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Celina Teague at Kristin Hjellegjerde

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THE METROPOLIST.
RATING ★★★★★

It is all is very 'of-the-moment', Kristin Hjellegjerde's London gallery. Named one of the world's 500 most influential galleries (Blouin, 2015) and independent gallery of the year (*Londonist*, 2014) it seems that Hjellegjerde's move to London from New York was as smart as it was brave. Her choice of artists is just as bold.

The latest exhibition, a suite of new canvases by Celina Teague, dazzles the viewer in colour and then punches them in the stomach with the subject matter. Do not be fooled, however; by no means is *I Think Therefore I #* style over substance.

Just as we absorb the latest exhibitions to see and social trends to follow, so too do we absorb the latest news stories, no matter how brief they may sustain themselves in our consciousness. The modern human condition, the scrolling disposition of indifference is only one strand of inquiry in Teague's painting. The other is its immediate manifestation: our cyber identities. It is this duel trajectory which gives the paintings their drive – it would be easy to dismiss them as art school hack works otherwise.

By seeking a personal answer to the universal question "what is going on?", Teague has come against the problem that the answers are hard to decipher through the spun rhetoric and superficial caricatured projections. Stream after endless stream of hashtags and bandwagoneque nonsense baffles the inquisitive and absorbs the under-informed and this is exactly what *I Think Therefore I Hashtag* fights against.



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Celina Teague, I am No One, 2015.

Charlie Hebdo cartoons, ubiquitous icons of the modern: pencils as free speech, watermelon emoticons, arse selfies. It would seem that Teague is just 'of-the-moment' as her gallerist.

In their traditional permanence of paint on canvas Teague's latest collection harks back to, by no means a simpler time, but a slower time; when news stories made paintings and paintings made the news. The slow and laborious process of painting, especially on such a grand scale, opposes itself to everything an Instagram post is not – small, glossy, supposedly instantaneous and ephemeral.

The most charming, and somewhat understated, aspect of these otherwise bold pieces is their insistence on public memory when internet space and hosting insists that headlines be superseded by the hour. The subject matter may be bold and the execution may be brash but the sentiment behind these paintings is very, very subtly human in a world of soulless avatars and usernames.

[Lead Image: Celina Teague, Come Together Over Me, 2015]

I Think Therefore I # is currently at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery (<http://kristinhjellegjerde.com/>) until 6th September 2015.

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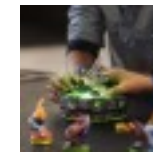
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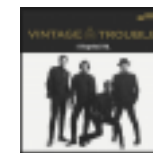
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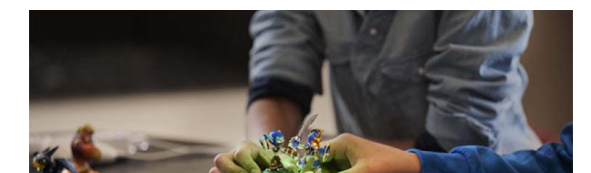
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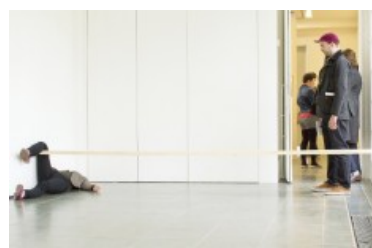
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