

The Adam Art Gallery presents

# Minimal Yet Evocative Read

AA JH

John Hurrell – 23 May, 2012

*Of the other three items, a piece of floor sculpture provides the exhibition title, an old fashioned slide projector shining 'The Usual' in text form on the wall. It is like a New Yorker cartoon. And as a show title, it ironically implies the exhibition is in fact unusual and you'd better not miss it. Or it could be claiming the 'usual' brilliance.*

RM

Auckland

Christina Read

*The Usual*

10 May - 26 May 20012

Christina Read's set of cut out, suede leather, paintings at RM are simple, austere compositions, usually reliant on glued-on concisely-lettered sentences and occasionally, the words of titles.

On the main wall four of these minimal but elegant hangings are butted together in a row. They all vaguely interconnect - formally and conceptually. The first, of six little white rectangles positioned in a curved line (as if a mouth), apparently refers to some European queen's false teeth. It is entitled *Little squares of wax*. Wax is associated with ears, so putting ears to mouths seems to joke about whispering and secrecy. While putting even hardened wax in mouths seems vile and disgusting.

The second seems to also refer to body parts, maybe prosthetic metal noses used to replace noses eroded by syphilis or the result of warfare. *Nose of silver and gold* hints of corruption and greed - the smelling out of money. There is also an ambiguity. Is it one nose or two?

*Ideas for a show (a)* states its own name in block letters, but with horizontal rectangles faintly drawn to enable word positioning and still detectable, no (a), and with slivers of colour peeking around the 'R'. The 'F' and the last 'O' are hard to read - a perverse pun perhaps on the artist's surname.

The last work in that suite, *Ideas for a show (b)*, seems to be a tall yellow plinth on a grey mat - though it could be like the two noses with one vertical rectangle obscuring another. Or part (a) obscuring part (b) - the title self-destructing.

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*Balloons and rubber bands* is just that, those white and yellow items glued in a posey-like cluster onto an uneven, dark blue, mutilated



