

Aesthetica

Land, Sea and Air, The New Art Gallery Walsall



Bringing together a diverse group of international artists, **The New Art Gallery Walsall's** summer exhibition delves into the notion of the map, and the different modes, purposes and connotations attached to this inspiring source material. Running until 4 September, *Land, Sea and Air* engages with this culture of cartography, and by extension, themes of borders and territory, through a variety of mediums including painting, drawing, print, video, sculpture and installation.

Comprising work by Frank Bowling, Tiffany Chung, Agnes Denes, Shilpa Gupta, Amar Kanwar, Tania Kovats, and Cornelia Parker, the presentation spans a period of over 40 years; each piece connected by its reflection upon the personal, the poetic and the political. As well as providing a sense of order from a world that is in constant transition, the idea of maps as a support for identity or an engagement with a specific time and place is also approached.

Featured artist Bowling is represented by three of his *Map Paintings* (1967-1971); a sequence of rich, experimental pieces that play with staining and pouring techniques to portray an interest in pure abstraction alongside references to his family and wider cultural origins. Elsewhere, Chung's *installation, remapping history, an autopsy of a battle, an excavation of a man's past, v 3* (2015-16) provides an insight into the effects of warfare and trauma, with a particular focus on the Vietnam War, through an assemblage of drawings in oil and ink on vellum and paper, archival images, photographs, video, audio and text.

Renowned for her transformation of familiar, everyday objects, British artist Parker brings a series of five works, *Meteorite lands on...* (1998), to the exhibition. The pieces take as their starting point the once

familiar A-Z street maps, which are gradually being eclipsed by mobile phones and satellite navigation systems. A pioneer of environmental art, Denes' *Map Projections* will accompany the presentation, and depicts maps of the world, projected onto a variety of forms, using complex mathematical calculations to create distortions of the globe.

Kovats explores humankind's relationship with the world's seas and oceans in her vast installation *All the Sea* (2012 – cont). A poetic work, the piece features over 300 glass bottles assembled onto shelving, bringing together as many of the world's seas as possible into a single place. Gupta's wall drawing *There is no border here* (2005-6) reflects upon the physical, social and psychological borders that define public life and the forces that serve to divide us, while Kanwar's film, *A Season Outside* (1997), considers the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and his commitment to non-violent resistance.

Land, Sea and Air, 27 May – 4 September, The New Art Gallery Walsall.

For more, visit www.thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk.

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Credits

1. Tania Kovats, *All the Sea*, 2012 – ongoing, seawater, glass, cork, oak, (365 bottles), 600 x 278.5 cm.
Installation view: The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh. Courtesy the artist and Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London. Photo: Ruth Clark.

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