

At the Courtauld Institute

ART FIRST will be resident at the Courtauld Institute until 8th December, in the form of *Invisible*, Simon Morley's exhibition in the library gallery space. As this is downstairs and 'invisible' unless you know it is there, we would like to encourage you to nip down and see it. During the week it is open from 10am–6pm and your entry point is the door opposite the entrance to the Courtauld Gallery itself.

While you are at Somerset House, we recommend the quartet of exhibitions which are there concurrently, all of them small and concentrated, and very good. Each one has a detailed presence online, so we will offer a very brief sketch, just to wet your appetite.

Beginning with Simon Morley: he has chosen works especially for the context, including books and art and modern history. 'I want to keep a passageway open to the past, and see art as a form of transmission, or as a kind of negotiation' he says, reminding us that he selects his sources from an already existing archive which he 'curates' rather than 'creates', often focusing on the historical dimension. How appropriate then to hear the occasional disembodied voice of Ernst Gombrich on a sound track in the exhibition, saying in his thick German accent, 'Next slide please'.

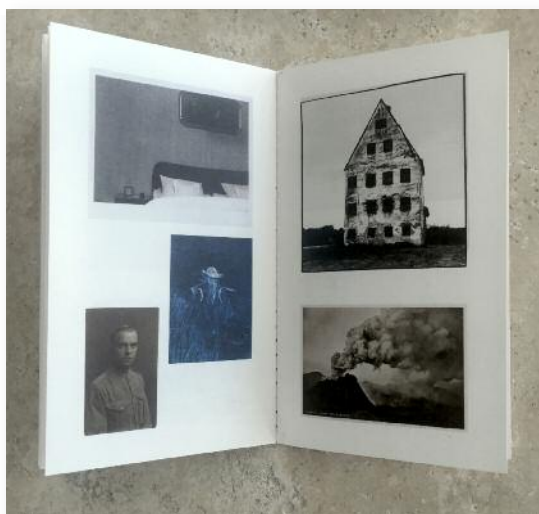
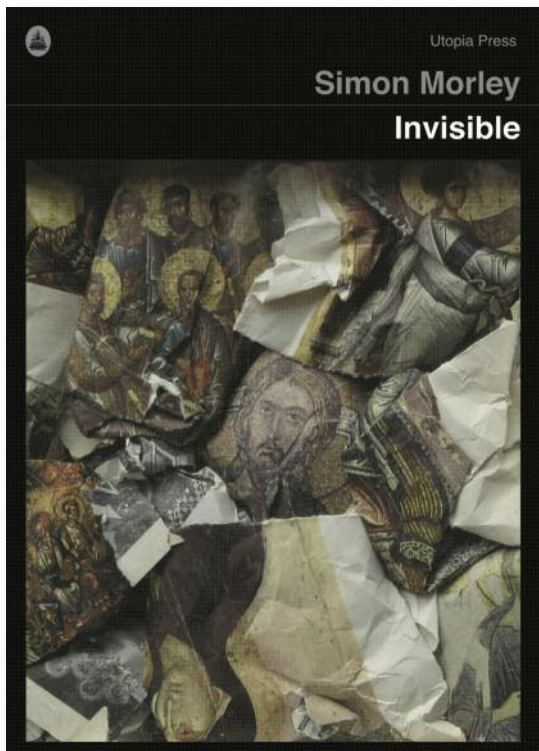
Simon Morley: *Invisible*, to 8th December

An online catalogue and other material are illustrated on our website: www.artfirst.co.uk

Also hidden within Somerset House in the Inigo Rooms is the Kings College exhibition called ***Melancholia: A Sebald Variation***, curated by John-Paul Stonard and Lara Feigel and supported by the European Research Council as part of the *Beyond Enemy Lines Project*.

Those of you familiar with Morley's work will know this to be a perfect complimentary show to rub shoulders with. It begins with Dürer's famous image of *Melencolia I*, 1514, and ends with works by contemporary artists whose melancholic vision is still haunted by that mid century moment of destruction evident at the end of World War II. In 1997 W G Sebald's lectures, later published in English as *On the Natural History of Destruction*, gave voice to the devastation of Germany by Allied bombing and the repression of memories of the destruction in postwar life. For Sebald melancholy was the only possible response to the brutality of the past. Anselm Keifer, Tacita Dean and Dexter Dalwood amongst others make new contributions.

