

Jeena Shin

Born 1973, Seoul, S. Korea. Lives and works in Auckland.

Jeena Shin has produced two site-specific wall paintings for the exhibition; continuing her long exploration of geometric abstraction and alternative surfaces for painting (in her early years Shin stretched industrial rubber over frames relying on the internal tension and torsion of the rubber to produce a monochrome surface pattern). The shapes in the paintings and their arrangement cause a flicker effect and seem to destabilise the surface they are applied to and decouple them from gravity. That gravity defying effect harks back to the Italian Baroque frieze work of the Carracci Brothers, reminding us that before paint ever hit canvas it was applied – in churches and palaces – to walls and ceilings drawing our eyes ever heavenward. The black-on-white explosion of one of Shin's new paintings might equally recall the exploding Richard Neutra house in the desert from Michelangelo Antonioni's film *Zabriskie Point* (1970) – dragging us back to the late 20th century. Meanwhile, the white-on-black choreography recalls one of Len Lye's scratch films, whether *Free Radicals* (1958) or *Particles in Space* (1979), bringing our viewers back to earth in the architecture of the Len Lye Centre.

Movement Image Time 2017
acrylic on wood, 10320 x 3600 x 400mm

With thanks to Two Rooms, Auckland

Open seven days
Closed Christmas Day
10 am – 5 pm

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Principal Funder



Surface Affect:

Amanda Gruenwald, Jeena Shin,
Michael Zavros

Since the 1950s, and the rise of the heroic American painters associated with colour field painting and abstract expressionism, writing about painting has been obsessed with its surface. Painters went out of their way to shuck representation and three-dimensional perspective, or depth, in their pictures and writers went to absurd lengths to describe what they saw there on the flats of the canvas. They got deep into surface. Then in the 1980s 'the picture' came back again in the painting of the 'new' American heroes and with it a new heroic language about what writers saw there (including nudes, still lives, the bourgeoisie, and any other number of 19th century ghosts).

Painting in this region was never as heroic, never as metronomic in its cycles, and the language associated with it never so clear-cut or doctrinaire. Abstraction, representation, the surface, and depth were bedfellows. Awkward, maybe, but bedfellows all the same. And writers were prepared to write from both sides of the bed. *Surface Affect* presents the work of three painters working with concepts of the surface, and the surface of their pictures, in different ways.

Each of the artists engages with the history of painting within their work. Shin's dialogue is resolutely of the 20th and 21st century and with various minimalisms and conceptualisms, while Gruenwald's dialogue extends to the beginnings of abstraction in France of the 1880s. Zavros is the time traveller of the troika sending his conversation back to Byzantine icon painting (see the Versace-ceramic portrait) of the 8th and 9th century. Lovers of painting can get your fill, here, in *Surface Affect*.

Curated by Simon Rees



Room Brochure

Amanda Gruenwald

Born 1985, Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. Lives and works in Auckland.

Amanda Gruenwald produces hi-colour blobby abstractions that look like an earlier generation of ‘pour’ painting, in which painters would pour paint straight from a ‘pot’ onto the flat of a horizontal canvas and then move the canvas around on an angle to let gravity do its work. In some of her paintings Gruenwald might apply an initial pour but she then builds-up painstaking and ‘painterly’ brushed layers – often with the canvas on the classical vertical plane – harking back to pre-20th century modes and techniques. Gruenwald’s colour blocks and the gaps between them create a spatial realm within the picture that stands for itself; they have an internal logic – so that the viewer hardly tries to make a landscape, skyscape, or anamorphic form or face out of them. The largest of the paintings in the exhibition, with the most muted colour palette, does have something of a Paul Cézanne ‘Mont Sainte-Victoire’ or a Nicolas Poussin cloudscape about it – but in a good way.

With thanks to Trish Clark Gallery, Auckland

Left to right

Green, Pink, Blue 2016 (West ramp)
acrylic, alkyd and oil on canvas, 1900 x 1700mm
Private collection, Auckland

Cerulean Pink 2016
oil on canvas, 2300 x 1700mm
Courtesy of the artist and Trish Clark Gallery, Auckland

Phthalo Orange 2017
acrylic and oil on linen, 1600 x 1400mm
Private collection, Auckland

Chartreuse, Violet, Blue 2017
oil on canvas, 1800 x 1200mm
Private collection, Auckland

Orange, Magenta Red 2017
acrylic and oil on linen, 1600 x 1400mm
Private collection, Auckland

Orange, Purple, Green 2016
oil on linen, 1215 x 910mm
Jim Fraser Collection

Alizarin Pink 2016
acrylic and oil on canvas, 1800 x 1200mm
Private collection, Auckland

Ochre Teal 2017
oil on canvas, 1000 x 750mm
Private collection, Auckland

Magenta Green 2016
acrylic and oil on canvas, 600 x 600mm
Peter and Sally Herbert Collection

Michael Zavros

Born 1974, Brisbane, Australia. Lives and works in Brisbane.

Michael Zavros is a master of photorealist reproduction who engages with the double agency of his subjects and his own subjectivity: surface in the world of Zavros has everything to do with the fashion, commodity and sexual connotations of the word. Marxists and Freudians beware and dare to enjoy! Conveniently, for Zavros there’s a hi-end fashion magazine titled *Surface (Wallpaper** magazine’s clothes oriented stablemate) to make part of his point for him. Their subject aside, his objects are also slyly appealing – as paintings. Even more slyly there are three photographs situated amongst them for good measure to add a degree of surface tension and encourage viewers to do some detective work. Nevertheless, as paintings Zavros’s images truck centuries of history from the classical mythical allusion of Adonis, Narcissus, and Leda and the Swan, to the aforementioned Byzantine iconography, onto Renaissance and Baroque subject painting in which death’s heads abound, leaping to 18th century still life, and 19th century ‘realism’ as the dead child wrapped in silk channels both Courbet and Manet. Zavros must own a TARDIS, which he warped to the noughties to remind us of Jeff Koons’ inflatables (and the maximal flower arrangement *Puppy*).

With thanks to Starkwhite, Auckland

Right to left

Homework 2014 (West ramp)
giclee print on cotton rag paper, 1390 x 1750 x 65mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Skull with Hydrangea 2017
oil on canvas, 800 x 1000mm
Private collection, Sydney

Ars Longa Vita Brevis 2010
oil on canvas, 2100 x 1670 x 40mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Brontosaurus 2015
oil on panel, 1200 x 1700mm
Private collection, Auckland

Self portrait as saint with Sean O’Pry / Versace 2015
archival ink on hahnemuhle photo rag, 1225 x 932 x 45mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Self portrait with Sean O’Pry 2015
archival ink on hahnemuhle photo rag, 1225 x 932 x 45mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Charmer/Pucci 2013
oil on canvas, 750 x 550 x 35mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Phoebe is Dead/Alexander McQueen 2010
oil on canvas, 1100 x 1500mm
Loaned from the Moran Arts Foundation

Phoebe is 11/Swan 2017
oil on board, 325 x 425 x 45mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Phoebe is 11/Linda Farrow 2017
oil on board, 220 x 220mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

Sunbather 2017
oil on aluminium, 2500 x 4000 x 200mm
Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland