

WORKPLACE

London Art Roundup
'2023 – Issue 48'
23 Jan 2023

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LondonARTRoundup

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Showcasing artists and works that caught my attention.

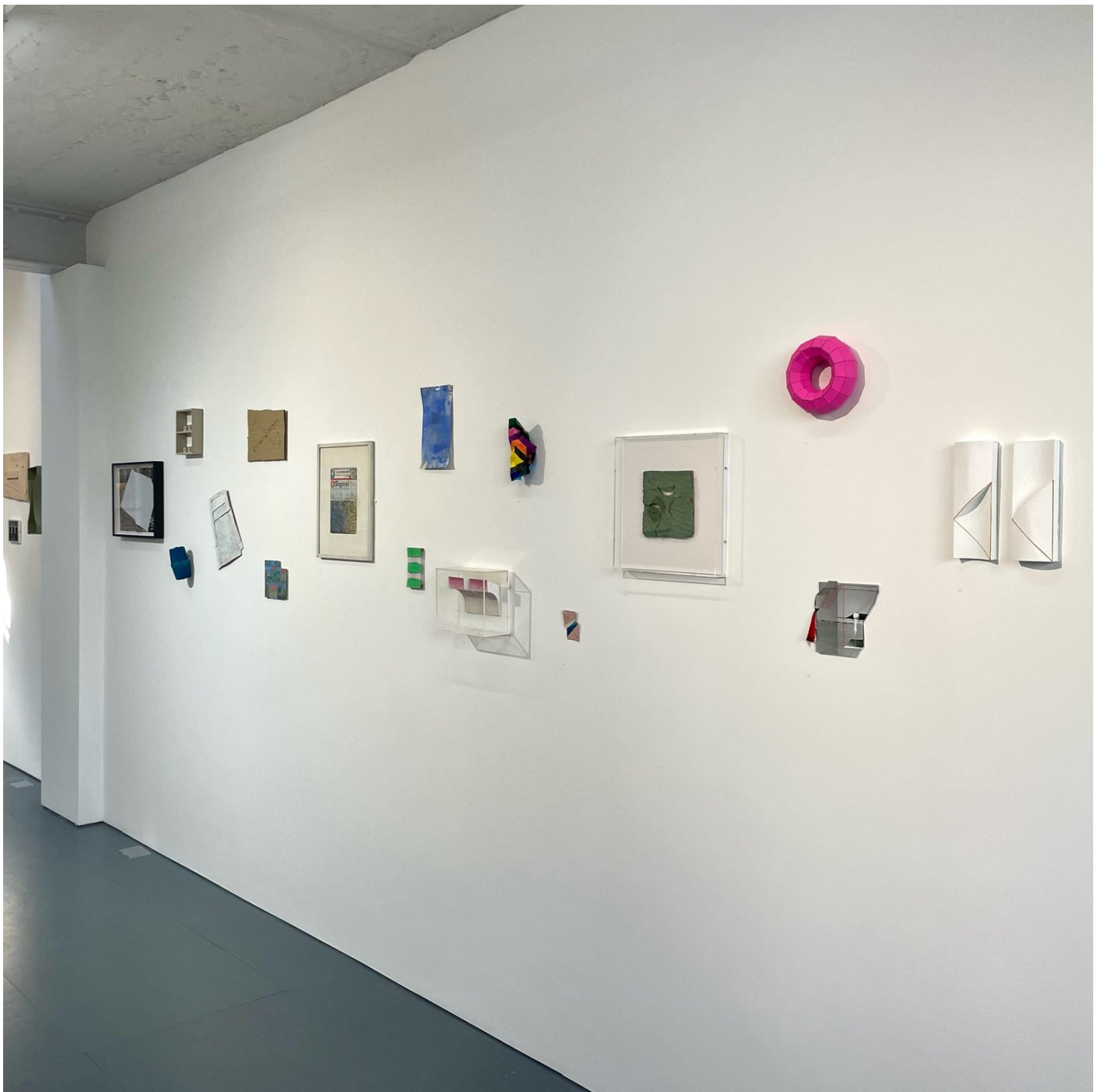
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It's a strong week in Cambridge Heath and for the neighbours on Mortimer Street. Plus a don't-miss dual show at one of Mayfair's most consistently enjoyable contemporary art galleries.



This is a really strong group show of artists that playfully subvert the traditional attributes of the materials they work with. The way **Li Li Ren** ([@lili_ren](#)) puts patina to bronze makes incredibly heavy elements look like gravity defying organics. **Sonya Derviz** ([@SonyaDerviz](#)) paints oil so tender and delicate that many of the strokes look like they've been whispered onto the canvas. Speaking of canvas, pay close attention to the one that **My-Lan Hoang-Thuy** ([@mylanhoangthuy](#)) has made: it's acrylic paint! And be mindful not to sit on the comfy looking cushion on the floor by **Shamiran Istifan** ([@kafirahm](#)) — the art is sewn in as seams.

