

RECEPTION

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Guy Allott Recent Wrecks

Nov. 27, 2010 – Jan. 8, 2011

Opening Friday, Nov. 26, 2010, 6–9 pm





Earthbound

Recent Wrecks is the second solo exhibition of paintings and sculpture by London based artist Guy Allott at RECEPTION. The work returns to the depiction of spaceships which Allott has used previously to convey his ideas on the ethics of ideologies. The writings of the philosophers and futurists¹ who first dared to imagine colonizing other worlds are now neglected, almost forgotten. Instead our preoccupation lays with the revolution in communications that forces us to redefine ourselves amidst rising cultural tensions; information on global cultures are being brought together at an increasing rate. The recent exploration of the galaxies has seen the demythologizing of space travel; the kind that was so prevalent in the late 20th Century and which romanticized the expeditions - imagined or real - of new worlds. We no longer name spacecraft after the Greek God *Apollo*, or even those great 19th and 20th century idioms, such as *Endeavor* or *Mir* (*Mir* translates as both Earth and Peace). Talk of terminating manned spaceflight is common. It seems we will be Earthbound for some time...

This exhibition of Allott's work centres on four large, ambitious paintings, each of which relates to a different country. The first two are Russia and the US. The second two - historically associated with the old super powers - are the UK and Estonia.

The forests of Estonia (*Baltic Coast*) with its spaceship rotting like so many wooden boats in the coastal forests of the Baltic

Sea contrasts with the English coast (*Cornish Coast*) with its washed-up globe-like craft. This contrasts again with the large bloated, retro feel of the American desert spaceship (*Empire*). The Russian Spaceship (*The Black Square*), a wreck inspired by a Moscow radio tower, refers directly to both the landscape painting of the Russian 19th Century and the revolutionary painting that came later in the form of Suprematism. Allott imbues these rusting spacecraft with the atmosphere of dilapidated monuments. It is unclear whether they have ever been used or have simply been abandoned. The two bronze sculptures also included in the exhibition continue the notion of decay. As a wreck of a spaceship, *Bronze II (after Magritte)* refers to a cut-out motif used by Magritte, which, in turn, acknowledges a surreal theme in the paintings. In *Bronze III*, again a wreck, Allott adeptly creates an identity for the derelict spacecraft. The windows become eyes. To anthropomorphize the sculpture and to an extent the paintings, we are introduced to a reflection of ourselves, of the world we live in today.

¹ The Soviet rocket scientist Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (1857 - 1935), seen as many as the pioneer of spaceflight, said: "The Earth is the cradle of humanity but mankind cannot stay in the cradle forever."

News

Luigi Ghirri

A selection of his work is part of the exhibition *La carte d'après nature*, curated by Thomas Demand at the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (until Feb. 22, 2011, www.nmnm.mc)

Heiko Karn, Katrin Mayer and Eske Schlüters

installed their show *Insert Never the Same Colour* at Kunstverein Harbeger Bahnhof (until Dec. 19, 2010, www.kvhbf.de)

Lisi Raskin

takes part in the *Singapore Biennial* (March 13-May 15, 2011, www.singaporebiennale.org)

upcoming show at RECEPTION:

GELD (group show), opening January 21, 2011

Contact

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Opening Hours: Wed-Sat 11-18 and by appointment

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illustrations

Guy Allott: *The Black Square*, 2010, oil on linen, 180 x 140 cm
(detail on the cover)