



1.
NO NO MORE THAN DENIM (FUCK FUCK FUCK), 2010
 Denim fabric

2.
LECKEY KAFKA, 2010
 Digital print

3–13.
 From the series *BASTARD HALLUCINOGENICS*,
 2008–ongoing
 Framed magazine pages

3.
Arm and room, 2008

4.
Bull eye heart, 2009

5.
Leg and washing line stockings, 2009

6.
Double ecstasy jumping, 2010

9.
Topless liquid, 2009

10.
Interior underarm, 2010

11.
Toucan beak and wig, 2008

12.
Army and alien light form in forest, 2010

13.
Head liquid, 2009

14.
*ENTRE LE DÉSIR ET L'ACCOMPLISSEMENT,
 LA PERPÉTRATION ET SON SOUVENIR*, 2010
 Grand piano, piano stool, spotlight, leather bullwhip

15.
*16–24 FÉVRIER 1985 LE LIVRE BLANC DE GENÈVE
 OLIVIER LOMBARD JEAN-CLAUDE SILVY*, 2010
 Light boxes, fluorescent tubes, book pages, red acrylic

16.
ANOTHER ANOTHER RING OF BALLS, 2010
 Magazine pages

17.
*WOMAN MAN MAN WOMAN WOMAN WOMAN
 MAN MAN 1975 GEORGE M. HESTER*, 2010
 Two light box tables, book pages, fluorescent tubes,
 white acrylic

18.
5...6..., 1993–ongoing
 Band equipment, drum kit, guitars, mics, PA system,
 mixing desk

19.
This guitar has seconds to give, c. 2006
 Digital print

20.
POLICE ICE, 2010
 Vinyl lettering

21.
Went to America didn't say a word, 1999
 Nineteen audio CDs
 Duration: 19 hrs, 20 mins

22.
Violin Siren, 2004–present
 Archive footage of *Violin Siren* performance at MoMA PS1,
 New York, 2004
 Duration: 22 mins

All works courtesy the artist

This solo exhibition presents the work of a London-based artist who emerged in the early 1990s, alongside artists including Liam Gillick, Paul Noble and Elizabeth Wright. Working with sound, performance, collage and photography, the artist plays with language and identity by inserting found objects and images into pre-determined systems that provoke unexpected outcomes and ambiguous meanings. Recalling the practices of major conceptual artists from the 1960s and 1970s such as Vito Acconci, John Baldessari and Piero Manzoni, these chance encounters and sometimes absurd combinations seek to open a space for the imagination, encouraging varying degrees of interaction and inviting a playful dialogue with the work and the artist.

The stuttering, nonsensical title *THE THE THINGS IS (FOR 3)* signposts the artist's tendency to favour rhythmical, sensory and lyrical qualities over conventional meaning. In fact, the artist revels in the gap between a word and its meaning or an object and its function and frequently blends opposites in order to create a third, continuous image or form ('FOR 3'). The deliberate absence of the artist's name from the exhibition and all related material is intended to engage visitors in a guessing game and to encourage them to put their own stamp on the work.

NO NO MORE THAN DENIM (FUCK FUCK FUCK) (2010) provides a catwalk of denim to guide visitors through the gallery space recording their footprints as they pass. This piece provides one of a number of loops in the exhibition, underlining the artist's fixation with circularity, in both form and content. This spherical sculpture loops around the exterior of the building connecting the gallery's internal and external spaces, while the expletives that colour the title recall the irrepressible tics associated with Tourette's syndrome.

LECKEY KAFKA (2010) is a scanned copy of the back of a framed quote by Franz Kafka included in the same location during the previous exhibition at Milton Keynes Gallery by artist Mark Leckey and gallerist Martin McGeown. A scan of the front of the frame, containing the quote itself, is installed directly on the other side of the wall as if the work has been turned round and can be read through the wall, in a playful enactment of the quote's appeal to 'push your head through the wall'. Similarly, for the invitation to this exhibition, the artist inserted the show's title on the reversed image of Leckey's invitation, as if turning the page on the previous show and making it transparent.

BASTARD HALLUCINOGENICS (2008–ongoing) is a series of framed works in which the artist simply removes the staples from double-page spreads in magazines to reveal unintended connections between images printed on the same sheet of paper before it is folded and bound. This economical gesture extends the Surrealists' 'exquisite corpse' game and invites viewers to devise their own interpretations and narratives from disparate images.

In *16–24 FÉVRIER 1985 LE LIVRE BLANC DE GENÈVE OLIVIER LOMBARD JEAN-CLAUDE SILVY* (2010) pages from a book of black and white photographs of Geneva coated in snow are placed on a red-tinted light box that forms a ring around the edge of the gallery. In a process the artist has described as a '...way of melting the snow...', the red light dissolves the paper to create superimposed images from both sides of the pages which are no longer black and white but varied shades of red.

ENTRE LE DÉSIR ET L'ACCOMPLISSEMENT, LA PERPÉTRATION ET SON SOUVENIR (2010) transforms the lid of a piano into a reflective surface. Removed from its usual context and function, the piano contains the evocative potency of a surreal ritual, realised by a brutal action at the exhibition preview.

