

Neil Cooper, „Nina Rhode: Friendly Fire/ Cara Tolmie: Read Thou Art And Read Thou Shalt Remain“, The List, Issue 682, June 23 2011

Nina Rhode: Friendly Fire/ Cara Tolmie: Read Thou Art And Read Thou Shalt Remain



Mixed media from Glasgow and Berlin

If the world is a circle without a beginning and nobody knows where it really ends ('laa-la-laaa-la'), as a zenned-out Hal David once wrote to a Burt Bacharach choon, then both Nina Rhode and Cara Tolmie's worlds seem to be on a permanent loop in these wonderfully complementary shows. For Glasgow-based Tolmie, this comes via two films, one an actual loop of a Death Valley landscape viewed from a speeding car, the other a hand-crafted pop-up toy theatre made with a shoebox, some sticky-back plastic and some close-up cut-outs of a similarly mountainous mural and a window that blows hot and cold. Out of this comes a narrative both domestic and epic, set as it is in a room with a very special view.

In her first ever UK solo show, Berlin-based Rhode's series of spinning wheels, cut-out shapes and endless mirror images suggests a playfully utopian infinity of touchy-feely exchanges by way of an interactive fairground attraction that is forever in motion without ever going through them. This major affair is book-ended by a large spinning wheel at the gallery entrance and the wonderful 'Rudolf Beuys' in the activity room, effectively a blackboard in motion that allows a creche-load of infants to make art. In the gallery itself, spinning harmonicas do a Terry Riley number, used fireworks are built into an organ shape, self-portraits through a looking glass take Rhode to Wonderland and a melted street bin captures the spirit of Berlin's anti-capitalist riots of 2009. Best of all is 'Gong', in which a log hung between two stone-cutting steel discs can be swung to chime out a gloriously clattering ceremonial.

Neil Cooper

Dundee Contemporary Arts until Sun 31 Jul