smac
art gallery
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On a recent visit to South Africa to attend the exhibition of South African born, British artist Helen A Pritchard at SMAC Art Gallery in Cape Town, Keith Coventry was impressed by the local art scene and the interest shown towards contemporary British art, in particular the so-called YBA (Young British Artists) generation, amongst whom Coventry was a central figure. Coventry suggested presenting and curating (together with Pritchard) an exhibition of works on paper by some of his artist friends from the UK. The show contains work by many of the important YBAs, as well as younger artists from the current generation, including three Turner Prize winners and many well-publicized and controversial Turner Prize nominees. A spirit of generosity from the curators and the participating artists underpins this exhibition that explores the often overlooked qualities of art produced on paper.

Gavin Turk, *100 Years* (2014)

Paper evokes history and the documentation thereof, in this context, the complicated history between South Africa and the UK. Gavin Turk's simple and characteristically piercing work entitled *100 Years* (2014), a century-old piece of paper bearing the handwritten inscription, "100 year", speaks a thousand words; commenting on the transience of things, the relative insignificance of recent history or perhaps its dire consequences which predicts an impending 'cleaning of the slate'.

Paper itself has the unique characteristic of outlasting most other art forms – especially technology based work or seemingly enduring contemporary trends. Paper has for centuries been the principal mode of written communication between people, but in recent times it has come to represent a uniquely personalized form of communication – an idea encapsulated perfectly in Tracey Emin's monoprint on personalized stationary. Paper is also at the heart of the current environmental debate and is an integral part of the concept behind the work of Simon English, who works primarily in this medium to convey his environmental concerns, as do the delicate works of mud on paper by acclaimed Land Artist Richard Long. Helen A Pritchard's framing of cardboard cut-outs from commercial packaging hints at similar concerns, whilst referencing important art historical moments ranging from Neo Baroque to Arte Povera, Minimalism, Geometric Abstraction and Pop Art.

Keith Coventry, *Two Girls Smoking Crack* (2001)

In the nineties, the YBAs and 'Britart' catapulted contemporary art into a new realm and broke boundaries, expanding the reach of the previously insular and isolated world of contemporary art. Art and celebrity culture became synonymous. The radical, alternative and sensationalist quality whereby these artists rose to prominence became a global cultural phenomena and aligned them with pop musicians (such as Jarvis Cocker & Oasis) and fashion designers (Alexander McQueen & Stella McCartney). The free, rebellious spirit of the time is embodied in Keith Coventry's work, *Two Girls Smoking Crack* (2001) and Sophy Rickett's iconic photographs of herself urinating, whilst standing and in a stereotypical male posture, on modern political landmarks such as the MI5 building.

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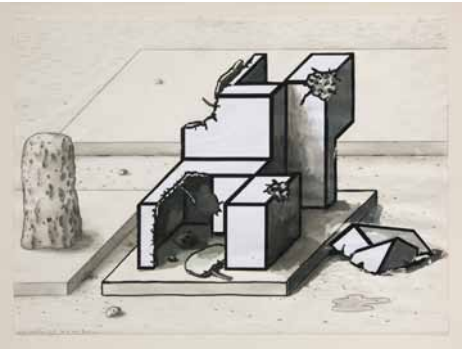
Mark Wallinger, *Untitled* (2014)



Paul Noble, *Details from Nobson* (c. 2000)

Despite a historic slant (the show spans more or less two decades), it also includes fresh and exciting new works such as a labyrinth drawing by Turner Prize winner Mark Wallinger, who has just been commissioned to produce 270 monumental public works on this theme to be placed permanently in various locations on the London, UK Underground. Further examples include a large, elaborate and typically colourful mixed media work by Keith Tyson (another Turner Prize winner) and two delicate collage works of autumn leaf shaped cut-outs of pages from pornographic magazines by Jonathan Yeo, who recently presented a major exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London, UK. These and other works make this exhibition very current and as much about the 'now', as about recent history.

The relative ease with which an exhibition of this stature was organized attests to another characteristic of the medium, namely its portability. Paper is light and easy to transport, it is also easy to work on outside of the studio. Many of the works on show might be interpreted as unfinished, rough or unpolished in contrast to how some of the more well-known and iconic works by these artists have been publicized. These 'sketches' reveal unexpected aspects of the thought process and general process behind these artists and their practice – a type of behind-the scenes, private view into their world. The personal nature of this exhibition extends beyond the relationships between the curators and the artists, to a broader collective intent to engage with a specific place. There is a sense of goodwill towards the idea of sharing and reaching out to the South African audience.

This exhibition allows Capetonians and art students the unique opportunity to engage with the works (and minds) of these renowned international artists, in an intimate, personal and direct way.

