

Art

MONTHLY

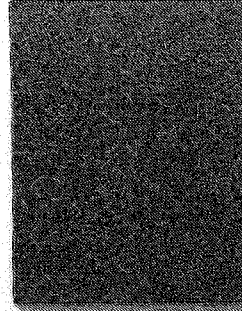
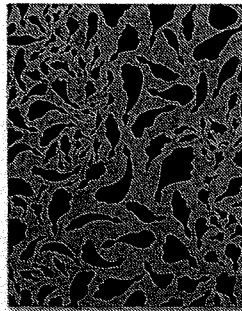
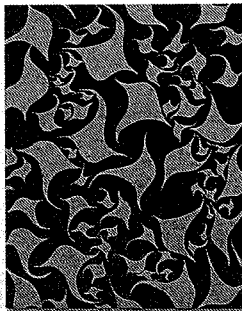
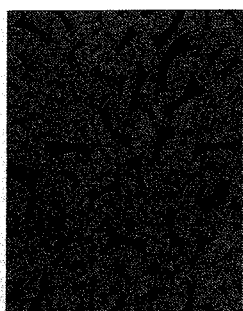
DEC 96-JAN 97 / No 202 / £2.75 US\$5

Let's Get Physical
Steve McQueen interviewed by Patricia Bickers

Painting in the 90s I
Andrew Wilson on looking at painting

Painting in the 90s II
Mark Durden on the matter of painting

Selling Fakes
Colin Gleadell investigates



■ Sally Heard

12 Aberdeen Road London November 8 to 30
Whitechapel Public Library London November 7 to 30

Appropriate to their distinct locations, Sally Heard's two installations interpreted pattern so astutely as to induce both a reconsideration of its meaning in applied art and excitement at the possibilities opened up for abstract painting. Not that painting hasn't periodically coopted ornamentation for this purpose as with the 'Pattern and Decoration' artists of the 1970s, such as Robert Kushner and Joyce Kozloff. Their unreflective hedonism holds less interest though than work by later painters like Philip Taaffe and Christopher Wool who incorporate pattern through a mechanical technique, such as stencilling and relief printing. Heard, however, paints these small pieces freehand, giving them an intensity more reminiscent of Counter-Reformation Baroque than the Protestant Huguenot tradition of textile designs from which she has improvised. The main installation at 12 Aberdeen Road set nine of these oval paintings around a classic town house living room, where their tightly coiled and sinister eroticism injected an unusual charge into the spare architectural details of the space.

Heard uses pattern as an entanglement of minute, intimate detailing with the more generalised vocabulary of abstraction. It's reasonable to think of this as a feminine inclusiveness, as bringing back to painting impure elements that a male-determined reductive language has

bulldozed out of the canon. These tracteries of intensely-coloured forms sustain the tradition of pattern as *horror vacui* but add a vertiginous depth to the image where unquantifiable entities appear to be moving in a coordinated manner, as if a cluster of orchids or viral micro-organisms were folding the space around each other as a means of propulsion.

Part of the fascination of pattern lies in a contradiction at the basis of its teleology. With an immanent vacuity, and without beginning or end, it is a representation of natural forms brought to order only to be reinvested with uncontrollability, designed to envelop every available surface. Heard preserves this non-hierarchical quality but in building the components around a vortex she reverses the sense of an indeterminate centrifugal spread to suggest a self-organising and synthesising pattern. This was most evident in *Group Diversity*, a separate installation, where the one-colour motifs were stripped down to basic ductile shapes appearing to coalesce into vortices with their surrounding space. These forms retained their earlier malignant quality in addition to having an unfamiliar malleability as if space was envisaged as a kneadable material. Like screen savers using digitised photographs of viruses, these images seemed to fix a moment in an endlessly mutable cycle.

In the Whitechapel Public Library Heard placed work in the upstairs art book and music section that is due to be closed down for lack of funding. Using decorative endpapers as a source she placed three books from the library collection in an old-fashioned glass case behind a

Sally Heard
Taking Forms (I, II, III & IV) 1996

NEW STUDIOS

Studio space available in SE/SW London.
 Competitive rates. 24 Hr Access.
 Secure. Private parking.

NEW SOUTHBANK GALLERY

Contemporary artists are invited to submit
 10 recent slides and CV for inclusion
 in 97/98 Programme.

BEDFORD HILL GALLERY 296/302 Borough High St, London SE1 1JG 0171-403 4190. Registered Charity No. 1001612

similar display of her own improvisations on those examples. This poignant homage to unsung design used a palette of dirtied off-key colour similar to the gallery paintings, though here the patterns had less of that erotic mordancy. Interspersed among the collection on the shelves were her *trompe l'oeil* books, shaped wooden panels painted with similar endpaper designs, each with a classmark on the 'spine' appropriate to its location in the library.

Because this collection of art books is about to be broken up and absorbed into a library that has not even had the means to redecorate in 25 years, Heard's installation pointed to an imminent loss. In this case, the derivation of her patterns from a part of the book, usually ignored in the rush to the text, lent an appropriate modesty to an installation that was practically invisible. The painted wooden boards were of various sizes and hard to find on the shelves. Pulling these beautiful objects out conveyed something of the satisfaction and surprise at finding a long-sought book.

