



10 BACKWARDS 1999
PHOTO CREDIT BLAST THEORY.

Blast Theory
artists' group
based in London
since 1991.

CURRENT + FUTURE PROJECTS

- 2003 *Uncle Roy All Around You*
ICA, London
- 2002 *Can You See Me Now?*
International Festival for Art & Technology, Rome
Mousonturm, Frankfurt, Germany; i-camp, Munich,
Germany
- 2001 b.tv Festival 2001, Sheffield, UK
- 2002 *An Explicit Volume*
Warwick Arts Centre, Warwick, UK; Tramway,
Glasgow, Scotland
- 2001 OctoberFest, in association with Battersea Arts
Centre, London, UK
- 2001 *Viewfinder*
Liste 2001, Basel, Switzerland
- 2002 *Desert Rain*
Typografie, Prague; Cornerhouse, Middlesborough, UK
- 2001 Las Palmas, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 2000 ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany; Riverside Studios,
London, UK
- Industrial Museum, Bristol, UK; Tramway, Glasgow,
Scotland
- KTH, Stockholm, Sweden;
- Digital Summer, Manchester, UK
- 1999 Premiered at Now 99, Nottingham, UK

SELECTED PREVIOUS WORK

- 1999 *Route 12:36*. Commissioned by South London Gallery.
An interactive artwork on two London bus routes.
- 1998 Commission for the Architecture Foundation, London.
Interactive sound piece made for local residents to
explore ideas about urban regeneration.
- 1998 *Kidnap*. Performance event including web broadcast.
Two members of the public were picked at random
from a pool of entrants, kidnapped for 48 hours
and held in a secret location.
- 1998 *Atomic*. Commissioned by CASCO, Utrecht. Two
way, live questionnaires held in the anonymity of
video linked booths.
- 1997 *Safehouse*. Installation, Kunsterhaus Bethanien.
Visitors interviewed about to what extent Kidnap
infiltrates our lives - culturally, politically, fictionally.
- 1997 *Kidnap Blipvert*. 45-second film for cinemas. Shown
in independent cinemas in England, France, Germany
and Canada as an advertisement project prior to
main cinema features.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

- 2002 'Intimate Technologies, Dangerous Zones', Banff New
Media Institute; 'Theatres of Life', Performance
Studies Conference, New York; 'Edrom-Electronic
Stage', Tempodrom, Berlin
- 2001 'Hot Docs Documentary Film Festival', Toronto;
'Virtuosity', Institute of Contemporary Art, London;
Banff Television Conference; Cairo International
Festival of Theatre; Mediamatic, Amsterdam
- 2000 'Interactive Screen', Banff New Media Institute,
Canada; Alchemy Masterclass, Powerhouse, Brisbane;
Performance Space, Sydney; 'Future Moves Three',
DEAF (Dutch Electronic Arts Festival), Rotterdam;
Station Arts Electroniques, Rennes, France
- 2002 Residencies
Banff New Media Institute, supported by an Arts
Council of England International Fellowship Award
- 1997 Kunsterhaus Bethanien, Berlin
- 1995 Institute of Contemporary Art, London
- 1994 Arnolfini, Bristol
- RESIDENCIES
- 2002 Banff New Media Institute, supported by an Arts
Council of England International Fellowship Award
- 1997 Kunsterhaus Bethanien, Berlin
- 1995 Institute of Contemporary Art, London
- 1994 Arnolfini, Bristol
- AWARDS
- 2001 International Media Art Award, ZKM, Karlsruhe,
shortlisted for *Kidnap*
Transmediale Awards, Berlin, Honorary Mention for
Desert Rain
Breakthrough Award for Innovation; Arts Council of
England, shortlisted
- 2000 Interactive Arts BAFTA Award, shortlisted for *Desert
Rain*

