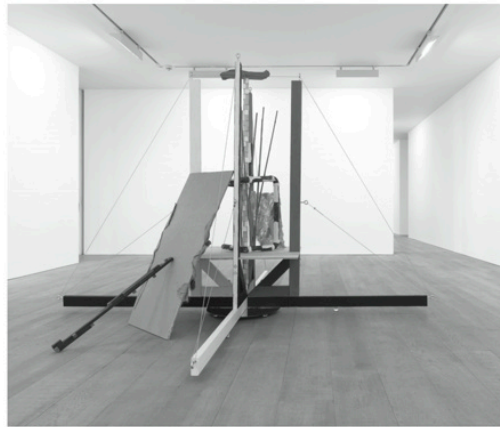


therefore at ease with its own self-assertions. There is a revealing sequence of photographs, in a catalogue, of the artist installing one of his sculptures, a studious-looking man battling helplessly against the intransigence of the material world, and having the grace to allow his inevitable defeat to determine the open-endedness of the work's final form.

Evenly distributed along a fine horizontal line ruled along the gallery wall, the sculptural assemblages of *Light and Colour*, 2011, looked like aborted attempts to redesign an alphabet but with no concern for signification. Letters and numbers emerged from the plywood and cardboard forms as though through a looking glass in which they were no longer required to assume functionality. Otherwise, each object succumbed to being a speculative model for representation: a cluster of wooden squares, like architecture on the pencilled horizon line, or an orange semi-circle, like a sun rising over it. Delicate details – the hairy edge of sawn plywood or a strand of spider's web preserved in the dried acrylic paint – encouraged intimate scrutiny, setting the anti-monumental scale at which Tuttle's work asks to be attended to.

Next door, the sculptural installation *System 7, Hickory Dickory Dock*, 2011, was about as monumental as Tuttle gets, which means decisions are allowed to accumulate more than usual but without qualifying the understanding that they can never add up to anything so grand as a constructive logic. Tuttle proceeds by working against an underlying cruciform symmetry, adding non-conforming elements – such as the length of paint-smeared drainpipe winding through the heart of the sculpture like entrails – or by painting half of the basic structure in random primaries, the other half in black and white. Symmetry's air of consequence is subverted by a more dominant sense of arbitrariness. The rise of the various materials may have been thrustingly vertical but it had been plotted, as though apologetically, with endless digressions. A central 'spine' of small wooden cubes took the most laborious route towards the ceiling, where Tuttle had mounted a large plywood disc, painted Tiepolo blue: a heaven which the clunky mechanics of the grounded structure were striving towards but never about to attain.

Downstairs, a series of six collages on plywood had been mounted at head height on painted ledges, as though the boards were sitting on them, leaning against the wall (*Sequence*, 2011). It was an image – but only an image – of nonchalance. Each piece appeared to constitute a limited chain of actions, anatomising a process which had been allowed to develop further upstairs. These collages showcased Tuttle's ability to reconcile the deceptive appearance of a structuralist investigation – as though the overtly handmade texture of his work was a means of revealing the fundamental workings of artmaking and the materials it manipulates – with the most intuitive aestheticism. A plywood oval had been laid over a rectangular plywood ground; or, alternatively, the oval was a negative aperture cut out of the superimposed layer of ply. We might have been looking at a demonstration of how these panels become prospective pictorial planes, were it not for the few added details which divert such a simplistic reading. One of the pieces featured two ticks of wood and a



Richard Tuttle  
*System 7, Hickory  
Dickory Dock* 2011

couple of pencil lines, converting the uppermost oval of wood into a face with the conciseness of a Matisse drawing. At the last moment, Tuttle declares himself too proud, or too diffident, for anything so reductive as a deconstruction of process, and shows us that the work was always serving the freest form of painterly play: a notation of visual memory. ■

MARK PRINCE is an artist and critic.

## Emma Hart: TO DO

Matt's Gallery London 28 September to 20 November

The circular perimeter of Emma Hart's *TO DO* comprises tripods embellished with sculptural elements and digital cameras showing films on the play-back function. This staging initially appears to form a gestalt-like whole. Yet having perambulated around the edge, self-consciously avoiding the theatrical centre stage of this installation in the round, *TO DO* conversely reveals itself as continuously fragmenting and regrouping, constituted by multiple sculptures that could form individual works. The discordant sound emanating from the small digital cameras contributes to this effect, a babble of language that clarifies as you move closer.

