

APPS

*'Alas, that cyan sea is heating up and, thanks to dirty rain and human run-off carrying substances like Arm & Hammer's Powerfully Clean Naturally Fresh Clean Burst laundry detergent, it has been a long time since the cyan of the sea has been pristine.'*¹ Lyn Hejinian

The selection of works presented in this installation, APPS, is comprised of a vocabulary of drawings that the painter, Adrian Jackman, has steadily been compiling over several years. This 'vocabulary' is comprised of a multitude of mass media images derived from mailbox circulars; predatory photographic and vector drawn advertising images we all know which are designed to focus upon our desire for new products; ever-cheaper tools, electronics and household goods.

Jackman treats his methodical process of collecting and re-rendering drawings of everyday objects to a rigorous yet whimsical process. He likens this pick-and-choose approach to drawing as analogous to the modernist musical theory of 'indeterminacy of composition'. Most famously utilized by the New York School of John Cage, Morton Feldman, et al, this experimental approach to music enabled a fluidity whereby the conceptual process employed by the artist was not below the content, but rather the process itself was brought to the forefront, with meaning and structure native to the presented layers of auditory content to float freely within a fixed plane.

This process of creating a scaffold for capturing free-ranging content in a self-reflexive manner has been employed within visual art for centuries, a prominent example being the 'mise-en abyme' in historical and modernist painting.² Referring to the modernist composer, John Cage, Deleuze and Guattari observed that 'the same could be said of the fixed visual plane: Godard, for example, effectively carries the fixed plane of cinema to this state where forms dissolve, and all that subsists are tiny variations of speed between movements in composition.'³

For a painter with interests in digital rendering, formal abstraction and representational imagery, it is easy to imagine this process-centric approach to dealing with representational content as somewhat liberating. Describing his drawing process and the treatment of representational content, Jackman writes, 'I approach drawing diagrammatically where the computer is used to trace, re scale and manipulate imagery sourced from D.I.Y catalogues and similar circular ephemera. The spectral opposites of black and white and the quality of line found within these printed resources form a formal vocabulary.'

Heavily abstracted from the advertising material in which these works imagery is sourced, Jackman's abstractions are reflections on contemporary life, the objects we collect and, of course, the waste we are produce. Dominated as we are presently by electronic goods and cellphone and tablet 'apps' – and the valuable time we are squandering in gazing at them – this series is a fitting metaphor for 2012.

Matt Blomeley, 16 June 2012

¹ Lyn Hejinian, *Colours / Cyan*, Cabinet, Issue 20, Brooklyn NY, Winter 2005-2006. (pp16)

² Francis Pound, *Walters En Abyme*, Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland, 2004. (pp56) Writing about the en-abyme works of Gordon Walters, Pound could almost be describing Jackman's APPS series when he writes, 'we might also say that Walters' paintings 'en-abyme' present representationality itself, and this 'in' a representation; and that they present too that which in representation allows representation to represent.'

³ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, (trans. Brian Massumi, Athlone Press, 1987), Continuum, London, 2004. (pp113)