



## Martin Maloney

Timothy Taylor West End

In the late '90s, when Martin Maloney pulled himself up by his bootstraps via his self-generated, post-YBA movement 'New Neurotic Realism', he sported a cocksure attitude that endeared him to few. Still, his saving grace was always his paintings, which walked a careful line between affection and contempt for their leisure-loving subjects and had the virtue of predicting the recent vogue for sloppy neo-Expressionism. Since NNR (as no one ever called it) disintegrated in a flurry of hype and Maloney's former dealer went into semi-retirement, he's been a quieter presence. His first London show since 2001, though, suggests that his bilious mien found an outlet in his work.

These new compositions are often set where cities open out into oases of park-

land, and are populated almost exclusively by women: adolescents in identikit dress, lazy-eyed office workers grabbing groceries at lunch break, starch-haired ladies-who-lunch perusing the *Daily Mail*. Busier than before, more high-keyed, and featuring snapshot-style cropping, they could be episodes from 'Little Britain' painted by John Bellamy. Maloney is still very good at capturing a precise facial expression in seemingly offhand swipes of oil, but those he ingrains here run the gamut from vacant to scheming. Only occasionally does affection creep in, as in a scene where women admire sculpted heads painted in a quicksilver pastiche of late-period Picasso. Then again, the press release claims that 'the inherent narrative is determined by the viewer', so maybe my impression of Maloney as a dyspeptic reactionary is a reflection on me. I doubt it, though. *Martin Herbert*

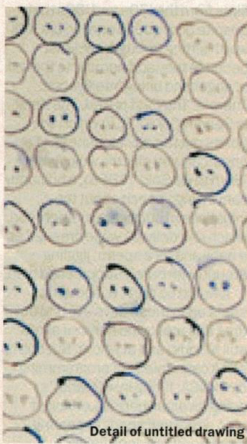
## Lucia Nogueira

The Drawing Room East End

This series of drawings by the late, Brazilian-born artist Lucia Nogueira contains similar contradictory concerns to those found in her sculptures. Her three-dimensional works playfully use both the unstable fragility and the potential for power and danger in materials such as broken glass, bullets and gunpowder. In her drawings it's the simple shapes, patterns and figures and thinly coloured washes that hint at something darker and more agitated going on underneath.

Shakily drawn figures that are just recognisable as characters from kids' classic 'Winnie the Pooh' are disturbingly obscured by black. A grid of circles, each with two dots inside, could be buttons, but they also read as a sea of faces, the blue of their outlines smudged and bleeding into each other. Against a blue/black background a row of teeth hang from a sinewy red line, the dribbling paint here becoming something more visceral.

The faltering lines in Nogueira's later drawings are the result of the artist having to use her left hand instead of her right as a result of cancer, from which she later died. It adds poignancy but it's not something



Detail of untitled drawing

you need to be aware of. On their own, her spare lines and use of colour communicate something of the complex workings of a creative, emotional mind far more succinctly than words. *Helen Sampter*

## Henry Krokatsis

David Risley East End

Henry Krokatsis deals in the imaginary histories of people and places. Favouring fantasy over logic, he finds new contexts and purposes for found materials. Whereas previous investigations into memory and association have been characterised by architectural constructions, this time he plays junk-shop archivist with secondhand images.

Wandering into his show at David Risley's new gallery is a bit like passing through a stranger's reception room – it's decorated with the odd domestic item and what could be personal imagery. Attached to rubber-coated Georgian panelling, a large pair of silver

antlers takes pride of place on the back wall. Contrasting bar-room kitsch with fine-art pretension, Krokatsis transforms the grizzly trophy into a poetic memorial for 'lost causes'. This skewed gung-ho sensitivity underpins the show. Monochrome canvases depict fragile carbon deposits of shadowy figures; it might be possible to blow them off the canvases had they not been firmly fixed in wax grounds. Stripped down to a basic visual language of negative shapes, they become difficult to decipher. In 'Bearer', a line of statuesque women carrying pots could be slaves; a man in a peaked cap in 'Head' might be a war casualty. But for all the sober undercurrents these rather pretty works offer a more whimsical than didactic experience. *Rebecca Gellard*

## Tracey Emin

White Cube East End

Tracey Emin's work is neither terrible nor brilliant. Neither is her celebrity status so unique, nor her outbursts that antagonistic – few of us are snobbish or repressed enough to find allusions to sex

and failure outrageous. There is more interesting art being made, yet Emin still, after all these years, commands more art column inches in the national press and on television than anyone else put together.

That aside, her latest output is as steady as ever. Perhaps, though, rather than the wail of a child with malaria, the timbre has lowered to the consistent moan accompanying a dull ache. Colour is muted and a resigned note creeps into the text in her embroidered blankets and monoprint drawings: refrains such as 'there is nothing witch I Regret, nothing in terms of Love' intermingle with the scratchy renderings of the artist wanking – a body of work as apparently endless as teenage lust. A vitrine containing rocks is elucidated by a drawing and scrawled text that tells of how they were hurled at her studio windows, and of an incident when a cockroach hid in her hair for 24 hours. These are the moments when Emin seems most piqued and piquant – when she articulates specificities rather than general ballyhoo at the moon. *Sally O'Reilly*



'Sometimes I Feel So Fucking Lost'

## Christian Ward

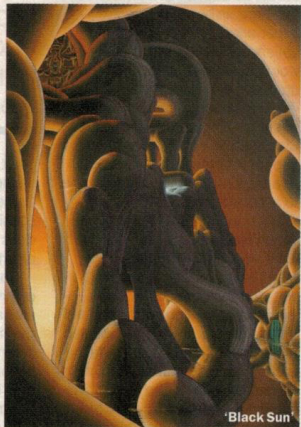
MW Projects East End

Christian Ward is known for his colourful landscape paintings; loading up a wide brush with pigment he sweeps it across the canvas in assured,

undulating strokes to create deep, cave-like spaces where towering curved forms are reflected in pools of water. Works such as 'Where the Cave Meets the Sun' continue these motifs, but in other canvases he pushes his exploration of landscape elsewhere. In 'Black Hut' the curved shapes have been scaled down to molehill-sized mounds and set on a bright yellow background. Loosely painted around them are more angular, architectural structures – walls, roofs and windows. This appears to be some form of village but it is just as unreal a landscape space as before, with the hut of the title flattened out into a two-dimensional arrangement of dense black geometric shapes.

In 'Island Culture' Ward's use of paint becomes even less controlled and more impressionistic in his depiction of a

landscape crossed by rivers and dotted with huts. The subject and use of perspective may be the most obvious reflection of his references to Chinese landscape painting, but these works also highlight that this mixing of genres has been there all along. *Helen Sampter*



'Black Sun'