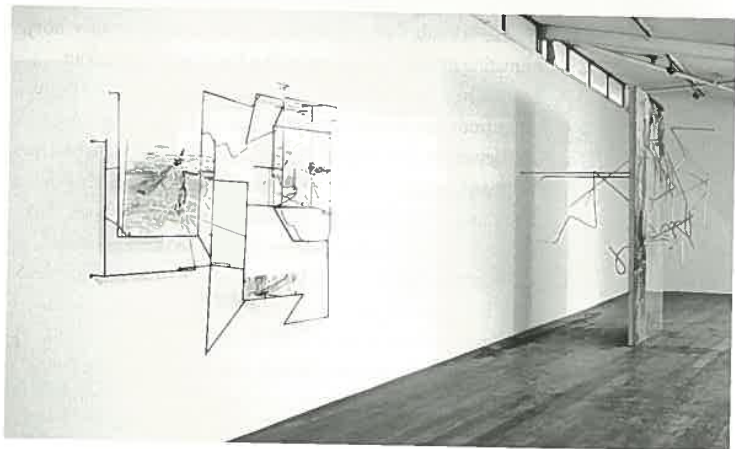
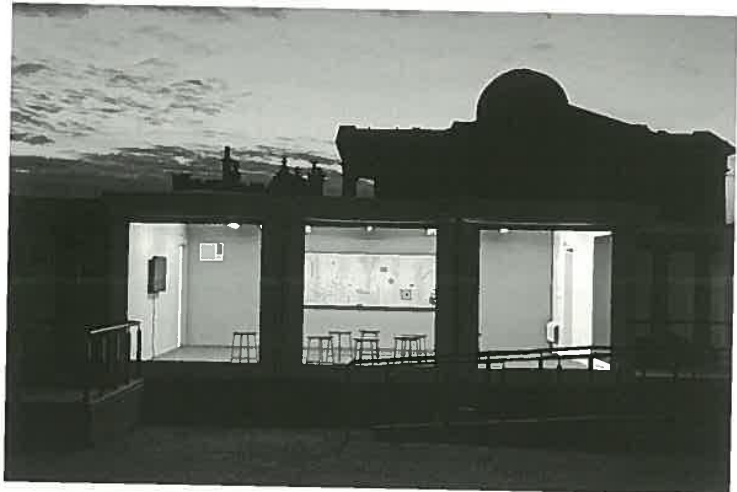


and inserting tiny figures into miniature scenes with tweezers. Omnipresent screens and windows function as portals to the outside world, channelling the 'very architectures of looking and seeing', which help to situate the spaces in relation to street level, and invariably creating tension between interior and exterior realms.

Given the camera's continuous glide, the viewer cannot linger over particular scenarios. Like *Quarry*, numerous in-film references to architecture's visual culture forge layers of meaning. Ubiquitous 2D renderings and 3D maquettes generate miniature scenes-within-scenes: fantasy spaces that continually reference the larger economy of seduction within speculative development. Though the films render no implicit commentary or judgement, wide-ranging discussions are propounded, not least the dominant cultures and homogenising forces of globalisation and their burgeoning impact across all spheres of life. ■

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Edinburgh and Dundee Round-up Collective • Fruitmarket Gallery • The Hannah Maclure Centre

On entering the Weimar Bauhaus in 1922, the artist Anni Albers had little enthusiasm for the practice that would ultimately entrance her; she only joined the weaving workshop because stained glass was full, and she later recalled thinking that textiles were 'sissy'. Yet the abstract wall hangings Albers subsequently developed undermined the gendered stereotypes that she herself initially associated with weaving, placing it at the centre of modernist debates about the relationship between the artisanal and the mass produced, and the pedagogic aspirations of 'good design'.