ANOTHER ANOTHER RING OF BALLS (2010) displays a continuous row of found magazine pages collected over several years that are pasted around the walls of the Long Gallery. Each page contains an image of a ball, arranged in order of size and carefully positioned so that each ball is aligned, creating an unbroken visual line that circles the space. Inspired by geometric systems, the artist has established a discreet, simple and self-perpetuating design principle that must be unlocked in order to make sense.

In *WOMAN MAN MAN WOMAN WOMAN WOMAN MAN MAN 1975 GEORGE M. HESTER* (2010) the artist places pages from a book with black and white images of classically posed nudes on a light box so that the paper disappears and the back and front of the pages merge to create hermaphrodites and ambiguously mutated body parts. In creating a third type of sexuality and merging different bodies, the artist blurs boundaries so that individual bodies create a fluid, genderless mass. As with the other magazine and book pages, the artist uses an original method of creating collages. Light is used instead of a scalpel or scissors to superimpose images while pre-existing combinations are revealed instead of being deliberately fabricated.

In *5...6...* (1993–ongoing) a fully functioning band's equipment is set up, live and ready to play. This installation represents the exhibition's most literal example of the artist's desire to encourage interaction and to establish an ongoing dialogue with the audience. If other works are intended to arouse the imagination, in this case, visitors are encouraged to pick up an instrument and to participate physically in creating the work.

For *Went to America didn't say a word* (1999) the artist travelled to New York, stayed overnight and returned home, without uttering a word. This work plays the ambient sounds that were recorded throughout the journey, evoking the artist's experiences and inviting listeners to complete the narrative. The process employed in this work extends the artist's ongoing preoccupation with creating an identity or a presence through absence, as demonstrated by the omission of the artist's name throughout the exhibition.

POLICE ICE (2010) transforms the gallery's window box into a type of light box in which the words 'police' and 'ice' are transcribed in large blue letters. Playfully exploring the power of language and how labelling can alter the function of an object, this branding might temporarily transform the gallery into a police station! The artist's interests in displacement and the unexpected are channelled into an ongoing sound performance *Violin Siren* (2004–present) where street noises, such as police sirens, are transcribed onto classical musical instruments.

Wrapped in a large denim roll, this exhibition brings together an eclectic assortment of subjects from a snowstorm to a police sign and from a grand piano to a leather whip. Adorned with images of classical nudes and sporting moments, the exhibition contains a range of experiments with social interaction, systems, chance and the absurd. The artist's practice often proposes unexpected contradictions and humorous outcomes, playfully experimenting with language, image, form and identity, finding poetry in the everyday and celebrating the gap between things and their meaning.

A catalogue with an interview between the artist and Milton Keynes Gallery Director Anthony Spira and a text by art historian Gilda Williams is available.

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THE THE THINGS IS (FOR 3)

Gallery Talks and Events

All events are free. Pre-booking essential unless otherwise stated on 01908 676 900 during gallery opening hours.

In Conversation:
The artist and writer Matt Hale
22 July, 6.30pm

The artist discusses the thoughts and processes behind the exhibition with Matt Hale from Art Monthly.

Music Challenge: Get Rhythmical!
London 2012 Open Weekend Event
24 July, 12–3pm

As part of the London 2012 Open Weekend, Milton Keynes Gallery and Milton Keynes City Orchestra have joined forces to deliver an art and music challenge for individuals, families and groups of all ages and abilities exploring sound, rhythm and movement.

Open Access Tour
26 July, 2–3pm

Join the Education Team for an informal tour of *THE THE THINGS IS (FOR 3)*, including British Sign Language interpretation and audio description of the art works discussed. No booking needed.

Live Guides
Every Saturday, 1–5pm
During the exhibition volunteers will be available to provide visitors with information about the exhibition and to encourage discussion.

For Young People and their Families

Family Evening
6 August, 5–7.30pm
A summer evening of art activities for children and adults, with food and drink available for all. Children must be accompanied by an adult. No booking needed.

Saturday Art Trolley

Every Saturday, 11am–1pm
These drop-in art sessions for families are suitable for ages 4–12. Greeted and supervised by our friendly education staff, you will find creative and enjoyable ways to explore the gallery's displays together. No booking needed.

Scratch Nights

Our Thursday evening events programme has been exceptionally expanded to coincide with IF – Milton Keynes International Festival. All events begin at 6.30pm and are free of charge with no booking required, unless otherwise specified.

15 July
Film Club
Michelangelo Antonioni,
La Notte (1962)

16 July
Sound Installation
Caroline Devine *Phishing*

17 July
Live Music
Acoustic Sessions

23 July
Live Music
Peter J Taylor

24 July, 1–8.30pm
25 July, 10am–5pm
Performances, lectures and seminars
Parallax Venice

29 July
Film Club
Michelangelo Antonioni,
L'Eclisse (1963)

Revenue Funders

Arts Council England, South East;
Milton Keynes Council



A large print copy of this leaflet is available on request from the Information Desk.