

Marc Camille Chaimowicz and Bruno Pélassy: Tears Shared

Flat Time House London 16 June to 31 July

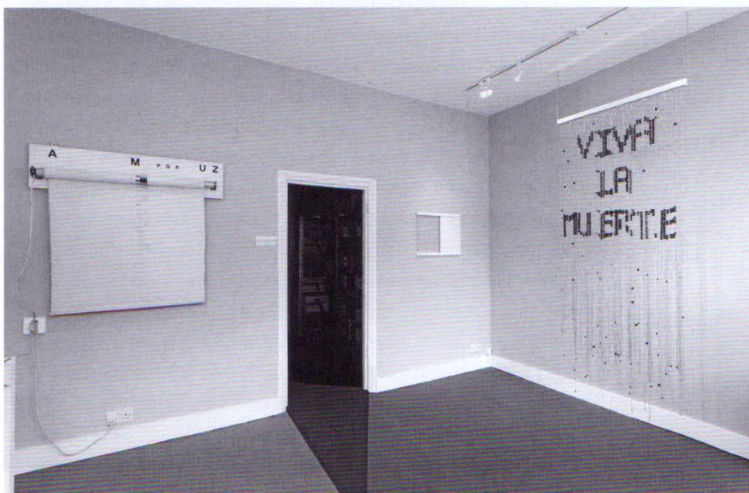
In 2003, John Latham pronounced his studio home on Bellenden Road in south London a 'living sculpture', calling it Flat Time House and opening it up for anyone to visit and engage with up until his death in 2006. It officially opened its doors as an exhibition and events space two years after and now closes with 'Tears Shared', its final exhibition. There are three components to the show: Marc Camille Chaimowicz's installation, a presentation of Bruno Pélassy curated by Marie Canet and a selection of pressed glass from Chaimowicz's own personal collection.

How do you manoeuvre in a space that is self-defined as an artwork without being stymied or occluded? Chaimowicz seems like a natural fit; he is already a master of using decoration and domestic space to tease out the artifices of installation, ornament and interiors, most notably in *Approach Road*, 1978, where he staged his own home as an exhibition, prioritising decoration, ornament and subjectivity over the dominant codes and practices of austere Minimalism. He sought to 'reclaim the once considered peripheral or minor spheres of the domestic and the decorative'.

In 'Tears Shared', Chaimowicz embraces the building without competing for its attention – to quote Henri Matisse, the decoration is 'a force of expansion that vivifies the things that surround it'. He has re-dressed the entire interior; every floor is carpeted and every wall is covered in new paint. The space is decorated over in angular blocks of colour – sharp and definite lacerations of hot pink, pastel orange, pale lilac, faded green and sky blue that cut across the surfaces and thresholds. The clean, pointed edges produce a visual movement and almost misdirect the eye to the regular format of the two-up two-down building. The installation is environmental both formally and mentally; the arrangement and composition of colour resists any contemplative absorption and insinuates a feeling of both vibrance and melancholy. It is a gesture that delivers up the building's shape decoratively, but so as to reveal what is underneath; as if, in its final show, the space could be made opaque.

There are public spaces – the party, the library, the gallery – and then private spaces – the bed, the studio, the kitchen. Flat Time House is a complex habitation that imports both types of space to function. If the house a living sculpture, then Chaimowicz has re-dressed it not as an appendage or substitution but more like a material that renders its contours and edges legible, sublimating its features.

Bruno Pélassy's work helps ground the show in an irreverent but melancholy tone. His objects – either naively constructed limp forms or neatly rendered decorative ornaments – elicit a certain care, intimacy and delicateness. The largest work, *Untitled*, 2000, (part of his 'Creatures' series) is an aquarium with an object, adorned in pearls, silicone and fine black lace, that drifts elegantly in the water behind pristine glass and metal, as if a live captured ornament, an artificial organism now suspended in mourning. Pélassy's 1995 video *Sans titre, Sang titre, Cent titres* sits at the centre of the show, in Latham's so-called 'body event' room (or the 'plumbing' of the building). The video, recorded and displayed on VHS, has been designed to degrade and deteriorate over time so that the images and sound will ultimately become unreadable. It vibrates with distorted and sometimes oversaturated colour showing edits of various extracts of found television footage that are often highly charged and affective – a horror clip of a woman in



'Tears Shared' installation view

terror repeated, the face of Joan of Arc, a sequence of a man being beaten. It is a swansong, just as the exhibition itself is the swansong to Flat Time House.

In 'The Death of the Author', Roland Barthes claims that 'the true locus of writing is reading' and that 'the unity of a text is not in its origin, it is in its destination'. The event-based structure of Latham's theory of 'Flat Time' (a complex framework that orders all objects, events and matter under the unifying concept of time) mobilises this same idea. According the principles of Flat Time House, it should have an end – concretely figuring it in terms of time. But defining it as an event requires participation: a witness and testimony, just like a reader to writing. So it is not about the house but about the engagement. This is why the show is called 'tears shared' not 'tears shed'. The show dresses the structure for mourning, but it is not dressed in black, it is dressed to celebrate. ■

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Found

Foundling Museum London 27 May to 4 September

Artist and current Foundling Museum Hogarth Fellow Cornelia Parker has put together an exhibition in which assembled tokens of contemporary art pay tribute to the museum's long history as the UK's first home for abandoned children. An anachronistic intervention of almost a hundred works by over 60 artists occupies the museum's permanent collection in London's Bloomsbury, echoing Foundling Hospital founder Thomas Coram's efforts to encourage the patronage of 18th-century artists, writers and musicians (notably William Hogarth and George Frideric Handel) through group exhibitions that sowed the seeds of the early Royal Academy. Fittingly, Parker has invited over 20 Academicians to participate alongside a diverse mix of designers, writers and musicians, including Ron Arad, Phyllida Barlow, Tacita Dean, Jeremy Deller, Brian Eno, Mona Hatoum, Wolfgang Tillmans, Gillian Wearing and Rachel Whiteread.

The format follows Parker's propensity for ensemble shows, a collaborative impetus reflected in the eclecticism of 'Found', through which the curator strives to articulate a 'riveting collective cacophony'. At the subterranean starting point of the exhibition, one encounters Parker's *There must be some kind of way out of here*, 2016: fragments of stairs salvaged from the former Mayfair apartment of Jimi Hendrix, adjacent to Handel's 18th-century