

Clare Goodwin***DIDN'T I TELL YOU, I THINK I DID****Ceramics, Paintings, Objects*

24 October to 5 December 2020

Opening reception: Friday, 23 October 2020, from 2 to 8pm

Clare Goodwin's painting practice has undergone a typically minimal but, in material terms, quite radical evolution in recent years. Her irreverent gaggle of Modern motifs appear to have travelled some distance, in scale and referential mileage, from their historical and studio origins: onto walls, objects and, most recently, into the fire. Many of the works that make up *DIDN'T I TELL YOU, I THINK I DID* at Lullin + Ferrari have been baked at very high temperatures in a kiln. Goodwin's *Whispers* – small-scale, flat and glazed clay shapes that reference details of her compositions – have been quietly evident in other projects, but this is the first of her solo presentations where the ceramic works take centre stage.

Goodwin takes a playful custodial approach to the job of working with iconic forms and motifs. In her bold, but precise, juggle of visual-art references – from Malevich to Mary Heilman via Charles and Ray Eames – she acknowledges that anyone working in the field of abstract painting is only ever a temporary Pied Piper in the process of its development. But, also, the concertina effect of these art and design sensibilities through popular cultural, over time; how much of their influence is (if not always consciously) felt and experienced through the everyday encounter, not just in the church of high art.

During the studio time-travel between sources, Goodwin consistently returns to the tested formal strategies of the Constructivists and Concrete artists to inform her graphic painterly language; sources able to withstand the rigours of material translation and hold their own in any aesthetic arena. Known principally for her works on canvas, Goodwin has ventured into many other making and presentational territories, exploring the associatively rich 'conversations' that might be had between the canvas and other objects, from a variety of spatial perspectives. *Sottovoce*, her current major wall painting commission at Haus der Kunst St. Josef, Solothurn, also refers to subtle forms of communication; the geometric dance of elements, surface to surface, speaking in hushed tones of moments of connection.

DIDN'T I TELL YOU, I THINK I DID, includes new paintings, ceramic works, furniture/objects. Once again, the idea of verbal exchange comes into play, with banter or gossip as social currency, possibly shared between many parties, its meaning likely altered along the route. The potential tactility of the painted canvas surface, has and continues to connect us with Goodwin's past and present sources: from the floppy, silky materiality of printed fashion items and home furnishings, to the crisp pages of 1970s design books that smell of another time. Goodwin is showing new round paintings on linen, which appear as if portals cut into the gallery walls, offering partial vistas onto an aspirational home-dec pastel world carefully pleated, rusched, smoothed and ready for visitors. The two other paintings on view, *Samuel and Patsy*, 2020, and *Andrew and Elizabeth*, 2020, employ a wonderfully complex, origami sense of layered imagery, which we might imagine from their titles as the shared memories of things, places and human encounters, reduced.

The presence in the gallery of hand-made and painted chairs and stool objects, further tests this playful tension, which always exists in Goodwin's work: between social and cultural hierarchies; public and private. But there is nothing comfy or suburban about these pieces, the form-over-function sensibility of their Modernistic design chiming neatly with the current moment, and the need to imagine the future progressively. Each hard surface, bearing Goodwin's colourful, familiar symbology brings us back to the canvas as starting point and the notion of viewing each composition as a set of expanded dimensional parts.

By contrast, the different bodies of ceramic works here appear stripped back, in some cases to single-colour glazes. Goodwin began experimenting with clay as a surface to paint on a few years ago, and has developed the idea to incorporate a range of forms and techniques. Recent periods in the Portuguese ceramic factory, Viúva Lamego, has enabled Goodwin to hone her skills and swiftly produce works in multiple for exhibition display. While some works appear positively rustic in the white cube and amongst many hard-edged contemporaries – the handmadeness of their manufacture connecting us with things of use and the domestic history of ceramic objects – others, seductively monochromatic and glossy, referentially straddle the breach between functionality and pure aestheticism.

Pairs of *Whispers*, tête-à-tête, tell different visual stories to those found in corners; their hand- and spray-painted glazes moving us associatively between artisanal and commercial design sensibilities. It's interesting that Goodwin should also chose to work with the standard-sized, hand-produced Azulejos tiles, given their significance to the history of the factory and the region as a manufacturing nation. Painted by Goodwin and box-framed together in sets of four and six, these tile works may share tonal and formal qualities with the paintings, but in fact appear like scaled-up, high-end versions of the more throwaway sliding puzzles associated with party bags and Christmas crackers.

Holding the room, the wall of tarry-black *Whispers* hung in curtain formation brings to mind a wealth of potential sources, disciplines and sensory triggers. Low-in-profile but not flat, they embody some of the messy printed characteristics of the page – imagine the creation of a new sculptural font – while the combination of fragile surface and a once-sticky, now protective coating creates a toffee moment in the mouth. As a gang they behave neither uniformly within the grid, nor appear out of step with the narrative parameters it sets. Like a designer autopsy of Cornelia Parker's *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View*, 1991, each slightly different form connects us with both the auspicious and everyday histories of collecting; the significance of things to people for very different reasons.

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Clare Goodwin, born 1973 in Birmingham, lives and works since 2003 in Zurich. Studied at Winchester School of Art from 1993 to 1996 (BA Painting) and at the Royal College of Art, London from 1996 to 1998 (MA Painting). Solo exhibitions include current show at *Sottovoce* Haus der Kunst St. Josef, Solothurn, until 15 November 2020; *Dis<>Order* at Nadja Brykina Foundation, Moscow (2019); *Wall Paintings*, Last Tango, Zurich (2019); *Whispering Widows*, Lullin + Ferrari, Zurich (2017); *Nostalgia*, CentrePasquArt, Biel (2016); *Broken Parallels*, Karin Sachs Gallery, Munich (2014); *Bradford's Jolly*, Christinger De Mayo Gallery, Zurich (2014); *Unforced Errors*, CGP London (2013); *Clare Goodwin feat WeAreTheArtist*, Kunsthalle Winterthur (2012); *Kiss on the Blue*, Rotwand Gallery, Zurich (2011)

The opening reception takes place **Friday, 23 October 2020** from **2 to 8pm**. The artist will be present. For further information and images please contact Lullin + Ferrari, Limmatstrasse 214, CH-8005 Zurich, t. +41 43 205 26 07, info@lullinferrari.com, www.lullinferrari.com
Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday 12–6pm, Saturday 11–5pm, and by appointment