

# LUNGLEY

**Stuart Brisley**

07/10 - 19/11/2022

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Lungley Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Stuart Brisley, for his second solo exhibition at the gallery we are proud to present three new paintings alongside *Before The Mast* (2013) a 10 day performance first seen at domobaal, London in 2013, photography by Maya Balcioglu.



*Before the Mast*  
*A 10 day performance (2013)*  
Photography: Maya Balcioglu

### **Footfall (2022)**

This painting on paper comes from studio walls covered with used, once painted floorboards. They contain accidental marks made from footsteps.

I became fascinated with one section which I felt looked like landscape. This landscape image eventually suggested to me to include two sections of other boards. I closely looked at what I was seeing. There is no absolute likeness. Inevitably my own limitations are both conceptually and technically limited, while at the same time trying to make a simulation.

When I finally leave the work I accept what it is at that moment without closure. The primary source is no longer relevant. The image is broken away from the source becoming a thing in itself.

### **8 into 1 (2022)**

I decided after discussions with MB on the question of the nature of the copy that I should take the previous single source and repeat it. Subsequently without intention I found that I had abandoned the initial interpretation of the section as a landscape. Slowly over the course of a year of painting I discovered that light was influential in subtle changes in the appearance of the original source. Working through the winter of 2021- 22, the changing seasons altered what I was seeing. The source lost its focus as I took an abstract position away from the landscape. The final set of eight boards were alike and yet unlike each other.

Other aspects changed. Colour, intensities, the substances of paint were expanded within a limited frame. My engagement with the ambition to resemble the source fluctuated as new intensities took precedence. After a while when I scanned the work I'd forgotten the struggles I had overcome and others I had left behind. I am bound to repeat them. It was, one might think, a source of the acquisition of experience. However, the arrival of not knowing is essential to the process.

I do not think about completion since every work is to some extent provisional.

### **R Y Sirb Curator of Ordure (2022)**

I have used R Y Sirb as an alter ego appearing occasionally since 2003. He does not materially exist. Therefore I chose to make a portrait by using my own head since I do not know who else he might resemble. The use of likeness was not limited to the head. I do not know what he looks like so could not find a fitting background or foreground. I erased the background all over without touching the head and found that it was different each time I mixed the background colour in small batches. This left the foreground translucent.

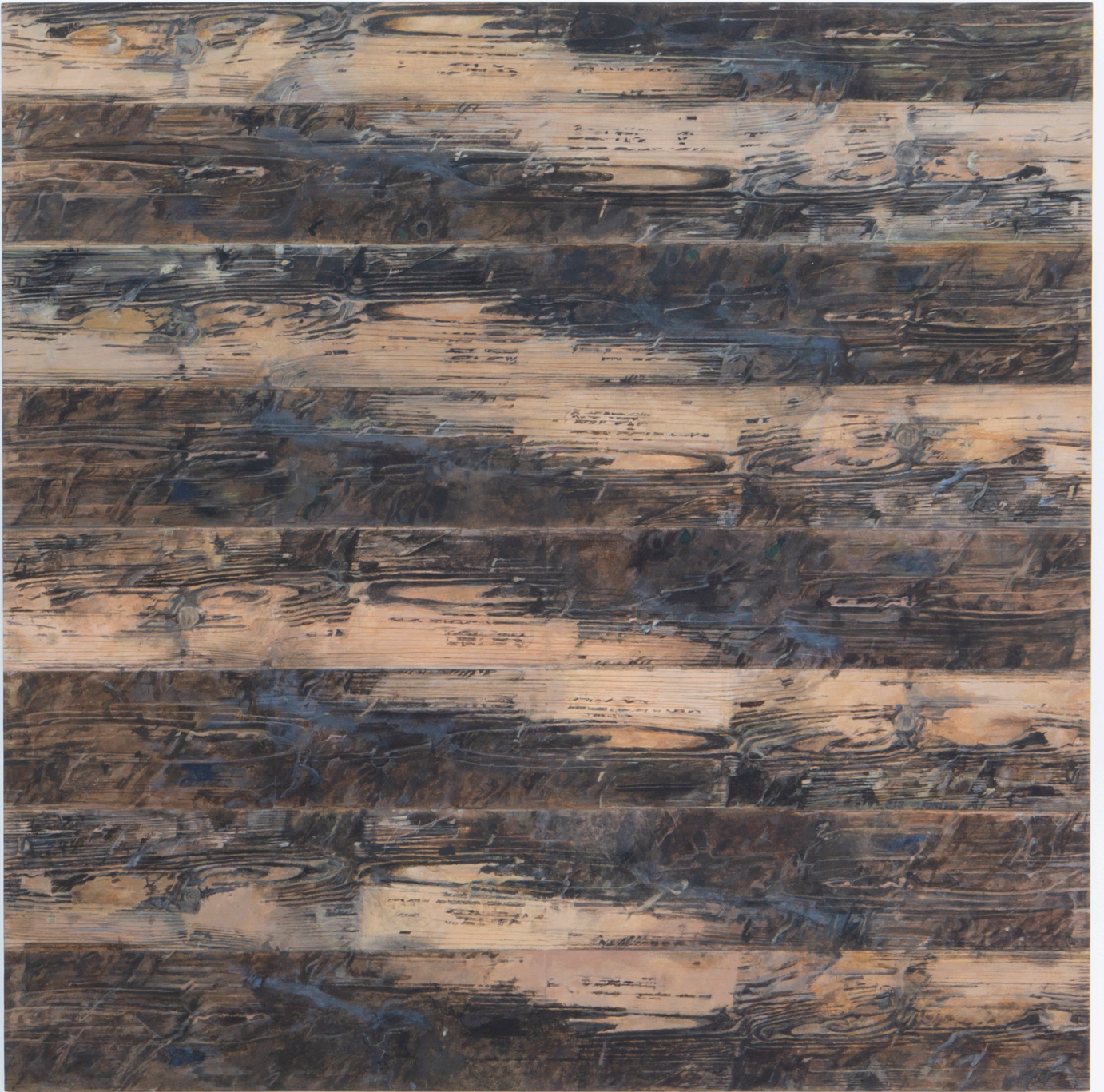
The paintings **Footfall** and **8 into 1** describe a process of looking and seeing a matter of fact presence, the floorboards. The portrait of **R Y Sirb Curator of Ordure** on the other hand is that of an unknown person.

