

*Fear View Lane* (2000) and *White Unit* (2003) – themselves apparently in storage. These works are packed up, their use to us now under question.

Like *Broken Sledge* (1992/2001), there are other objects here that seem to have come to a halt or at least a state of pause. *While No One Can See, See Through You, Nothing is Unseen* (all 2015), slim metal armatures on plinths, look as if they once held precious objects on display, or are poised to do so again. Weathered and rusted objects – *The Waves* (2011), *You Will Always Be Winter* (2012) – also hold memories of past lives, abandoned public spaces in which they once might have resided. They seem like apparitions waiting between exhibitions, reminding us that artworks spend much more of their lives in storage than on display. Boyce has asked ‘do my sculptures dream?’ This might be the place they go for such reveries.

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# Martin Boyce

**Before Behind Between Above Below**

02.03.24–09.06.24

For this exhibition Glasgow-based artist Martin Boyce (b.1967, Hamilton, South Lanarkshire) has reimagined each space in the Fruitmarket through subtle architectural interventions – corrugated partitions, wall mouldings, full-length curtains – that alter the atmosphere and create structures within which his artworks are re-staged, shown again, but seen differently.

Each work brings with it the memory of its own past lives, apparent in the visual conversations that occur between works. Repeated forms, colours and angles create a sense of a practice that constantly circles back on itself, lifting artworks – Boyce’s and those of other artists – back into the present.

A key to Boyce’s practice lies in the material shown on *Concrete Table I* (2008) in the small gallery on the ground floor. Brought together here for the first time are drawings, notes, photographs and maquettes relating to Boyce’s fascination with the concrete trees designed by Jan and Joël Martel for the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris. He first discovered a photograph of these trees in 2002, and was drawn to the way in which they synthesised nature.

The materials on display allow us to see how Boyce has analysed the structure of the concrete trees in order to create a modular system from which he can construct any number of forms from typography to telephone, from sculpture to street lamp. This is directly visible in *A Forest (I)* (2009), the chandelier that hangs over the table, and in works shown throughout the exhibition.

The remainder of the lower gallery is divided by translucent corrugated partitions that create the feeling of an architectural pavilion. Within this structure, wall-based works – including *Between the Long Roll and the Flash* (2014), *Lost Light 5020* (2018), and *Long Distance (I Travelled Far and Wide)* (2022) – match Boyce’s angular forms with similarly hard-edged urban materials, such as perforated steel, cast Jesmonite and aluminium. Softened by the blurring effect of the corrugated panels, works slide in and out of view.

The ghostly images of *Concrete Autumn (Phantom Tree)* (2005) and *Phantom Limb (Sister)* (2002) seem just out of reach, apparitions floating before us. The latter is an abstraction of the leg splint designed by Charles and Ray Eames in the 1940s. These splints, now icons of modernist design, have become detached from their original function to aid war wounded soldiers. Boyce asks what is left, suggesting that, as he says, ‘the object isn’t dead as such but is perhaps undead, a ghost, a physical presence in limbo.’ Boyce’s references to twentieth-century artists, designers and writers often takes on this ambivalent edge, orbiting their work not with reverence but with quiet interrogation.

The earliest work in the exhibition, *Interiors* (1992), explores Boyce’s longstanding fascination with images of architectural interiors, where, as he puts it, the ‘moment before the building is inhabited and the editing out of life somehow foresees its eventual abandonment.’ The spaces he creates contain this sense of liminality.

This is evident in the upper gallery, which floats between interior and exterior space, and between the natural and the manufactured. We enter what feels like an elegant and expansive bourgeois apartment, with architectural moulding running around the walls and, at the far end, a fireplace – *Same Day* (2015), an interior within an interior. Yet the outside world has crept in, with *Future Blossom (For Yokeno Residence)* (2022), a canopy of pink perforated aluminium shapes suspended from the ceiling. And the wax coated paper leaves of *Somewhere there are Trees* (2022) collect in drifts across the floor. The words of the exhibition title – before, behind, between, above, below – skirt around the walls in *Ventilation Grills for an Apartment Building* (2003). The stage is set for something to happen, or perhaps, conversely, something has just happened.

Entering the Warehouse we also find a place and time in limbo, where the sculptures are partially concealed by a haze of semi-transparent white curtains. There are storage units here – *For 129*