

Nightclubbing

Ceysson & Benitiere is pleased to present Sherman Sam's first exhibition with the gallery and in Luxembourg.

Born in Singapore and based primarily in London, he says of his method:

"At any one time there are some 15-20 works in progress. Some of these have just been sitting in the studio for some years. I would say that half of them are getting more attention than the rest. I move them round, glance at them. A touch of paint here and a touch there, that's the main action, and not always every day. BUT it is the looking and trying to stumble on to a solution or way forward that takes the time. Well, sometimes it's not a stumble, but the accidental path is always the most satisfying because it's so much less predictable. So even those seemingly forlorn pieces sitting around collecting dust, are really still being thought over somewhere in the back of my mind.

How does a painting come together? First I cut and assemble the panels. So when I begin to paint, they already have some sort of determined rectilinear shape. Then I make some marks on the primed panel, maybe a splatter or two, or in earlier pieces a light wash. These actions determine some of the under structures of what becomes the painting. Likewise my drawings follow a similar process. They come about in a process of, let's call it, searching, working through, erasure and then finally equipoise. They too are cut from larger sheets of paper. Both drawings and paintings are the result of some kind of spontaneity and predetermination."

The title "Nightclubbing" comes from the 1981 Grace Jones album. Sam finds titles for his paintings from song lyrics and names for his exhibitions from the titles of albums. Their found quality brings another layer to his art's meaning. Although he describes his work as without referent and his approach as "some what" improvised, "it" he says "does not leave us with meaningless objects." Though they are nonrepresentational, the preferred word is abstract, as they are in his view objects on the edge of meaning. Abstraction he says is

" a more speculative form. No other media quite offers the same sense of openness. Or fluidity. I realize this seems a contradiction when one is speaking of singular flat objects. Abstraction can be speculative; it can be uncertain, as life is; it is open to possibility (of interpretations), as life can be. It is not a closed form, as some conclude it is. It is not symbolic, least not the kind I am thinking of. That is it can pose or *embody* flux - open questions in ways that representation cannot."

His paintings and drawings are intended to be seen and thought over, he frequently describes them as slow objects for a speedy world.

Sherman Sam is an artist based in London and Singapore. He has exhibited internationally, including one-person shows at The Suburban (Chicago), the Rubicon Gallery (Dublin), Lugar do Desenho (Porto), the Centro de Arte (San Joao de Madeira, Portugal), Some Walls (Oakland, CA), Equator Art Projects (Singapore) and most recently at Annka Kultys Gallery (London). His work has also been included in numerous group shows in Europe, America and Southeast Asia, including *M6: Around London* (Andratx, Majorca), *Plan D*, an exhibition which he curated (Portugal, Ireland), *Rhyme not Reason* at the Janet Kurnatowski Gallery (Brooklyn), *Connected* at Feature Inc (New York), *The Theory and Practice of Small Paintings* at Equator Art Projects (Singapore).

From interview with Traction magazine

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