



ABOVE FROM TOP

Luciano Bonomi, *The Black Arrow*, 2007
collage on card, 10 x 15 cm

Will Maclean, *Barque de Pêche*, 2012
printed collage, image size 9 x 14 cm,
paper size 30 x 21 cm, edition of 6

Graeme Williams, *Mandela Park
Township Edenville South Africa*, 2011
digital print, 19.5 x 27 cm, edition of 10

The previous time you heard from ART FIRST was in anticipation of the London Art Fair (21st–26th January), when we gave you details of work by the four artists to be presented: **Simon Lewty**, **Kate McCrickard**, **Jack Milroy** and **Donald Teskey**. The Fair was a great, energising occasion to start the year—a festival of sorts, where a healthy gathering of the old and the new members of the British art world, with institutional directors, curators, critics and collectors, all coming by to catch up and to look at the stand en route to exploring the entire Fair. Finding new homes for works is always a pleasure, but so is making new connections and planning new collaborative exhibitions, which is exactly what we did.

Four months later, ART FIRST should now be hosting a solo stand for **Simon Lewty** at **DRAW**, the elegant and well established French fair purely for drawings. It was inaugurated in London in 2019 at Saatchi Gallery but like everything else—fairs, exhibitions, concerts, plays, etc—destined for these months of lockdown for Covid19, it has had to be postponed. We await a firm date for its autumnal manifestation and we look forward to inviting you as soon as the date is announced.

Artist support pledge

In the meantime the whole art world has gone online, streaming virtual exhibitions, art fairs, auctions and talks. Much charitable fund raising is taking place too, and there is one initiative which seems to be making both sides very happy: to support artists suddenly stripped of all forms of income, from planned exhibitions and residencies to teaching, installation work and so on, the artist **Matthew Burroughs** had the brainwave of a scheme called the **#artistsupportpledge**, using Instagram as a direct selling vehicle for artists. They are invited to post works for sale at the uniform price of £200 (or less) plus postage. Anyone seeing the image on Instagram can make contact and purchase the work directly from the artist. Not only has this meant that great bargains are to be had (many of the pieces are way above £200 in value), but it has generated much needed cash flow and a real spirit of support and discovery. Once an artist sells five works he or she pledges to purchase a work by a fellow artist . . . and so it goes. The scheme continues to grow. Google **#matthewburroughsstudio** and you will find thousands of tempting posts with news updates and more.

ART FIRST artists are participating, some of them directly on Instagram, but others who do not 'do' social media have asked me to manage their Instagram posts for them. On request, I can also send you jpegs of images





Margaret Hunter
Seated Figure, 2014 pencil,
ink and gouache, 14.5 x 10.5 cm

Alex Lowery
Portland 150, 2020
oil on canvas, 60 x 130 cm
West Bay 312, 2020
oil on canvas, 40 x 90 cm

not yet posted or posted but still available if you are non instagrammers. Please do contact me if you are interested. It is a very good way to begin to know an artist's work and to have a small treasure that can come everywhere with you, easy to place, wherever you live.

Some current examples of works available for a mere £200 on the scheme are shown here. Details of the artists' practices, collections they are in, exhibition histories and publications, can be found on our website at: www.artfirst.co.uk/gallery_artists.html

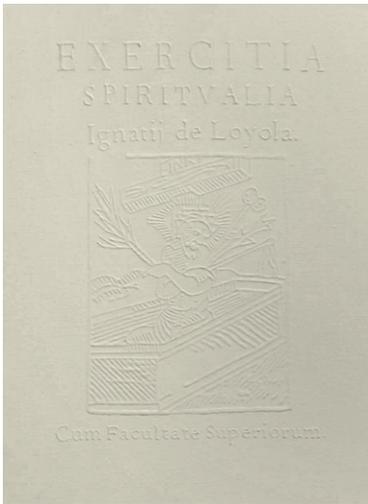
Exhibition news

Alex Lowery and **Simon Morley** both have current exhibitions engulfed by Covid19. Despite the disappointment and 'non visibility', online publications and installation views are available and you can find them on the artists' minisites within the ART FIRST website.

