way her forms keep sliding between art school and broadcast culture, between the civic street and the domestic screen, between the slogan that claims to speak to "everyone" and the private note that lands, abruptly, like a full stop.

What's here is less a timeline than a set of operations. Images as instruments.

Phrases as repeat-glitches. Posters, mock-ups, fragments. Not so much finished works as working procedures, tests of how authority makes itself feel like common sense, and how repetition turns instruction into atmosphere. In Coventry, that question has a local lineage: the Art & Language milieu of the 1970s, with its suspicion of "the finished work" and its insistence that framing is part of the content.

Design isn't neutral. It is one of the soft technologies that trains us, quietly, into what counts as normal. Governance doesn't always arrive as a schoolbook text or a law. Sometimes it turns up as typography, as layout, as a slogan that "just makes sense": a visual rhythm you absorb before you've even realised you're being addressed, before you've had the chance to disagree.

Then Sarison introduces the fault: the wrong title, the misnaming, the stubborn image that won't resolve into the expected message. Small breakdowns in the signal, moments where the supposedly natural starts to look constructed, where the smooth surface gives up its seams. It's not that the system collapses; it's that you catch it operating.

The archive becomes a record of those catches. Proof that the apparatus can be made visible, and that visibility is already a kind of refusal. Presented as a constellation rather than a celebration, this selection offers Sarison not as a finished figure but as an ongoing method: working with compromised materials and public language, insisting, again and again, that the apparatus can be made, if only for a moment, to stutter..

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