

Double Trouble

Bernheim Gallery, London

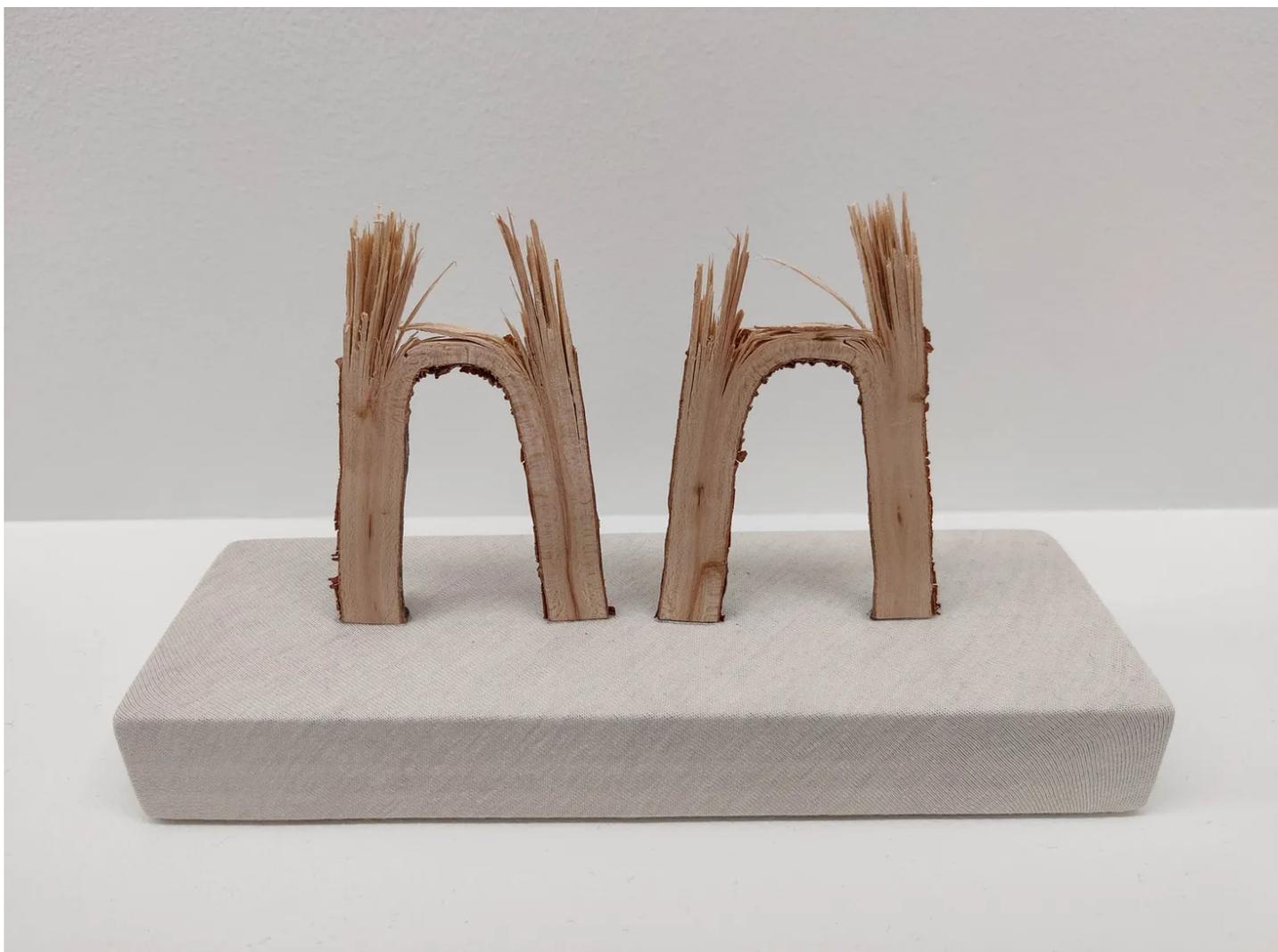


JETHRO TURNER

APR 17, 2024



Eric Oglander - 'Do Nothing Machine' & Miriam Cahn - 'Solitude'



5th April - 11th May, 2024

Wander around London's galleryland and there's plenty to keep the average punter

out. Frosty front desks, minimalist signage or fussy QR codes, and exhibition texts apparently translated from ancient Amharic by ChatGPT.

