

might have been a bit OTT.
 \begin{tikzpicture}
 \draw (0,0) -- (1,0) -- (1,1) -- (0,1) -- (0,0);
 \draw (0,0) -- (1,1);
 \draw (1,0) -- (0,1);
 \end{tikzpicture}
 I've been thinking about this

(advertisement)

272

273

274

Art Fair
17/06 – 22/06

**LILI
DUJOURIE**

JAN MOT AT ART BASEL

ANDREA BÜTTNER AT UNLIMITED

Jan Mot
Petit Sablon / Kleine Zavel 10
1000 Brussels, Belgium

Hall 2.1 Booth S9
Messeplatz, Basel (CH)

Hall 1
Messeplatz, Basel (CH)

Congratulations on getting water from	d
y	t
i	a
s	[
t	S
v	e
I	
t	
*	e
z	-
t	y
v	I
t	.
I	y
s	f
r	n
y	e
g	-
l	f
r	r
t	e
g	.y
y	y
l	L
i	
T	I
y	L
I	y
z	e
Predicted non current air year would	

£	1
(-
I	2
t	3
i	-
I	1
l	
I	1
z	2
v	-
(3
f	3
t	2
s	2
s	3
z	1
t	1
r	1
l	2
v	2
t	/
s	2
l	3
s	1
I	1
e	
L	2
S	3

the end of the room, lighting up

kitchen, dressed in sweats, he rubbed	1
s	3
c	3
f	1
t	3
t	1
c	2
a	1
t	2
f	1
c	2
u	3
r	1
l	1
a	2
c	1
y	1
J	1
F	
J	1
c	1
F	2
t	2
t	2
s	1
F	2
f	1
i	1
t	2
Who spends a lot of time sitting down,	

Tris Vonna-Michell

The Art of Clockmaking

By
Andrew Hunt

MANCHESTER, APR. 25 — *For twenty years, Tris Vonna-Michell has employed analogue and digital technology alongside innovative approaches to installation that encompass performance, sound poetry, printed matter, sculpture, photography and film. Through a trans-generational approach, Tris' father E.E. Vonna-Michell's (1950–2020) photographic and publishing projects from the late 1960s onwards are currently being shown at Moon Grove in Manchester, alongside and integrated with Tris' recent works. The show is entitled 'The Art of Clockmaking' and is the second iteration of a two-part project, the first of which, 'Vonna-Michell's House', curated by Anja Casser and Andrew Hunt, took place at Badischer Kunstverein in Karlsruhe in 2024.*

In 2021, Tris received two-hundred and forty-four boxes of material that his father had accumulated, many of which contained unfinished works, research material and indeterminate objects. E.E. had been involved with counter-cultural artistic movements including auto-destructive art, expanded cinema, sound poetry, and the British poetry revival movements. Through his publishing house Balsam Flex, he worked and collaborated with artists such as Henri Chopin, Bob Cobbing and Allen Fisher to create innovative artists' books and recordings. Examples of material found in E.E.'s boxes included numerous large-format camera components and abstract photographs, which had been deliberately crumpled, left unprotected, scratched and contaminated, as if to be found later and decoded. In this resistance of the creative possibilities offered by such photographic apparatus, Tris perceived parallels with his own work: an encounter with contradiction, abstraction and renewal in archival and time-based media.

The exhibition at Moon Grove comprises a small number of discreet and intimately connected rooms that include E.E.

Vonna-Michell's work within the context of Tris Vonna-Michell's own archive and characteristic performative, sculptural, filmic installations. The result is a series of meticulously interconnected narratives that consist of multi-generational aspects of sound poetry, artistic publishing and countercultural moments, set within the domestic context of a family home.

In concrete terms, as one enters the gallery, the first work encountered is *Boxed Matter* (2022–2025), a slide installation showing images of Balsam Flex artefacts combined with a collection of photographs taken by Tris in late 2023 that show E.E.'s publications held at The British Library's collection in London. This imagery is shown with a sound piece made in collaboration with the artist and oral historian Laura Khan Mitchison, recorded on a walk along the River Thames, which takes the listener through London locations familiar to E.E. and Tris, featuring an interpretative reading of Tris' photographic collages.