Stuart Brisley

Dungeness, September 2022



*Footfall* (2022)  
Acrylic on archival paper, 55.9 x 76 cm



*8 into 1* (2022)  
Acrylic on gesso on birch ply, 56 x 76.8 cm



*R Y Sirb Curator of Ordure (2022)*  
Acrylic on archival paper, 56 x 76.8 cm

**Before the Mast (2013)**

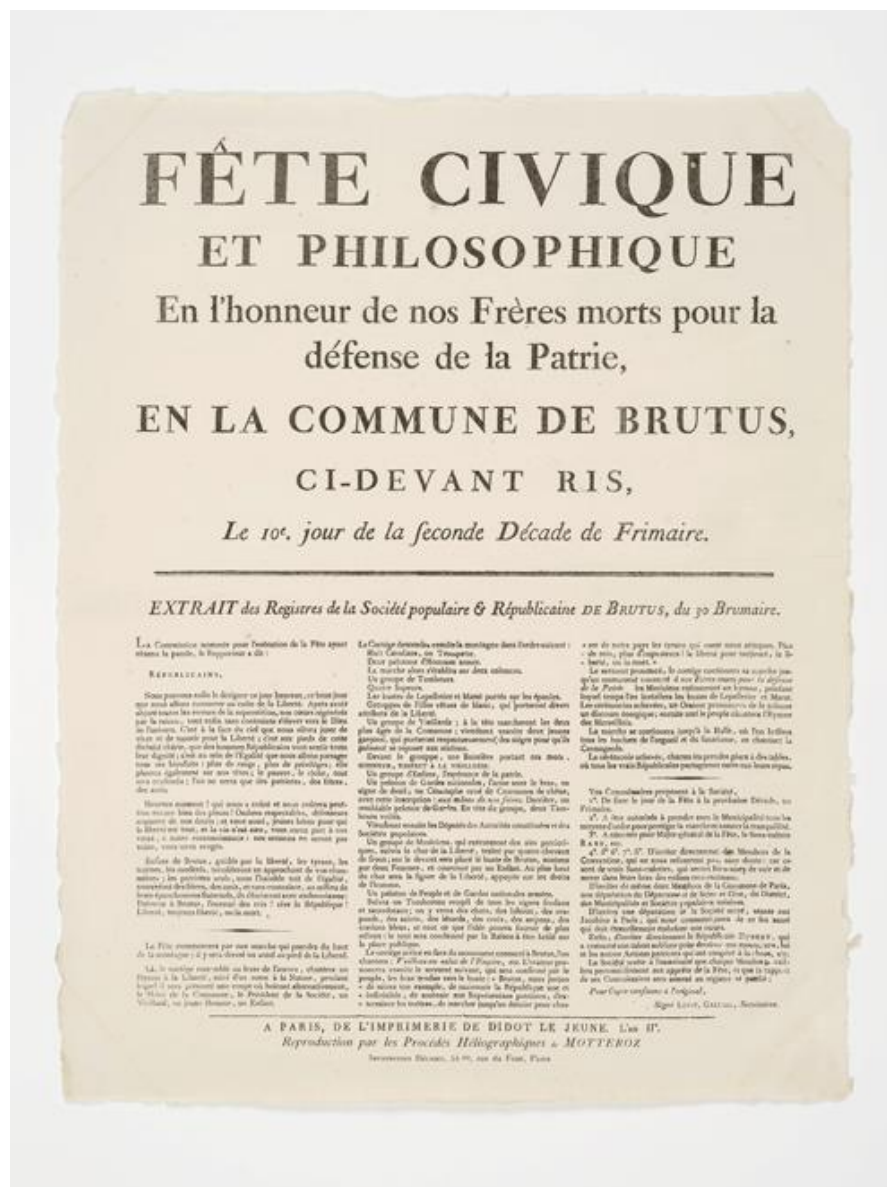
A 10 day performance

Photography: Maya Balcioglu



*Before the Mast*  
*A 10 day performance (2013)*  
Photography: Maya Balcioglu

The dates of this performance correspond to the month of Frimaire in the Republican Calendar that was introduced in France after the French Revolution. This calendar established a new chronology and was an effort to sweep away history and a centuries-old religion-centred organisation of time. The seven-day week was replaced by a new ten-day decimal week called a 'décade', with ten-hour days and 100 minute hours.



Announcement for Festival of Reason, second década of Frimaire (October-November 1793)

The poster announces one of the first 'festivals of reason' that took place in Fall Year II, on the tenth day of the second década of Frimaire (October/November 1793), the first year the Republican calendar was instituted. It took place in the Commune of Ris, outside Paris, whose inhabitants replaced their patron saint with Brutus and dismissed their curé with the pledge that the 'majority of citizens no longer recognize any day of rest other than that of the décade, any festivals other than those of the heart, any

religion other than that of liberty'. In addition to proclaiming the birth of a new time, the festival also celebrated the destruction of all the symbols of existing society. As the poster announces, the highlight of the procession was to be a 'barrel filled with all the signs of feudalism and religion; in which you will see cats, owls, toads, saints, lizards, crosses, serpents, cordons bleus and the most odious things that can be imagined. All this will be condemned by Reason to be burnt in the public square.'

