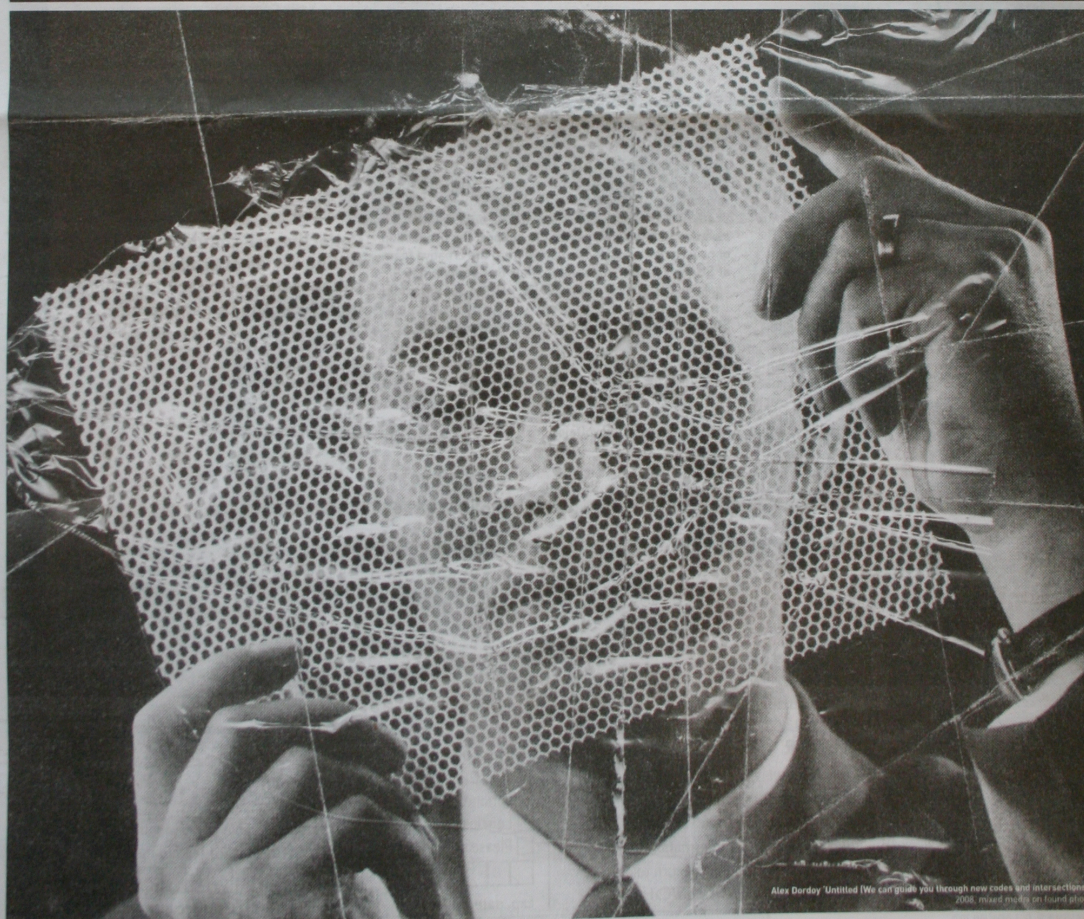
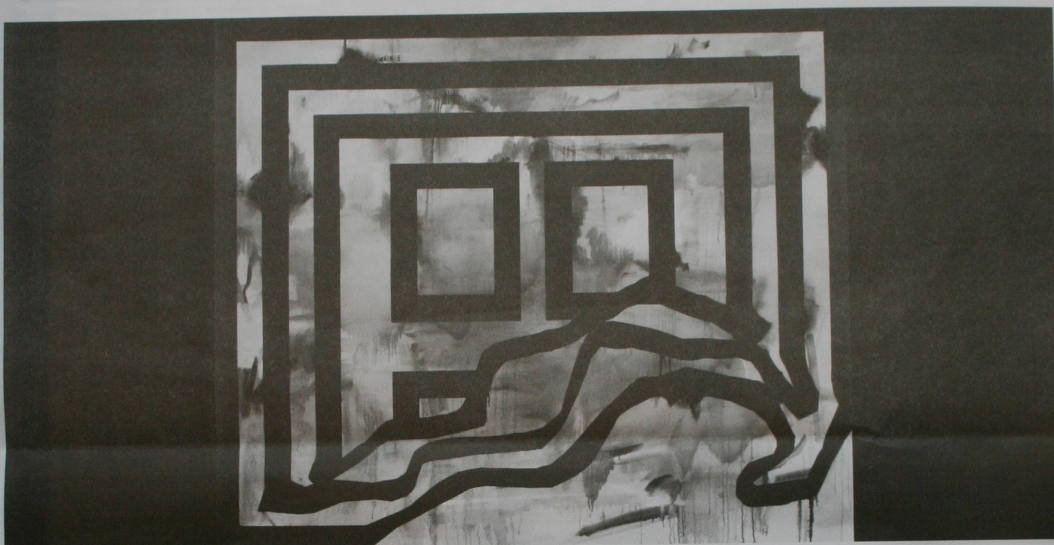