'Into My Arms' at [Sherbet Green](#) ([@Sherbet_Green](#)) until 04 Mar



If you're the kind of person that could spend hours looking at small scale models and conceptual sketches, then you won't want to pass up the chance to see these 43 works from Canada, US, UK, Europe and Japan. And be sure to pick up the incredibly detailed gallery handout and beautiful companion catalog printed on humble newsprint. It's a modest show full of modest materials that remind us of the powerful inspiration you can create from a few bits of cardboard, crayon and paste. Every big idea starts somewhere. Curated by **Robert Moon** ([@robertmoon](#)) and inspired by some of the final works he found in his father's art studio.

'Maquette' at [No Show Space](#) ([@NoShowSpace](#)) until 04 Feb



Doctor Who — Original Yeti foot from The Abominable Snowmen (1967)

Speaking of maquettes, this entire show feels like a life-sized mock-up that hasn't been fully fleshed out, but is certainly intriguing. The gallery write up, which you'll want to read, is just a transcript of an audio note explaining the concept. It involves lots and lots of feet, including a Doctor Who Yeti foot and references to the sad end to Mike Webster's life, which was gruesomely depicted in the opening scene from the movie [Concussion](#). So, umm, yeah... this isn't the kind of foot fetish show where you'd find [Tarantino](#). With contributions from **David Burrows**, **Lesley Guy** ([@LesleyGuy](#)) and **Jack Killick** ([@_JackKillick_](#)). Cat lovers will especially want to pop into the back room for a mostly unrelated collection of works being guarded by three felines. (Note: *Cordelia, Madge and Walter* are [NFS](#).)

'All I Can See Is Trees' at [IMT Gallery](#) ([@imtgallery](#)) until 19 Feb



If you saw the Hayward Gallery's [Strange Clay exhibition](#) then you'll surely recall the contribution from **Jonathan Baldock** ([@jonathan_baldock](#)) that looked like a bunch of stacked ceramic buckets filled with hands and coated in emoji. It was hard to take seriously, and that was the point. Baldock's quirky outlook has now been extended to include overgrown flower people that initially appear sinister but really aren't that scary, since they're impotently rooted to the wall. They remind me of the quirky but conveniently sage characters that often pop-up midway through fantasy movies to provide narrative exposition that helps the heroes further their journey, but the works are actually inspired by Baldock's relationship with his mother. Oh how I'd love to read her review of this show!

Across the street you'll find three simple, sombre works by [Stephan Balkenhol](#). Each is hand carved entirely out of a single block of wood and plainly painted. Rough squared-off cuts with splintered edges make these look like three dimensional palette knife portraits. Plus there's a giant painting of a mushroom!

'we are flowers of one garden'

and

'Stephan Balkenhol'

Both shows at [Stephen Friedman](#) ([@StephenFriedmanGallery](#)) until 25 Feb



Half the works are too broadly brushed to comprehend up close, and the other half are so closely cropped they challenge whether or not they're worth the mystery. You'll still probably want to spend a lot of time looking, especially once you learn that these wildly different styles are the output of identical '[mirror twins](#) [Laura Lancaster](#) ([@laura_lancaster](#)) and [Rachel Lancaster](#) ([@rachel_lancaster](#)).

'Cadence' at [Workplace](#) ([@_workplace_](#)) until 04 Mar

And now for the show that everyone's talking about, or probably soon will be...



Thirty two years ago Madonna made a sexually suggestive though not explicit video filled with bondage outfits, gender fluidity and mysterious interpersonal interactions taking place throughout the rooms and hallways of a hotel. ['Justify My Love'](#) was banned by MTV and only made available as a paid-for videocassette with an 18 / R certificate. Last week **Jenkin van Zyl** ([@Jenkinvanzyl](#)) debuted an immersive art installation where you enter through the head of a giant inflatable rat to watch a 50-minute sexually suggestive though not explicit video filled with bondage outfits, gender fluidity and mysterious interpersonal interactions taking place throughout the rooms and hallways of a hotel. Art loving mums are taking their children and raving about it on Instagram. My how times have changed!

I've only seen half of the 50 minute video, enough to know that it should come with a trigger warning for white collar executives because the general plot appears to be: rat people attend a deviant corporate retreat at the world's worst Travelodge. I haven't yet begun to contemplate what any of it means but it's ridiculously captivating and the extent to which the theme has been meticulously executed throughout the gallery is impressive. Whatever you make of it, it's refreshing that artistic visions like this are being given prominent platforms rather than instantly censored and relegated to an underground scene.

'Surrender' at [Edel Assanti](#) ([@edelassanti](#)) until 04 Mar