The psychogeographic nature of the sound piece, alongside its productive entangling of personal accounts evident in E.E.'s texts and Tris' collages, is also present in the photographic and film series shown in the exhibition. *Nudging & Spooling* (2023–2025), for example, consists of digitised film transfers from 8mm, 16mm and photography by E.E. and Tris. Demonstrating what Tris terms 'a certain technological alchemy' in the aperture or interstice between practices, the work contains slow screen recordings of high-resolution scans belonging to Tris' photographic collages *Collections & Collaborations* (2023–2024) alongside 16mm footage of his hand rummaging through boxes. *Collections & Collaborations (study 1)* (2023), meanwhile, shown in Moon Grove's dining room, consists of photographic prints made using a large format camera, the result of a long process of collating E.E.'s archive. These images comprise constellations of material ranging from artworks, personal and anecdotal ephemera, political or propaganda brochures, newspaper clippings and artefacts.

Essentially, through Tris' activation of his father's collection, which casts myriad archival viewpoints in a montage of personal identity, 'The Art of Clockmaking' folds ideas of time onto tropes of doubling and the uncanny in literature



Tris Vonna-Michell, *The Art of Clockmaking* at Moon Grove, installation view, April 2025 (photo: Michael Pollard)

and art, to enable new readings of historical material. One can claim that Tris' form of trans-generational authorship also stimulates ideas of cultural ancestralism, where a process of intuition or a mongrel system of knowledge serves to scramble any easy idea of art history or contemporaneity through duration and lived experience. This complicated familial context allows new artistic identities to emerge and is one sought by Moon Grove's ongoing programme, which aims to engage with intimate subjects that might develop new forms of curatorial and artistic knowledge.

Tris Vonna-Michell, *The Art of Clock-making*, Moon Grove, Manchester. Till 27 June.



KÖLN, APR 3 - **Andrea Büttner** is the winner of the Cologne Cathedral International Art Competition. In 2023, Büttner was one of fifteen artists invited to participate in the competition, which sought a new artwork for the cathedral—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—that would focus attention on the present and future of Christian-Jewish history. In her practice, Büttner asks foundational questions about how art functions in culture, through the use of imagery evocative of religious themes, and art historical representations of lowliness, vulnerability, and shame. By opening up artistic discourse in these ways, she challenges prevalent value judgments and their underlying belief systems. Büttner's proposal envisions a mural on the end wall of the Chapel of St. Mary in Cologne Cathedral. The mural is painted directly above Stefan Lochner's *Altarpiece of the Patron Saints of Cologne* (1442) and presents a life-size depiction of the stone base of the Torah ark from Cologne's former medieval synagogue. Lochner's altarpiece, which was moved to Cologne Cathedral in 1810, originally stood on the Torah ark's base, replacing the ark after it was damaged in a 1349 pogrom and the synagogue was turned into a council chapel. Her proposed artwork links the Jewish quarter's history to the cathedral, telling a story of foundation and superimposition.

Clothes
I
t
j
c
g
s

E
I
C
r
v
I
f
c
f
f
v
r
A
i
y
c
I
c
t
c
i
e
t
F
v
u
t
v
t
i
c
E

M
v
the computer screen, but one of my hand

had accompanied my position onto the bottle that sat in a champagne bucket. I
t s - a
r - t
- c
- g
t f a
l r I
r - /
r t
1
1
There she is, I've been teaching a senior
ting it down, growing heavier and

Voice Over

by
Mario García Torres

It is late afternoon, the moment just before the end of the day. Dusk. Vision is limited. A few simple forms emerge; it is possible to recognize a minaret, a dome, and little more. Half the image is sky. That space of imagination, the space where ideas come from. But then, a reduction, a synthesis, in the form of a fantasy. A dream, where not everything is given; a suggestion, an invitation. It is a color of light that exists in reality, yes, but only momentarily. A passage that feels almost like a fiction. The stage of a story, a backdrop for a theater piece. It is what gets a narrative to be experienced as truthful. The image is a way to make life possible, in a studio, rather than being on location. A displacement. The beginning of a mediated reality. In fact, it is a call from Hollywood, a call from illusion, from the desire of being. It is pure possibility. Or more so, the impossible. Salvo has managed to make distant extremities coincide in his work; the precognitive and the conscious concur. What seems contradictory, in Salvo's work becomes a perfectly synced playlist. This is where different times collide. Where different ideologies sit for dinner and smile at each other. The uncomfortable made easy.

