

TETRACONTAMERON

Christian Newby
with Ana Martínez Fernández and Drew Liverman

08/12/16 - 14/01/17

Space In Between is delighted to present *TETRACONTAMERON* - an exhibition of new work by Christian Newby with Ana Martínez Fernández and Drew Liverman. *TETRACONTAMERON* employs the 14th Century Italian text *The Decameron*, by Giovanni Boccaccio, the stock characters of the *Commedia dell'Arte*, as well as the political cartoons and visual language of state tourism agencies in a comic exchange of artistic and literary common property. It applies the concept of 'open source' creative and intellectual exchange as an operative model exploring the rigidity of artistic property and emphasises invention and authorship as fugitive parts of a larger, collective surfeit of art-historical tropes and techniques.

The subsequent film, literature and image references that flow from a text such as *The Decameron* and into other works are rife - from Chaucer to Poe to Pasolini - and this exhibition consists of works that aim to invoke that practice of artistic or literary common property. Investigating notions of authorship and the production of surpluses of creative content from existing works of art, the exhibition addresses works that have - in their own right - been taken directly from the previous bodies of work, such as Botticelli's quadriptych depiction of the story of Nastagio degli Onesti and an 1894 commercial advertisement for cherry liqueur.

TETRACONTAMERON brings together a number of threads invoking dynamics between fine and applied art making and includes an industrially hand-tufted carpet produced by Newby and designed together with invited artist Drew Liverman from Austin, Texas. Depicting two out of four of Botticelli's panels the carpet is presented alongside another collaborative work comprised of 9 glazed ceramic silhouettes portraying examples of ancient Iberian pottery. Produced in collaboration with artist Ana Martínez Fernández, and arranged in a sequence on the floor, these works discuss the fluidity of how, from region to region, decorative motifs are exchanged before the public sector asserts an index of associated characteristics—perhaps stifling its natural current as an ever expanding vernacular of techniques. In this work, which stems from the need to possess the image of such ancient vessels whose shapes recur in many other cultures throughout Europe, the artists have composed a kind of playful back and forth: the flat clay shapes have been produced by following 9 lines of a poem that was written by one artist, which have then been 'illustrated' by the other.

Two other works use stock characters from the *Commedia dell'Arte* and the woebegone clown Pierrot, rendered by the 19th century political cartoonist Gustave-Henri Jossot for an early Cointreau liqueur advertisement. Incorporated in the work *Harlequins on a Hillside Reading the Newspaper with Palm Leaves and 'SCUM' (stained glass window)* is a succession of previous attempts at producing what was ultimately supposed to be a stained glass window; enacting the stock character of the harlequin as a dual satirical or ornamental motif, parodying the laconic political summaries of tabloid headlines and sentiment within papers like *The Sun* and *The Socialist Worker*.

List of works:

Harlequins on a Hillside Reading the Newspaper with Palm Leaves and 'SCUM' (stained glass window)

Glazed ceramics with acrylic paint and varnish, 2016

8th Story, 5th Day

With Drew Liverman

Acrylic wool, carpet backing and latex, 2016

Guignolet Pierrot

Silkscreen print on cotton, 2016

(From left to right)

BRAND CONCRETE YELLOW FIELDS

BUILDING WASHED HERITAGE

PASSING BY, BLOWING IT

CONQUERING FIELDS

CONQUERING NEEDS

CONQUERING THE IMAGINARY

MERCHANTS FEEL WITH NO TOUCH

GLOBAL UNIQUENESS TERRITORY

All with Ana Martínez Fernández.

All glazed ceramic and wood, 2016

TETRACONTAMERON

Risograph on paper, edition of 25 + 5AP, 2016

Artist Bio: Recent exhibitions and residencies include: URRRA/Gasworks residency, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2015); The White Review cover, publication issue number 10 (2015); Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon: Howard Hodgkin group show (2014); Dazed and Confused Magazine/Whitechapel Gallery Emerging Artist (2013); *Nouvelle Vague*, Palais de Tokyo (2013); *Blue and Blonde and Among the Living*, Space In Between (solo show, 2013); *Parlour Apes*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (solo show, 2011); Christian Newby at Galerie Ôu, Marseille (2011). His work has become increasingly collaborative, questioning conventional aesthetic notions of authorship and autonomy and exploring methodologies aimed at achieving a collective surplus of knowledge. His practice has incorporated the use of many applied arts techniques such as carpet making, ceramic production, *Pots and Tiles* (Space In Between, London, 2015) as well as a commission by Studio Leigh resulting in series of objects designed by artists that were informed by useful everyday things (2015).