This concern with obliterating all the remains of the past echoed the festival of August 10 1793, which celebrated the anniversary of the overthrow of the king. This festival, choreographed by the artist Jacques-Louis David featured a giant bonfire in which the symbols of feudalism were burnt. It was accompanied by the destruction of the royal mausoleum at Saint-Denis in which the royal bodies were exhumed, some even mutilated and fashioned into relics. But this destruction of the past also sought to create new forms with which to render visible the dawn of a new time. Most significantly, this festival of reason became a prototype of the various festivals of reason held all over France in Fall Year II, the most famous of which was the festival held on Décadi, 20 Brumaire Year II (Décadi being the new day of rest that now replaced Sunday) in the Church of Notre Dame in Paris. The cathedral was rebaptised a 'Temple of Reason' and instead of a statue of Reason, it featured a semi-nude actress, incarnating a Goddess of Liberty, who unveiled herself to indicate the triumph of reason over religion and who was to replace the centrality of the Virgin Mary in Christian iconography. Unlike ancient symbols of authority, which were believed to embody the presence of an eternal and divine truth, the living goddess was to herald a new secular relation of the image to time, signaling the triumph of life over death, reason over religion and the presence of the material body over the transcendental soul.

Dr Sanja Perovic 2013

Further texts and images are on Stuart Brisley's website [www.stuartbrisley.com](http://www.stuartbrisley.com)

[http://www.stuartbrisley.com/pages/36/10s/Works/Before\\_the\\_Mast/page:16](http://www.stuartbrisley.com/pages/36/10s/Works/Before_the_Mast/page:16)

[http://www.stuartbrisley.com/pages/37/10s/Text/Before\\_the\\_Mast:text\\_by\\_Tony\\_White\\_and\\_Sanja\\_Perovic/page:8](http://www.stuartbrisley.com/pages/37/10s/Text/Before_the_Mast:text_by_Tony_White_and_Sanja_Perovic/page:8)