In this setting the intervention inevitably felt deeply melancholic; valedictory paintings made from the overlooked decorative features of neglected books, now threatened with indefinite storage. It was a good example of how Heard's carefully wrought style need be only slightly inflected to engage with different contexts. ■

Mark Harris

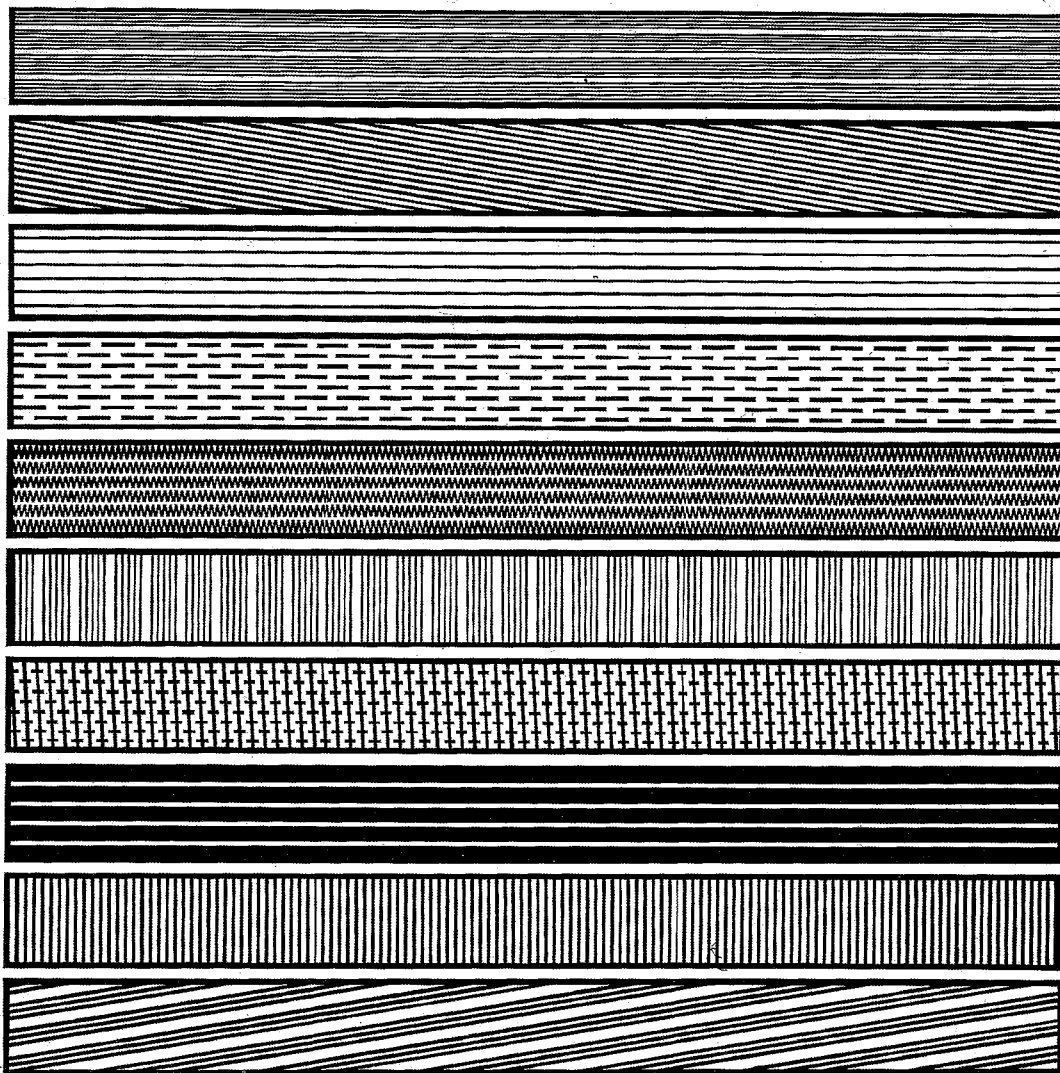
■ Angus Fairhurst

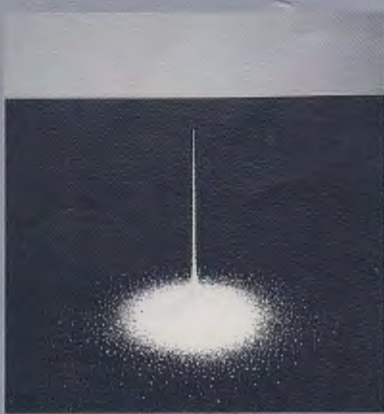
White Cube London October 28 to December 7

This clever show, after luring us into a number of humorous but unsatisfactory resolutions, ultimately settles for a conundrum. How can we reconstruct the dematerialised artist from his painting? Distracting us from underlying questions is Angus Fairhurst's façade of slack technique, seductive wit and references to other artists in an installation whose rock music, animation and uncommitted process abstraction suggest we simply enjoy it in its apparent immediacy.