Melancholia: A Sebald Variation, to 10th December



FROM TOP

Front cover of Simon Morley's catalogue for *Invisible*. Installation view of *Invisible*.

Photographs from the Sebald archive in the catalogue for *Melancholia: A Sebald Variation*.



The first-ever assembly of Chaim Soutine's great portraits

of cooks, bellboys and waiters, active in the grand hotels of Paris in the 1920s and 30s is presented by The Courtauld Gallery. He had emigrated from Russia, arriving in Paris in 2013, and like his friend Mondigliani, he lived in extreme poverty until the American collector Albert C Barnes discovered his work in 1923 and bought 50 on the spot. Soutine retained his sense that profound humanity and emotion could be found in modest sitters, and this new social class of service personnel who had moved from aristocratic households of the past to luxury Parisian hotels and restaurants from the late 19th century onwards, all decked in smart colourful uniforms, became Soutine's main subjects.

Soutine's Portraits: Cooks, Waiters & Bellboys, to 21st January 2018



La Caravane by British-Moroccan artist **Hassan Hajjaj**, is the fourth exhibition. It is in the Terrace Rooms, as part of the *Charles Russell Speechly Terrace Room Series*. The vibrant photographic and video works celebrate Moroccan street culture, featuring portraits from his *Kesh Angels Series* with their witty frames made of every day objects, and the *My Rock Stars Volume 2* series of musicians who take it in turns to play an instrument in the nine-screen installation.

There are bookshops, cafés, restaurants—you can spend half a day there or more, and then walk to the National Portrait Gallery to see the breathtaking *Cézanne Portraits* exhibition. The long-awaited *Mondigliani* exhibition is open at Tate Modern from 23rd November. On offer is a substantial lesson in early twentieth-century art history with two considered responses from our own time; it can all be yours if you give it the time.

Art Fairs—recent

We had a successful and exciting time at the 10th edition of the **FNB Joburg Art Fair** in September. The event preceded the great excitement in Cape Town the following week with the opening of Africa's first museum of contemporary African art. Housed in a repurposed historic Silo building on the waterfront, the *Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africat* (Zeitz MOCAA) is now open to all and its impact is extraordinary.

Tate's African Acquisitions Committee, together with Frances Morris, arrived in Johannesburg to catch the fair and make some carefully arranged studio visits, including a fascinating morning in Karel Nel's home and studio where they encountered his collection of African and Oceanic artefacts before they set eyes on the great line up of his own work.

In Cape Town we all met up again for an array of openings of other new spaces alongside ZMOCAA, such as the A4 Foundation, Wendy Fisher's brainchild, and the AAD Foundation threw a party for 100 artists in their collection and guests, in their beautiful Constantia home where our hosts, Gervaine and Matthias Leridon, welcomed



FROM TOP Chaim Soutine, *Valet de chambre*, 1927. Chaim Soutine, *The Pastry Cook*, 1925. Hassan Hajjaj, *Rider*.





everyone to roam around every room, the garden, the well stocked bars, before the sequence of gracious speeches began. These were events of a lifetime for many in the Cape Town art world, but also for many international visitors for whom it was the first-ever visit to South Africa. They will be back—there is lots more in store.

Art Fairs—2018

In January 2018 we look forward to seeing you at the **London Art Fair, Islington Design Centre**, from 17th–20th January. We will be presenting work by Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Christopher Cook, Kevin Laycock Simon Lewty and Jack Milroy. Please contact us for tickets or visits at specific times.

ART FIRST will also participate in the **Cape Town Art Fair**, 16th–18th February 2018, with our largest stand yet, featuring photography by Graeme Williams, Kim Wollhuter, and introducing the great African photographer duo, Carol Beckwith & Angela Fisher. Two major new works by Karel Nel will be featured and for his first appearance in South Africa, the master text-artist, Simon Lewty will be showing work in a dialogue with Nel that has been a long time in waiting. Kate McCrickard and Jack Milroy will be presented for their second appearances, both with new work, completed especially for the fair.

