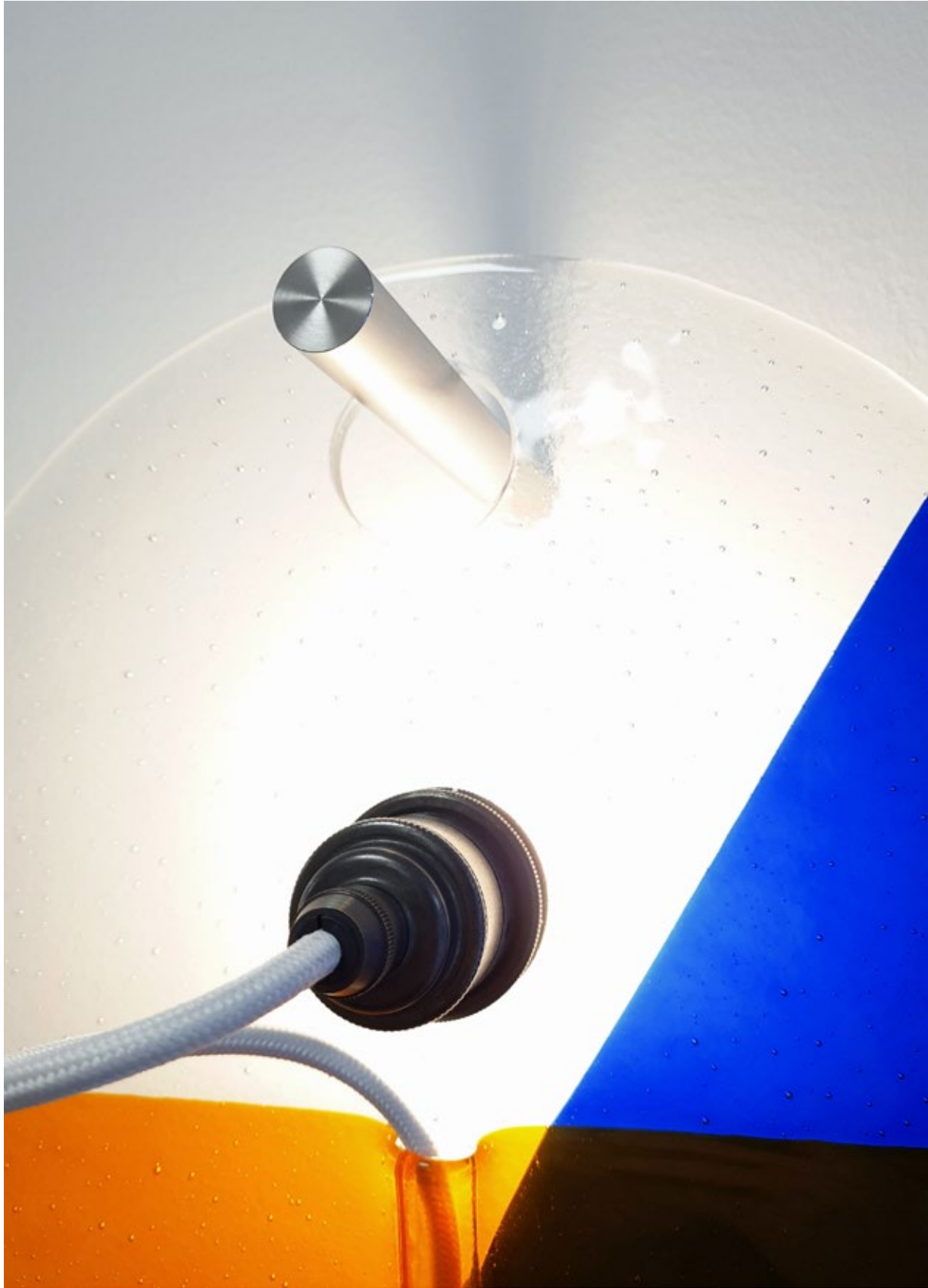


ISOLATION INTERVIEWS

JACK BRINDLEY





ISSUE 19

Continuing the Isolation Interviews: a series of weekly artist and curator profiles highlighting current concerns, accompanied by a selection of available works.

We know that these are precarious and uncertain times for everyone and with so many people staying at home, self-isolating or social distancing, we want to be able to continue sharing some of our favourite art and artists with you. The Isolation Interviews are a weekly series of conversations with artists and curators that will explore how these new circumstances are affecting their practices, projects and productivity. We'll hear how they are finding solutions - and even opportunities - and what their plans and hopes are for the future.

Brooke Benington is committed to supporting and creating opportunities for artists. We believe that this is needed now more than ever. Most artists are self-employed, often supplementing their income by working as technicians, fabricators, assistants, teachers and a whole host of other jobs. Now, many have very suddenly lost a vital source of income. With this in mind, we are accompanying each Isolation Interview with a curated selection of work by that artist, available for purchase.