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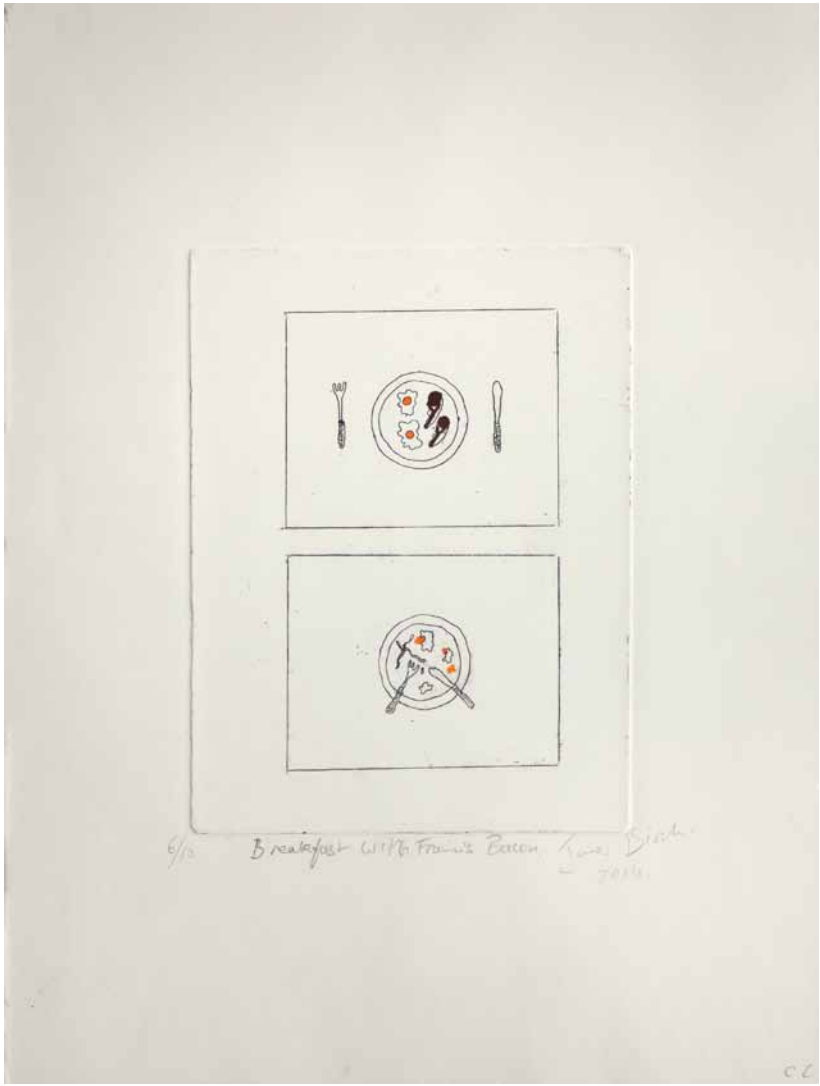
Keith Coventry | *Junk I & II* | 2014 | Oil Stick and Pencil Crayon on Paper | 59.5 x 50 cm

JAMES BIRCH

Born 1978 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Breakfast with Francis Bacon
2014
Hand Coloured Etching
37.7 x 28.2 cm
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MAT COLLISHAW