There is a sense of repetition, a sense of *déjà vu*. I have been here, but it is different. Regardless of the narrative that has been written over the decades about Salvo's radical career path, of a "return" to painting, I have never stopped seeing his work lodged in the discourse known as Conceptual Art. It is possible to paint a landscape while thinking about the issues that concern rational people, the intellectuals, the coherent who eventually turn into romantics, who turn thinking into poetry. It is possible to realign the conception of what the last avant-garde movement, in fact, yearned for.

The passage of time has allowed the conclusion that the moment in which Salvo created immaterial, photographic, and text-based works seems more of an extraordinary deviation than the norm. If it is true that the move was more of a return than a departure, the period of the

early 1970s seems to be overly significant for what happened afterward. Or is it that after Conceptual Art, nothing, absolutely nothing, could be seen in the same light? Is it possible to claim that Conceptual Art managed to erase every other ideology, that absolutely everything that happened afterward comes back to it? Once you go Conceptual, you never go back. It is a gang—once you are part of it, you cannot leave. It curses you forever.

In that sense, I doubt Salvo's "return" to "traditional" painting. There is no return, it does not exist. By the time a return happens, it erases itself, because we are different, we are other people; it is never the same character playing the part. Even if places are identical, they will not be the same either. Salvo's "return" is nothing but doubts. In fact, it makes me doubt perception, it makes me doubt representation. Figuration is never just that. There is an agenda, there is a program. Action overshadows form.

We see the same place again, but it is dawn. We see more of the space, the forms repeat, but also multiply. Something has allowed the frame to open out and reveal what was off-screen before. It's an image of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I am told. It is the extended version, the director's cut, the bonus track. There is the same minaret, the same dome. Same location, different scene. We have spent time *from dusk till dawn*,¹ but there are no vampires. Seven years have passed through the night. Barely anything has moved. There is nobody there. Yet, it is a delusion. A place Salvo had visited in other times. It inhabits the present, but it is merely a flashback. And as such, it is a ghost, an apparition, a specter that is able to bridge time.

In this second image, there is a presence, the phantom maybe, of Giorgio Morandi. Painting the same still life again and again. The second is the sketch for the first. In repetition, time crumbles too. It disappears. It reorders sequence. Then Giorgio de Chirico appears, pretending to crush time too. Referencing the classics while predating the image. A hoax, a market *trucco* turned conceptual gesture. It is, in fact, an act, a movement, a dance step, a balancing act. de Chirico as the proto-conceptualist. I like to think that.

A trickster, who gives more importance to dates than to forms. He is a ventriloquist, playing a stunt we all know is just that, but we decide to enter the game. But when the show is over, it pushes you to ask what is the gesture, what is the operation we were just in front of. That is no more than the legacy of Conceptual Art; its own revenge. It moves back and forth. It is a legacy that is malleable, flexible. It accommodates itself to whatever context and whatever practice.

Like the first, the second is also an empty place. How lonely an image can be. We are all alone, in an image. That is not because the image is devoid of human presence, but because the experience of an image is always practiced from solitude, in one's mind. The experience of an image is a solo. There is always space in-between. It invites us, it seduces us, but it is never complete. It only gives what is needed, so we are able to project. In the incompleteness rests its success. An image is only a proposal, an insinuation. Always showing what it wants. We try to reach it, but we never succeed. We are there, but we cannot inhabit it. *Faraway, So Close!*² It is the beginning of a story, your story. The starting point of a new script. The reference has been mentioned before, but every time it is said, it is different. Every return makes things anew. Every time a story is repeated, it is a different one.

