

# palmer gallery

Exhibition 08

SO MANY CARES

Curated by

Andrew Price and Lucy Cowling

07.03.25 - 19.04.25

Private View:  
Thursday 6th March, 6-9pm

Callum Eaton  
Débora Delmar  
Helen Clarke  
Megan Plunkett  
Ryan Gander  
Shanzhai Lyric

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*'everything is ruined  
we' re domed  
nogthing can save us  
we' re all going to die'*

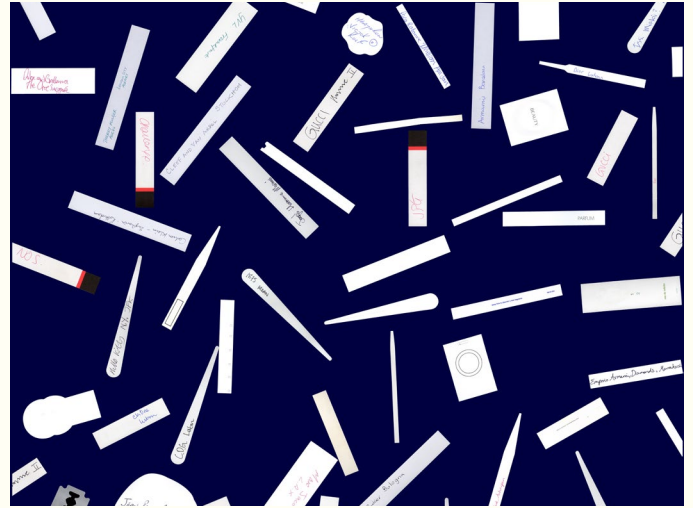
*'on one hand  
who cares  
and in the  
other hand  
so what'*

*'Art is a way of survival.  
fashion sport  
ther your'*

These slogans, as well as the exhibition's title 'so many cares', were found emblazoned on clothing and are taken from Shanzhai Lyric's archive of poetry-garments. The fragmentary language speaks to conflicting emotions about the state of the world and our place within it. Living with cognitive dissonance is for many of us part of being alive in this alarming moment in history, and this exhibition addresses symptomatic feelings of confusion, responsibility, privilege, ambivalence and irony. Through a sparse poetry and an attentiveness to cultural discards of the global marketplace, the artworks in 'so many cares' offer a deeper look into the dynamics of contemporary life, shaped by misguided notions of growth, accumulation and progress.



*Shanzhai Lyric, Incomplete Poem (heap), 2015-ongoing.*



*Ryan Gander, The Charlatan's Tear, 2025, printed silk*

*Incomplete Poem (heap)* (2015-ongoing) is an excerpt from Shanzhai Lyric's evolving archive of garments featuring the experimental English of 'shanzhai' t-shirts – a Chinese term for 'counterfeit,' describing goods that are knock-off or parody. While visually playful in their collision of garish fabrics, zippy typography and accidental irony – courtesy of nonsensical mistranslations – shanzhai T-shirts demonstrate 'how the language of counterfeit uses mimicry, hybridity, and permutation to both revel in and reveal the artifice of global hierarchies'. As archivists of this verse, Shanzhai Lyric question the labour conditions behind these 'accidents' of language and celebrate their irreverence, while alluding to other histories of textile production. Here, shirts presented in the form of the heap specifically reference shoddy, a recycled woolen textile innovated in Yorkshire during the height of the Industrial Revolution and maligned by wool and cotton industries, fearful that a viable recycled textile material might threaten their profits. *Incomplete Poem (heap)* entwines legacies of textile industries, property, enclosure, exploitation, waste and commoning.