Albers's practice and the issues it catalyses underpin **Katie Schwab's** 'Together in a Room' at Collective in Edinburgh. The exhibition evolved through Collective's Satellites Programme, a residency for early career artists in Scotland. As a result, while there are only two works here – a tapestry entitled *Sampler* and the video *Dedicated to my great teachers*, both 2016 – they communicate a rich body of thought. In *Sampler*, practise stitches and embroidered doodles float across a gigantic field of loose-woven white fabric, like organisms viewed through a microscope. Rendered on the scale of a large abstract canvas, *Sampler* infers that paths to modernist abstraction were forged across several media, not just painting. It pays homage to the feminist reclamation of textile work, exemplified by Rozsika Parker's iconic intervention *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* of 1984; *Sampler's* motifs derive from an embroidery manual owned by the artist's grandmother, spliced with others by women designers including Enid Marx and Sonia Delaunay.

Schwab's feminist politics also prompt reflections on education and labour. *Dedicated to my great teachers* lifts its title from the

epigraph of Albers's 1965 book *On Weaving*. The video intercuts flashes of digitised 16mm film, covered in hand-painted abstract patterns, with footage of St Catherine's College at the University of Oxford – designed by the modernist architect Arne Jacobsen during the postwar expansion of higher education – and of the Phoenix Pottery Studio in London, which was established in an attempt to perform triage on the current government's debilitating cuts to adult education services (including funding for mature university students). A scrolling text from a memoir by Schwab's grandmother, recounting how she travelled to England from Berlin in 1939 and found work as a machinist in a textile factory, holds this imagery together. Through Mia Schwab's voice, *Dedicated to my great teachers* contrasts sites of learning both privileged and precarious against the alienated labour of the factory, traces the shifting value placed on the hand-made and the machine-made, and touches on the simultaneous realisation and compromise of modernist utopian ideals through the mechanics of the production line.

In *On Weaving*, Albers praises 'tactile sensibility', reflecting on the paradox that while 'modern industry saves us endless labour and drudgery' it also 'bars us from taking part in the forming of

Katie Schwab
Together in a Room
2016 installation view

Sara Barker
installation view at
Fruitmarket Gallery



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Flash, 2015, Ruth Barker, courtesy of the artist

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Funded by Arts Council England Grants for the Arts, and Creative Scotland

material'. Tactile sensibility links Schwab's investigations with **Sara Barker's** exhibition 'Change-The-Setting' at Fruitmarket Gallery nearby. Although Barker's materials include canvas, aluminium sheeting, brass and steel rods, paint and Perspex, there is a sense in which her works are, if not quite analogous to weaving, then at the very least based on a process of formal warp and weft while also evoking the use of materials like wire and cellulose by modernist textile designers. The earliest works on display are the result of Barker taking geometric linear designs and rendering them as three-dimensional metal structures. They elegantly bisect the air, ironically boxing and framing sections of negative space. The etiolated metal tracteries of pieces like *Love Letter*, 2012, are overlaid with sections of canvas which in turn are covered with expressionistic passages of oil paint, acrylic and watercolour. Each section looks tacky to the touch, their accretions of studio silt peeling like old skin. These sutured ligaments allude to bandages, sticking plaster and hastily improvised masking-tape fixes.

Like Schwab, Barker has titled one of her works *sampler*, 2013, animating its metal armatures with a liquid overlay of colour that achieves the sheen of floral silks. A series of diamond forms hangs from this delicate support, glistening like oversized Art Deco jewellery. This engagement with histories of design becomes particularly apparent in the larger, more recent and robust-looking works confidently occupying Fruitmarket's airy upper floor. Two sculptures transform the basic template of the dressing-room screen into outlandish formulations: *irradiations across hemispheres*, 2016, is a fantasy of anti-functional clear Perspex panels that are linked with ribbons of metal and polished brass rods; while in *metamorphosis of friends disappeared subtle structures*, 2016, Barker suspends panels painted in the moody aquamarines of a 1970s bathroom suite within a fretwork of black metal.

