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Sara MacKillop

Attachments

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On bindingbazaar.com, the first bullet point on a list of reasons explaining why German firm Laurel's Plastiklips® are better than metal paper clips states:

- Plastic grips thick or thin paper more effectively than metal clips.

This emphasis on the material qualities of the clips, as well as the various sizes they come in, as mentioned in bullet point three on the website, are relevant to the wall-based works in Sara MacKillop's new show *Attachments*.

Paper Paper Clips are a series of works where large pieces of plain paper have enlarged paper cutouts of different designs of plastic binder clips attached around their edges. These paper copies of an array of plastic clips are cut from colourful pieces of plain, lined, gridded or patterned paper, as well as glossy pages from home interior and stationery catalogues listing storage solutions; calendars; art supply adverts; and paper inserts for multipacks of writing or printer paper, which were previously bundled with cellophane. All roughly A4 in size, these oversized paper paper clips may or may not be made from less grippy material than either plastic or metal, but either way, these idealised images of organisation don't seem to have the rigidity required to hold things together themselves.

Somewhere the materiality of the paper clip is of no concern is on the computer screen, where it appears as the icon that enables the user to attach files to an email. MacKillop's use of stationery in her work, as well as other office materials, brings to mind the changing universe of storage and transmission media and technologies of reference as we leave the epoch of paper behind. To ease this process along, the terminology of computer surfaces was designed to remind users seated before their screens of the familiar world of filing and the stationery shop as they fulfil in ever more internalised ways the basic law of bureaucracy according to which administrative techniques are transferred from the state to the individual.

Another word that can be found amongst digital menu tabs offering options such as "lists", "bookmarks", and "format" is "thesaurus". In the exhibition these appear in paper hardback form, along with other types of reference books hung from coat racks with straps, suggesting these *Book/Bags* can be worn over the shoulder as accessories to be carried around.

Titled *Giftwrap Shutter*, the third element of the show consists of rolls of wrapping paper threaded through a fabric storage system. Hung from the tops of doorways, the horizontal wrapping paper bars create a series of ambivalent barriers between the different rooms of the gallery, which the more paranoid among us might associate with gatekeepers, the denial of insight, and arcane mechanisms of exclusion. Ideas of concealment and mystery are also central to how wrapping paper works normally, as it heightens the pleasure of receiving a gift. Or at least it offers a moment of suspense before it's established whether or not there is any connection.

- Oliver Corino