



to a printing press, then a distillery – and, now, in its final incarnation before it is levelled and reborn as a high-rise office block, a part-time gallery. Constructed of plywood partitions, white paint and entered via a bright pink security gate, welcome to Noble Studios.

Cities exist as repositories for the new and the next. Innovation, invention and creativity thrive in their bustle. But wherever there's a shiny tower, a dirty old building has met the wrecking ball: the most thrusting of cities is also a ghost town, haunted by the lives and ambitions that came before, in this instance the printer and his books and pamphlets, the distiller with his clear bottles of gin.

We are ever passing ghosts without realising. Everything connects, intersects. There are echoes in life, rhymes.

Before it is annihilated and makes way for 800 new office workers, Noble Studios is the venue for 'Tempting Fake', an exhibition which embraces the new and the next, but is also acutely aware of the ghostly nature of city life. Of what came before and what, ultimately, is making way.

'Tempting Fake' introduces eight recent graduates with an eye on history, but who make vivid statements about what is to come and what it is to be original. Think of this show as a wake for a building that is, literally, history. Artists exhibiting in this soon-to-be office block combine processes of copying, assembling, remaking, appropriating and taking in an attempt to reposition or skew or inform and misinform preconceived notions of function or purpose. If you detect something of the elegy in their work, it is perhaps because it has been commissioned specially for this space, at this time, as the demolition crew assembles.

Artists, like buildings, are accustomed to change. Noble Studios doesn't erase what came before and certainly doesn't fit in the bracket of the 'white cube' phenomenon; pristine, precision-cut shoeboxes of space where we are invited to step out of time. When entering Noble Studios, you are invited to abandon supposed notions of neutrality and embrace an entirely subjective, ad-hoc relationship with viewing art and being in this place.

As I sit here writing, I notice fragments of the past: uncharted brackets that hang from the ceiling, exposed cables and facades blocking a view of the toilets. Idiosyncrasy, imperfection, improvisation and everyday life seep into 'Tempting Fake'. Nestled between impromptu barricades and lit by a scattering of artificial lighting this unselfish pop-up is, like the building, destined for ruin. But, for the moment (this moment), the artists have transformed the space into a sculptural gymnasium, one that accepts its concrete fabrications but tests its consistency, its diameter, its periphery, and, yes, its history, to the full.

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Ozymandias, Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,  
 Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
 Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,  
 Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,  
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,  
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read  
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,  
 The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;  
 And on the pedestal, these words appear:  
 My name is, Ozymandias, King of Kings;  
 Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!  
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
 Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare  
 The lone and level sands stretch far away."







Håkon Lillegraven is a recent graduate of BA Culture, Criticism and Curation at University of the Arts London. His research and curatorial practice focuses on cultural memory and historical objecthood.

Additional credit and a special thank you to Hugo Lucien and Calli Layton.

‘strictly no access’ ‘authorised personnel only’. recognisable signs of london life announce the precarious occupation of **art** in the space i’m about to enter.

usually history appears as a **narrative** structure in a vacuum, in an absence, but in ‘tempting fake’ the attempt is made to **posit** new, contemporary art as historical through different strategies, the **curatorial conceit** being based in the fact that the space we are in will be demolished to make way for office spaces.

a pink light and a pop-up bar in front of the back of a plywood wall further assert the temporary but **aesthetic** pleasure i’m about to encounter-

national lottery logos stand like transmitters signalling to each other  
across an invisible geography.

the outside world - is it history? - is present in here, object which  
would typically be found, used, or **situated** on or in the earth, the  
supermarket, a home, have been excavated onto canvases, video  
screens, into sculptural forms. a shed, pre-colombian sculpture,  
a dog's playpen, a coil of rope or an iron bar. **interiority** and  
**exteriority** is circumvented and in effect so is **historicity** and  
**contemporaneousness**.

i'm trying to understand how i'm a part of history whilst surrounded  
by clean white sneakers.

an **archaic** shed lit up from the inside. usually a private, hidden **site**  
of storage or desecration, the light gives it a sanctified **status**.

the safety belt has been left on the floor. a piece of rope coils its way  
around the suede bar resting its leather-clad weight on a piece of  
wood.

the reflection of light on ancient porcelain (or is it clay? **materiality**  
was never my strong suit) spread across two canvases, symbolising  
the mirror pages of a book, recall manet's 'death of maximilian'.

the overall statement of the pieces in this space emerge in dialogue  
with the space itself, the last mise-en-scene it will present as curated  
in the artistic sense, soon to be replaced by 'curated' office spaces.  
where history is rejected in favour of the future, and visions are  
formulated in meeting rooms rather than in artists studios. the shared  
argument, in addition to their individual **interrogations** of history,  
appears to be a proposition that because they appear to us here at  
this exact point in time, they, despite their contemporary forms and  
methodologies, have already entered history. a history of place, of  
**taxonomies** such as gentrification and **art-making**.

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it's a welcoming space, through its recognisable range of **symbols** and spacious positioning, a party where the ongoing conversations between the artworks invite you in rather than close in on themselves. if only all art spaces presented their own history as willingly.

“he's painted it through the **western canon**, magnified images from a book, hence the page numbers,” someone tells me. “wanna go for a fag?” says someone else.

“when i was a child i was left-handed. but they wouldn't let me. they stuck a pen to my right hand with a sticker, they just wouldn't let me. so i didn't really start writing until i was 12. oddly enough i can draw quite well.”

studio walls are disbandoned to allow for a congregation of **dialectics** which through their **curation** allow for the previously unnoted to be seen, and defining. this is an open-floor plan for those of us who feel uncomfortable on office floors.