The first time Salvo's work caught my attention it was not with a painting, but his intervention in Harald Szeemann's 1972 documenta. I saw it many years after the exhibition. I was, as always, late. It happened at a time when I was deeply interested not only in conceptual strategies, but also in the most radical gestures within that movement. It smelled like books and old carpet. I remember the moment that sparked my curiosity. Endless bookshelves and soft talking. I remember, it was in the CalArts Library. I was doing research around the work of the North American artist Christopher D'Arcangelo—a performer, an anarchist working during the early 1970s who wanted to disappear. Some things I read there seemed unreal.

Books lie sometimes. It was Los Angeles, after all, the Mecca of fiction. Among many other subtle gestures, D'Arcangelo had swapped his name from a show's invitation card and communication for a blank space. It was then that I understood that the enlargement of Salvo's name in the list of artists was some sort of



SALVO È VIVO

Salvo è vivo / Salvo è morto (Salvo lives / Salvo is dead), 1977, serigraph on board, 65 x 50 cm, edition of 100. Courtesy of Archivio Salvo and Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin.

performance in itself. A magic act. It intrigued me not only because of the immaterial nature of the work (his contribution was the request for his name in the list of artists participating in the exhibition to be printed in capital letters), but also because it seemed to challenge the nature of an artwork, a gesture that questioned the institutional apparatus. A simple move breaking the conventions, a form of quitting while being (more) present. Not so different from D'Arcangelo, Salvo also refused to appear in the exhibition. He had exchanged a space at the Fridericianum for a list in the catalog. Hiding there. An act of escapism. Being (more) there, while also not. Like a backdrop, like the set of a scene that becomes invisible when the action starts.

Conceptual practices, as they have come to be known, are a set of tools that have allowed aesthetic practices for the last five decades to expand the notion of art, while also criticizing its operations and the way art is experienced. Contrary to what its presentation card pretends, Conceptual Art is a flexible toolbox that can allow the most radical, thoughtful, political gestures to exist, but also the most capricious, ethereal, and unpredictable ones. It could be argued that the most radical works in the so-called Conceptual Art movement are in fact quite romantic—the word that Jörg Heiser used in the title of his 2007 exhibition *Romantic Conceptualism*.³

Salvo's "hotel drawings" evoke the artist as the lone painter, the traveler. The artist

in search of the extraordinary. Walking, climbing, looking, as a gesture. Salvo as Caspar David Friedrich, looking for the sublime, at the edge of reality, at the edge of the imaginable, while drawing on hotel letterhead paper. It pretends to be a depiction, but it is just the documentation of an action. I like the drawing from 1995, from the Oriental Palace Hotel in Tunis. Being in a place, while searching profoundly for feelings. The "hotel drawings" seem immediate; I trust them. Maybe because they use the "aesthetic of administration"⁴ while tricking us into the romantic. Can desire coexist with reality? It is as if Salvo is trying to escape from veracity, from reality, maybe. He is on the edge. They tell a fiction, the drawings; they turn around the truth, they avoid, they leak out, they elude. Because the romantic is nothing but idealism, the practice of realizing the unrealistic. Of escaping logic. And as such, it is an act of resistance, an act against conventions.

For Alighiero Boetti, Salvo's early studio-mate, faraway places were an act of escapism too. He thought of Kabul and Buenos Aires as places where he could reinvent himself. "Even presenting yourself as other than an artist. When you have no anchorage and must completely reinvent yourself, physically and as a character."⁵ Escapism as a theatre play, as the illusion of a movie sequence. Role-play as an aesthetic gesture.

Like Boetti's *One Hotel* (1971) in Afghanistan, all hostels are, in general, faraway places. They are the place of foreigners; they are in a city, but also outside of it. They are contextless. Stages for a story to develop, without attachment. What happens in hotels, stays in hotels. I tell a story about myself to the barman, and then a different one to the cleaning lady. I write from room 1036 at the Pierre Marques in Acapulco. I am able to become a writer here, an introvert, thinking about other times. They cannot tell who am I here. I am an unwritten script, an undefined story. I am a character, or so I hope. I write as I think: in a slow, low, deep voice. It goes back, it repeats, it erases itself. It edits, it goes back in time. It does not follow a coherent timeline. I can only hope one day the text will be spoken in someone's head, in that voice, in that tone. Unfortunately, there is no letterheaded paper in this room.

