

Inês Rebelo *This Otherworld*: The Bun House, 96 Peckham High Street, London, SE15

Peckham is a densely populated area with a high concentration of ethnic minorities representing a rich cultural background. In 2001 census estimated that a mere 25.73% of the residents represent White British background¹, so it does come to a little surprise when I enter the Bun House that is primarily occupied by White British clientele. Add to that, the dark interior and hypnotic atmosphere of the pub, with stale light hitting the empty pint glasses set against the boisterous High Street and it is already otherworld-ly.

However, Inês Rebelo's solo exhibition inside the pub provides us with yet another set of realm – a form of contemporary artistic intervention in a public space creating a platform that is at once as thought provoking as Hans Ulrich Obrist's kitchen exhibition. The contemporaneous exhibition co-exists with the pub, gently colliding and subsiding whilst the locals sip their drinks with very little words in-between. It finally becomes apparent that the pre-existing audience is an intrinsic part of the show as much as the actual works exhibited inside the pub. As the red clock on the wall quietly strikes the hour (*One Day in Saturn #2*, 2011), we are seduced by the multiple personalities of this exhibition – the drinking English culture and that of contemporary arts.

The third regime this exhibition experience holds, is the one the artist reveals through her works. Cosmological notions and astronomical depictions fixate our eyes through the pub bench *Pub Rover* (2011), and the painting *37 Cluster* (2009). In the small back room (where a double bed would barely fit) a pub bench is covered in postcard size solar panels, equipped with sets of wheels, as well as an antenna. Dressed with a reflective surface, the wheelie bench is frozen in a moment where it carefully overrides an obstacle – a stack of books. The *Pub Rover* effectively translates its abstract nature inside a claustrophobic condition. Within the exhibition, it acts as the junction where the context of the pub meets the subject of the artists practice, yet this context-specific work is inherently ambiguous because of its dysfunctional nature (both as a bench and as an immobile mechanism carrying solar panels in a dimly lit room). Next to it, another reference to our planetary system is made. *37 Cluster* evokes humour by alluding to a constellation identified only by its visual mimicry to the numerical value.

Above the roof of the pub is where the artist's highest point of achievement can be seen. Standing two meters high, the aluminium sheet has a solitary presence on the tarmac sheets. *Proxima Centauri* (2011) adopts its form from omnipresent billboards, but this one also proposes an omniscient presence. The coagulated and conjoined flats, houses, and other buildings metamorphose to create a behemoth made of old bricks in various gradations of yellow and brown, whilst the relatively new Morrison's (substantially unified) building dominates the easterly landscape of Peckham. Amidst the chaos *Proxima Centauri* rests in the position alone, emitting hope and failed aspiration for another planet, a new relation. Like a silent protester *Proxima Centauri* faces the residences, calling for supporters and new believers, that there is another world, reality, or dimension, yet by the same token, perhaps it could also be acting as a flare gun to indicate that *we* are *the otherworld* someone or something is searching for, in another universe, at another time.

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¹ <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>