

For immediate release:

Aaron Fickling & Mark Davey
Post Belief

28 November – 11 December 2010

Private view, Saturday 27 November, 6-9pm

Unit 7c, ABC Wharf, King Street, Norwich NR1 1QH

Open Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 5.30pm

The logo for 'post belief' is displayed in white lowercase letters on a solid black rectangular background.

Horace Blue is pleased to present in partnership with Artsaft, an exhibition of new work by Aaron Fickling and Mark Davey.

We find it hard to look at what comes after. Our consciousness doesn't really allow it. To perceive life after death is something that has long occupied the minds of philosophers and academics the world over, and of course is a favourite subject of the world's religions, a discussion as fascinating as it is long. A post apocalyptic future has always been a timely staple of Hollywood also, drawing in voyeuristic audiences and reaping the rewards. And it is this vision of the future, one that is usually without fail ominous and full of foreboding, that runs throughout the two artists' work on show here.

Cast your mind forward to a future in which humans are largely extinct for whatever reasons you care to conjure - a future in which optimism and hope are but distant and vaguely remembered words, and in which machines are now the de facto. With the last of the survivors driven underground, the final trace of the human race is their markings and drawings they left behind, a secret last call to arms that manages to pass under the machines' radar. A combination of archaic seeming symbols infused with jarring colours promise a message that asks to be deciphered, reminding us of ancient languages that have fallen to the passing of time. The way the paintings are composed suggests a hierarchy of leader and subject in a society that is now struggling to survive, or perhaps it's more a reference to the constant tension the paintings demand: a ruling of rank and protocol between artist and viewer. Talismans and sacred symbols have been commonplace in every religion throughout history, controlling people's belief and faith without question. Is this a naivety or a sign of a higher understanding? Throughout the paintings, Fickling plays on our beliefs in these objects and knick-knacks, testing and pushing our understanding of these belief systems.

What of the rulers of this *New World Order*? In a world where humans are rare and in hiding, the machines are able to thrive, their intelligence now far outstripping ours. But what is the role of a machine in today's world? This is what is at the core of Davey's mechanical works, having the distinct mark of being handmade and imperfect, not attributes we often associate with a machine. Neither do we think of a machine as being delicate and sensual, even sexual, as machines are ordinarily built with a function in mind. The machines on show force us to question these notions, as they display and repeat their tongue in cheek sexually charged actions. We find ourselves with a feeling of anxiety and are left uncomfortable by their seemingly functionless being and their worryingly close relationships with light bulbs and steel. Is it possible for a machine to be perverted? Or can a machine only ever be just that: a machine?

This show explores these ideas and relationships of a New World Order, and of something coming to an end whilst something else is just beginning. Aaron Fickling and Mark Davey explore the vast feeling of *post* life or being, something that is almost impossible for each of us to comprehend although being so widely studied and considered all around the world. Perhaps this show is more Hollywood than it is philosophical, but that doesn't mean it's any less likely to happen. To consider our future is not just the job of film directors, philosophers or religions, it is for believers. And after all, we all believe in something, don't we?

Aaron Fickling was born in Norwich in 1985, where he lives and works today. He studied at the Norwich School of Art & Design (2004-2005) before being accepted to attend the prestigious UCL Slade School of Fine Art, London (2005-2009). He is the founder of Norwich-based, contemporary art organisation, Artsaft. Fickling's works have been included in a number of group shows including *Volume 7*, Zimmer.Küche.Kabinett, Vienna, Austria, *STEEL*, The Jago, London, *Border*, Slade Research Centre, London and *Systems & Patterns III*, artbelowzero°, London. He has work in private collections in Austria, Italy and the UK. This is his first show with Horace Blue.

Mark Davey was born in Bristol in 1985. He graduated from the UCL Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2008. He is currently studying sculpture MA at the Royal College of Art in London. In 2008, Davey won New Sensations – an art prize organised by the Saatchi Gallery and Channel 4. Recent shows include, *Edging* (solo show), Backlit, Nottingham, *Embrace*, ECA, Edinburgh, *Failure (and Barbecue Paint)*, Tim Pritchard Gallery RCA, London and *Notes from the Underground*, James Taylor Gallery, London. This is his first show with both Horace Blue and Artsaft.

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Editor's notes

Contact: Keith Webber
keithwebber@hotmail.com
+44 (0) 7917 819 007

Horace Blue gallery was established by architect, Keith Webber in 2007 and has shown work by local, national and international artists, including significant shows by world-renowned Pop artist, Colin Self. The exhibition space has recently moved to a bigger venue in Norwich where a larger and greater variety of work can be displayed. Further information regarding the gallery can be found online at www.horaceblue.com

Artsaft is an artist-coordinated organisation presenting a platform for artists to successfully engage with the contemporary fine art scene at its highest level. Established in 2009 and based in Norwich UK, Artsaft is focused on making the space and community available for both emerging and established artists not only to contribute to but dramatically shape the art world. Being unequivocally concerned with looking forward, Artsaft approaches its exhibitions and events in a fresh, investigative and experimental way. Artsaft believes that artworks can exist in an infinite number of unconventional contexts as well as the more traditional gallery format. The fact that Artsaft does not carry one singular position or attitude towards artistic practice allows for new and extremely interesting dialogues to develop.

Further information regarding Artsaft can be found online at www.artsaft.com
Contact Aaron Fickling on [+44 \(0\) 7590 804 304](tel:+4417590804304) or via email: mail@aaronfickling.com

Marion Catlin, Cultural Development Officer for Norwich City Council and former organiser of the Norwich Fringe Festival, comments: "Aaron Fickling is an up-and-coming young artist who has from his first days at Slade, shown exceptional promise in his originality as an artist and his ability to push the boundaries. A more rare quality is that he has the initiative and motivation to instigate action. From his early experiences exhibiting with the Fringe, he has matured into a force to be reckoned with. It is fantastic to see that he has started Artsaft and is collaborating with Horace Blue. I look forward to seeing the show he has created with Mark Davey."

Artists' websites for your reference:

www.aaronfickling.com
www.mark-davey.com

Print-quality colour images of artwork can either be requested from Keith Webber or downloaded from: www.artsaft.com/page5.htm

The artists will be available for interview/photographic opportunity for the duration of the show. If you would like to make an appointment please contact Keith Webber.



Left Mark Davey, *Rimming Machine II*, 2010, dimensions variable

Right Aaron Fickling, *Second of Six*, 2010, 76 X 76cm, acrylic and marker pen on canvas

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