

Excerpt from interview with Martin Clark, Artistic Director of Tate St Ives, about Borrowed Cold Lodge. (From catalogue Adam Chodzko Proxigean Tide, Tate, 2008)

MC: There's a way in which your work appears to arise out of a weaving together of a kind of absolute pragmatism – using the 'ordinariness' of your immediate situation or circumstances – and a surreal or absurd fantasy. And this seems to be the case again in the new work you are producing for the Heron Mall, *Borrowed Cold Lodge*. In the work for *Tate Etc.* you have reimagined the Loggia as a sun temple, and from that space, as a visitor, you move directly into the Heron Mall where you have created a fantasy of cold weather, a winter store.

AC: The Heron Mall seems an odd room. It feels a bit like a Methodist chapel mixed with a cycle storage area. I wanted to change the status of that first public space of the gallery into that of a staff cloakroom or locker room – something which the visitor would pass through feeling they were somehow bypassing the normal entrance. Instead they were accessing a private space; a chamber beyond the bounds of the self-conscious desire for scrutiny that the gallery normally encourages.

In the past year or so I had made *M-path*, a threshold that proposed that visitors make a physical and symbolic transformation by changing into second hand footwear, to enhance their perception of the spaces beyond it. And also *Sowmat*, at Signal Galleri, Malmö, where I made a mud trough in place of a doormat, so that gallery visitors brought in dirt as they entered the space. *Sowmat's* mud was made up of very specific ingredients: clay dug out from a deep excavation made for a transport terminal that would create a new centre for Malmö; rainwater from the leaking roof of the abandoned Rooseum (previously the home of a great art collection) and 1 million wormwood seeds. But *Sowmat* was also specifically a winter work where visitors turning up to a pristine gallery through the January sludge would actually become dirtier upon entering, but dirtier with a material that suggested some alchemical potential. *Borrowed Cold Lodge* for the Heron Mall stems from these ideas of entrances and transformation, and of making a beginning that is somehow 'wrong' ('starting off on the wrong foot' again). You kept on reminding me when I visited that it will be summer when the show is open, and many of the visitors will come in straight off the beach ...

MC: That's right, lots do. We get sand drifting into the gallery from people's flip-flops, and lots of them will be looking at the art in their swimwear.

AC: Exactly, so this is why I began thinking about creating a sign of the opposite season, by borrowing a large quantity of very warm, protective clothing to store in this space. There is something very disturbing about looking at a thick coat in semi-darkness on a hot sunny day. In *Yet* (showing in gallery 5) the narrative, which speaks of a crisis, begins with another misapprehension. A landscape is seen as being set in early summer, yet all the vegetation is dying. 'Time has accelerated', and a problem needs solving! But the narrator has just got the timing of the visual evidence wrong, and really it is winter. All is as it should be. I'm conscious that making work that uses the 'wrong season' as a device seems a bit trite, and I think that triteness needs to be offered at the start of the work as a false expectation of what is to follow. But there is that British preoccupation with the weather, much increased by current anxieties about global warming – 'The weather has gone crazy!'. JG Ballard's stories often begin with a subject noticing a subtle shift in landscape or weather, and this again precipitates this apocalyptic slippage into another reality.

MC: I guess the Heron Mall itself is quite bunker-like, with its peculiar exterior pebbledash finish on those interior walls; an uncertain kind of space, neither convincingly inside nor outside the building. It also has this very austere atmosphere, as you say, like a chapel, or maybe more like a tomb. When you first started talking about *Borrowed Cold Lodge*, I was picturing the installation as almost like an Egyptian tomb, a hidden chamber that exists in a kind of twilight between two spaces or states: the world and the underworld – full of the possessions and equipment necessary for the next life, all held in a kind of stasis, again a space that is about a transition, a journey, a preparation.

AC: Yes, but all these amazing ideas then get punctured by this very dominant, almost authoritarian, icon of the Heron glass, the stained-glass window that Patrick Heron made for the building. It turns what could be a relatively neutral space into a very charged space. So I wondered if I could shift it from glowing abstraction to a highly specific, short-term, pragmatic functional object (other than as a window!). Therefore the Heron Glass became, for me, a map or plan of how the borrowed winter clothes could be recovered by the lenders, the day after the show ends. Different types of clothing are allocated to different sections of the glass, only becoming activated when the exhibition closes.

MC: I like the way that the Heron window suddenly starts to have this really strong formal relationship with the colours and patterns of the winter gear. It starts to look a bit like the design on a ski jacket or something.

AC: Yes, and again, like the ingredients of *Sowmat* (or indeed the material used for the Mask-Filters or the elements in Plan for a Spell), *Borrowed Cold Lodge* uses the Heron Glass to request an array of elements that is peculiarly exact: 27 items of cold-weather, protective, outer clothing for water use ... 27 winter stable rugs ... 97 winter coats from primary school children ... and so on. It seems to suggest the build-up of a code that will solve or resolve something, but like a lot of the work, it's all based on putting things in the wrong place at the wrong time. So together with the impression of accumulating meaning is the feeling that at any minute it might all unravel, or be washed out to sea again.