

Orange around

Diaphanous fellow, marked by time, screening what I know so well. Heavy head, overhead, spare and barely touching as we pass. I can see your seams and your seams see me. I could also hear you, what were you thinking? I was thinking about touching you, but your guard was nearby. I used to know every corner, and now bathed in orange light, I can't recognise you at all. Always humming you, a reminder that you are not empty, or closed. But perhaps you are closed to me.

I was in my early twenties...and at the time, of course, being a young intellectual, I wanted desperately to get away, see something different, throw myself into something practical....One day, I was on a small boat with a few people from a family of fishermen....as we were waiting for the moment to pull in the nets, an individual known as Petit-Jean...pointed out to me something floating on the surface of the waves. It was a small can, a sardine can...It glittered in the sun. And Petit-Jean said to me - You see that can? Do you see it? Well it doesn't see you.

(Lacan 1981, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, Jacques-Alain Miller (ed), Alan Sheridan (trans), New York: Norton)

Kate Newby, [Always humming](#), Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 17 July - 29 August 2015.



Kate Newby, 'Always humming', (installation view), 2015



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Kate Newby, 'Always humming', (installation view), 2015

To be outside, to be inside, to be free, to be bound, to be

Walking up to Kate Newby's ceramic wind chimes at *Between being and doing*, a group show at Utopian Slumps, I was aware that I wouldn't be able to hear them clink in the wind from inside the gallery. I was talking to the curator about another piece of Newby's in which she traced two outdoor desire paths to where they each met and then filled the worn cross-path puddle with concrete. I thought it was an interesting action. The way Newby's art works for me is its play on landscape; it wants to be outside and doesn't really seem to need the gallery. Don't get me wrong; it looks good in the gallery and brings the outside in, but it's transient, ready to roam.

Last Wednesday night, Melbourne [Nite Art](#) happened and roam it did—a bunch of drunk women broke one of the chimes by using their hands to emulate a devastating wind. As the gallerist came to the rescue they fled with the broken chime. Out it went. I thought it was poetic in a weird way as Newby's romance is elsewhere already. Off the grid.

Free feudal barter store, Christopher LG Hill's Studio 12 show at Gertrude Contemporary, has Hill filling the space with his own work; publications, paintings, sculptures, records, toys, collages, Asian milk drinks. The wooden lattice that covers the floor is like a tilled field from which the objects shoot upwards. Some things are more mulched down than others but these parts give nutrients to the work as a whole and there are some juicy fruits to be taken. Everything in the show is up for grabs and free. I took a mirror-tiled bust of an adolescent home.

And then there's new work by Melinda Harper at Block Projects. Her paintings strike me as rich, like she needs what she paints. Each feels executed as though the finest things in life cost a bit but not heaps; cadmium red and yellow, cerulean

blue, studio rent.

Harper's painting style is nonchalant and frank. The aesthetic action versus its perceived monetary value; greasy tendrils of oil paint that crisp up where the masking tape hasn't sealed thoroughly; the coolness of her one coat of oil paint. The work is not over-prepared like a lot of bad flat designer painting of the moment, it has soul. It's done as it needs to be.

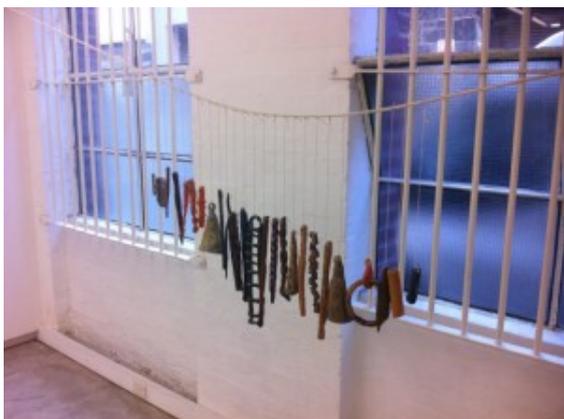
[Between being and doing](#) (Kate Newby, Joshua Petherick, Sriwhana Spong, Alex Vivian), curated by Brooke Babington and Melissa Loughnan, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne, 27 July - 17 August 2013.

Free feudal barter, [Christopher LG Hill](#), Studio 12, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 25 July - 23 August 2013.

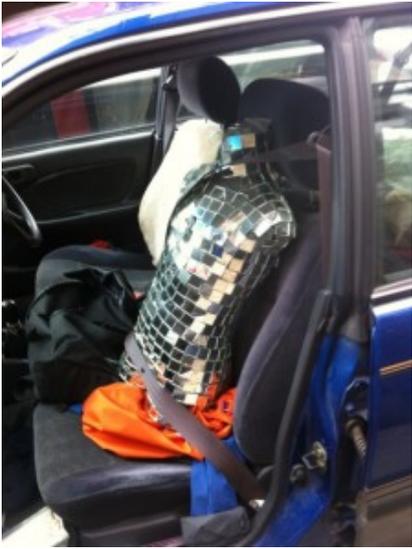
[Melinda Harper](#), Block Projects, Melbourne, 23 July - 17 August 2013.



Kate Newby



Kate Newby



Christopher LG Hill



Christopher LG Hill



Melinda Harper



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