



From top:

Alice Theobald

"Weddings and Babies"

Installation view at Pilar Corrias
Gallery, London (2017)

Courtesy of the Artist and Pilar
Corrias Gallery, London

Photography by

Damian Griffiths

Ian Wallace

Installation view at Greta Meert

Gallery, Brussels (2017)

Courtesy of the Artist and

Greta Meert Gallery, Brussels

Lawrence Carroll

Untitled (2016)

Courtesy of the Artist and

Buchmann Galerie, Berlin

Photography by Roman März

Alice Theobald Ian Wallace

Pilar Corrias / London

"Wedding and Babies," Alice Theobald's second solo exhibition at Pilar Corrias, took me a while to grasp, and to digest. Perhaps I've reached an age when such a title resonates with my own situation enough for me to be skeptical about it.

White vinyl lettering on the front window, *Titled* (2017), proclaims the show's title in pop graphics — a forewarning of the complicity required to fully experience the exhibition. *Untitled (Love and Patience)* (2016) broadcasts passersby from the street into the gallery using a baby monitor, immediately challenging the condition of viewership by introducing the frenetic rhythm of the outside. Pillowcases and sandbags barricade the entry space, blocking one's view and forcing confused visitors toward a space of contrived intimacy at the rear of the gallery. Issues of war and domesticity, of public and private, are drawn together here, signaling the performance of violence within the privacy of the home. Three anthropomorphic sculptures, *I don't like your tone*, *Second Best* and *Corner Bath* (all 2017), positioned at different heights and illuminated by theatrical lighting from below, project enlarged shadows of scripted dialogues and drawings. Haunted by their own transfiguration, these works reveal the moments before and after parenthood, while connoting a sudden change in couple dynamics. I realize I have entered a meta-space, inadvertently becoming part of a mise-en-scène in which viewers are transformed into impromptu actors.

A 3-D film, titled *The Next Step* (2016) and displayed as part of an installation on the lower floor, includes a scene of two men walking through a park, one pushing a pram and the other walking a dog. That their conversation never coincides reminds us of the importance of language, while our technological gaze further contaminates the ordinary tone of their actions. I am unsettled and wonder what part I might be playing in this scene.

by Attilia Fattori Franchini

Ian Wallace

Greta Meert / Brussels

In 2008, the exhibition "Un Coup de Dés: Writing Turned Image. An Alphabet of Pensive Language," at the Generali Foundation in Vienna, brought together sixteen artists, including Ian Wallace, around Stéphane Mallarmé's famous poem. Wallace returned to the topic in 2011 for the Biennale de Montréal, with works such as *La Table III*, *Les feuilles répandues*, *L'ébauche* and *La tentative*, now on display at Greta Meert. These white canvases, incorporating a single geometric color field, also include a picture of the artist's worktable with a copy of *Un coup de dés* on it. They are perfect examples of *mise en abyme*, with Wallace turning a photograph of the working process into the artwork itself.

According to Wallace, Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* (A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance) has been a source of inspiration since the early 1970s — that is, since Marcel Broodthaers offered his own pictorial interpretation of the text. In *MACBA Interior IV* (2009) and *MACBA Exterior I and II* (2009), Wallace demonstrates his understanding of the aesthetic as well as the socio-cultural implications of the poem (it is about a shipwreck, that of tradition). These works all display huge photographs of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona with a large vertical stripe of paint hiding part of the left-hand side. Monochrome canvases from 1967, recreated by Wallace in 2009, are displayed alongside. Both Richard Meier's architecture and Wallace's monochrome paintings embody a turning point in the history of the arts — a form of radical modernity that echoes Mallarmé's quest to renew poetry at the very end of the nineteenth century. It is no accident that, for *MACBA Interior IV*, Wallace used a picture of one of Lawrence Weiner's *Statements* painted on the wall. It builds a 130-year link between two successful attempts to reshape language, poetry and the arts.

by Pierre-Yves Desaiwe

Lawrence Carroll

Buchmann / Berlin

"Under the Blue," the third exhibition by American artist Lawrence Carroll at Buchmann Galerie, is a rather laid-back affair. The smaller works are dabs of paint on newspaper, as if lifted from the studio floor. The larger pieces are thoroughly worked surfaces: less spontaneity, more gravity. Yet these days, one questions how such objects still claim relevance in an age when hectic media cycles sputter forth ever more warped shades of truth.

First of all, they do so through their silence. The two main pieces in the show, both untitled and dated 2003, are large, solemn, monumental paintings bearing the worn-out appearance of second-hand appliances: abstract, modernist, minimal, yet built upon near-tangible artistic decisions. Secondly, they convey presence. Their apparent depth derives from surfaces ceaselessly overlaid with spare strips of canvas, as if the artist had previously bored into his paintings in search of a hidden motif behind the picture plane and, on discovering it, decided to patch the rest up again. The motif is revealed as a milky cyan square in the upper-left corner — not painted on the canvas but rather residing in a hole cut out of the canvas: a painting within a painting, a window onto a blue sky. The artist worked these pieces for thirteen years, lugging them from one studio to the next, an act that undoubtedly helped contribute the traces that lend them their aged and dignified appearance. In their dialogue with the smaller newspaper pieces, these works offer an alternative glimpse of extemporality. This is a good thing, and a rare find.

by Andreas Schlaegel