

## Letter from London

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# LETTER FROM LONDON

By Melissa Lam

London: Easter Weekend

London's ever-vibrant art scene deserves a nod of recognition as I headed to the United Kingdom in search of new and interesting shows. The theme in London was crosscurrents of globalization and the intersplicing between history and the present, country to country. Rather than focusing on nationalistic shows, the archaic models of the past, the new London art scene reflects the patterns of multiculturalism and globalization that reflect the intersplices of ghettos and enclaves that make the city quintessentially new British.

Tate Britain

Tate Triennale: AlterModern

Curator: Nicholas Bourriaud

Nicholas Bourriaud's show of *AlterModernity* (his own word to replace postmodernism) featured international artists that specialized in working on themes of world travel, Diaspora, and global interconnectedness. Artists such as Navim Rawanchaikul (Thailand) showed the effects of Pakistan Diaspora in the native country of his birth in a documentary style video as well as featuring several of his trademark paintings. "Places of Rebirth" featured a Bollywood style film landscape with the artist as taxi driver and his parents in the backseat of the car surrounded by Indian citizens hoisting a Pakistani flag.

Artists Bob and Roberta Smith featured an architectural structure of placards emulating the language of protest and political sloganeering from around the world while Lindsay Seer's work *Extramission 6 (Black Maria)* documentary on becoming a living camera demonstrated themes of personal memory and insularity. The show was heavily curated, Bourriaud's hand was in everything, all works cohered strictly to his proposed theme, the works were carefully placed in direct conversation with each other. A beautiful display of interconnectedness and translinkage that stretches across global implications and fosters border crossings.

Tate Modern

Turbine Hall

The Unilever Series

TH.2058

Dominique Gonzalez Forster

TH. 2058 is the ninth commissioned work co-sponsored by the Unilever series and Forster the latest artist to use the problematic and challenging space of the Turbine Hall in the Tate Modern. Her innovative use of the often overwhelming architectural space is to envision it as a futuristic hiding place for sculptures, a dry bomb shelter used to house art pieces, like animals from the rain. Recreating famous public art pieces such as Bruce Nauman's *Untitled (Three Large Animals)*, Louise Bourgeois overarching Maman



Claes Oldenburg and Coosje Van Bruggen  
*Apple Core* 1992  
Reproduced with the permission of the  
Oldenburg Van Bruggen Foundation

and Claus Oldenburg's and Coosje Van Bruggen's *Apple Core*, she has also filled the space with bunk beds and cages that are scattered throughout the hall, locked inside are dystopic science fiction genre novels. The premise is art locked away or hidden in the rain, and Forster explains that she uses the Turbine hall as a hiding place for them in a post-apocalyptic dystopic world.

Saatchi and Saatchi Museum

[www.saatchi.co.uk](http://www.saatchi.co.uk)

Unveiled: New Art from the Middle East

Following Saatchi's stellar survey show of China Art now is his new collection from the Middle East featuring such big-weight artists as: Ahmad Morshedloo, Hayv Kahraman and newer younger works by Marwan

Rechmaoui and Halim Al-Karim. Among the most prominent works in the collection is Kadar Attia's *Ghost* installation featuring stunning tinfoil sculptures lined up in prayer to Mecca. Shadi Ghadirian's *Everyday Series* photographs featuring a whimsical collection of women in chadors, their faces covered by household items such as a yellow dishwashing glove, a mop, and an iron are both witty and informative. Finally, Ahmed Alsoudani's lush, evocative paintings featuring a dystopic war-torn landscape are both political and timeless, the magical realism and Goya-like detail in etching use the symbolism of fantastic animals coupled with the political reality of war-torn landscapes in Afghanistan and Iraq. All in all, an extremely informative and stellar look at new artwork from the Middle East.