Thank you for your continued support. Stay safe and look after one another.

Lily & George
Directors, Brooke Benington



You have lived and work in Glasgow for a number of years and recently you opened Pavilion Pavilion, a gallery and experimental project space. What motivated you to launch this project and what did you set out to achieve with it?

My practice has always been informed by architecture in some way, and recently I've been leaning towards more functional objects. Luckily I have a street-level studio space and I thought that it would be interesting to invite artists who are working with functionality to make an exhibition in the front space of my studio. Many of the shows have exploited the idea of functionality and lean heavily on display as being a central aspect of a work.

As an artist, you have an evolving yet distinctive and defined style that draws inspiration from the history of modernism, the Scottish Arts & Crafts movement, post-war civic architecture, and literature. Do you think that there is a commonality that links these various areas of interest? Or is it the dissimilarities that allow you to draw from so many different places?

That's a great question and I'm not sure how to answer it! Again all of those influences manifest themselves strongly through architecture, manipulating ideas of space and place. I think what interests me most about specific era's in Art, Architecture and design is the boldness of approach, the uniqueness of form that comes from a cultural, social/ economic place. From the forceful Italian WW2 era buildings made under Mussolini to American Beat Poets, it's quite clear in all of these aesthetics that they are a direct product of their surroundings. I feel like there's a sort of dormancy of ideology in all physical forms and all of these points of history are seemingly up for grabs as a latent reference in contemporary art. To me, a monolith with a hole cut out of it speaks of Barbra Hepworth and the postwar rebirth of Civic sculpture, I'm interested in exploring if there's a sort of universality in these motifs, and seeing how simple we can go without becoming 'basic'.

You have previously incorporated design elements into your sculptures and installations but more recently you have been developing a stand-alone design

practice alongside your art practice. Although separate, these appear to be two sides of the same coin, often exploring and drawing from a similar pool of influences as your primary practice. Do you see this development as something distinct or hard to separate?

Its an interesting place to be, on the one hand using another alias such as Pavilion Pavilion to make different more functional work allows more space to explore a variety of things perhaps too far fetched from my art practice, and on the other hand, being an artist making furniture is a way to bring a very diverse approach to making something quite ordinary.

As an artist, there are always ideas that you never allow yourself to follow up, and having a parallel practice in design, and functional objects gave me this freedom to make a wider variety of things. Recently I have been focusing more specifically on making Stained Glass. Mostly as a commission basis, it's a medium that has a close relationship to painting (which is where my background lies) and applied art. Looking at the Bauhaus school in particular it is amazing to think that the Stained Glass studio was founded by Johannes Itten with star students such as Paul Klee and Joseph



Albers, at that time there was a belief that important art can exist in functional and practical objects. Over the past 100 years or so the two worlds of art and design have been kept very separate and other than a few exceptions of people like Don Judd only now does there seem to be a bit of a merging between Fine and Applied Arts.

For me, the stained glass work maintains my interest in formal artistic ideas such as colour and composition whilst directly connecting to architecture. Also, having been around the block a bit now, the

model of month-long exhibitions in gallery spaces was becoming a bit of a bizarre concept to me, so producing something that would exist in situ for years and perhaps decades is really appealing.

As well as being something of a curatorial exercise for you, the programme at Pavilion Pavilion has also seen you collaborate with the invited artists. Have you found that this has fed back into your own work at all?

One of my original ideas with the Pavilion Pavilion project was to think about what it means to house an exhibition. I'm really interested in Biennale Pavilions such as the Rietveld Sonsbeek Pavilion or the Carlo Scarpa Pavilions in Venice and I think that there is something quite vital in how the design of the building is on par with the aesthetics of the art that it showcases. The birth of the White Cube gallery model mostly bleaches out any architectural detailing which in my mind is totally absurd. So I wanted to host an exhibition programme where the venue became part of the consideration with the work. This could take many formats, and a Pavilion could be the room itself,

or the plinth something is exhibited on. I regularly make shelving for reasons still not entirely clear to me. I think it has something to do with the fact that conceptually they are very basic i.e. a horizontal surface but in reality, they can take almost any form. So I have done exhibitions where I have invited artists to show objects and I have made shelves in response to these objects. I think that this blurring between what is an artwork and what is part of its display is very interesting and calls into question the tense relationship between art and design.

I'm currently working on a collaboration with a perfume maker 'Early Modern', and have made a perfume which draws in a lot of these references. We started from a photo of a Pavilion by Scarpa taken out of season and overgrown. So the smell is a very layered one containing cedarwood essence reminiscent of sawn pine, a green musky idea of a building overgrown. I've designed the bottles, and have developed an installation including some wall lights and shelving units for an exhibition at Pavilion Pavilion opening on the 12th Dec. The perfume is a limited edition of 40 bottles and is available through the Early Modern and my own website.