CHECKLIST OF WORKS

TRUCOLD 2002
DVD duration 14 minutes
courtesy Blast Theory, London



GLENN BROWN

HEART & SOUL 1999 OIL ON PANEL. FRONT PAGE IMAGE: LIFE WITHOUT COMEDY 2001 OIL ON PANEL

Originality is a problem, it always has been. For Glenn Brown originality, or its impossibility, is a fertile territory in which to work. None of Brown's images are original, they all visually demonstrate their primary source and its mutation, though his paintings, sculptures and photographs seem to speak of themselves as works in their own right. They are extraordinary things, the oil paintings with their immaculately crafted finish, the sculptures thick with the impasto of oil paint and the photographs either a blur of a presumed video still or frozen in the icy majesty of black and white. What reveals them as works with origins elsewhere is their diversity. The personal

GLENN BROWN

STEPHEN HEPWORTH

vocabulary of image and style which we recognise as that of an individual artist is displaced by the incongruous mix that Brown chooses to create.

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Portraiture is prominent in the body of work that Brown has made over the last decade. Many of these are derived from the works of the British artist Frank Auerbach, whose portraits of a small number of sitters are known for their long gestation yet apparent spontaneous quality as indicated by their thick gestural appearance. Brown's relationship to his source material is complex. He chooses to work from reproductions found in catalogues, books or postcards, often collecting many images of the same painting. They are often paintings that he likes, and has developed a relationship with, and he begins to develop an aspect or a character from within them, from the armature that the drawing provides, or perhaps the skeleton on which to hang fresh pigment or grow new flesh. As Brown works he strips away the appearance and dominant identity of the work, allowing what he talks of as the ghosts that inhabit a painting to be seen, the aspects of character that have perhaps become lost

under the gloop of the paint. Focusing on these he edits: removing elements, cropping and altering scale, stretching the dimensions of the original, sampling from the palette of specific works by other artists. Brown recognises the fragility of these new identities, painted through the construction of a shifting focus. These embryonic individuals are like wisps of paper caught in the wind, often appearing like masks evaporating at their edges. The reasserted paint brushstrokes blur into a non space. Across the surface, marks which appear absolute dissolve with trompe l'oil trickery. As paintings they no longer show the trace of marks from which they are constructed. Instead there is a glossy surface more akin to that of a photograph.

Brown's sculptures similarly sit within their own spaces. Vitrined from the outside world they are placed atop wooden display bases topped by perspex boxes, asserting a geometry of framing that is reminiscent of Francis Bacon's pictorial space frames. Mutant in form, they could be the free-standing actualisation of Auerbach's vision. Crude multiple faces appear and disappear, gashes suggest mouths, protrusions are noses, and hollows – eyes. The palette is derived from a sickly eighteenth-century Fragonard scene or a vivid twentieth-century Kirchner portrait; they are pathetic in their self-importance. Like an obese Giacometti they sit suffocating, the heroic stifled by the weight of paint.

The bringing together of oppositional or inappropriate elements and the evocation of art historical figures are constants in the work of Brown, part of his mapping out of territory, or a specific space. Often achieved through the use of humour, his work undermines the portentous and cherishes the lowly. Brown's ongoing series of science fiction paintings elevates commercially produced illustrations for book jackets to the equivalent of grandiose Victorian visionary painting through massive enlargement. This series re-enlivens the youthful excitement that such images first elicited, while also suggesting exhaustion. Stilled with a con-

trolled palette or saturated to the point of decay, the titles signify barrenness of faith and a desire to decorate the void that remains. Titling is an important part of Brown's work, some are culled from pop songs or films, others refer to paintings or the personal history of an artist. They fuse together figures from different worlds. This is not a gratuitous act of cut and paste, but a further way of giving voice to the newly developed identity of the work, to give voice to an emotional need.

In his exhibitions Brown juxtaposes works creating imagined stories rather than exploring more formal concerns. The space between a Fragonard and an Auerbach may be a couple of centuries but their interaction is flirtatious, like a momentary encounter in a bar. He chooses how he will inhabit the given space, making it his own, sometimes by painting the walls a colour, changing the lighting, boarding windows and closing out the world of others. Within these altered spaces the characters and vistas he has developed in his imagination and within the refuge of his studio can converse and so gain a further reality.

