



Andrew Bick: **Archive Bag Drawing V**
pencil and marker on paper and melanex bag on wax paper 22¾in x 18½in



Eileen Cooper: **Ghost**
pastel on paper 30in x 22in

Open Drawing

Cheltenham 2000

at the EICH Gallery, Kingston upon Hull

John Hudson

Drawing as an art form is often deemed to be a little out of fashion these days. Hopefully this belief is slowly being overturned. Cheltenham's Open Drawing Exhibition reveals the power of the 'humble' drawing or, dare we say, sketch.

This exhibition brings together varied styles and disciplines. Take the work of David Connearn. His two 'drawings' on paper are barely visible to the naked eye and are impossible to reproduce. These examples of sublime minimalism are untitled, yet the medium is indicated as 'erased pencil' on one and 'empty pen' on the other. Both are characterised by tight horizontal lines making a barely visible wave pattern in the centre of the paper. Other conceptual and minimalist works in this exhibition include Joanna Greenhill's '21 Hours' and Richard Talbot's 'Ascent.'

These contrast sharply with the more expressive and gestured drawings of Andrew Bick with his layered acetates juggling geometry and thick swirls of pen marks, or Nina Troitzky's 'String Theory', an automatic drawing in pen and ink.

These humorous and surreal pieces jostle po-faced figurative works with more traditional subject matters. Eileen Cooper, with her formulaic style is here - a regular, it seems, of this gallery. Lorrain Robins' 'Family Portrait Series' is a must, with its mix of photo-realism and comic book humour.

Some of the abstract drawings and representational work put me in mind of André Masson's surreal experiments. This can be seen in the case of Malcolm Pollard's 'In the Garden Looking for the Garden'. I challenge anyone not to smile at Jane Harris's abstract-pop silhouettes or be impressed by the cool seriousness style of Ruth Uglow.

This fun show contains a range of drawings from the serious, the architectural, the expressive, and the comic

book, the comical, the childish, the figurative and the abstract. The cliché of 'something for everyone' is very appropriate in this case.

**The EICH Gallery,
University of Lincolnshire and Humberside
George Street
Kingston upon Hull
until 28 February 2001**

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