You have already mentioned Bauhaus and discussed how your own practice has recently become less isolated and more inclusive and collaborative. Across this difficult year we have seen artists and artistic communities coming together, while apart, and finding ways to support one another, collaborate, and be creative in ways that may not have occurred under usual circumstances. Do you think that this new cooperative spirit is something that could and should be carried forward beyond the difficulties of this year, and do you have any particular hopes or aspirations for change within the art-world?

It has been a very interesting time for Contemporary art. Initiatives such as the 'Artists Support Pledge' which lifted the veil on the sale of artworks directly from the studio have provoked something that I don't think will go away. It's a terrible shame that the fun exploration of putting on physical exhibitions has been forgotten this year, but it has encouraged



artists to challenge the current model of commercial galleries. On the one hand, it is fantastic that artists can meet collectors so easily online, and during this year I've noticed many artists transitioning into 'makers' as a way to sell more objects (at a lower price point). However, on the other hand, there is a real danger that artists start producing 'product' that is entirely focused on the market place as opposed to their own practice. This has been the case for many years in the commercial gallery world with the endless international art fairs but never for individual artists. The re-emergence of craft and mastering materiality is a really fantastic development but it does not come without its issues.

If anything this year has asked everyone to re-address their situation and the models of art distribution are far from exempt from that.





JACK BRINDLEY

Jack Brindley (b. 1987, London) lives and works in Glasgow. He studied BA Fine Art at University of Reading (2005-2009) and MA Fine Art Painting at Royal College of Art, London (2011-2013). Recent solo/two-person exhibitions include: Staring at the Sun with Nick Jensen, Union Gallery, London (2020); David Dale (permanent commission), Glasgow (2020); The Crystal World (online Viewing Room with Yeni Mao), Brooke Benington, London (2020); Actual Size, The Briggait, Glasgow (2019); DUMB POET, Ltd Ink Corporation, Edinburgh (2019); Everything Always is for the First time, House for an Art Lover, Glasgow (2019); STONES, Art Lacuna, London (2018). Recent group exhibitions include: Contemporary Sculpture Fulmer, Brooke Benington, Fulmer (2019); European, Foreign and Domestic, The Averard Hotel, London (2019); Some People are Worth Melting For, Ginny Projects, Wales (2018) and If a Tree Fell..., Its Kind of Hard to Explain, is this it, London (2018). Curatorial include: Pavilion Pavilion, Ryan Gander, Glasgow (2020 - upcoming); Pavilion Pavilion, CJ Mahony, Glasgow (2019) and Pavilion Pavilion, LS GOMMA 072, Glasgow (2019).

www.jackbrindley.co.uk



Wall light, 2020
Fused glass, stainless steel bracket, light fixings
30 x 30 cm
11 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.
Variable series



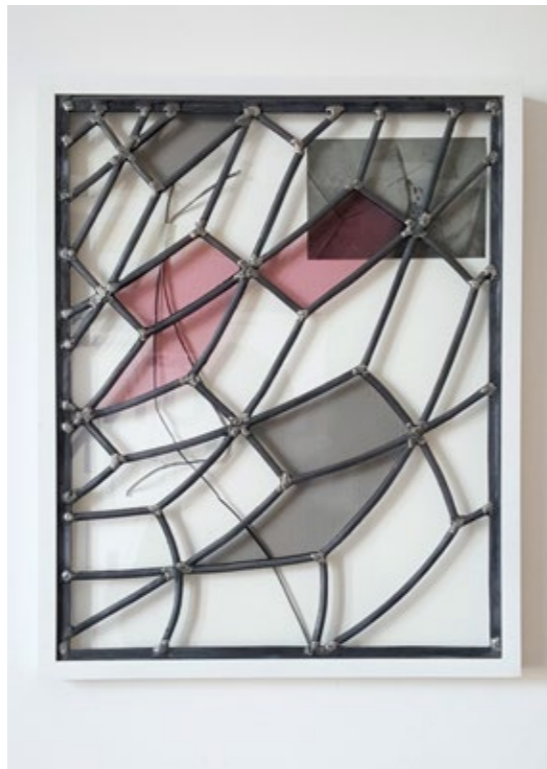
Blanks (Stories of water), 2020
Shou Susi Ban treated ash, collaged silver gelatin print
26 x 18 x 6.5 cm
10 1/4 x 7 x 2 1/2 in.



Yesterdays Tomorrow, 2019
Silver gelatin print, rabbit skin gesso, MDF, steel frame
32 x 21 cm
12 1/2 x 8 1/4 in.



Actual Size, 2019
Lime wax and pastel on wood
28 x 19 cm
11 x 7 1/2 in.



Untitled (Cosmic Grid), 2018
Stained glass, silver gelatin print
60 x 40 cm
23 3/4 x 15 3/4 in.



Early Modern Perfume
Edition of 40
50ml bottle

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