

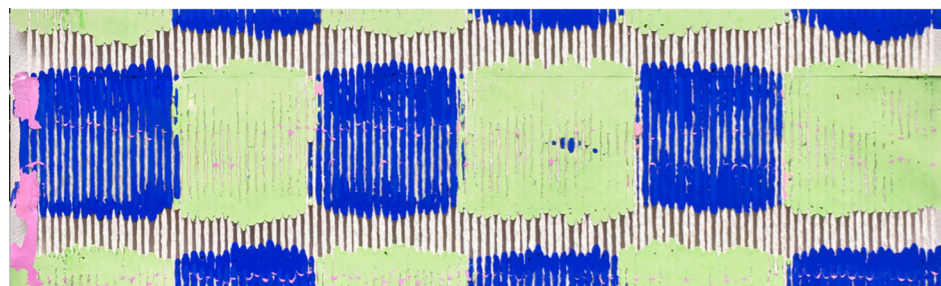
FRIEZE

The New Queer Minimalism of Brandon Logan

At Ingleby Gallery in Edinburgh, the artist draws inspiration from his Orkney heritage to create a unique style of painting with a whimsical touch



BY LOU SELFRIDGE IN EXHIBITION REVIEWS | 04 MAR 24



To weave with paint is an odd idea, but Brandon Logan has found a way of doing it well. He begins each piece with a series of vertical strings, flooding them with acrylic paint in different patterns to fuse the strings together; rather than working on top of a canvas, Logan creates one as he goes. The 45 works on display in 'Dog Rose', the artist's first solo exhibition at Ingleby Gallery, combine sculptural and painterly elements with breathtaking finesse.

There's a quiet beauty to works such as *Gooseberry* (2023), in which five bands of pale green paint are separated by areas of exposed string. Purple bleeds out from behind the green, encroaching upon the empty strings, but the painting is left with thin gaps where no paint has touched; you can see through to the wall behind. In other works, Logan cuts out sections of dried paint and string, leaving a skeletal structure with larger gaps and more intricate patterns: *Wakes the Aconite* (2023), for instance, has a repeated series of 'N' shapes carved out of its surface. Delicate and often understated, Logan's works revel in their own fragility.



Brandon Logan, *Kiss 2*, 2022, acrylic and string, 20 × 13 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh; photograph: John McKenzie

Zaccaria (2022) is the muffled heart of the exhibition. More than a metre in height, it comprises several wide bands of bubble-gum pink, holding together the warp of loose strings. There's a bouncy queerness lurking within this work, injecting playfulness into Logan's minimalist vocabulary; when observed from afar, the painting almost looks like four sets of pink lips. A sharp mastery of technique and form underpins *Zaccaria*, with a simplicity to its bands of solid pink which nevertheless embraces vibrancy.

Belying the show's quietness, however, are several endearingly cocky works. The series 'Kiss' (2022–23), for instance, presents experiments with colour that embrace dissonance and eccentricity. Each work uses two vibrantly clashing colours: in *Kiss 4* (2022), the left side is painted green and the right side orange; *Kiss 6* (2022) combines burgundy and turquoise; *Kiss 7* (2022) brings together purple and yellow; and *Kiss 9* (2023) pairs black and pink. These works eschew the monochrome and muted tones which pervade much canonical minimalist art. Yet, while pairing seemingly uncomplimentary colours risks creating a jarring appearance, the outcome is exuberant not ugly.



Brandon Logan, 'Dog Rose', installation view. Courtesy: the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh; photograph: John McKenzie

Not all of Logan's experiments with colour possess the delicate balance of *Zaccaria* or 'Kiss': *Pretty Heady* (2023), for instance, contrasts bold shades of purple and green but doesn't quite achieve the depth or playfulness of his finest works. Elsewhere, lace-like pieces, such as *Ribcage* (2023) and *Wagtail* (2023), contain small nicks where Logan has cut too far when removing areas of paint. Such bumps, though minor, reveal the delicacy of his process and the scrutiny such pared-down works solicit.

Although his Orkney home is a clear influence, with Logan tapping into the traditions of weaving on the islands, his eye is always outward-looking, too: the works in 'Dog Rose' make sidelong glances at the weavings of Anni Albers, such as *Black White Yellow* (1926), and Agnes Martin's paintings, including *I Love the Whole World* (1999). This combination of the local and the international gives an eclectic background to Logan's practice, which is underpinned by a rich engagement with the history of his craft.



Brandon Logan, *Ribcage*, 2023, acrylic and string, 2 × 1.2 m. Courtesy: the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh; photograph: John McKenzie

To forge a new minimalist medium is no easy matter, with artists courting the risk of gimmickry or banality with every addition to the field's productively limited set of techniques. What Logan has achieved with the innovative works collected in 'Dog Rose' is all the more impressive because of this. These paintings are a meaningful addition to minimalist vernacular, seemingly pulled off with a nod and a wink.

Brandon Logan's 'Dog Rose' is at [Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh](#), until 09 March

Main image: Brandon Logan, *Cézanne's Wall (detail)*, 2023, acrylic and string, 50 × 43 cm. Courtesy: the artist and Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh; photograph: John McKenzie



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