New from the studios

Meanwhile, we have done a studio prowl and gathered fresh works by ART FIRST **Gallery Artists**. Some of the works are still 'on the go', others have just been completed and in some cases you are the first members of the public to see them.

Enjoy looking at them and please get back to us if you would like prices and further information.

If we don't see you beforehand, Benjamin and I would like to wish you a wonderful seasonal break, a very Happy Christmas, and we look forward to seeing you at Islington or Cape Town, if not at Somerset House.

Clare Cooper and Benjamin Rhodes

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Stop Press!

Just announced from The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, the winner of the £10,000 Valeria Sykes Award for the New Light Art Prize 2017 is Christopher Cook for his graphite work *Forbidden Fruit*.

FROM TOP, AT THE FNB JOBURG ART FAIR

Installation of Graeme Williams' photographs

Karel Nel, in front of his *COSMOS* works, in discussion with astrophysicist Lerothodi Leeuw

Kim Wollhuter, *Cheetah Girls*, digital print on Hahnemühle, 120 x 80 cm, edition of 10





JONI BRENNER

Register, 2017, oil on canvas, 100 x 40 cm

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CHRISTOPHER COOK

Furious Birds 2017, graphite on paper, 70 x 100 cm

ART FIRST



JAKE HARVEY

Quiet Place 2, 2017, granite and Corten steel, 2017, 91 x 56.5 x 51 cm

ART FIRST



MARGARET HUNTER

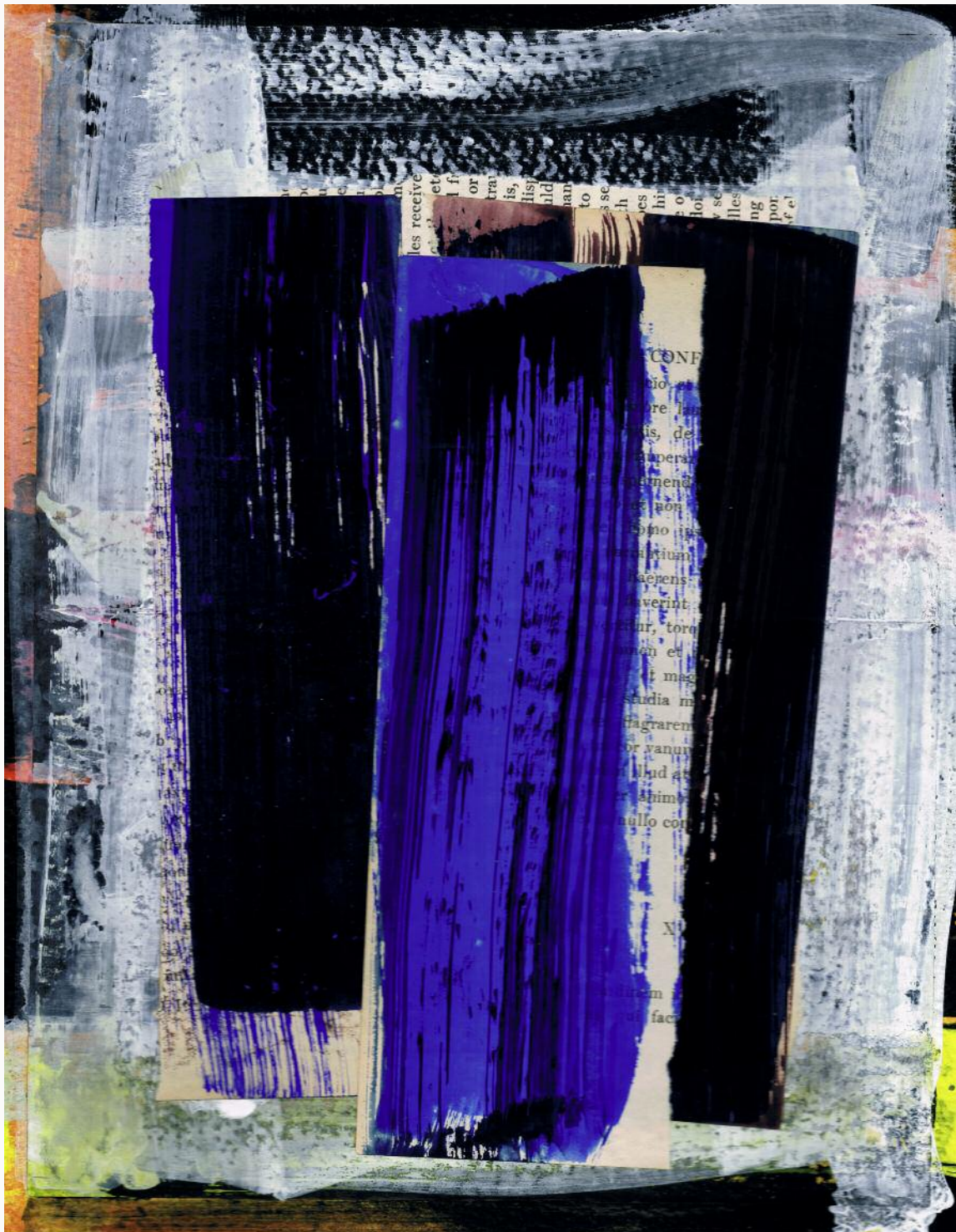
Heads Together, 2014–17, acrylic on hand-made cotton rag paper, 102 x 68 cm