Alex Lowery

Alex Lowery's exhibition, *Land Use*, opened in March at Sladers Yard Gallery in West Bay, Dorset, where it remains, behind closed doors. Here are two of his elegant, silent modernist paintings to give you a glimpse. There is much more in the catalogue, including a measured, informative accompanying essay at: www.artfirst.co.uk/alex_lowery/land-use.pdf





Simon Morley

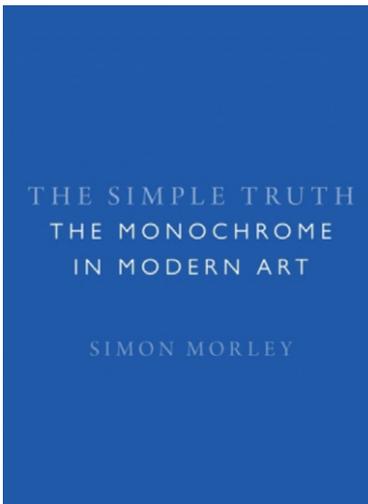
Simon Morley's exhibition, *Ex Libris*, took place from 15th November–15th March, 2019, at the rarified Bibliothek Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt. Shown here is one of his series of the Jesuit volumes which engaged him, where the cover is depicted in monochrome.

The exhibition was then scheduled to open in Cologne on 21st May–28th June. Its extensive catalogue, with texts in both German and English, can be seen on ART FIRST's website at:

www.artfirst.co.uk/simon_morley/ex-libris-frankfurt.pdf

Morley's new book, *The Simple Truth, The Monochrome in Modern Art*, (Reaction Publishers, London) was scheduled to launch in June but is currently postponed, though it will be well worth the wait.

In this illuminating book Simon Morley unpacks the meanings of the monochrome as it developed internationally over the twentieth century to today. In doing so he explores more general questions such as how artists have understood what they make, how critics variously interpret it and how art is encountered by viewers. (The University of Chicago Press)



Simon Morley is currently Associate Professor of Fine Art at Dankook University, Republic of Korea, and is the author of *Writing on the Wall: Word and Image in Modern Art* (2003) and *Seven Keys to Modern Art* (2019), and editor of *The Sublime* (Documents of Contemporary Art) (2010). He has exhibited with ART FIRST in London since 2007.



ABOVE FROM TOP

Exercitia Spirituality (Ignatius of Loyola), 2019, acrylic on canvas, 45.5 × 38 cm

Front cover of *The Simple Truth, The Monochrome in Modern Art*

Ex Libris, installation view, Bibliothek Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt





Bridget Macdonald

Bridget Macdonald's exhibition, *Another Country, Paintings and Drawings* took place in the Courtyard, Hereford (10th January–15th February, 2020). Alongside drawings and paintings from her residency in Rumania's deep and ancient countryside, she exhibited works completed in her Malvern surroundings and in the Isle of Wight, where she grew up and returns regularly. A small online catalogue hints at the sheer beauty of her work, suffused by a pastoral ideal but with references to current realities and an acute sense of place. Please contact ART FIRST for more information about this landmark, very affecting and distinctive exhibition.

www.artfirst.co.uk/bridget_macdonald/another-country.html

ABOVE

Bridget Macdonald
Another Country, Paintings and Drawings
at the Courtyard Gallery, Hereford

RIGHT

Olga and Costica, Vaeni, Romania, 2019
charcoal on paper, 81 x 122 cm



BELOW L to R

Summer Cattle
oil on linen, 102 x 127 cm

Crows in The September Orchard, 2019
oil on linen, 76 x 102 cm





Partou Zia

Green Breath, 2006

oil on canvas, 152 x 163 cm

Fenced Horizons, 2005

oil on canvas, 150 x 170 cm



Partou Zia

Recently we received a welcome piece of uplifting news. **Arts Council England** has decided to include two key paintings by Partou Zia (1958–2008) in its collection.

Green Breath had only recently been exhibited in Falmouth Art Gallery, where Partou completed her PhD at Falmouth University. Falmouth Art Gallery featured a far reaching exhibition, *The World as Yet Unseen: Women Artists in Conversation with Partou Zia* (6th April–15th June 2019) which I curated with Penny Florence, Professor Emerita, Slade School of Fine Art. There is a catalogue (sold out but visible online), and installation views on our website at:

www.artfirst.co.uk/ebooks/partou-zia/the-world-as-yet-unseen/

The second work they selected, *Fenced Horizons*, is slightly earlier, from a time before she was diagnosed with the cancer that took her life, and only two years after her fascinating exhibition at Tate St Ives, *Entering the Visionary Zone*.

Refreshed web site

Please enjoy a visit to ART FIRST's refreshed website, where you will find much archival material, online catalogues, newsletters, and some videos. www.artfirst.co.uk

I hope you are all in good health and are finding time to enjoy the uplifting arts programmes and events being streamed by our museums and galleries, theatres, concert halls, film festivals, auction houses, you name it.

Keep safe and alert till we meet again, hopefully in the autumn.

ART FIRST

15 St Mary's Walk, London SE11 4UA

Clare Cooper, clare@artfirst.co.uk

+44 (0)7769 950 884

info@artfirst.co.uk

www.artfirst.co.uk

