

FORWARD MOTION: PREVIEWS

Rachel Potts selects some of the most interesting painting shows around.

Varda Caivano

2 June – 22 July 2007

Thinly applied, softly handled paint suggests a shifty conventionality in Varda Caivano's works, which touch on portraiture or still-life, and the artist's 'inner world,' as if they might belong in a psychologist's living-room. Their strength lies in their straightlaced, slightly Post-Impressionist concern with perception and paint, and that woolly point of crossing-over between the two, where the medium seems to do something that maybe nothing else can.

Chisenhale Gallery, 64 Chisenhale Rd, London E3

T: +44 (0)20 8981 4518

'The Painting of Modern Life'

4 October – 30 December 2007

Hayward director Ralph Rugoff curates a museum survey based on the translation of the photographic vision into paint; maybe not the most original painting show premise, but a great chance to see lots of influential work under one roof. Take some stock about image-making since the 1960s with old favourites Gerhard Richter and Vija Celmins alongside more recent artists Ebehard Havekost, Elizabeth Peyton and Wilhelm Sasnal.

The Hayward Gallery, South Bank Centre, London SE1

T: +44 0870 380 4300

Hernan Bas

2 June – 28 July 2007

Elements of 'Brideshead Revisited', fairy-tales, and medieval horror inhabit the work, all undercut by a rough, painterly style, richly romantic, troubled and kind of rubbish. Modern subculture and fashion crop up along with queer iconography, historic melodrama and shy sexuality.

Victoria Miro Gallery, 16 Wharf Road, London N1

T: +44 (0)20 7336 8109

Mari Sunna

7 June – 15 July 2007

Finnish artist Mari Sunna's bold, inky images have been compared to the paintings of Marlene Dumas. Her simplified, naïve and cartoon-like characters create a blank but emotive collection of almost road-sign emptiness. Like folk-art given a clean and sinister modern darkness, her paint-stained, washy style becomes queasily Baconesque.

The Approach, 47 Approach Road, London E2

T: +44 (0)20 8983 3878

Allison Shulnik

27 June – 31 July 2007

An ex-student of Experimental Animation in LA, Allison Shulnik's first solo London show features history-painting sized works in thick, sculptural oil paint. Blobs of impasto flip in and out of being part of her images, and Shulnik purposefully allows herself only to use old, dried-up brushes. She paints imagined narratives or animals, as if from foreboding myths, with a child-like intrigue and an LA lightness, along with something more grown-up and dark.

Rokeby Gallery, 37 Store Street, London WC1

T: +44 (0)20 7168 9942

Kounosuke Kawakami

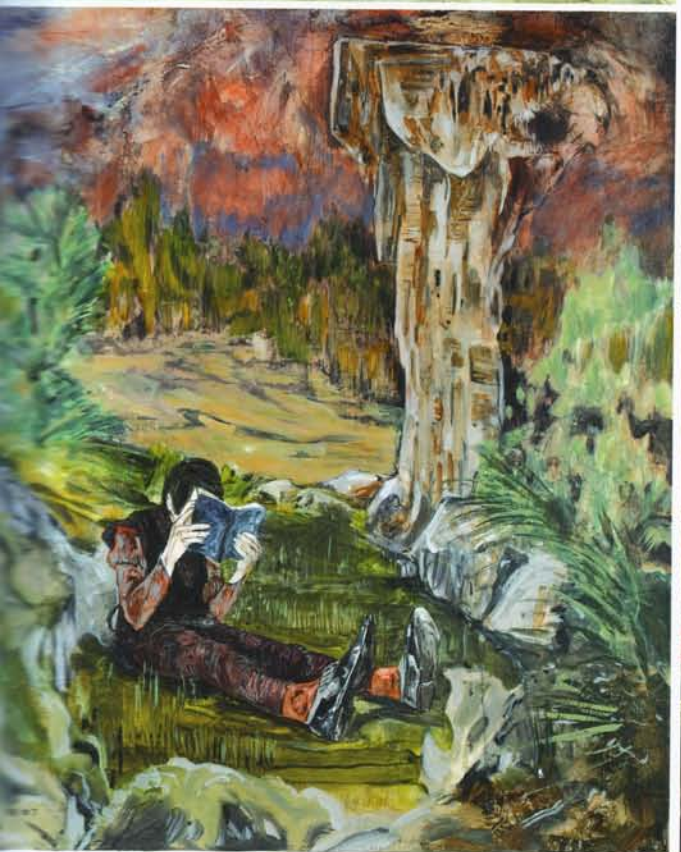
4 May - 2 June 2007

Kounosuke Kawakami's show at Houldsworth promises a collaged world of si-fi and romanticism with papery-flat atmospheric oil paintings. Steeped in Japanese visuals, both traditional and digital, his work is kind of toxic but satisfying and shows quite a sweet concern for natural beauty and its demise at the hand of industry.

Houldsworth Gallery, 50 Pall Mall Deposit,

124-128 Barlby Road, London W10

T: +44 (0)20 8969 6166



Far left column from top to bottom:
Varda Caivano 'Untitled' 2004,
oil on canvas, 45.5x61cm,
courtesy the artist & Victoria Miro Gallery;
Franz Gertsch 'Kranenburg', 1970,
dispersion on unprimed half-linen,
200x300cm, © Franz Gertsch;
Hernan Bas 'Mephistopheles, at 17
(reading poetry)' 2007, mixed media on
linen, 61x51cm, courtesy the artist &
Victoria Miro Gallery;
Near left column from top to bottom:
Mari Sunna 'Again' 2005, oil on board,
35x30.5cm;
Allison Schulnik 'Green Man' 2006, oil
on canvas, 122x122cm, © the artist;
Kounosuke Kawakami 'Red Flower' 2007,
mixed media on canvas, 190x130cm,
courtesy of Houldsworth Gallery.
Overleaf: Ursula Llewellyn's studio,
photography by Paul Murphy