NEW WORK SCOTLAND PROGRAMME

KELLY CONNOR / ALEX DORDOY
ALEX GROSS & SANDY SMITH / LILA DE MAGALHAES



Alex Dordoy 'Untitled (We can guide you through new codes and intersections)'
2008, mixed media on found object

NEW WORK
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PROGRAMMEALEX
DORDOY

Alex Dordoy 'Zenith' 2008, oil on canvas (Courtesy of Grimm Fine Art)

When I met up with Alex Dordoy he was considering the construction of several sculptures derived from the idea of the cowboy's upturned wagon and its lost

wagon wheel. Dordoy's canvas based painting is usually coupled with stylised sculptures that he presents as autonomous objects or activates as painting support. These crashed wagon sculptures are gently reminiscent of J. G. Ballard's novel 'Crash' (1973) that describes an erotic melding of flesh and technology through accident, a dystopian, [porno?] graphic realisation of the reciprocal interconnectivity that sees man and technology produce each other. The potential of the accident is co-developed with advancing technology - an idea proposed by Paul Virilio. He suggests that with technologically delivered mobility comes the crash, that man has 'first been mobile, then motorized' and that here the body is the victim lost in accident scene, reducing man 'to a few gestures, like channel surfing'. Dordoy's work loses the cataclysmic consumption found through impact of accident that is pursued in 'Crash'.

Channel surfing is the route to the dated scene that provides Dordoy's stimulus. He takes us on a day trip that meanders through the late 60's early 70's Sunday matinee, revisiting the figures given to us through mainstream representation. TV archetypes that are deployed as missionaries for dominant modes of production.

Dordoy's painting collages fragments found in past popular culture that he revives as 'retro'. The figures presented on Dordoy's canvas are mythologised Western hero's, failed agents in the search for utopia. The artist is involved in a nostalgic search for the myth of 'heroic individualism'. He says that he aims to reinvest the signifiers of this myth 'with emotive potential'. One such agent found in Dordoy's work is Quiller, Cold War TV Spy, described by his creator as - alienated, 'professionally neurotic and half in love with Death'... alone. Similarly the lonesome cowboy has also been a major figure for Dordoy. These figures in Dordoy's work act as self conscious reflexive anchorage in his 'process of production of representations that have no truth content' that he employs to activate 'representation against itself'.

Dordoy's paintings host these iconic images but refuse to provide an associated narrative for the viewer, instigating a search for meaning that reaches beyond the familiar TV and cinematic representations cited.

The work holds a tension between the figurative and the abstract. The figured is not pursued into lifelike perfection, a perfection that would remove the ciphers of mediation from our perception. Instead the construction of the work is readily apparent. This, and the raw mark making refuse promotion of any kind of invisible authorship.

The figures in Dordoy's work are only half given. They disappear in places into the ground that is itself a partial surface of roughly worked strokes. The dribbles and preparatory structure are not there to add to the compositional quality of the work.

Instead they visibly reveal the artist's presence, his subjective traces remain and it is this subjectivity that anchors the abstract qualities of the work and refuses linear singularity that would instigate a search for the work's creator and the particulars of his intention.

The blatancy of Dordoy's mark making avoids absolute mimesis. Here there is no invitation to find the essence of the work or of the artist; the work does not attempt the status of 'thing in itself'. Instead the work aims to make explicit the production values of artist, institution and through reflection, the viewer that bring the work within experience, underlining the idea that what we observe is not the way things are, but a representation, of the way things are; one that is determined through methodology, that is usually imperceptible and institutionally driven.

Kelly Connor