And, to some extent, it doesn't matter – the people *buying* most of the things on display have called or been called in advance to confirm they're coming by. But I think that's a sad way to look at it. This stuff gets made to be seen, and I think every set of eyeballs makes it all the richer.

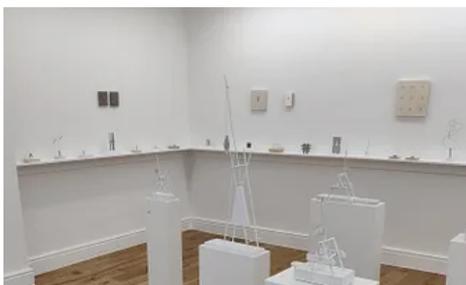
The gatekeeper the other day at Bernheim Gallery was the front door, which was literally stuck when I was buzzing, until one of the team came and sorted it out. But if you dive in just off Regent Street, there's plenty of bang for your buck/time here.

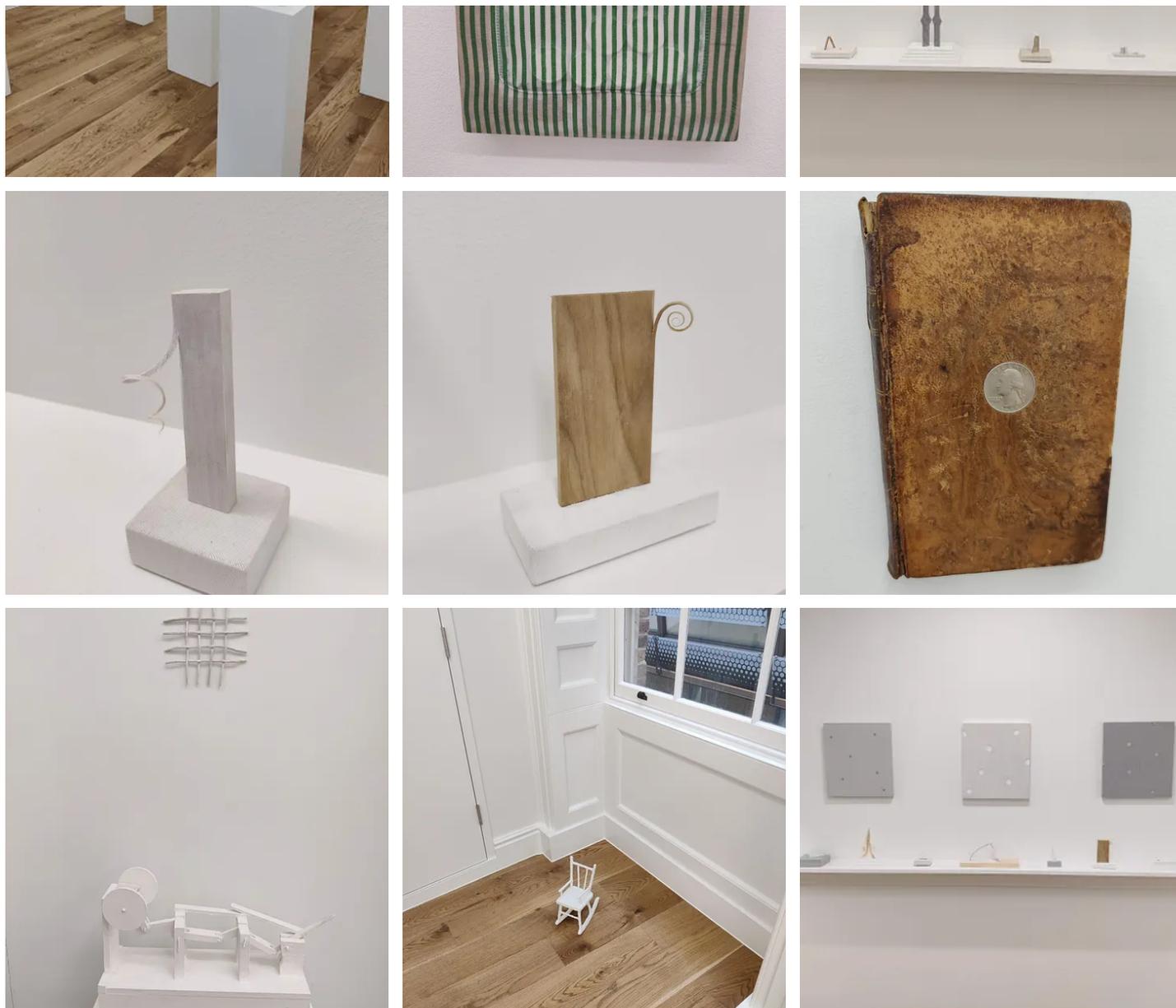
There are two shows up right now, both alike in dignity, in fair Mayfair, where we lay our scene. I started all the way at the top of the gallery as I wanted to get to the Eric Oglander first, which has been curated by my long distance friend, the writer and curator Lola Kramer.