Salvo's "hotel drawings" are immediate, quick. I remember. They are not interested in detail, they are interested in

place. By the time Salvo stayed in Tunis, a number of works from his *ottomanie* series already existed. Salvo's "hotel drawings" seem more of a bureaucratic procedure than a sketch for a later work. The *ottomanie* works are projections, a condensation of memories and yearning. The drawings seem more of an excuse, the proof of being in a place that had been painted before. A reversal operation. It is like looking to prove to yourself that what you imagined actually existed. Waking up and trying to prove that your dream does in fact exist.

In the early 2000s, Salvo mentioned taking a trip to Norway in order to look for the filming locations of a movie he had seen, titled *The Heroes of Telemark* (1965). Anthony Mann's film is the true story of the Norwegian water sabotage during World War II, with Ulla Jacobsson, Kirk Douglas, and Richard Harris. Salvo's drawing from Hotel Norge, in Bergen, is proof of his search. He had been nearby, or at least 321 kilometers away from the movie locations. Regardless of the fact that he claimed not to be able to see the shooting locations, it is telling that Salvo was trying to prove what he had seen, chasing a memory. It makes me want to go out and search for shooting locations of *Le Magnifique* (Philippe de Broca, 1973), or *Murder in Three Acts* (Gary Nelson, 1986). The artist chasing the memory of an image. Or chasing the image of a memory.

Achievement and deception happening at the same time. In a 2006 conversation, Salvo said, "Every journey has three phases; imagination, before departing, empirical experience, and finally memory. A memory that cannot be precise and ends up mixing with others, inexorably."⁶ Salvo as a "romantic conceptual artist."

Salvo's artistic gestures are closer to those of Robert Barry or Sol LeWitt (who he met through Gian Enzo Sperone) than to his Turinese colleagues. Both artists were regarded as some of the most radical of the movement, although they were in fact the ones who argued against the intellectual nature of Conceptual Art. LeWitt famously wrote, "Artists are mystics rather than rationalists. They leap to conclusions that logic cannot reach."⁷ Barry famously said that the ideas in his *Telepathic Piece* (1969), to mention but one example, will live forever until the end of the world. Salvo's text works *Più tempo in meno spazio* (1972), or *Salvo è*

vivo – Salvo è morto (1970) inhabit the same space; they are doing nothing but flirting with the idea of the eternal and the sublime. Like Barry, who was working with the most ethereal materials, playing with memory and time, Salvo created smilingly modest works that were, at the same time, the most grandiloquent, looking for perpetuity and the unimaginable.

This is what in fact surrounds Salvo's *capricci*, which I have been thinking about a lot recently. They are unstable images, as they open themselves to interpretation in order to tease us; they appeal to the precognitive, but can only exist through an action, that of the artist, looking, imagining, hoping, while crashing the past into the present. There is no rational logic in Salvo's operation. The *capricci* are betting on the poetic, on a non-conformist vision of the world.

The time is noon, or so the light indicates. There are no actual buildings, but ruins, a very small fraction of what an ancient construction would have been. Only the columns and a few slabs topping them remain. There is a distant background, faraway mountains, and a bay. It is 1999, and it feels like I have been here before. Maybe it is 1983, or it may have been 1984. Repetition plays its tricks. Time collapses again. It is hot. The humidity makes me open the window. Sea air blows in. As I draw the heavy curtains, strong sunlight enters the room and blinds me. I have been in a different geography, who knows for how long. When I manage to see again, there are no ruins. Just a large empty garden with some palm trees, manicured grass, and shrubs with funny shapes. The bay in the background makes me doubt. A great part of what I see is sky, but I can hear the waves. When my eyes focus, what previously looked like scattered leafy forms with trunks become small *palapas*, those structures for people to shelter under from the sun when at the beach. Suddenly the wind brings the voices of people sunbathing. I am not alone. This is not an image. I wonder if I have been in a dream, and this is the stage for it.