KEVIN LAYCOCK

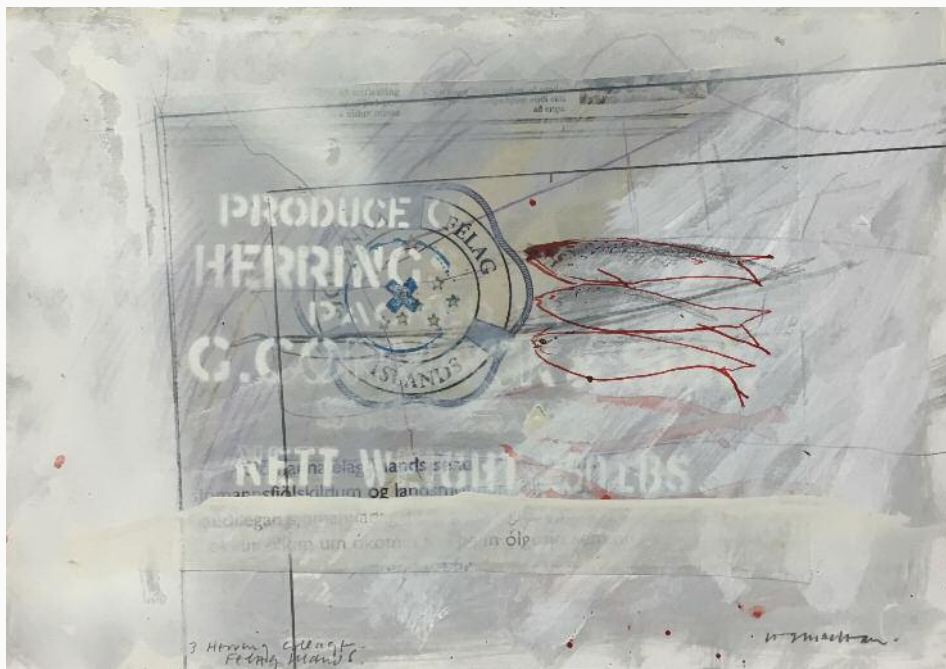
Work in Progress

ART FIRST



GILLIAN LEVER

St Augustine Confession Series, 2017, mixed media and collage on board, 22.5 x 17.5 cm



TOP

HELEN MACALISTER

Illusion of the Nation State (credited to Peter Geoghegan), 2017, oil on linen, triptych, each panel 29 x 21 cm

