

## Daddy in the Algorithm – Conor Kelly

Conor Kelly's show at Queens Park Railway Club stinks – literally. There's a fug left over from the residue of the opening, with wine stains spattering the floor from the opening, in one case a gold chain having oxidised into wine spilled from a wine bag, mounted on a wall, which was apparently in full use during the opening.

To even get into this room you have to duck your head beneath some plywood, a further measure introduced to disorient the viewer on entering what Kelly envisaged as a middle-management party gone awry, a disparaging comment on how he perceives his role working Glasgow School of Art.

Most exhibitions try to scrupulously efface all traces of their openings, events which in some cases can upstage the actual art. In this case the debris is proudly displayed, wine spat on expanses of linen, helium-filled balloons now deflated and trailing across the floor.

Kelly is primarily known as a painter, and an accomplished one; the first thing you see on entering the gallery, after the cute monkey poster on the door, is another image of a monkey, a painted one, but bifurcated on its axis and turned on its side against a green background evoking a jungle, so that at first glance it appears to be a biomorphous blob.

The monkey comes to be the most recognisable trope guiding one through the exhibition, the first painting echoed in a realistic portrait of a monkey on a tree, but mounted above a crazed tropical cocktail holder – that opening again. This is indicative of the entire formal language of the show; while Kelly is primarily known as a painter, and an accomplished one, here he sets out to challenge traditional taxonomies and hierarchies.

A deflated monkey balloon is set into the wall, its face partially obscured, as if in shame, by a folded sheet of paper, beside a painting of Corsica, the island – Kelly claims to like its shape.

I believe that Corsica also has greater personal significance for Kelly, as do many of the objects in this quite private show. Kelly previously used the space as his studio while the gallery wasn't exhibiting, and this may have encouraged the intrusion of the domestic sphere into the artistic space which occurs here. He's obsessed with the physical traces left by work in the gallery, and as well as all the spat wine stains has gone as far as to incorporate his own hair into paintings, most spectacularly with a cone made of hair protruding from one canvas.

The wine bag on the wall is matched by milk bags, as used by Kelly's wife to express milk. If at first glance the title, Daddy in the Algorithm, seems to evoke the topical, with connotations of Trump and feedback loops, it comes to be more associated with the domestic when we realise that the object placed highest in the gallery, out of the spectator's reach, is a bag containing the umbilical cords of his children, suggesting where Kelly thinks the real hierarchy resides.

While ultimately this is quite a cryptic - even hermetic at points – show, it's playful, inventive, and completely unpredictable.

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