



Brenden Scott French

Exhibitionist, BMA Magazine

Tuesday, 8 May 12 by Chloe Mandryk

Futures Pass Remains is an exhibition by eminent glass artist BRENDEN SCOTT FRENCH on show at Beaver Galleries. I spoke with Brenden before the opening and he explained why careful consideration of medium and technique is characteristic of his work. His process of layering colour and shape leads to unique patterns that reflect and parody industrialisation, the urban jungle and the gentle giant also known as our ecosystem. These kinds of dualities carry through the show.

The sculptures are constructed from glass blocks that are kilnformed (a process that prepares glass to be halfway between solid and melting) and fused together. When the glass is cool he uses a cutting lathe to incise. As opposed to its luminescent qualities, it was the strong hues, opacity and density of colour that attracted Brenden to the medium of glass and he enjoys working with its immediate and spontaneous nature. Because of its colour and format (many of the pieces are wall panels) some have aligned his work to painting, particularly abstraction or colour field. But the artist says, "Mine is a labour of assemblage... a work will start from individual pieces of coloured glass sheets and through this process of mosaic come together to form an object."

It is interesting to hear that Brenden sees himself working with assemblage in mind. Assemblage entered the debate of representation with the likes of Marcel Duchamp, Pablo Picasso and later Joseph Cornell and Rosalie Gascoigne who used found objects like newspaper, old toys or spare parts, to paint a different picture. Brenden doesn't use commonplace objects, he depicts them and allows his blocks of colour to form relationships with one another to decide his composition.

You could argue that Brenden uses the idea of a 'collective consciousness', initiated by the Dada movement and Surrealists, where symbols, colours or shapes that most people would recognise (intentionally or subliminally) prompt a reaction. "Most important to me was not gender but what we do with aggression and destructiveness," said Brenden, "because universal symbols such as the handgun and the vehicle... are very familiar and nostalgic works that connect with people's own personal experience... It is not how we got to be in this place or who we are that is my main interest, it's what we are doing or are about to do."

Brenden has trained extensively in glass practice, undertaking residencies at the Canberra Glassworks and the Northlands Creative Glass Centre in Scotland. Even with such accomplishments Brenden says, "Perhaps when the dust settles I will have a clearer perspective. Though I do find it interesting that any hint of subtlety has found its way towards me when the sense of urgency in nearly everything that surrounds me is palpable."

Catch Futures Pass Remains at Beaver Galleries, Deakin, until Tuesday May 22. The exhibition is open Tue-Fri, 10am-5pm, and Sat-Sun, 9am-5pm. Free.

<http://www.bmamag.com/articles/exhibitionist/20120508-futures-pass-remains/>