Born 1966 Nottingham, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

The Invisible Calf
2014
Conte Pastel and Pencil on Paper
42 x 29.7 cm

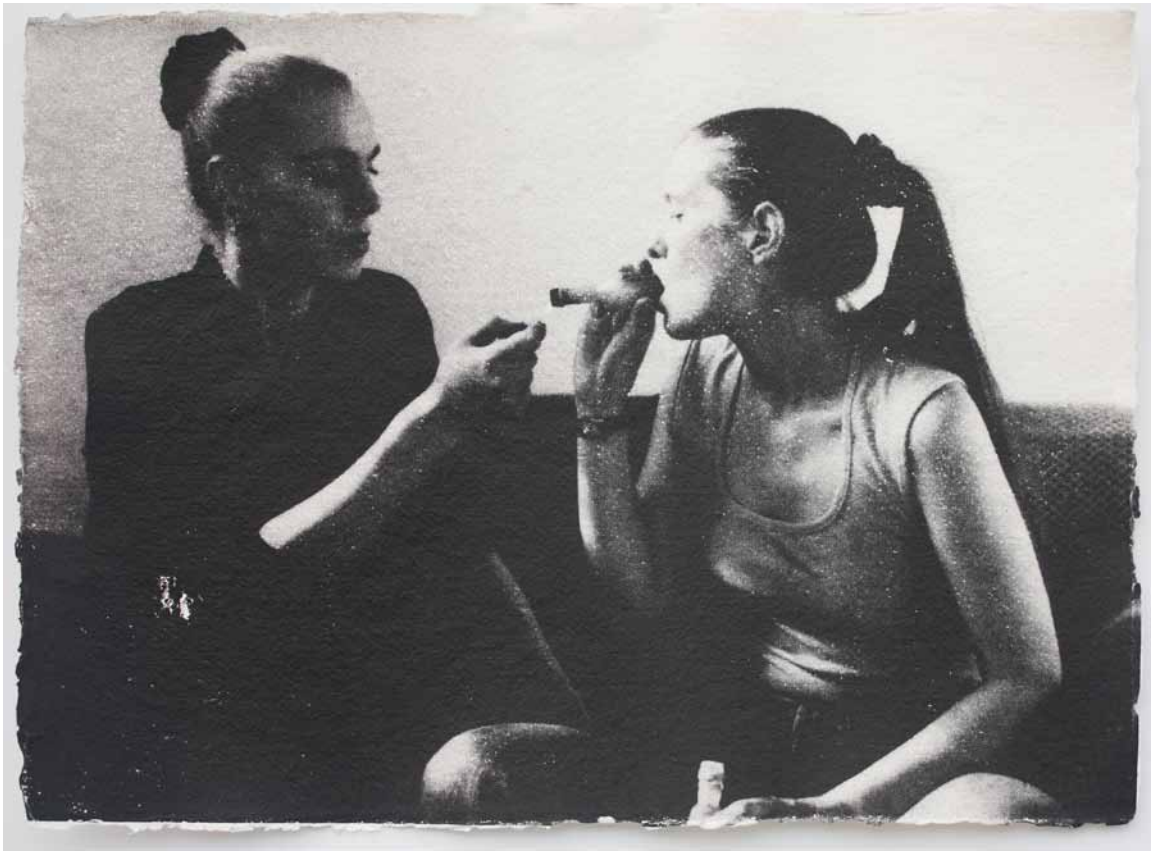
NIGEL COOKE

Born 1973 Manchester, UK
Currently lives and works in Kent, UK

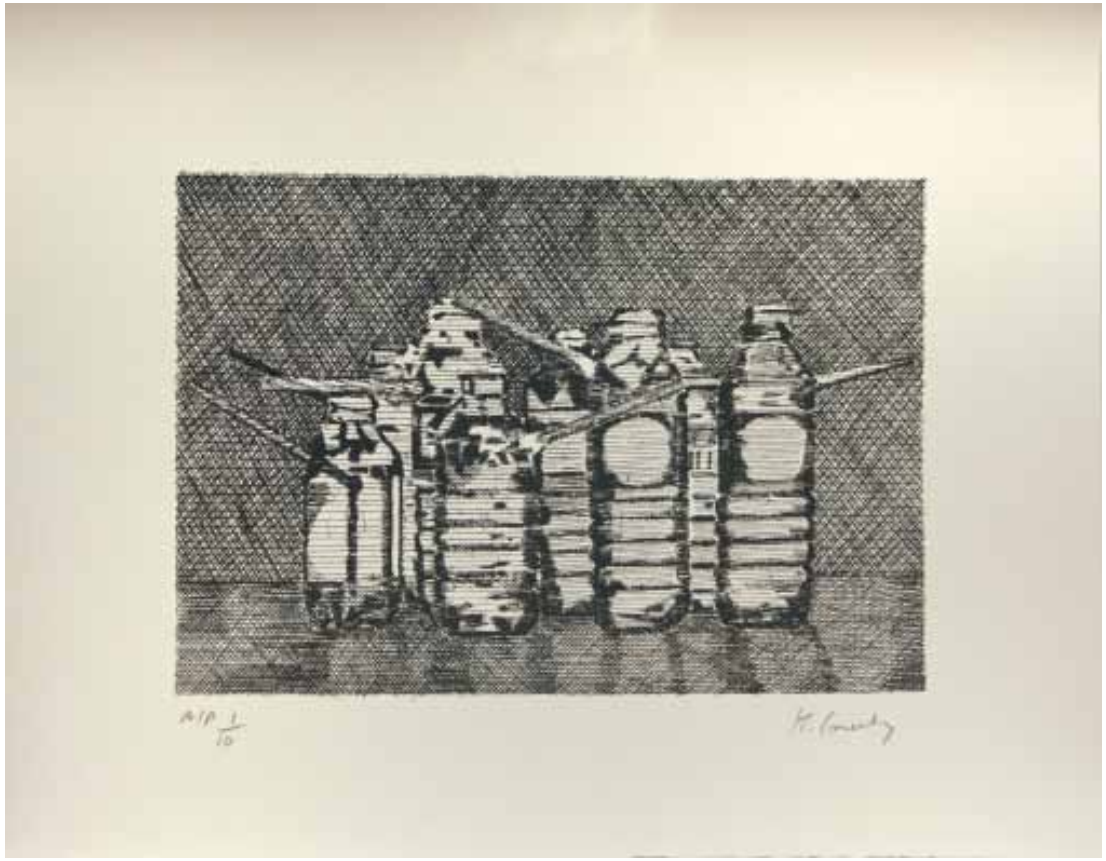
Study for Translators
2013
Charcoal and Watercolour on Paper
27.8 x 38 cm

KEITH COVENTRY

Born 1958 Burnley, Lancashire, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Two Girls Smoking Crack
2001
Silkscreen on Paper
30 x 41.5 cm



Untitled
2007
Silkscreen on Paper
30 x 37.8 cm
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Junk I
2014
Oil Stick and Pencil Crayon on Paper
59.5 x 50 cm

Junk II
2014
Oil Stick and Pencil Crayon on Paper
59.5 x 50 cm

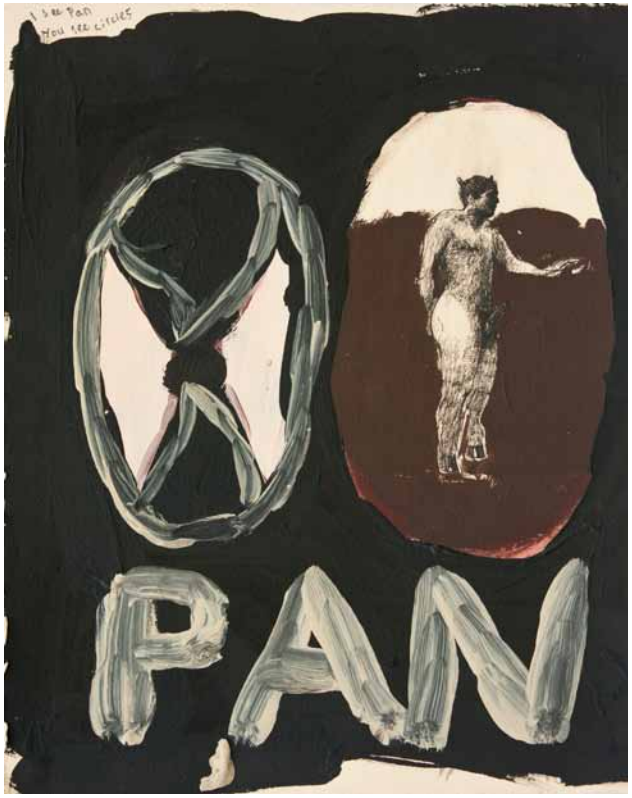
Junk III
2014
Oil Stick and Pencil Crayon on Paper
59.5 x 50 cm

Junk IV
2014
Oil Stick and Pencil Crayon on Paper
59.5 x 50 cm

SIMON ENGLISH

Born 1959 Berlin, Germany
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Lay Head
2013
Mixed Media on Paper
36.5 x 28.2 cm