'Do Nothing Machine' sees 87 small sculptures ranged around/packed into the space by the Nashville-born New York City artist, and some are truly teensy.

It's all trinkety but not tricky, almost eerily honest. There's an element of playful Heath Robinson energy (or Rube Goldberg for the Americans) to the wooden trebuchets and catapults, but the milky paint they're covered in lends them something of the puritan spirit of a whitewashed New England church.

I liked the little coils of turned wood best – meditative, playfully erect, delicate. Despite the moneyed location, currency acts as something of a joke – US quarter dollars are embossed/impressed into paintings – or features as a solo coin set into the aged leather cover of a book, more good luck charm than value statement.





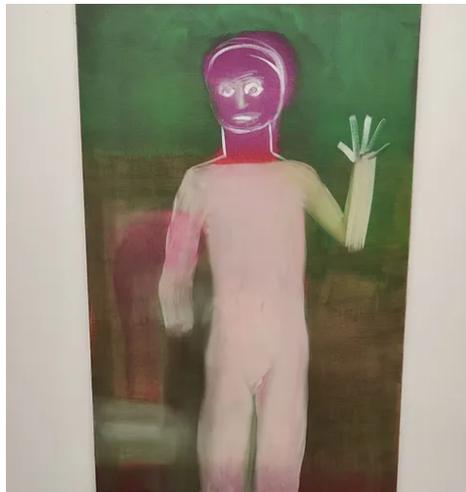
Eric Oglander

Meanwhile, in the same gallery, Swiss artist Miriam Cahn is 74 and brimming with anger and energy. These historic works have been pulled together from the past few decades, but the most recent are by no means the least potent. They're gutsy, guttural yelps from a void, filled with flesh, violence and sex, all rendered in bold colour.

There are awkwardly purple and yellow faces. Some bodies are heavy with all the shades of sexuality – lips (both sorts) and nipples are reddened – others are washed out or glowing white with a ghostly ambiguity. There's an eerie sense of stillness and whooshing movement. The backgrounds are fuzzy washes of bright colour, all the shades of a bruise or an eyeshadow palette cracked open and smeared across a

canvas. Mountains appear too, whether as a form of escape or a symbol of madness, it's difficult to tell.

As double shows go these are extremely different, but wholly rewarding to see as a pair. Buzz that doorbell hard if necessary.



Miriam Cahn