

Leo Fitzmaurice: *Misconstructary*

15.03.24 — 20.04.24

Rather than adhering to a specific medium or form, Fitzmaurice's practice is deeply rooted in a process of roaming and observation. His focus invariably centres on the everyday—the subtleties so common they are often overlooked. Through the use of found and discarded items, Fitzmaurice confronts themes of consumerism, the repercussions of mass production, and the physical structures onto which information is placed, presented, or contained. Previous bodies of Fitzmaurice's work have explored a diverse range of materials, including discarded Coca-Cola cans, plastic shopping bags, abandoned cigarette packets, and promotional flyers—each imbued with a sense of disposability that contradicts their enduring impact on the environment. By reworking and manipulating society's unwanted debris, his works prompt reflection on the subtle structures that hold information within the public realm, as well as their evolution over time.

The works showcased in *Misconstructary*, Fitzmaurice's fourth solo show at The Sunday Painter, mark the latest development in the artist's ongoing exploration of the overlooked and ubiquitous aspects of our increasingly material world. In his large-scale installations *Circumspectacle (Blueshift)* and *Circumspectacle (Redshift)*, Fitzmaurice arranges a collection of salvaged 'O' signs he has amassed over the years along the gallery's back walls. Each letter varies in size and material, originally serving as part of signage designed solely to support words in public spaces. Stripped of their original textual content, Fitzmaurice renders these objects devoid of their intended meaning to explore the intricate ways we interact with our environment. The deliberate selection of the letter 'O', reminiscent of the human mouth, subtly prompts reflection on the role of communication and the significance of individual symbols within the broader framework of constructed meaning; through this process of extraction and recontextualisation, Fitzmaurice imbues the letters with renewed significance.

Upon entering the gallery, viewers encounter Fitzmaurice's ongoing series, *Misconstructions*, featuring reworked packaging sculptures devoid of logos and text. Resembling miniature architectural models or modernist buildings, the small-scale works evoke urban cityscapes that disorient our sense of scale and proportion. Cut out with a scalpel-like precision, Fitzmaurice ensures that all information on the packets is either removed or hidden from view, leaving behind only skeletal structures marked by voids where labels and details once resided. Here, Fitzmaurice prompts reflection on the objects' communicative potential while drawing attention to how packaging—standardised to a remarkable degree—can be instantly recognisable even in the absence of graphical detail. In *The Reverse Being True*, Fitzmaurice strategically flips discarded signage panels to conceal all textual information, meticulously arranging each to form a geometric floor installation. The work discreetly alludes to minimalism in the guise of the found object and the readymade, pointing towards an altogether different sculptural imagination.

Misconstructary offers a compelling commentary on the transformation of meaning through the reappropriation of objects, inviting viewers to reconsider preconceived notions about utility and value. As with much of Fitzmaurice's practice, the works on show are testament to the artist's life-long fascination with information systems and the subtleties which lie behind the identity of places. Evoking a continued relevance that mirrors our culture's burgeoning consumption of entertainment, Fitzmaurice's work highlights the tension between the necessity of information for choice-making as well as the overwhelming inundation of data in modern society.

Leo Fitzmaurice was born in 1963, Newport, Shropshire, UK and lives and works in Liverpool, UK. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Enjoy Civic Life*, Humber Street Gallery, Hull, UK, 2021; *Between You and Me and Everything Else*, The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK, 2018; *As Yet*, Caustic Coastal, Manchester, UK, 2017; *OH V HO*, The Sunday Painter, London, UK, 2016; *Frieze London Sculpture Park*, 2015; */*, The Sunday Painter, London 2014; *Blank Stir*, The Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool, UK, 2012; *You Try to Tell Me But I never Listen*, New Art Gallery Walsall, 2011; *Sometimes the Things You Touch Come True*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park 2007; *Neat Stuff*, First-site Colchester 2005. Group exhibitions include: *Sculpture In the City*, London, UK, 2019; *Yorkshire Sculpture Park*, UK, 2016; *Reader*, Gether Contemporary, Copenhagen, 2016; *Edit/Undo*, Space In Between, London, 2015; *Easy Does It* (Curated by Kevin Hunt), David Dale Gallery, Glasgow, 2014; *Chain Chain Chain* (curated by Glenn Adamson), Bischoff Weiss, London, 2012; *The way we do art now*, curated by Pavel Buchler, Tanya Leighton Gallery, Berlin, 2010; *Flyerssheepflagshelf*, Seventeen Gallery, London, 2010. Fitzmaurice was the recipient of the 5th Northern Art Prize in 2012. Fitzmaurice's work is in the Arts Council Collection of England, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Manchester Art Gallery, The Royal London Hospital (Vital Arts), The Locus Plus Archive, Government Art Collection, Modern Forms Collection (London) and numerous private collections.