I see Pan- You See Circles
2013
Ink and Acrylic on Paper
36.5 x 28.2 cm

Fairy Sheath
2013
Ink on Paper
36.5 x 28.2 cm

Lay Torso or Apple Nipples
2013
Mixed Media on Paper
36.5 x 28.2 cm

TRACEY EMIN

Born 1963 Croydon, Surrey, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

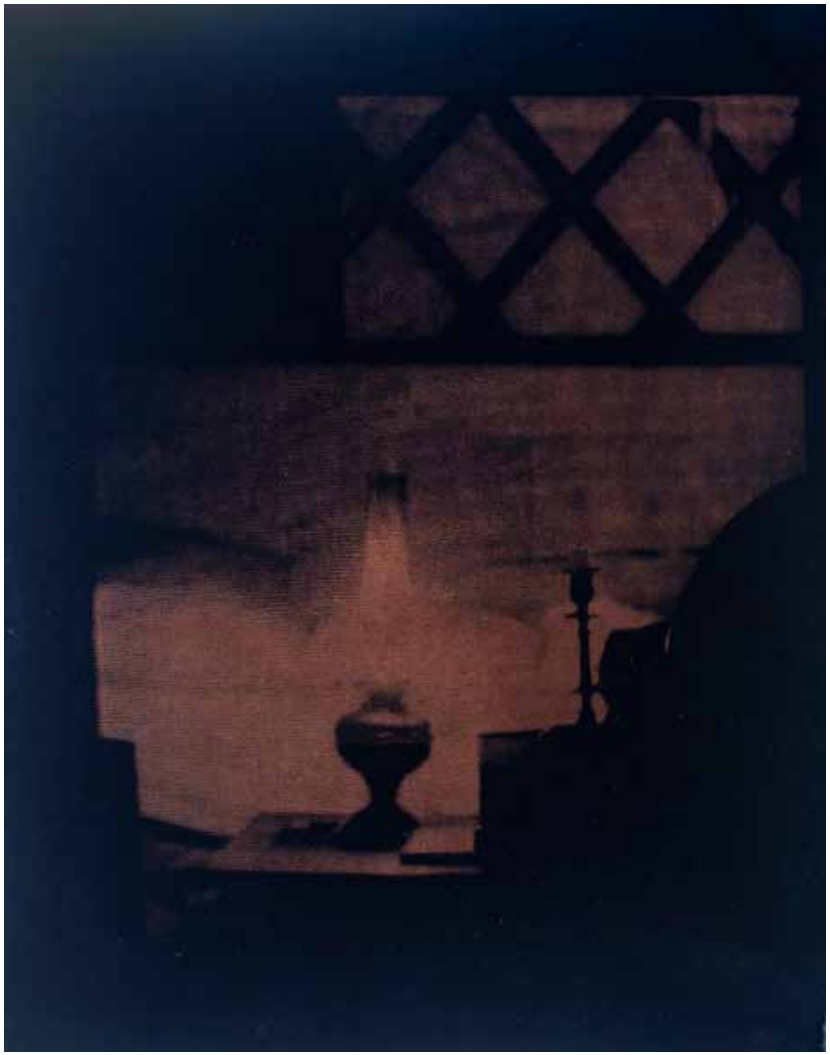
More Thinking (Verso) | 2012 | Pen on Paper | 21 x 29.7 cm

More Thinking (Recto)
2012
Monoprint on Paper
21 x 29.7 cm

Turner Prize Nominee, 1999

BARNABY HOSKING

Born 1976 Norfolk, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Untitled
2013
Bleach on Velvet on Paper
62.5 x 50 cm

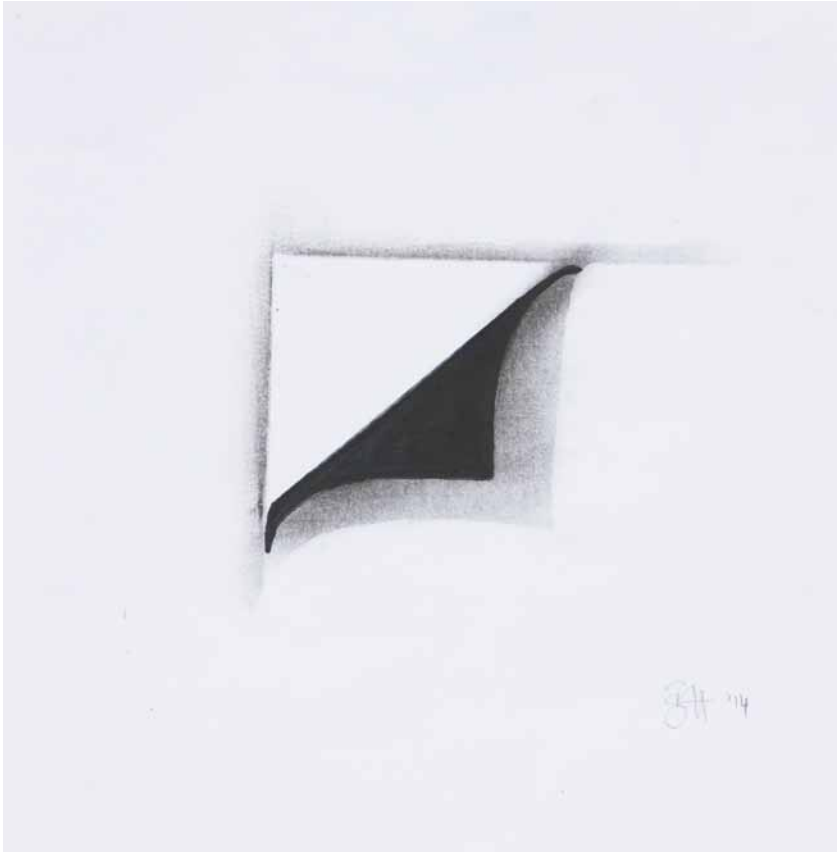
HENRY HUDSON

Born 1982 Yorkshire, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Icons- Study for a Bronze
2014
Pencil on Paper
31x 50.5 cm

BRIDGET HUGO

Born 1971 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Peal I
2014
Pencil on Paper
19 x 19 cm

