

Prophet

Georgie Hopton, Esteban Igartua
& Cornelia Parker

Gallery 1

July 12 - September 14

Tuesday - Sunday 11am - 6pm

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The narrative for our future is everywhere; conveyed in headlines and research findings. So much conflicting information propelled into media authority, born by experts with a range of agendas so vast that little reliable prophesy can be extracted.

Our ability to weave belief systems out of this web of information is impressive. We pick through the various opinions and select that which supports our own values. We then describe and discuss our views and priorities. In this way we are all having a stab at anticipating the future.

Prophet brings together the work of three artists: Esteban Igartua, originally from Lima in Peru, now based in Bristol; Georgie Hopton based in London and upstate New York, and Cornelia Parker who lives and works in London. The works selected for this show draw us into a world, both real and imagined, which in very different ways, reflects the anxieties that are beginning to characterise the first part of the 21st Century. Seen through the various perspectives and experiences of these artists, the relationship between the works, shown together for the first time, draws the shape of a future, informed heavily by the past.



Above images: *Chomskian Abstract*, (2007) courtesy of the Artist Cornelia Parker and Frith Street Gallery, London.

Cornelia Parker's, *Chomskian Abstract*, presents the artist's interview with the renowned American linguist, philosopher, author and political activist Noam Chomsky. This is a quiet exchange between artist and the great writer, a man whose radical position has inspired and influenced so many.

The work is an intimate portrait of Chomsky: the camera fixes on the detail of his face and scrutinises his expressions, as he listens to the questions, he thoughtfully responds. He addresses the failings of government, corporations and the media to take responsibility for the ecology of our planet. He urges us to change our lifestyles and bring about socio-economic change. Though Parker fears that the planet may not be able to sustain human life by the end of this century, her work prompts reflection on our collective responsibilities and possible solutions. The work, made in 2007 was originally commissioned by Ikon, Birmingham in partnership with the 8th Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates.

Georgie Hopton's series of works take their starting point from the tradition of still life. In her use of painting, photography and sculpture, each medium informs the other; photographs relate to the painting and the paintings are informed by the sculpture and so forth. The sculptures are rendered out of some sort of heavy material; clay, or pulped paper, we know not quite what. It is a material that needs taming, shaping, coaxing in order to make it form the leaves and petals.

The delicacy of the flowers in both the paintings, but particularly the sculptures, is lost, but delicacy is not the point. These objects are 'flower-like', perched atop polished plinths. The contrast of the beautiful clumsiness and the classical plinth draws us to focus on the possibly, more sober intentions: are Hopton's collection of photographs, sculptures and paintings – the latter more object-like than paint on canvas – a collection of flowers, or an archival record? Are we to imagine that there might come a time when our climate will not remember how to nurture the real thing? Shall we, in the future, know the vibrancy of plant life only through renderings achieved through the inaccuracies and approximations of memory?



Esteban Igartua's detailed, laboured drawings and exquisite jewel-like paintings describe a world, perhaps of the future or maybe the past. These works bring to mind a sort of purgatory, a sense of endless waiting, the impossibility of escape. The clusters of human beings surviving on waste ground and bare hillsides are despairing. The compositions of these works are classical, yet refer to a modern scarred and torn world, a place where all human intelligence is gathered just to enable survival.

The skill in the draftsmanship is absorbing, and the detail of these tiny paintings ensures that the viewer misses nothing of the features and surfaces of each face and limb. The scenes, though produced entirely from the artist's imagination, are commonly familiar, tenderly crafted; there is an ambivalence between horror and the human relationships that are clearly formed between the characters that dwell, sometimes only half drawn, in Igartua's works.

In these works, where the intense pencil drawn image hovers in the centre of an otherwise empty sheet of paper, we are made aware of the artist's hand, the decisions that are made to start and then stop. The heads and features of the characters, either alone, or in such close proximity to one another that they might be sharing the same as yet, un-drawn body, are miniature, perhaps they come from another world, a world of the small.

Georgie Hopton graduated from St Martins School of Art in 1989. Solo exhibitions have included *Laughed - I Could Have Cried* at Milton Keynes Gallery, which travelled to Firstsite, Colchester, 2003. Hopton was nominated for the Maxmara Art Prize for Women. She has recently undertaken a solo exhibition *Artists' House* at Roche Court, New Art Centre. Hopton's work is represented by New Art Centre, Roche Court.

Above images: *Flowers in a Bag (red, green, blue) & Pink Roses in a Blue Bag*, courtesy of the Artist Georgie Hopton.



Cornelia Parker is represented by Frith Street Gallery (London); D'Amelio Terras (New York), Guy Bartschi (Geneva), and Galeria Carles Tache (Barcelona). She was nominated for the Turner Prize in 1999. In the last three years, she has had solo exhibitions at Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin, Italy, ICA, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Aspen Museum of Art, Colorado, Chicago Arts Club and the ICA, Boston. Recent group exhibitions include *Days Like These*, Tate Britain, *The Disembodied Spirit*, Bowdoin Museum of Art (touring to other museums in the US). Parker's work is represented in many international collections including The Arts Council of England, Tate Gallery, London and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Esteban Igartua trained at Universidad Catolica, Lima in Peru, Slade School of Art and Byam Shaw School of Art, London. He was selected for New Contemporaries 2003. He has most recently shown at Galleria Leme, San Paulo in the group show, *10° 00 S / 76° 00 W*.

Cover Image: *Meeting*, courtesy of the Artist Esteban Igartua.

Image: *Couple*, courtesy of the Artist Esteban Igartua.



Frith Street Gallery

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