

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

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PARIS

## "The Third Mind"

PALAIS DE TOKYO

Recent exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo have made it their task to reveal marginalized or undervalued historical figures. Ugo Rondinone's selection of thirty-one artists for his exhibition "The Third Mind" continued this program of rediscovery, mingling contemporary and historic works in a series of visual dialogues made by groupings of works.

Of the thirteen such conversations comprising the exhibition, several stood out. The proto-Minimalist artist Ronald Bladen was described by James Meyer in this magazine in 1999 as a "somewhat obscure figure"—this certainly remains the case in Europe. His unforgettable *Cathedral Evening*, 1971, a black portal with a sheer jutting architrave, dominated the largest room in the exhibition and created a dynamic severity around which Nancy Grossman's frighteningly cool leather-masked heads and Cady Noland's silk screen—on-aluminum cutouts of images from the American media were austere positioned. The effect was to recontextualize a Minimalist sculpture both historically and erotically—although what this really means is a little harder to say. Similarly striking and perplexing was the display of works by Valentin Carron, Jay DeFeo, and Martin Boyce. Carron's large, wall-mounted crucifixes are made from fiber resin designed to imitate wood, each appearing incredibly heavy and charged with meaning, yet void of any direct religious significance. Four of these mingled with DeFeo's jagged monochrome paintings, creating a gothic atmosphere completed by Boyce's spiderweb of neon lights, which hung from the ceiling (*When Now Is Night [Web]*, 1999).

Even when the combinations were not suggestive of a "third mind," the affinities elected by Rondinone were memorable. Particularly successful was the combination of Robert Gober's enigmatic wall-mounted sinks, waxy architectural drawings by Toba Khedoori, and *Troubled*, 1999, a small pile of wood and rubbish by Laurie Parsons. A large mural of repeated screen-printed posters by Josh Smith (*Untitled*, 2007) stood at the entrance alongside Sarah Lucas's *Car Park*, 1997, an old Renault with its window smashed, surrounded by large photographs of the interiors of car parks in Islington, London. Lucas's anomie seemed tongue-tied alongside Smith's combination of the anonymous Warholian multiple with the soulful expressionism of the handmade print. Elsewhere the company was mixed in a more manipulative, perhaps misleading way. A room with sculptures by Lee Bontecou and Hans Josephsohn and collages by Hugo Markl elicited a certain regret: Revivals are only lasting if there is sufficient historical context. The Prussian-born Swiss sculptor Josephsohn, whose figurative sculptures are informed by traditional ideas of style and meaning, seemed used simply for exotic chic in this contemporary setting.

The theme of dialogue was wittily undermined by the work at the heart of the exhibition, a tremendous installation of twenty-three of Andy Warhol's Screen Tests. These are essays in narcissism, human frailty, and the inability of most individuals to stand up for too long to silent scrutiny. Trisha Donnelly's nearby sound work, *Dark Wind*,



View of "The Third Mind," 2007. Left to right: Jay DeFeo, *Hawk Moon #2*, 1983-85; Valentin Carron, *Fosbury Flop*, 2006; Valentin Carron, *Après de Musset*, 2006; Hanging: Martin Boyce, *When Now Is Night (Web)*, 1999.

life-size photographs of his own body were no competition for Warhol but were respectfully mute, as if in attendance. That this was the most successful grouping was due to the fact that the dialogue was not one that could be transcribed or represented: As the wall-mounted text for Donnelly's work observed, these "mysterious works will not delight visitors looking for meaning."

—John-Paul Stonard