Barker's works condense numerous references to modernist design, architecture and sculpture. The welded-steel geometries of her wall pieces evoke the American sculptor David Smith's fusion of environment and abstraction in works like *Hudson River Landscape*, 1951, while painted transparencies cite Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)*, 1915-23. Abstracted rug and screen designs for the Omega workshop by Bloomsbury artists like Vanessa Bell also spring to mind, again recalling the tension within Modernism between the promotion of hand-crafted unique objects and the desire that affordable design be integrated into everyday life. The theatricality of Barker's work encapsulates the idealistic indulgence, as well as the exhilarating ambition, motivating such projects.

Schwab's *Together in a Room*, which occupies Collective's project space, also provides a site for discussions and screenings. A similar ethos is in operation further north at the Hannah Maclure Centre. **The Mother Load: Dundee** is a group show that forms a setting for workshops and activities. 'The Mother Load' began in 2012 as a gesture of support and solidarity between two artists based in Texas, Lesli Robertson and Natalie Macellaio. From there it morphed into a global network exploring how mothers balance creativity with domestic labour and care. Given the historical centrality of textiles to women's work, it is fitting that the project is visualised here through an animated film in which webs of stitched lines trace the relationships between its nodal points.

The works in 'The Mother Load: Dundee' are the result of collaboration, either between artists or between artists and their

children. Macellaio and Robertson have worked with mothers from a local parents group to make cyanotype prints, subsequently stitched together to form a quilted wall hanging. In the joint video work *House Arrest: Domestic Actions*, 2016, Zoë Irvine and Pernille Spence amplify the micro-aggressions of domestic demands, pouring milk into a glass until it overflows, cracking egg after egg into a bowl until the obscene mass of yolks flops out over the side in a viscous, anarchic mess. Throughout the exhibition, clusters of copper plates bristle on the walls, marked with the gently oxidising fingerprints of children and carers. The reverse sides are stamped with a QR code which, when scanned, links through to the artists' websites. It may make for slightly awkward viewing, but if you dig out a smartphone the results convey the scale and diversity of the group, casting the work on display as the tip of the iceberg.

'The Mother Load' impresses the politics of specific bodies and lives with a direct intensity that contrasts with the more allusive modes of Schwab and Barker. Yet Schwab's project in particular references the ways in which Modernism attempted to deny gendered subjectivity while nonetheless reinforcing limiting constructs of who could be an artist and what media counted. Following the lead of Albers in *On Weaving*, for Schwab, Barker and the many artists encompassed by 'The Mother Load', reclaiming the materiality of different media enables the continuing work of challenging and contesting such constructs. ■

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London Round-up

Cell Project Space • Carlos/Ishikawa • Limoncello

The title of **Iain Ball's** exhibition at Cell Project Space is indicative of the artist's practice. Seemingly a four-word non sequitur, 'Praseodymium Intracrine Signal Aggregate' demands semantic research. However, while the dismantling of the title may reveal individual definitions (praseodymium is a malleable, silvery metal in the lanthanide group, a series of chemical elements collectively known as the rare earth elements; intracrine refers to a hormone which acts inside a cell and regulates intracellular events) their cumulative or 'aggregate' significance remains unclear. Instead, the process reveals fundamental aspects of Ball's practice and his predilection for channelling them into narratives held together solely through his own constructions.

In 2011 Ball began the *Rare Earth Sculpture Project*, which utilises as starting points for self-contained sculptural systems the 17 rare earth elements that are often mined for use in computers, smartphones and drones. *Praseodymium Intracrine Signal Aggregate* is the ninth instalment in this series, and centres on a large aluminium and steel sculpture. Framed within an analysis of the metaphorical intracrine effects of paranoia as a social agent, the structure is posited as a 'psychotechnical artefact' which harvests praseodymium in order to transmute anxiety, fear, irrationality and delusions, irrespective of political and social influences.

The form itself resembles a large, uninviting tent, enclosed within a square of white tarpaulin so that it is only visible through tiny frayed openings. The corners are reinforced