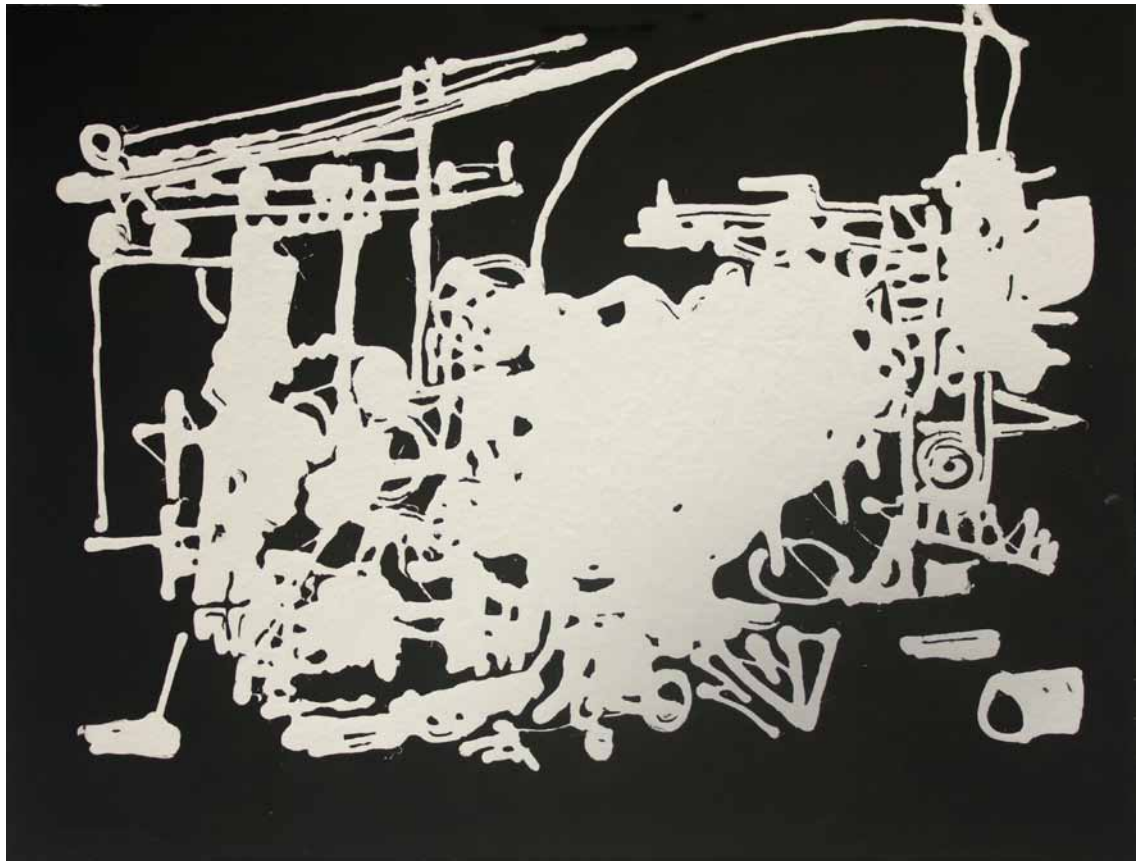
RICCA KAWAI KALDERON

Born in Japan
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Untitled
2010
Ink on Paper
45 x 38.3 cm

MICHAEL LANDY

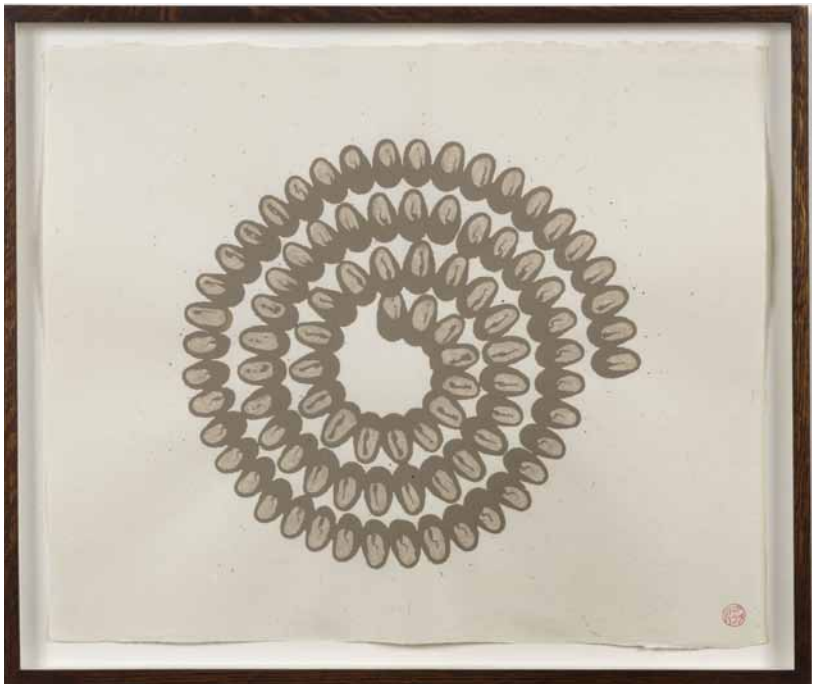
Born 1963 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Piano on Fire
2006
Oil Stick and Tipex on Paper
30.5 x 40.5 cm

RICHARD LONG

Born 1945 Bristol, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



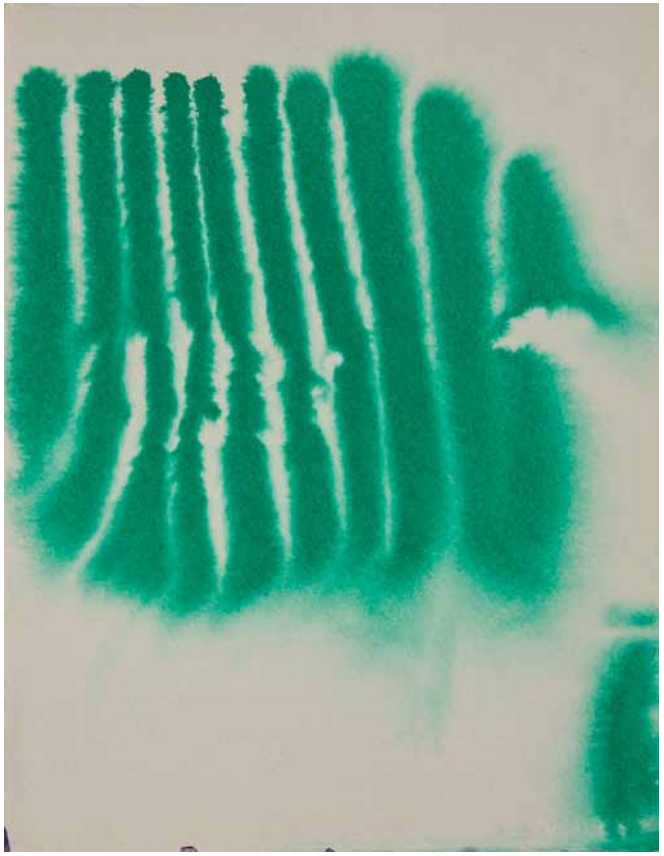
Untitled
1992
River Avon Mud on Paper
40 x 48 cm