In his most recent works Brown has started to introduce human features to inanimate objects and body parts, bowls of flowers develop eyes and blowsy roses hint at cleavages, while a re-inverted Georg Baselitz foot develops a plume of phalluses. The sexualisation evident in these works is in contrast to the paintings derived from Auerbach's oeuvre which are often goulsh in appearance, haunted by introspection, embraced by innocence or betrayed by arrogance; while a series of Rembrandt self-portraits as a child appear tragic and afflicted. The humour in these later works appears more determinedly adolescent, in the spirit of the surrealist Salvador Dali who Brown much admires. Naughtiness is a theme that runs throughout Brown's work, a desire to misbehave with the facts of history, play games with value and taste, and question what is truly acceptable.



Glenn Brown born
Northumberland,
England, 1966.
Lives and works in
London, UK.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 Patrick Painter Inc., Los Angeles, USA
- 2000 Domaine de Kerguennec, Bignan, France
- Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin, Germany
- 1999 Patrick Painter Inc., Los Angeles, USA
- Jerwood Gallery, London, UK
- 1998 Patrick Painter Inc., Los Angeles, USA
- 1997 Galerie Ghislane Hussonot, Paris, France
- 1996 Queens Hall Art Centre, Hexam, UK
- 1995 Karsten Schubert Gallery, London, UK

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 Azerty, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
- 2000 *Hypermental*, Kunsthau Zurich, Switzerland
- Turner Prize, Tate Britain, London, UK
- The British Art Show*, and touring, UK
- 1999 *Examining Pictures*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, UK
- 1998 *Secret Victorians*, Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, UK
- Abstract Painting: Once Removed*, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas, USA
- 1997 *Sensation*, Royal Academy, London
- Treasure Island*, Fundacao Calouste Gulbenkian, Minneapolis, USA
- 1996 *Brilliant*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Matthew Collings, 'Higher Being Command', *Modern Painters*, Summer 1999, pp 58-64
- Jennifer Higgie, 'Review', *Frieze*, no. 47, 1999, pp 98-99
- Mary Horlock, 'Glenn Brown', *Turner Prize*, exhibition catalogue, Tate Britain, London, 2000
- Ian Hunt, *Glenn Brown*, Jerwood Gallery, London, 1999
- Sarah Kent, 'Artificial Intelligence', *Time Out*, 25 Oct. 2000, pp 20-21
- Philip King, *Glenn Brown*, Queens Hall/Karsten Schubert, London, 1996
- Terry R. Myers, *Glenn Brown's New(Re)Order*, Domaine de Kerguennec, Bignan, France, 2000
- Keith Patrick, 'Formal Dress', *Contemporary Visual Arts*, Winter 1999, pp 46 - 51
- Joelle Rondi, 'Review: Domaine de Kerguennec', *Artpress*, Oct. 2000
- Mark Sladen, 'The Day the World turned Auerbach', *Art/Text*, Feb. 1999

CHECKLIST OF WORKS

- THE MARQUESS OF BREADALBANE
2000
oil on wood panel oval 96 x 78 cm
collection: Rachel and Jean-Pierre Lehmann, New York
- HEART & SOUL 1999
oil on wood, 102.50 x 84cm
private collection London
- BÖCKLIN'S TOMB (AFTER CHRIS FOSS)
1998
oil on canvas, 221 x 330 cm
private collection: Hans-Joachim Sander, Darmstadt
- Works courtesy the artist, Patrick Painter Inc., Santa Monica, and Max Hetzler, Berlin



1/4 TON BRIDGE, 1997. 1/4 TON BRIDGE IS AN ENGINEERED ARCH BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED OF MECCANO AND ERECTOR PARTS. IT IS CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING 500 POUNDS. THE THIN DIAGONAL STRUTS ATTACHING THE DECK TO THE ARCH ACTUALLY TRANFER THE CONSIDERABLE LOAD TO THE ARCH AND PREVENTS THE SPAN FROM COLLAPSING, SHOWN HERE LOADED WITH TEN 50 POUND BAGS OF FERTILIZER.

CHRIS BURDEN