ABOVE

WILL MACLEAN

3 Herring Collage, Felag Islands, 2017, mixed media, 21 x 30 cm

ART FIRST



BRIDGET MACDONALD

The Midsummer Mare, 2017, charcoal on paper, 81 x 122 cm

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KATE McCRICKARD

At the Café, oil on canvas, 90 x 70 cm

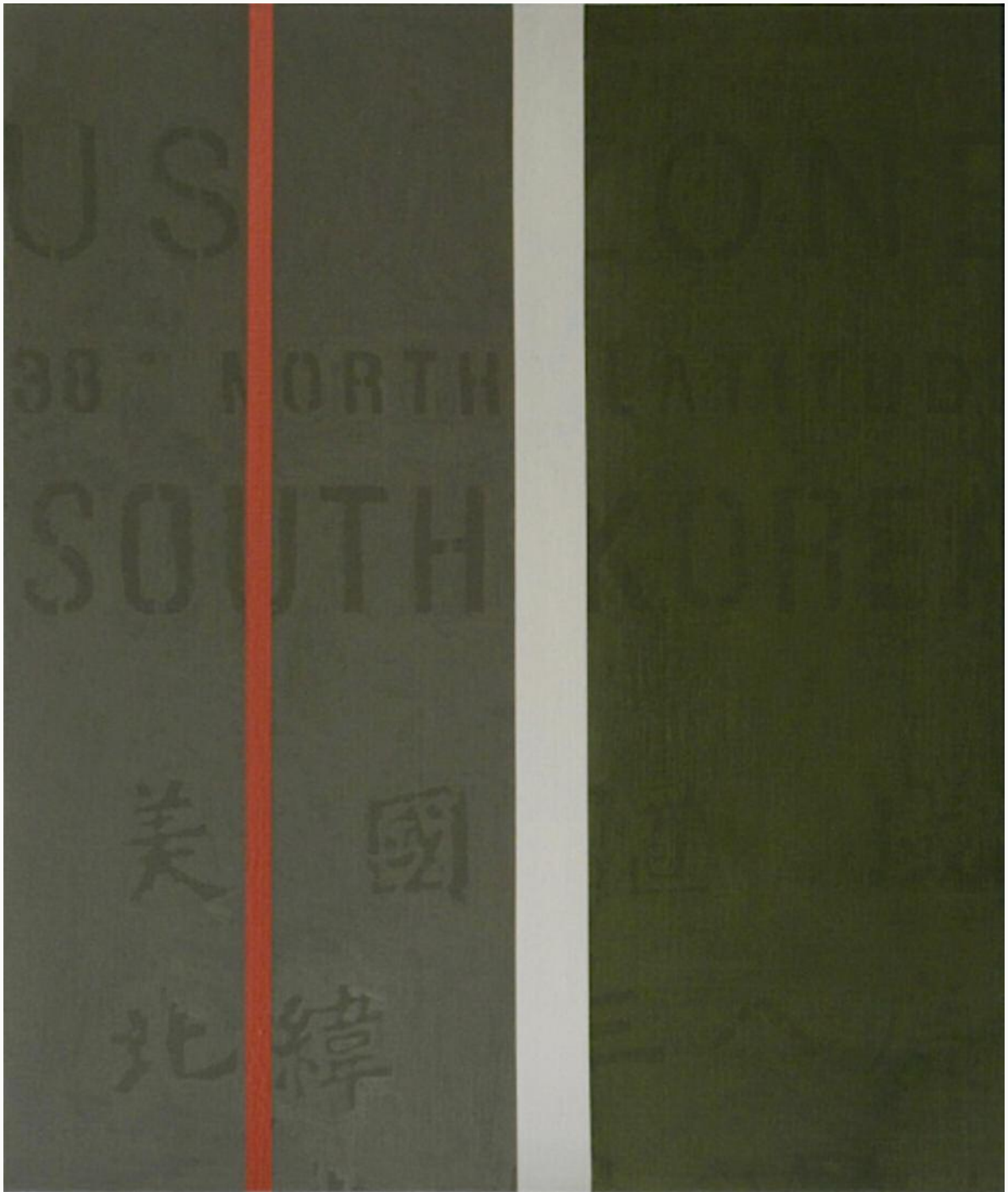
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JACK MILROY