Untitled
2006
River Avon Mud on Black Card
21 x 25 cm

Turner Prize Nominee, 1984, 1987, 1988
Turner Prize Winner 1989

JASON MARTIN

Born 1970 Jersey, Channel Islands, UK
Lives and works between both London, UK and Portugal

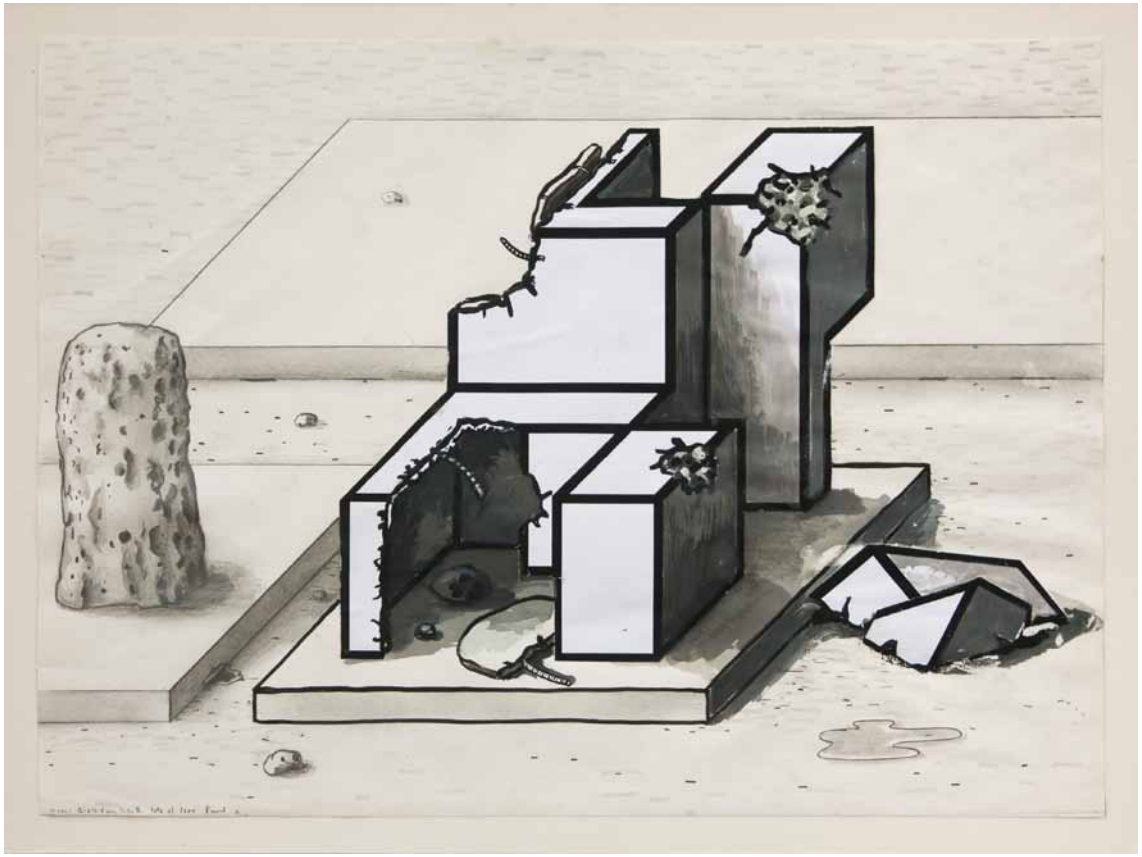


Untitled
2001
Ink on Paper
29 x 22 cm
Diptych

Courtesy of Lisson Gallery , London, UK

PAUL NOBLE

Born 1963 Northumberland, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

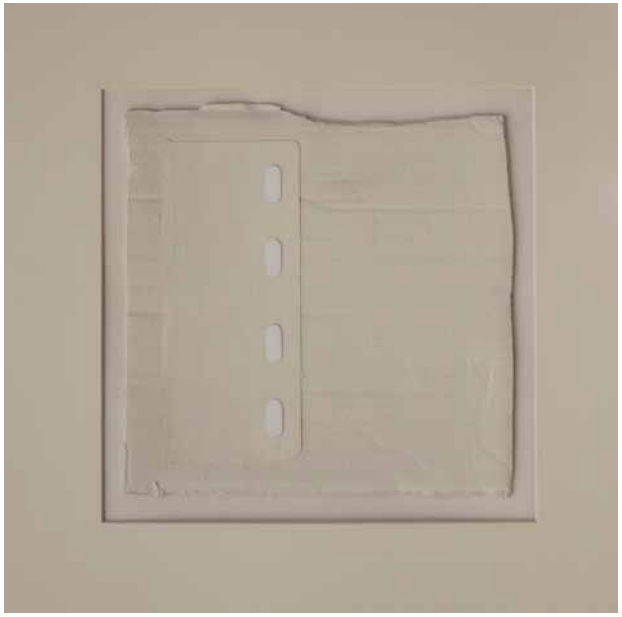


Details from Nobson
c. 2000
Collage and Ink on Paper
23 x 33.2 cm

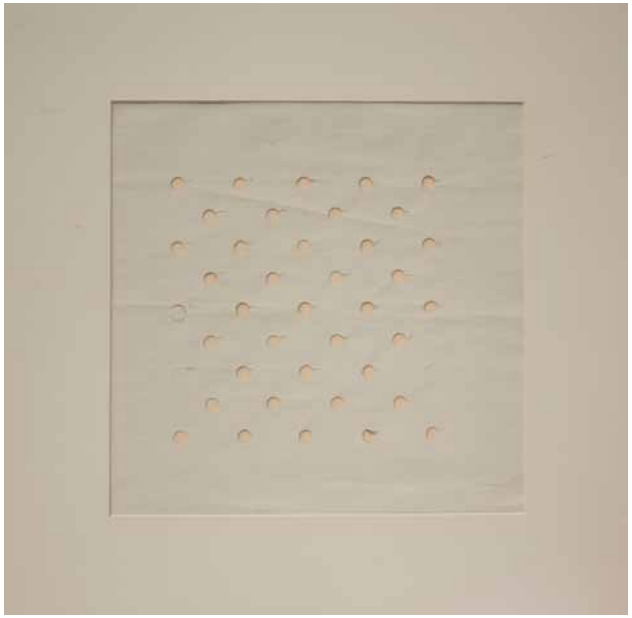
Turner Prize Nominee, 2012

HELEN A PRITCHARD

Born 1975 Durban, South Africa
Currently lives and works in London, UK



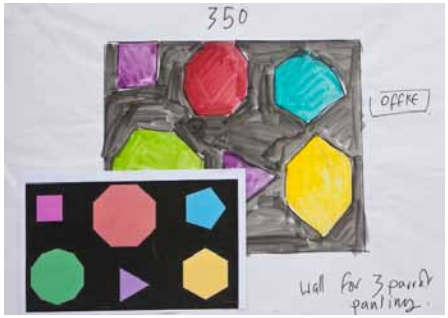
Untitled
2014
Mixed Media on Paper
50 x 50 cm

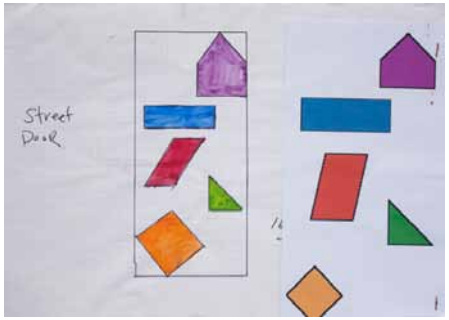


