

James Merrigan, DEAD ARM, *iamnotapainter.com*, 4 November 2021



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NOVEMBER 04, 2021

Leave them where they lay. Found in an uncanny corner of the QR generated gallery map for Áine McBride's solo exhibition *point of fold* at mother's tankstation, is "notes: titles for works, in no particular order". Included in the list is "friends, lovers, allies", but no enemies. A world without enmity? Is that good? Bad? Flat! On closer inspection "friends, lovers, allies" is preceded by "gauge" which, when collapsed with the aforementioned, reads as the *measuring of friends, lovers, allies*. I like that. There's hierarchy implied; judgment too. Especially when you consider architecture vis-a-vis society as something that goes up/down, not just flatly across. There can be no rupture or change in society if the fabric of the world is flat. Democracy is the fight *for* not the realisation *of*. Then there's "the in-and-of itself" on the list, which is missing 'thing' in Schopenhauer's terminology – *the thing in-and-of-itself*. I wonder what world Áine inhabits in her work: the phenomenal world of objects as perceived through the human; or the noumenal world where the essence of things outside of human perception (time, space & causality) exist in and of themselves, & where impossible questions can be paradoxically answered minus the kink of the human to see or hear the answers. Perhaps, as also listed in her notes on the "power stance" – 'tilted head, relaxed posture' – there is an implication of being "both 'n all" in her work? If Áine's work exists in the noumenal world, or the *in-and-of-itself*, then there is nothing left to say, as any word mentioned in the vicinity of her objects would miss the point. I firmly believe art is concerned with sociability, & that Áine McBride's sculptural articulations in space elegantly invite the awkward human to physically stoop, intellectually stumble, imagine & feel the knuckle of steel that dead-arms that bruised pinstripe blazer pinioned to the gallery wall. Power punching without the rhetoric! These objects are something to embody & empower a way of thinking & moving in/out & between the world of things & subjects. Especially when confined to the footprint of a gallery signposted with **Private** spaces that sidewind consciously out of view.

—James Merrigan

Through 4 December 2021.