I decide I am not playing this film again. I pack and leave the room. As I drive back out into reality, into my daily life, I see ruins again. Half the city is destroyed. I am told a hurricane wrecked hotels, streets, and everything in the port less than a year ago. It has changed the city, and it has changed my memory of this place. I doubt

if they are speaking metaphorically, if the typhoon they are talking about is simply daily life. I am confused. The only thing that seems certain is that I will not be able to return to this place ever again.

Essay excerpted from the book Salvo. Arrivare in tempo published in 2024 by Pinacoteca Agnelli Torino, with JRP|Editions, on the occasion of the Salvo retrospective (October 2024–May 2025), 400 pages, ISBN : 978-3-03764-629-8

1. *From Dusk till Dawn* is a 1996 film directed by Robert Rodriguez, starring George Clooney, Quentin Tarantino, Harvey Keitel, and Juliette Lewis.
2. In *weiter Ferne, so nah!* is a 1993 film directed by Wim Wenders, a sequel to *Der Himmel über Berlin*, 1987.
3. J. Heiser (ed), *Romantic Conceptualism*, exhibition catalog, Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Nuremberg, May 10–July 15, 2007; BAWAG Foundation, Vienna, September 14–December 1, 2007, Kerber, Bielefeld and Berlin, 2007.
4. B.H.D. Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962–1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions," *October*, vol. 55, Winter, 1990, p. 106–143.
5. Alighiero Boetti, interview from the 1970s, quoted in A. Sauzeau, "Alighiero Boetti's One Hotel," vol. 025, *DOCUMENTA* (13): 100 *Notes*, 100 *Thoughts*, Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern 2012.
6. L. Castellini, "Dialogo con Salvo," in *Salvo – Opere recenti*, exhibition catalog, Biale Cerruti Art Gallery, Genoa, 2006, reprinted in *Io Sono Salvo. Works and Writings 1961–2015*, NERO, Rome 2023, p. 605.
7. S. LeWitt, "Sentences on Conceptual Art," *0 to 9* (New York) 1969, and *Art-Language*, vol. 1 no. 1, May 1969, p. 11–13.
https://www.robertspahr.com/teaching/gen/lewitt.html?_im=LAGKdKta=1382432094336335477 (last accessed October 2024).

In the second and final section, "The two sea-
t -
t -
t -
c -
c -
r -
t -
v -
C -
t -
e -
c -
v -
c -
To supply myself.

A Remains. An outdoor Bush of... If you find your room on the edge of... would touch it a skin would...
f t / t /
t r t r
t k - /
f e t s
o s . t
t / t c
t t , a
J . c i]
t d a - c
y - b i a
r s v - b
s - f - s
v e g f v
f l t , s
c a l f c
k o t c c
t - i u
c s a t u
c t a - l
v a t / g
c - v l i
i . t . g
l a l / r
g t s f l
e d r i
y . y t
l r g a l
t r t
v r
] e t
t e y
c t f
i , r
f d]
l / r
t o y
r e t
y t b
c c l
e d l
t r e
t e
f e
l / f
t l b
f a l
s e e
t - v
c a c
c a f
c r f
t e c
f e e
v , c
c t r
c a i
c o l
e - r
t a b
r - c

tom... need i go on... tive to the sensation, and as soon she

Opening in the centre, which removed panel

In Brief

Sven Augustijnen's new film *Fierté nationale : de Jéricho vers Gaza* (2025, 93 min.) was awarded with a Special Mention in the Burning Lights Competition at the Visions du Réel – International Film Festival Nyon.

Francis Alÿs received the Gorrita Azul Award for Artistic Career Achievement. Founded by Mario García Torres and produced by public relations firm Xaviera, the Gorrita Azul Awards honor outstanding achievements in the Mexican art world across thirteen categories.

An extended version of *Shame Punishments* by Andrea Büttner will be shown at Unlimited during Art Basel this June. The presentation is a collaboration between David Kordansky Gallery, Galerie Tschudi, Hollybush Gardens and Jan Mot.

For the exhibition *Dance with Deamons* at LUMA Arles, Tino Sehgal created a display conceived as a 'chain reaction' with works from the Fondation Beyeler and the Maja Hoffmann/LUMA Foundation. Until November 2.

Wed–Fri, 2–6.30 pm
Sat, 12–6 pm
and by appointment