

Fowler, Martin (2016) Still future III. [Show/Exhibition] In: Hidden Door Festival, 27 May - 4 June 2016, Edinburgh, Scotland. (Unpublished)

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STILL FUTURE WHO ARE STILL FUTURE?

The Still Future Group are a collection of visual artists that are strung together because of a variety of things but the defining factor is place. That place is Edinburgh.

Within the culture of art Edinburgh stands in the shadow of Glasgow – a place, we are told, of miracles. Despite the glamour of Glasgow, Edinburgh does not define itself in direct distinction but only acknowledges that distinctions themselves are arbitrary and even, at times, pointless.

Still Future Group could not care less. Edinburgh just happened to be the place, but what's more important is that there is a meaningful relationship between people who have a desire to create something beautiful, something challenging, something that is vital to society and culture in Britain and the world today.

These artists are from a time and a place that is theirs and it's a time and a place that's marked by ideas of past, present and future. Growing up across the sixties and seventies in Britain was a time of shifting notions that can loosely be described as post-war modernism. These formative years were a time when the linear model of progress seemed to be a given. There was the idea that culture moved headlong into the future in a thrusting motion, discarding its predecessors as the next wave came along. Innovation was a standard and the shock of the new was always just around the next bend. Tomorrow was a delicious mystery filled with wonder and speculation, dangerous maybe but each new generation forged new ideas, new values.

However some time during the eighties this trajectory began to falter and the confidence in the notion that things were upward and onward became shaky. Maybe the idea was an ideological figment in the first place.

Today a few decades later this has become a quaint subject for numerous TV programmes as the belief of progress has shifted and been undermined by global warming and other man-made ecological disasters, by the re-emergence of religious fundamentalisms, by global financial meltdowns, and by national and racial divisions that are causing frictions the world over. The future has never looked so bleak when not so long ago it was secure.

Since the rise of globalisation and the internet with its networks and connectivity, culture has experienced a slow down, a flatness, a plateau where everything seems accessible and nothing seems precious or valued. Once cultures took time to grow and develop then when ready burst through into full bloom. As a youth buying vinyl records was a glorious indulgence in something that took time and energy to get. It was worth it, it was valued for a long time. Making a trip to the centre of your city to see an exhibition, buying the postcard or even the catalogue was almost a religious experience, a secular pilgrimage. Somehow clicking on a mouse and seeing it on a screen during a lunch break is a bit throwaway or downloading a whole catalogue of mp3s and then not finding the time to listen to them or pour over the album cover just does not contain the same rush into the unknown. The danger is gone.

It's not how do we regain this notion of the future but how do we tackle these problems and make it vital again? Maybe there are differing ways to see things around us. Some of these are critical, some are hopeful and romantic, some take leaps into the dark and polemical, some are a drag on the rapaciousness of neoliberal capitalism, and some are just downright failures. Some are not. The Still Future Group are a bunch of disparate artists who have been informed by a place and have connections with each other that overlap and intersect. Who knows exactly what they were, what they are now and what they will be in the coming years but whatever they are, they are trying to do things.



STILL FUTURE III
@ HIDDEN DOOR
27 May - 7th June

Still Future Group 2016

Still Future III is the third exhibition and forum for a group of artists who were brought together by chance in Edinburgh. Charged by a need to discuss the contemporary world through their art they formed a group in order to create exhibitions that fostered debate and dialogue across a variety of disciplines.

Still Future is driven by a core group of artists, however, for our exhibition at Hidden Door we have extended an invitation to other artists who share our vision.

Sometimes beautiful, sometimes difficult, sometimes funny and sometimes tragic the artwork displays an engagement with our times and a compulsion to converse in an artistic forum.

Their conversation is not just about now but also about how the past made the now, how the present will make the future and how our ideas of the future revisits the past.

Overlapping a time when British ART Show 8 comes to Edinburgh in February Still Future III offers an opportunity to see a broader view of contemporary art and artists that originated from Scotland.

Still Future presents:

- Katarina Corbet
- Otto Berchem
- Ingrid Berthon-Moine
- Chad McCail
- Alberta Whittle
- Janie Nicoll
- Robert Montgomery
- David Fryer
- Billy MacCall
- Andrew Smith
- John Ayscough
- Gordon Dalton

STILL III FUTURE



Photo credit: Mike Scott