Débora Delmar acquired the elements of *CLOCKS* (2025) from Blythe House, the Victoria & Albert Museum's former archive, after working as part of the team packing a quarter of a million objects in the collection ahead of the collection's relocation to East London. The work symbolises the time spent on this labour and the slow grinding bureaucratic hurdles she had to overcome to obtain permission before removing objects from a government-owned building. A row of clocks is reminiscent of non-places – airport lounges, hotel lobbies – where time seems endless, a reminder that finance and goods never stop flowing. However, in a museum, time stands still; objects can't age, nor can they easily be removed. The clocks, with their different rhythms, remind us that time isn't just linear – it can unfold in many ways.

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In Ryan Gander's *What you lack in poetry you cannot make up for in ambition* (2019-2020), silhouettes of currency, ID cards, and other objects tied to a culture of time, property, and profit proliferate throughout the gallery. Stripped of their everyday signification, the haphazardly scattered black shapes suggest a gradual infiltration of capital into every aspect of our lives. In contrast, *The Charlatan's Tear* (2025) consists of a silk scarf incorporating discarded scent swatches, each representing well known duty-free perfumes, accumulated from the artist's travel through different airports in countries around the world, presented here as a map of luxury global brands.

Callum Eaton's photorealist paintings uncover the incidental beauty of everyday encounters in the urban environment, highlighting certain formal affinities with forms of minimal and conceptual art practice. His new paintings, feature familiar scenes from dying high streets – darkened storefronts and boarded-up windows. The paintings evoke a state of consumer dissonance. With intense and exacting detail, Eaton captures a sense of neglect and lifelessness that reflects the decline of physical retail in the wake of Brexit, COVID-19, rising costs, and the surge in online shopping.

Megan Plunkett investigates how systems of signs and symbols create meaning, by subtly yet forensically manipulating their visual language. Flirting with the capitalist noir and cinematic uncanny, Plunkett employs tricks from the Hollywood playbook to create estranged environments. The metal can of *Dirty, Dirty* (all 2023) has been cut open, with decoupage 'teeth' reflecting back the light like a wry smile. As if producing sketches, each version is different – disarming and haunting in their multiplicity, as the images undermine the projected lore that a camera captures an objective truth. Similarly, the 'Coke' candle of *Cruel and Thin* (both 2023) is off-brand and not quite at one-to-one scale. While the photographed objects mimic the real, her images create glitches within the replication of consumer logic.



Megan Plunkett, detail from *Cruel and Thin 01*, 2023, inkjet print, glossy paper, black foamcore



Shanzhai Lyric, *Incomplete Poem (heap)*, 2015-ongoing

In *Propagation* (2020), Helen Clarke repurposes Polyethylene Terephthalate containers, arranged in a minimalist grid. The plastic packaging slides seamlessly in scale between the micro, as womb-like protective compartments for single seedlings to grow, and the macro, calling to mind aerial views of man-made landscapes. Inspired by satellite imagery of industrialised agriculture, where once wild landscapes have been transformed into vast fields of greenhouses enabling a year round supply chain of produce, Clarke is interested in how such cycles of production can become more nurturing.

Each artist in so many cares finds poetics within the materiality of everyday life, resisting and rewriting the destructive forces of consumption and global circulation. One extra care at a time.

## About Palmer Gallery

Founded by Lucas Giles and Will Hainsworth in 2024, Palmer Gallery is a space dedicated to identifying and developing the strongest emerging artistic talent of today. The gallery programme focuses on cross-disciplinary artists working across painting, sculpture, video, performance, light and sound installation, creating an immersive exhibition space. This multi-sensory approach embraces a holistic view of contemporary art while championing an institutional dedication to framing and contextualising complex artistic practices. Palmer Gallery's core mission is to allow artists to express themselves and thrive in an open, supportive and experimental environment; fostering a culture of creative freedom and connection among the gallery's artists and the wider community. The gallery is situated in London's Lisson Grove, in a 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> former-factory built in the 1920's by the Palmer Tyre Company, who produced parts for the Spitfire, Hurricane and Lancaster Bombers during The Second World War.

## Contact Us

For further press information and high-res images please email: [contact@palmergallery.co.uk](mailto:contact@palmergallery.co.uk)

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