

'(...) I am drawn to the unfixed quality, the destabilising feeling that things can shift or even disappear; the sense of movement. The rhythm of breathing is echoed in the rhythm of the drawings. Time, air and light become materials in the work, animating either the space or the thing itself.'

An exhibition catalogue published by The Fruitmarket Gallery and MK Gallery includes newly-commissioned essays by Fiona Bradley and Briony Fer, and a conversation between Anna Barriball and Anthony Spira.
Exhibition price £15, (£17.95 RRP)

Martin Creed *Work No. 1059*, 2011

Commissioned by The Fruitmarket Gallery as part of a refurbishment of The Scotsman Steps by the City of Edinburgh Council and the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust

The Fruitmarket Gallery is proud to announce the long-awaited opening of Martin Creed's *Work No. 1059*, a new permanent work of public sculpture on the Scotsman Steps, across the street from the Gallery. For more information pick up a leaflet or ask at the Bookshop.

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Anna Barriball

Exhibition 21 January – 9 April 2012

Anna Barriball (b. Plymouth, 1972) makes work that blurs the boundaries of conventional art disciplines. She uses traditional materials, but her actions test the limits of how materials can be made to behave, so her work often transcends its original medium: drawings are also sculptures, sculptures are drawings, photographs and films are drawings and sculptures.

Barriball studied Fine Art at Falmouth School of Art, Winchester School of Art and Chelsea College of Art. She has exhibited her work internationally for the past fifteen years, with exhibitions at Arnolfini, Bristol (2003), Frith Street Gallery, London (2004, 2009), Gasworks, London (2005), Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh (2006), The New Art Gallery, Walsall (2006), Camden Arts Centre, London (2007), Galleri Bo Bjerggaard, Copenhagen (2007) and Institut im Glaspavillon, Berlin (2008). Barriball lives and works in London.

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This exhibition presents a selection of Barriball's work made from 2000 to 2012, including drawings, sculptures, photographs and films, along with two major new installations. Materials such as pencil, ink and paper together with found photographs and other everyday objects, such as money, windbreaks and curtain fabric, feature in her work, animated by light, air and even breath itself. Architectural elements such as doors, walls, shutters and windows serve as starting points for new visions and experiences.

The exhibition opens with the very recent *Untitled* (2011), a vast expanse of windbreaks covered in black marker pen and assembled into a monumental sculpture. Taken out of their context on a beach, their original function thwarted and their bright colours muted, the windbreaks are transformed into a formidable wall of varying shades of darkness when first encountered, in contrast to the unexpected glow of colour contained in the shallow space between them and the wall behind.

Much of the large-scale work in this exhibition Barriball makes through a process similar to taking a rubbing of an object: pressing with pencil, pen or brush onto paper attached to different surfaces, directly transferring the texture of a window, wall, shutters or door onto paper. The body of dense markings possesses solidity, weight and mass despite the weightlessness of materials like paper and graphite. The direct transfer of surface texture and folds and creases produced through flattening volumetric elements creates a very close representation, a fusion of abstraction and figuration.

In the series *Mirror Window Wall I-IV* (2008), Barriball's drawings of brick walls address what drawings can be. The viewer encounters each group of four drawings as a mirror, window, and wall: the viewer beholds their reflection in the glass, sees through it like a window, and looks at it as a wall. Barriball says she is '(...) interested in the confusion of being inside or outside, in a liminal space. Thresholds that are no longer ways in or ways out – drawings that hold you in the space while hinting at what might be behind the surface.'

The artist's work can also be described as liminal in terms of the form it takes. *Copper pipes* (2011) and *Untitled II* and *Untitled III* (2008) are drawings that have become sculptures, as once again paper gains weight and mass from its sheen and bulk. In the video *Draw (fireplace)* (2005), a piece of tracing paper hangs over an empty grate. One moment, the paper moulds itself to the grate as air is drawn in, and the next moment, the paper is released to become flat again. The fireplace appears to draw breath, but only the paper is animated, moving from a state of flatness to sculptural form: video becomes sculpture. Similarly, the video *Untitled* (2011), with its series of inverted images of flash photographs taken at night in different interiors looking out through the windows, is at once a film and a drawing. Blinking images capture different kinds of marks, reflections and moments.

Barriball's mark making process varies depending on the material she is using, although she usually begins the large-scale drawings from the top left and moves to the bottom right of the paper, and the pressure she applies with pencil or brush results in a kind of low relief sculpture composed of creases, tears and holes in the paper. If she is drawing over a found object, the markings may still be dense, but the forms underneath – the head of the Queen on a five pound note (as in *Money Drawing*, 2000) or the stripes of the windbreak – can still be seen. By obscuring one aspect of the object's image, Barriball makes visible evidence of its use – how it has been handled as an object. The marks on found photographs are substantially different: more quickly made and more ephemeral.

Defacement is another mode of Barriball's mark making, although her methods are radical and methodical, ranging from blowing to sewing and careful cutting. Her interventions with found photographs are made by blowing, a hands-off process. With *36 Breaths* (2002), she deposited a drop of ink onto each photograph and blew on it; to make *Untitled V*, *Untitled VII* and *Untitled XII* (all 2004), she blew bubbles with an ink and detergent mixture onto photographs. Like the click of a camera's shutter, the bursting of the bubble also captures a moment in time. For *Knife II* (2006), Barriball drew around a knife blade and cut through the line with needle and thread, cutting and mending the form of the knife at the same time. Cut window mounts frame minuscule images of windows in *Windows I-VIII* (2006), covering everything else in the photographs, while directing focus to each image. Speaking about her work with found photographs, Barriball considers the process as a way of '(...) re-animating the images whilst also obliterating them slightly (...) Within this there is a desire to hold something still and look hard, a kind of preservation.'

Perhaps most importantly, memory is a persistent thread in all the work. Barriball focuses on the overlooked – an unclaimed photograph, or the ordinary domestic window or wall. *Untitled* (2008) began when, at a market, the artist came across some curtain material identical to the curtains she grew up with, which led her to collect other second-hand leaf-patterned curtains. She has, in her own words, 'liberated' the leaves from the fabric, releasing their capacity to behave like leaves. Another ordinary domestic material, the simple acoustic tile, is the basis for the newly-commissioned wall drawing *Soundproof* (2012). Pencil marks rather than sound waves travel through the tiles' holes. Their multiplication transforms graphite into a glittering sea of silver and dark grey pencil marks, reflecting light in some areas while absorbing light in others, changing with the movement of the viewer.

With *Soundproof*, as in so much of the work here, the dynamic between the viewer and the work – the physical experience of the encounter in a particular moment in time – is what completes the work. Barriball herself best expresses this dynamic: