

Project Space: Laura Buckley

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Ellen Mara De Wachter, exhibitions curator at Anita Zabludowicz's London space 176, presents the first in a new curated series of artist projects for artreview.com.

Click [here](#) to see Laura Buckley's work for the Project Space.

London-based Irish artist Laura Buckley combines video and kinetic sculptures to create dreamlike environments with an industrial aesthetic. Her piece for the Project Space uses documentation of the recent installation *Gasworks/Colourbox* to transfer a sense of movement and the play of light from a three dimensional space onto an online platform.

Ellen Mara De Wachter: Could you briefly describe the project you have created for artreview.com?

Laura Buckley: This project is a record of an installation. Four of the films are documentation of a work, and one (*Colourbox*, with coloured light flashing out of a wooden structure) is part of the original work. The installation was a kinetic video work, where a film projection was refracted onto the walls, ceiling and floor using a Perspex triangular prism. So it's a sculptural projection of film, and this project is documentation of this movement.

The layout of the project came about because I was watching some QuickTime files that I minimized on my computer, so they were on the bottom menu and quite tiny, but still playing. I enjoyed them playing in that tiny capacity. So they are icons really, which refer to the computer as a method of exhibiting work. So it's a play with scale and function. It's an interesting duality as I use the computer to make the work, and it has become a virtual space in which to show the work.

Ellen Mara De Wachter: You use light in quite an idiosyncratic way, making it visible as a medium and causing its dispersal in space. Is this transformation of something intangible into a medium a conscious decision or a happy accident? What is it about light that attracts you?

Laura Buckley: I've used reflective surfaces to bounce things around for a few years, so when I started making films it was a natural progression. When I

project many films in a darkened but white-walled space it creates this kind of twilight, and I hope that by encompassing the whole interior space with the movement of the image this creates a feeling of inclusion for the viewer. And the viewer becomes part of the work.

I ended up doing what I do in the overall installation as I was making a film. I used a ceramics revolving turntable as I was filming a Perspex structure, and placing a projector on the turntable led me to project onto and through an actual Perspex structure within the installation. So the structures exist within the films and also physically.

Ellen Mara De Wachter: Your sculptures and installations also use movement and kinetics – some of your sculptures are revolving and they affect the route of a projection by casting reflections and prismatic distortions. Is the work influenced by the legacy of kinetic art?

Laura Buckley: There were two shows this past year at the Serpentine that I related to, Paul Chan and Anthony McCall. I identify strongly with this work as it is sculpting light. Entering such unreal and otherworldly spaces is a very moving experience. The McCall show was the closest I've come to a religious experience, and I enjoyed watching the viewers as much as the work, and how they interacted with the situation. It's the same with Olafur Eliasson, the piece he did for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern. Phenomenological. Magic. Escapism.

Ellen Mara De Wachter: You have a very distinct vocabulary of materials: plywood, perspex, digital video. You gravitate towards industrial materials in a way similar to someone like Donald Judd, who chose to work with materials which had no art historical connotations. Is there a similar desire to distance yourself from materials which may be imbued with a sense of art historical or technical tradition?

I think that due to the legacy of Judd, John Cage and others, basic materials have become part of our current visual vocabulary. In art, architecture, furniture...

Plywood is interesting because it is wood that has been remodeled, but it retains its character in the grain. It is natural and has comforting qualities. I used to paint on wood, so in a way the structures have become the supports, and I'm applying the image through the projection. It's painterly, light

painting. I had issues with film as a medium because of its transience. I was missing the physicality of the object, so by projecting onto a structure I'm grounding/anchoring the digital. You can still touch the work. At Chelsea Brian Chalkley always encouraged us to break things down and see the potential in everything. Somehow the supports became the subjects of my films. That's how I got started filming.

I hover between abstraction and representation, the structures are quite minimal, but the films are figurative. There's a richness of imagery that I'm constantly trying to strip back, stripping back reality by representing it.

Ellen Mara De Wachter: Sound is an interesting feature of your films and installations – especially ambient sounds, which some people may have been tempted to eliminate. What role do you think sound plays in the works and is it a guiding part of editing and composing the work?

Laura Buckley: When I started making films they were silent, it was strange to work with audio. It's about letting go of control, and allowing everyday life feed into the work, which can be emotional. I grew to appreciate what I could do with sound gesturally. The impact of an action. Much of my film work involves the movement of materials, repetition and percussion.

Laura Buckley's work features in Material Presence at 176 until December 14. Colourbox film here courtesy David Roberts Collection.

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