Fairhurst is showing four paintings developed from indifferent computer designs yet supposedly based on a short animated video of his surrogate, the familiar undemonstrative gorilla. This animal has long been Fairhurst's other, as if a residual childhood projection of masculine power and ambivalent intentions. From the gorilla costume that he sloughs off by leaping about, to the looped video of the same animal repeatedly dropping and catching an unconscious man, the interdependence of artist with double is touchingly played out. In this new video the ill-fitting gorilla suit is shown facing forwards, tentatively swinging its arms and flexing its pectorals before breaking into five cross sections that rotate showing diagrammatic bones and flesh, in parody of Damien Hirst's sliced carcasses. These shapes are held in

Angus Fairhurst
Low Expectations 1996





COVER

Steve McQueen
Bear 1993 (still)

{01} FEATURES

Let's Get Physical
Steve McQueen
interviewed by
Patricia Bickers

{07} The Vision Thing
Andrew Wilson finds
that *About Vision* is
more about looking

{11} Loaded
Mark Durden discusses
the matter of painting

{17} COMMENT
Editorial
Letters

{19} ARTNOTES

{22} EXHIBITIONS
Reviews
Louise Hopkins
Ian Hunt

{23} Sally Heard
Mark Harris

{24} Angus Fairhurst
Mark Harris

{25} Angela Bulloch
Andrew Cross

{27} Tom Friedman
David Barrett

{28} Miguel Angelo Rocha
Roy Exley

**{29} The Pleasure of
Aesthetic Life**
Valerie Reardon

{30} Made New
Juan Cruz

{32} Vija Celmins
Melissa Feldman

{33} Popocultural
David Burrows

**{34} The Speed of Light,
The Speed of Sound**
Michael Gibbs

{36} Diana Thater
Paul Usherwood

{37} Triplicate
John Tozer

{38} Evident
Gilda Williams

{40} I am Curious
Mark Sladen

{41} Inside the Visible
Toni del Renzio

{44} REPORT
Conference
Open Space
Clair Joy

{45} Open Submission
Cyril Barrett

{46} EDITIONS
Artists' Books
Book Plates
Cathy Courtney

{47} Books
Partisans
Reviewed
Andrew Lambirth

**{49} Christmas
Booklist**
Jessica Wyman

{50} INTERNET
**The Other Art
Media Art in
a Modernist
Climate**
Julian Stallabrass

{51} SALEROOMS
**Tribulations
and Trials**
Colin Gleadell

{53} ARTLAW
**Photographing
Artwork**
Henry Lydiate

{54} LISTINGS
Exhibitions



Art Monthly
Suite 17
38 Charing Cross Road
London WC2H 0DG
United Kingdom

Telephone
0171 240 0280
Fax
0171 497 0726

ISSN 0142 6702
Art Monthly is published
10 times a year

**Annual
subscription rates**

INDIVIDUAL
UK £27.50
Rest of Europe £36
Rest of World \$48
N America US\$50

INSTITUTIONS
UK £34
Rest of Europe \$44
Rest of World \$58
N America US\$50

Editor
Patricia Bickers
Managing Editor
Lotty Moorling
Advertising
Matt Hale
Distribution
Neil Wendler
Editorial Assistant
Jessica Wyman
Publishers
Jack & Neil Wendler
Design
Area
area@area.demon.co.uk

Published by Britannia Art Publications Ltd. *Art Monthly* editorial, advertising and subscriptions tel +44 (0)171 240 0280; fax +44 (0)171 497 0726. Printed in Great Britain by Panhurst Press, Buckingham House, Longfield Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3EY. Bookshop/Gallery Retail Distribution: Central Books Ltd, 99 Walsby Rd, London E9 5LN; tel 0181 986 4854; fax 0181 533 5821; e-mail orders@centralbooks.demon.co.uk. Newstrade Distribution: Comag Specialist Division, Mercury Centre, Central Way, Feltham, Middx TW14 0RX; 0181 844 1000; USA: Ubiquity Distributors, 607 Degraw Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217 USA; 718 875 5491. Periodical postage paid at Middlesax, NJ. Postmaster: send changes of address to *Art Monthly* c/o C&C Maners International Inc, 900 Lincoln Blvd, PO Box 177, Middlesax, NJ 08846 USA. *Art Monthly* is available on audio tape for visually impaired persons from TNAUK, 01435 866102.

The views expressed in *Art Monthly* are not necessarily those of the Publishers or Editors. Articles submitted for possible publication and accompanied by SAE, are welcomed, and it is advisable to contact the Editorial Department beforehand. While every effort will be made to safeguard unsolicited manuscripts, photos and other material submitted, the Editors will not accept responsibility for loss or damage. The electronic version of *Art Monthly* is available on the Artindex. © No part of this publication may be reprinted without permission.

Funded by
THE
ARTS
COUNCIL
OF ENGLAND