

LISSON GALLERY

Press Release

Line

22 January – 12 March 2016
52 Bell Street, London

Athanasios Argianas, Ceal Floyer, Monika Grzymala, Victoria Haven, Susan Hiller, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Tom Marioni, Jonathan Monk, Julian Opie, Florian Pumhösl, Fred Sandback, Maximilian Schubert, K. Yoland and Jorinde Voigt

Drawing is both physical entity and intellectual proposition in 'Line', Lisson Gallery's group exhibition, guest-curated by Drawing Room. Fifteen international artists – whose works span seminal artworks from the late '60s through to performative and site-specific pieces made especially for this exhibition – take their various lines for a walk off the page to intermingle in the three-dimensional space of the gallery, extending via sound into the atmosphere and reverberating via action and memory across time.

Lisson Gallery's almost fifty-year history frames the exhibition. Sol LeWitt's *Wall Drawing #157*, a diagonal line first drawn according to the artist's instructions by Nicholas Logsdail in 1973 and re-drawn again for this exhibition, suggests an expanded field for contemporary art through its conceptual premise. Richard Long's 1980 work *A Four Day Walk* describes an imaginary line in the ground measuring 94 miles, which shifts the parameters of drawing to consider man's physical yet transitory relationship with the world. Long's ephemeral line contrasts poignantly with British artist K. Yoland's recent photography series, *Border Land Other* (2013-2014), the result of a residency in Texas, shown alongside a film of her performance of the same name. The performer unfurls an unruly paper line, which refuses to settle in one spot, referencing the complexity of carving up land on a map and the arbitrariness of borders. Here the line describes not one person's passage but instead a political boundary not to be crossed, namely the border between Texas and Mexico. A recent work by Julian Opie also brings the natural world into the gallery via a black vinyl installation, *Pine Forest*. The vertical procession of tree trunks can also be read as a parade of silhouetted figures, a stream of barcode data or simply as abstract lines.

Brooklyn-based Maximilian Schubert and London-based Greek artist Athanasios Argianas both present new and recent work that employs metallic forms to execute three-dimensional drawings. Schubert's linear compositions cling to the gallery walls like the frames of invisible paintings, while Argianas's installation features a freestanding steel armature draped with brass ribbons. Etched with words that describe subjective measurements, such as "the length of the strand of your hair", the ribbons' descriptions will be activated via spoken performances during the exhibition's opening, operating like a linear code that translates material into sound.

In Viennese artist Florian Pumhösl's animated film *Tract* (2011), moving lines explore the relationship between dance notations and a figure's movement in space. Drawing from Paul Klee's *Pedagogical Sketchbook*, which states "a line is a point, which goes for a walk", Berlin-based artist Ceal Floyer's 2008 work, *Taking a Line for a Walk*, uses a marking tool to paint a meandering line on the gallery's floor, its length dictated by the quantity of paint. The performative element of drawing is also referred to in German artist Jorinde Voigt's *Botanic Code* (2015), which translates the artist's perceptions by way of an algorithmic code into a row of painted aluminium rods leant against a wall.

American conceptual artist Tom Marioni's *One Second Sculpture* (1969) documents the artist throwing a coiled tape measure into the air and letting it fall – an act echoed in Jonathan Monk's neon *Fallen* (2006) – with the aim of eradicating the distinctions between sculpture, drawing and performance. Such crossing and erasure of medium specificity is a feature too of the minimalist sculptor Fred Sandback's dematerialised work, *Untitled* (1974), which uses ochre coloured yarn to draw lines in space that delineate rather than occupy volume.

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An installation by Susan Hiller, *Work in Progress* (1980), contains the residue of a week-long performance by the artist, which involved unravelling the canvas of a painting into its component parts, each day the resulting threads re-configured as a 'doodle' or 'thread drawing'. Using the soft material of tape, Berlin-based installation artist Monika Grzymala and Seattle-based artist Victoria Haven create new site-specific works for the exhibition: Grzymala's durational piece creates a densely crosshatched maelstrom blizzard of black, in contrast to Haven's minimalist and geometrical abstractions; their delicate compositions worked out and painstakingly painted in advance.

Curatorial Statement

"In today's expanded field of contemporary art, drawing still retains its traditional associations with two intrinsic characteristics – line and movement. In this exhibition, each work is distinguished by the implementation of line as a physical entity, which is freed from any obligations to represent the outside world. Indeed, drawing could be regarded as much an intellectual proposition as it is a descriptive exercise, and in 'Line' we find each artist employing line to articulate an idea or a concept. Avoiding a fixed substrate such as paper, lines are applied directly to the gallery walls, onto the floor; they extend into three dimensions, and into the atmosphere, via sound. The lines we see are often the residue of an action, or the trigger for unfolding events, and their transitory constitution apes the erasable line of pencil, and the inevitable residue it leaves in its wake."

Mary Doyle and Kate Macfarlane, Directors of Drawing Room

About Drawing Room

As the only public and non-profit gallery in the UK and Europe dedicated to contemporary drawing, Drawing Room provides a unique resource for the promotion of drawing, its practice, theory and methodology. It was established in 2002 by its three co-founders Mary Doyle, Kate Macfarlane and Katharine Stout, and delivers publications and an ambitious international programme of solo and group exhibitions, many of which tour to galleries and museums throughout the UK and beyond. It incorporates Outset Study, a free, open access research hub that includes a drawing library, study area and a programme of events and displays. On 16 January 2016 Drawing Room opens 'Pyramid Selling', a solo show by Mick Peter, in its new location - Unit 8, Rich Estate, 46 Willow Walk, Bermondsey, London SE1 5SF.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Sol LeWitt and Richard Long, as well as those of significant British sculptors from Anish Kapoor and Tony Cragg to a younger generation led by Ryan Gander and Haroon Mirza. With two exhibition spaces in London, one in Milan and a fourth to open under the High Line in New York, Lisson Gallery supports and develops artists globally, including Marina Abramovic, Allora and Calzadilla, Ai Weiwei, Gerard Byrne, Liu Xiaodong, Tatsuo Miyajima, Rashid Rana, Pedro Reyes and Santiago Sierra.

Exhibition Facts

Opening Hours Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 11am-5pm

Location 52 Bell Street, London, NW1 5BU

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