

Reviews

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Wade Guyton and Torbjørn Rødland at Serpentine Galleries

CULTURE ART



★★★★★ - **Catherine Sedgwick**

Exhibitions of art by Wade Guyton and Torbjørn Rødland are on at the Serpentine Galleries from 29th September. Both shows are eclectic and intriguing.

Wade Guyton presents new work *Das New Yorker Atelier, Abridged*, the title representing locations connected with the pieces – Germany and New York – and the influence of *Das Pariser Atelier* and Hans Jakob Oeri. Most of the very large pieces – all unnamed – consist of double panels, and are in fact prints on linen folded and then fed into inkjet printers, creating randomness in the visuals. The folding is utilitarian, because of the printer's limited size, but the two-panel effect appears deliberately uneven, as successful accidents, serendipity from necessity, as if to reflect an order in entropy.

The installation includes camera phone photos of his studio, bitmap detailing, and screenshots of web pages. Some of Guyton's huge works look like colourful expressionist paintings, others copy motifs from ads. There's a certain repetition in the show with echoed shapes like bicycle bars, and one piece that seems to be a magnification of another's detail.

A kind of Warhol for the digital age, Guyton's art is partly tongue-in-cheek as well as a contemplative exploration of the cold rationality of technology – combined with the dominance of mass media – meeting the organic nature of art. Although the collection could be more cohesive, it is an interesting, thought-provoking comment on our culture.

At Serpentine Sackler Gallery, photographer Torbjørn Rødland's first solo exhibit, *The Touch that Made You*, is wild, disturbing and compelling. Consisting of a large number of diverse pieces and one very moody and vibrant repeated conceptual film accompanied by captivating otherworldly music, subject matter includes sex, exploitation and rape, extra-terrestrials, pensive portraiture, the environment, and variations of the marginally repulsive. His creations are imaginative, surreal, and dreamlike but also harsh – they are not restrained. His close-up portraits are vivid.

The Baby is an exquisite shot of an infant holding her chest, reminding of Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus*, except the child has an ET quality. *Bathroom Tiles* is a disconcerting image of feet seemingly covered in ice. *Plate and Spoon*, a picture of food combined with white and gold teeth is viscerally revolting. This exhibit also could be more unified, but whether ethereal, frightening, creepy, or humorous, each photograph is gripping and vibrant, holds interest and stimulates thought.