



Blackwater Polytechnic

Resistant Materials

Ben Coode-Adams, Freddie Robins, Justin Knopp og Fiona Curran er alle del af kunstnerfællesskabet Blackwater Polytechnic som holder til på en gammel solbærfarm i det nordlige Essex, øst for London i England.

Udstillingen på M100 er de 4 kunstneres individuelle værker, som spænder fra strik og tekstil over plakattryk og maleri til akvarel.

Samarbejdet på Blackwater Polytechnic er miljøbevidst aktivistisk fællesskab, der bruger kunst og kreativt samarbejde til at skabe modstand og alternative billeder af hvad England er og skal være. Med udgangspunkt i det landlige som er tæt forbundet med den engelske identitet, som landsbylivet, pubber, snoede veje, stråtede huse og cricket, bruges landskabet som billede på den modstand og modsætning til byens urbanitet som blandt andet har resulteret i det modsætningsfyldte Brexit.

Alle kunstnere arbejder med materien, de producerer ting. Håndværk og kreativt overskud er grundelementer i modstanden, som i faktiske visuelle værker skaber modbilleder til de ord der bruges til at skabe splittelse. Her bruges ord og billede i kampen for solidaritet og som et våben mod magten.

Ben Coode-Adams og Freddie Robins startede Blackwater Polytechnic for snart 10 år siden og vil til en artist talk inden ferniseringen fortælle om samarbejdet og de holdninger og bevægelser i England som de arbejder i. Om hvordan det er at leve uden for begivenhedernes centrum og arbejde et sted hvor fællesskab og fælles værdier sættes på prøve. Om Brexit, miljø, utopier og håbet for en bedre fremtid.

Ben Coode-Adams
www.bencoodeadams.com

Freddie Robins
www.freddierobins.com

Justin Knopp
www.justinknopp.work

Fiona Curran
www.fionacurran.co.uk

Blackwater Polytechnic:
blackwaterpolytechnic.com

RESISTING COZINESS

A Danocentric Perspective on the works of Coode-Adams, Robins, Knopp and Curran

Theis Vallø Madsen

Danes are famous for their "hygge" brought about by knitted jumpers, rain, dimmed lighting, cookies, and half-timbered houses in the countryside. In recent years coziness and other forms of "moods", "Stimmung" or atmospheres have become objects of studies in academia. Philosophers regard these kinds of "atmospheres" as aesthetic phenomena in-between objective and subjective states of being. According to German philosopher Gernot Böhme, atmospheres are typical intermediate phenomena bordering subjecthood and objecthood. A pleasant or unpleasant atmosphere are far from vague or weak but on the contrary "[...] bathe everything in a certain light." They are totalizing. Yet it is possible to resist and even change a specific atmosphere in a room by an extraordinary event. Something has to break, or somebody has to say something completely out of line in order to change the mood of the room. Artworks have also been known to disturb pleasant moods by picturing or including things that are usually left out in order not to spoil a common sense of well-being and harmony.

The works of the four British artists currently exhibiting at M100 all seem to – to a Dane at least – resist coziness and other kinds of pleasantness.

Freddie Robins' hand knitted jumpers invoke a sense of coziness brought forth by their materiality but the reworked pictures work against the intuitive feel and cultural signification of their material. Materiality and imagery are at odds with one another.

The paintings by Ben Coode-Adams are also uneasy. Things and shapes are flickering, worming around or rearranging themselves out and into one another. These paintings are on the move. Fiona Curran's paintings picture clouds and rainbows in synthetic or strange forms. They have been short-circuited or recharged from an unusual energy source. Justin Knopp's type based posters promote resistance by words and materials.

The four artists are all navigating in-between different states or materials whether that would be coziness and discomfort, materiality and image, or harmony and disharmony. The artworks appear to be uneasy with their surroundings and their current situation. This uneasiness is much more interesting than consensus and established truths.

Image: Ben Coode-Adams – Blue Bird