Untitled
2014
Mixed Media on Paper
50 x 50 cm

SIMON POPPER

Born 1977 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

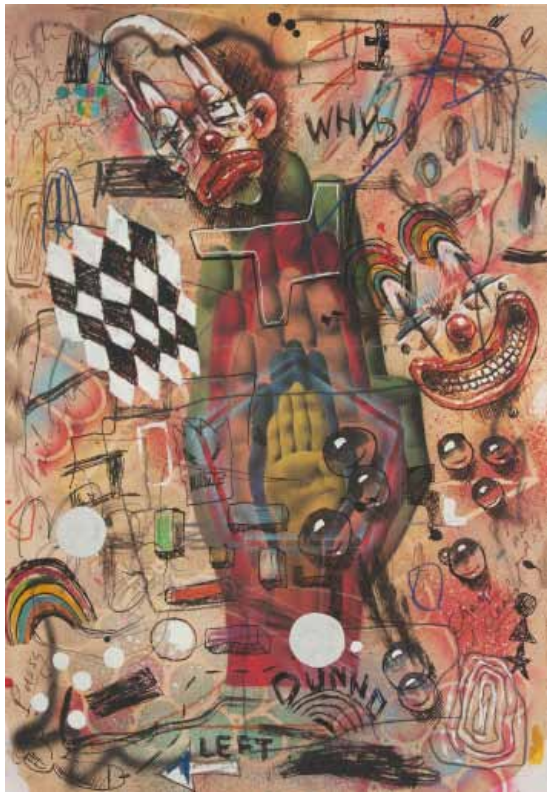




Study for Paintings
2014
Mixed Media on Paper
119.5 x 42 cm

BARRY REIGATE

Born 1971 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Untitled (Orangutan)
2013-2014
Mixed Media on Paper
41.5 x 28.5 cm

Untitled (why?)
2013-2014
Mixed Media on Paper
41.5 x 28.5 cm

SOPHY RICKETT

Born 1970 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Pissing Woman Study
2001
Bromide Print
46 x 36 cm

Vauxhall Bridge (from Pissing Women Series)
1995
Bromide Print
40.5 x 29.4 cm

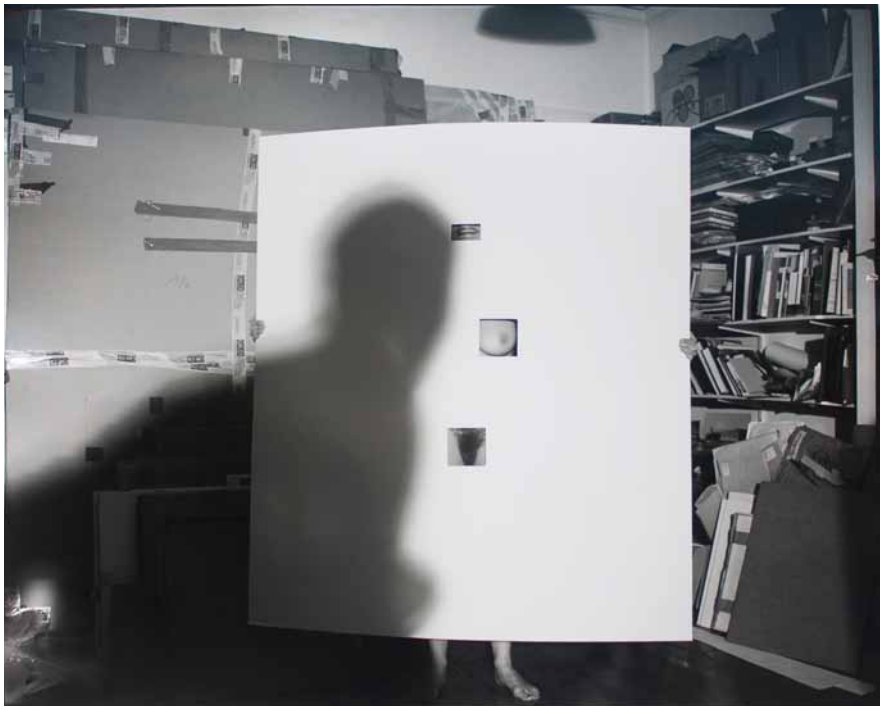
LIAM RYAN

Born 1982 Dublin, Ireland
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Untitled
2014
Watercolour on Paper
58 x 42 cm