Cut Out Cubed-Aviary, cut and constructed book, 42 x 35 x 9.5 cm

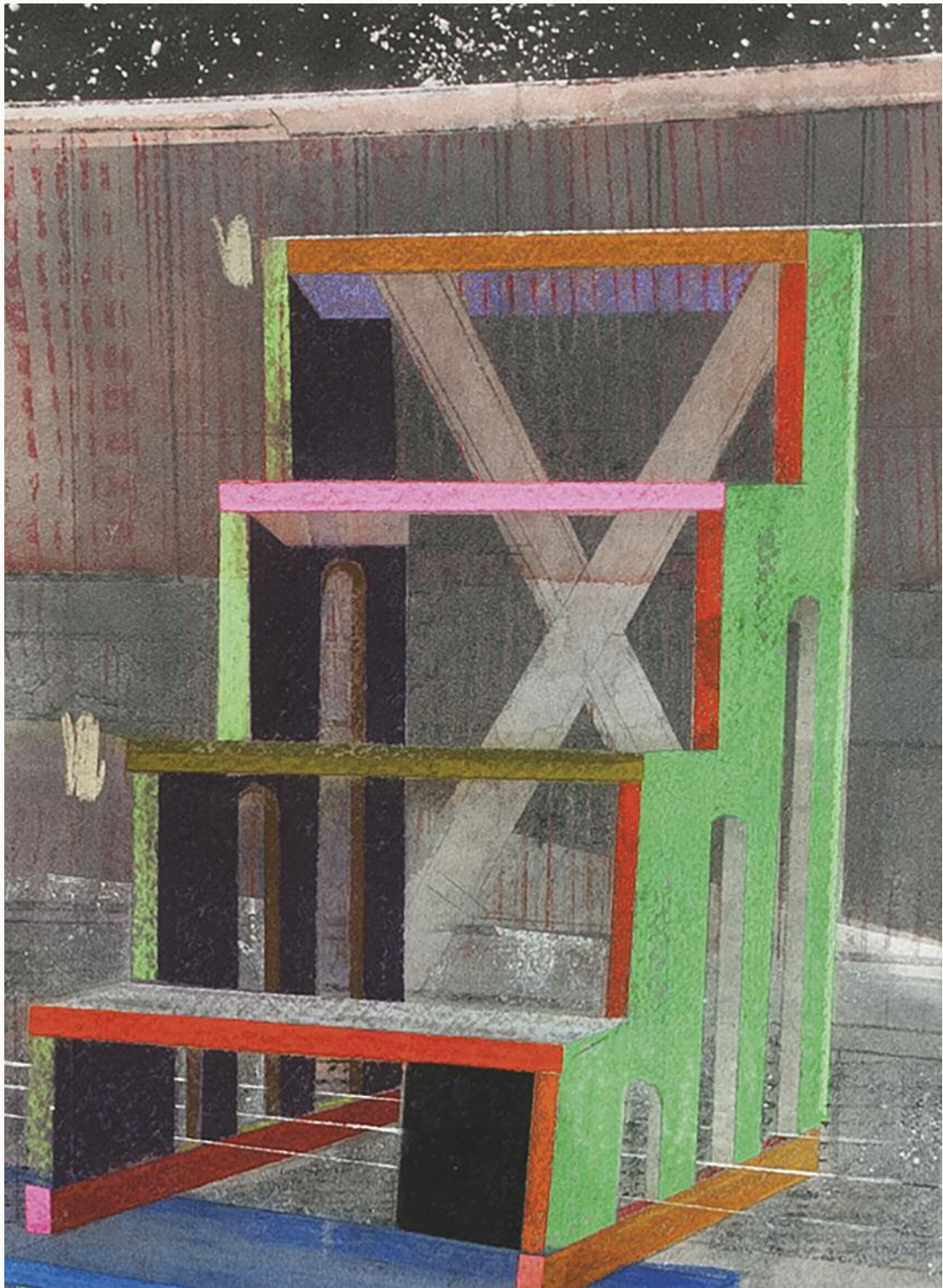
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SIMON MORLEY

38th Parallel (1945 No.2), 2017, acrylic on canvas, 53 × 45.5 cm

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KAREL NEL

Work in progress

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DONALD TESKEY

Crum Creek No.5, 2017, acrylic on paper, 19 x 23 cm

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MIMEI THOMPSON

Cave Painting (Yellow Sunday), 2017, oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm

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GRAEME WILLIAMS

Edge of Town Series no 2: Springfontein, image size 54 x 80 cm, edition of 5

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