On each sculpture, the tripod acts as the architecture holding the work together. Though every element is different, all are composed and sustained by a triplet of media: sculpture, sound and film. Repeated motifs build up to produce a number of threads that contribute to the coalescent effect of stepping back and viewing the artwork as a united assembly of objects. *TO DO* cites past works such as Hart's *For Arrows*, 2010, and conceptually rests on an attempt to commandeer a group of cyborg-like assistants (the cameras mounted on each work are invested with a certain agency) to fabricate and produce her work. Despite a heightened awareness of the presence of multiple cameras, the viewer's participation in *TO DO* avoids a trite repetition of the tropes contained within Dan Graham's *Time Delay*

Radar

Human  
Condition/ing

Jacqueline Donachie  
Revital Cohen

Loughborough University Arts  
[www.arts.lboro.ac.uk/radar](http://www.arts.lboro.ac.uk/radar)

Loughborough  
University

November —  
December 2011

Emma Hart  
TO DO 2011



*Room*, 1974, or John Baldessari's *Brain/Cloud*, 2009. Rather than through technological trickery, this work is instead activated by how one navigates the sometimes overwhelming multiplicity of elements.

The cameras affixed to the armature of each tripod are supplemented and enclosed by sculptural components, many of which utilise Day-Glo elements. Cut-out pictures of birds, framed photographs of people wielding binoculars and synthetic feathers generate a network of imagery that seemingly represents a twitcher's demented fantasy. What could tip over into a twee speculation on bird watching is piqued at various intervals by the abrasiveness of the sound, plasticity of other elements and a film of a vacuum cleaner nozzle sucking up cut-outs of feathered creatures. Another motif accumulates through the repeated appearance of a gnarled, putrid yellow, joke-shop witch's hand. On one screen the disembodied hand caresses and releases a fistful of feathers, while elsewhere the hand manically opens and slams shut a kitchen drawer containing a cutlery tray that hosts a tiny *Borrower*-like cut-out photograph of Hart.

Writ large on a thick board is Hart's to-do list. At the corkboard base of this sculpture/tripod lies a floppy tangle of black acetate that looks like a synthetic mimicry of a Robert Morris felt piece. 'Ring council tax', 'Start presentation', 'Clothes washing', 'Take back Urban Outfitters' are scribbled on the list, and surrounding these chores are six rectangular holes cut into the board. Small cut-out photographs of Hart grasping a clipboard rest in five of these openings, while the camera that sits in the hole at the top plays a film that shows the manic

crossing-out of a to-do list. An aesthetic of domestic drudgery made fantastically demented is present throughout *TO DO*; one tripod is topped by an image of an ironing board, on another a shower curtain shrouds the camera, elsewhere the camera is wrapped in clingfilm.

The clashing of different soundtracks and Hart's cacophonous layering of her voice through sing-song intonations of 'sorry', 'welcome', 'take take take' and 'in in in' are accompanied by the percussive register of a vacuum cleaner played through a camera housed within a snug, snake-like vacuum cleaner nozzle. These aural elements compete for clarity and the vocals sound like The Raincoats circa *The Kitchen Tapes*. *TO DO* is also formed through a montage of reflexive elements, particularly present in the camera screens that display Hart moving around Matt's Gallery and the moments where we glimpse a still shot of the sculpture sited opposite with the view experienced in that instant replayed and captured on the camera screen.

Hart's interest in Bertolt Brecht is visible in the theatricality of this work which readily instrumentalises the viewer into a type of performer: the way in which *TO DO* is constantly threatened with fragmentation commands you to keep taut the threads that tie together discordant elements. The Day-Glo assemblages of the work partially recall Isa Genzken's *Ground Zero*, 2008; however, the sound in Hart's work adds further complexity, making this work denser than Genzken's. A bright green tripod, covered with green and black feathers, hosts a sign announcing 'REMEMBER I WAS HERE FIRST', an accurate declaration of the originality of *TO DO*. ■

LARNE ABSE COGARTY is a writer and research student at University College London.

## Josephine Meckseper

Timothy Taylor Gallery London

12 October to 12 November

Ambivalence is a relative thing. In the case of Josephine Meckseper, you might say her work is less ambivalent than Richard Prince's, more ambivalent than Group Material's, less ambivalent than Andy Warhol's, more ambivalent than Marcel Duchamp's. But it depends where the frame is placed, how much you have faith in objects being able to speak for themselves in a range of settings, or, conversely, how much you believe the discussion matters.

Meckseper's displays of mass-produced, found and handmade objects are in the service of indirect protest and media/commodity critique. One is struck first by their arch refinement, all clean and shiny surfaces, fitted lights and new things looking straight out of their packaging. The juxtaposition of refinement and inherent worth is where the disjuncture between given and discursive value lies: most of the mass-produced objects are 'low', and are bought or found by Meckseper. There are steel wire scourers, fake diamonds, socks and tights, reproductions of film stills, paintings, images of previous



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