“there's a word for this, if you have social anxiety, you bring a friend - not to speak to, but just to always be there, visible in the space, so if you panic you can talk at them, not to them, but in their direction.”

i wonder how many modeling contracts are in the room.

how refreshing to be in an exhibition so completely lacking in **metaphorical** phalluses, affected political statements, where the gin has an unassuming tint of pink and the forms are rounded and **conversational** rather than imposing or contrivedly mystified. to see a group show which dares to not forefront literal and political language and trust the visual, the **spatial**, the language of **form**, **materiality**, and no labels.

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i couldn't help but wonder...

what does the meaning a pre-colombian figurine become when drawn from an encyclopedic book rather than from an archeological excavation?

someone's trendy bicycle bag just broke off a piece of art. a piece of clay on the floor. i turn away and when i look again it is gone, the scene of the crime absent rather than visibly demarcated. this is an art show, not a crime scene.

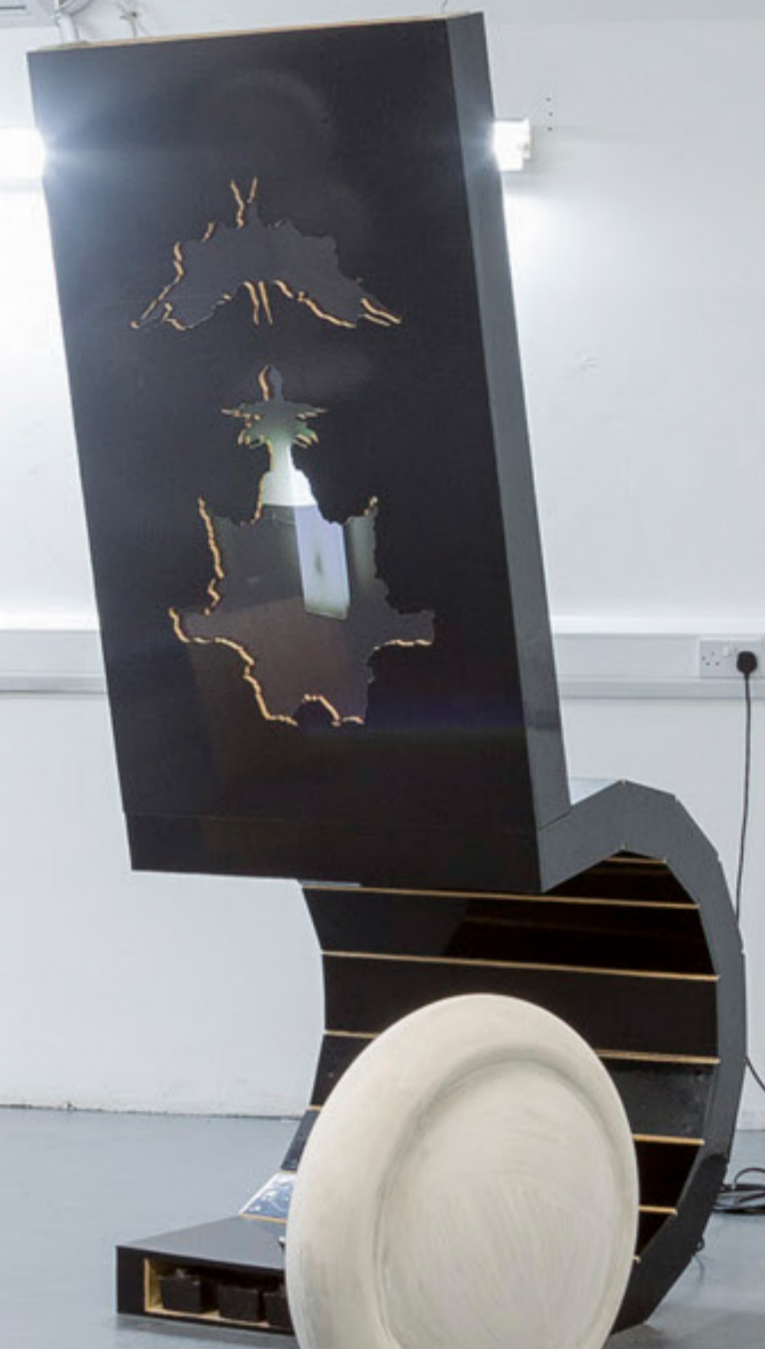
i'll write about outside. "good turn-out". as we've seen the **art**, a gentle waltz of the eye, are we now roadblocks or speed bumps?

overheard on the street: "an **art** career is obviously a bit of a gang-bang. oh - i mean gamble."

who knows what rosalind krauss would have said to this. all i know is she can't have been very **conversational** at parties.

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CURATED  
BY TED TARGETT  
\*\*\*\*

Tel: 020 3556 1542  
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PLEASE RETAIN RECEIPT  
THANK YOU

# TEMPTING FAKE

AUG 17 / 6:00 - 9:00PM



Sarah Finney,  
Tom Ribot, Kelly Randall,  
Real Hayate, Penella Breerton,  
Mimi Hope and Fred Le Sueur

Nathaniel Faulkner, Sarah Finney,  
Tom Ribot, Kelly Randall,  
Real Hayate, Penella Breerton,  
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