

News Release from Milton Keynes Gallery

25 Jan – 2 Mar 2003

Press view Fri 24 Jan 17.00-17.30 Private view 18.00-20.00

Admission free

Sarah Staton: Green – Or How We Missed Modernism Georgie Hopton: Laughed – I Could Have Cried

MK G starts the new year with solo exhibitions from London-based artists Sarah Staton and Georgie Hopton. The two shows will be the largest surveys of each artist's work to date, giving an overview of their practice in the last 10-15 years and reflecting the scope and diversity of their careers so far.

Sarah Staton will be creating an installation of old and new work in the Long Gallery. It will explore elements of English cultural life from Agincourt to advertising, particularly our new-found obsession with TV shows which tell us how to transform our homes and gardens and the role they have played in assisting the absorption of IKEA-style modernism into the mainstream. She contrasts this with the recurring motif of the Gothic cathedral, a late 19th century symbol of unified artistic practice in which architecture, art and craft were all given equal weight. The Gothic cathedral also represents the chaotic forces of sex and money, which, says Staton, exist in a "hilarious duality with the backdrop of immaculate post-human architecture which is the legacy of modernism".

Georgie Hopton combines playfulness with tragedy, creating pieces in which humour and sadness collide. Like Sarah Staton, she works in a variety of media and will be showing paintings, drawings, sculptures and photographs in the Cube and Middle Galleries. Her continual re-workings of her own and other artists' work results in a circular vision tinged with the pathos of what she calls "l'homage pathétique". For Hopton, it is this process of re-working existing pieces which gives her work its flavour of comic sadness. The idea of *nature morte*, which she takes literally as meaning "dead life", has inspired much of her work over the last few years. Painted clay jugs, skulls, flowers and apples sit listlessly, shadowed by neighbouring fake bronze palettes and logs. A Pierrot watches sadly over the scene, Harlequin's batons lean, immobile, against a wall. Life, as revealed in Hopton's exhibition, is a circus, with all its ups and downs, misery and hilarity.

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In Conversation with Sarah Staton and Georgie Hopton

Wed 29 Jan | 19.30 | £3 (£2 concs) to include a glass of wine

The artists will be discussing their work with Stephen Snoddy, MK G's Director. Tickets must be booked on 01908 676 900 during gallery opening hours. Doors open at 19.00 for pre-talk viewing.

The Annual Friends Lecture

Wed 26 Feb | 19.30 | Doors open at 19.00

Discuss the state of contemporary art with Stephen Snoddy. This is a Friends of MK G event. Membership is £15 (£10 concs); ring MK G for details.

Art for All: Free Exhibition Tour

Wed 29 Jan | 13.30-14.00

Join Stephen Snoddy for an informal tour of the Staton/Hopton exhibitions. Book on 01908 676 900.

Free Family Exhibition Tour

Sat 25 Jan | 11.00

Join a short, informal tour of the exhibitions before starting Art Trolley activities. Book on 01908 676 900.

The Saturday Art Trolley

Every Saturday at 11.00

Free art activities for children aged 4-12, who must be accompanied by an adult.

Opening hours

Tues – Sat 10.00-17.00

Sun 11.00-17.00

Closed Mondays and for exhibition changeovers.

Press information and images

Contact Emma Dummett, Marketing and Development Assistant, on 01908 558 302 or e.dummett@mktgc.co.uk

Ends

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