

John Henry Newton
Trust me, I'm firing on all cylinders
6 February - 14 March 2015

There was a crack that often appeared in the gallery wall and it was always up to me to fix it; a task that I found to be a respite from the more onerous chores of my job such as packing artworks and moving shipping crates.

On its first appearance the crack ran from ceiling to floor: I ran my finger along its jagged length to remove any loose paint before I filled it with too much filler, which I then sanded back and painted over. It was narrower on its next appearance and could be covered with just a coat of paint. On one occasion it was much wider and required me to cut away all the previous layers of filler and paint from either side of the chasm before sanding, filling, sanding and painting. On one occasion it was shorter, and, peculiarly, did not start or finish at the floor or ceiling, but instead levitated in the centre of the wall: on this occasion I simply hung a painting over it, with a couple of centimetres of crack protruding from the bottom of the canvas.

Through repetition of this task I grew to understand the nuances of the crack; despite variations with each appearance, there were familiar angles, branches, bends and turns that remained. I came to know which intersections were most likely to flake, which meanders would split into an offshoot if I manoeuvred the razor carelessly, and which bulges had to be sanded more lightly than others; I understood how weather conditions could exacerbate the crack, to the extent that I knew, before I arrived at the gallery each day, whether or not the crack would be there. Each time I performed my repair works the memories of past repairs were invoked: not memories of the labour itself, but of what was going through my head during a previous repair. The crack became an abstract map of my memories of thoughts and emotions, like a mixtape I once made that somehow embodied the autumn of my 16th year.

For John Henry Newton walking is of great importance to the development of his ideas. Just as I went for a walk and came back with no soles is an abstract map of its own production, so the rest of the exhibition, *Trust me, I'm firing on all cylinders*, can be viewed as a mixtape compiled to accompany Newton's daily ambulatory activities from the moment he left his house every day for the last four years. The works within the exhibition act as markers on Newton's various journeys; like the fork in the crack in the gallery wall, that chipped every time I repaired it, that reminded me of a song on my mixtape that reminded me of the bench where I used to stop to smoke and reflect on my way home from school every day: each marker the cumulation of memories invoked by an action repeated.

Barnie Page

* Simultaneously, we will present *Economists are watching*, a solo exhibition by Stefano Calligaro at Hadrian - our project space.

Opening 6 February at 7 pm

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