JEMIMA STEHLI

Born 1961 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

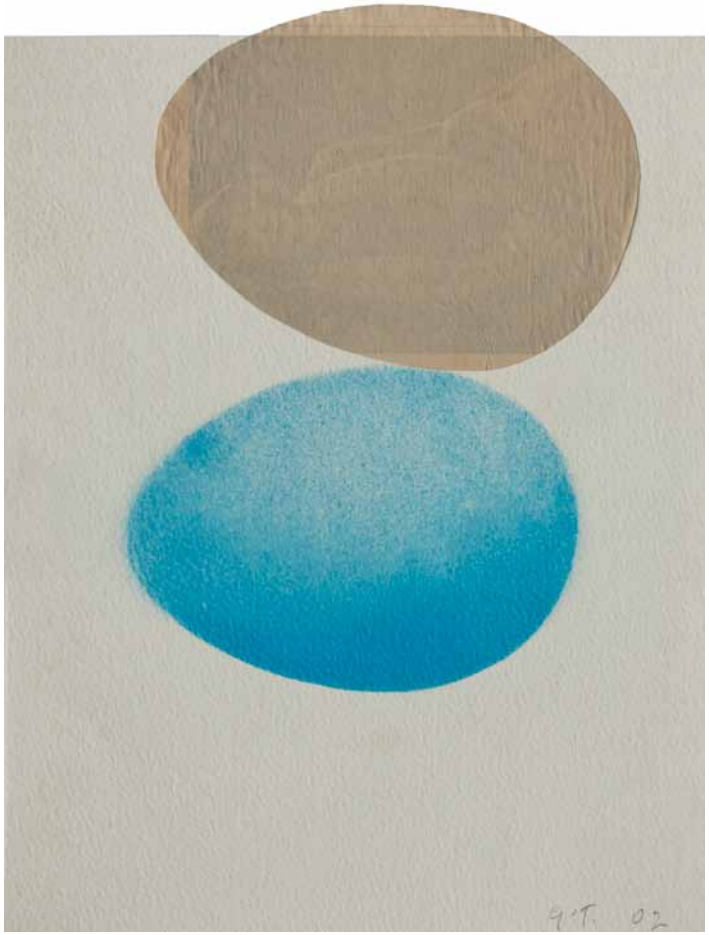


Jemima Stehli and John Hilliard
Untitled
2004
Silver Gelatin Print
51 x 60.7 cm

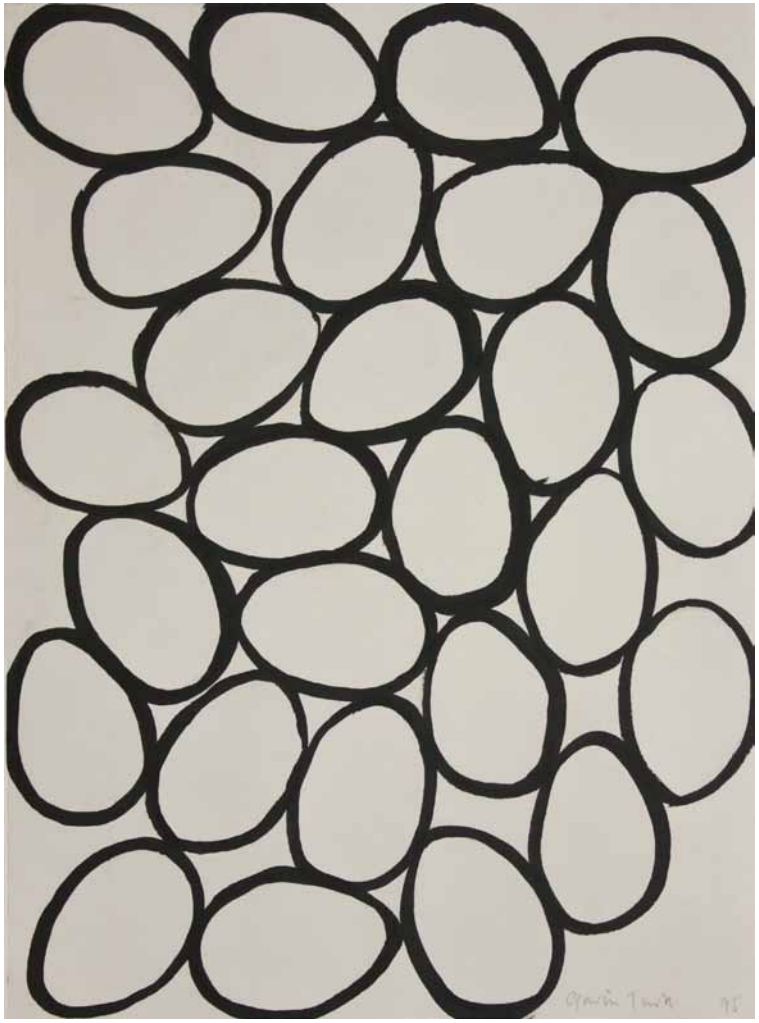
Untitled
Undated
Silver Gelatin Print
40.2 x 50.7 cm

GAVIN TURK

Born 1967 Guildford, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK



Egg Collage
2002
Mixed Media on Paper
26 x 20.2cm



Eggs Conatined by Page
1995
Ink on Paper
31.2 x 23.7cm

100 Years
2014
Paper
26 x 30.5 cm

KEITH TYSON

Born 1969 Ulverston, Cumbria, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Untitled
2014
Mixed Media on Inkjet on Watercolour Paper
76 x 61 cm

Turner Prize Winner, 2002

MARK WALLINGER

Born 1959 Essex, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Untitled
2014
Ink on Paper
29.5 x 20.9 cm

Turner Prize Winner, 2007

GREVILLE WORTHINGTON

Born 1963 Newcastle, UK
Currently lives and works in Yorkshire, UK

Untitled
2013
Red Wine and Ink on Paper
26 x 65 cm

JONATHAN YEO

Born 1970 London, UK
Currently lives and works in London, UK

Untitled
2014
Collage on Paper
31.2 x 42.5 cm

Untitled
2014
Collage on Paper
31.2 x 42.5 cm