

22 FEBRUARY 2014 | £3.75

WWW.SPECTATOR.CO.UK | EST. 1828

THE SPECTATOR



Cameron ♥ Merkel
James Forsyth

Be a shale profiteer
Matthew Lynn

The return of England
Dot Wordsworth

Exhibitions

Small wonders
Andrew Lambirth

Liam Hanley: Land
Crane Kalman Gallery, 178 Brompton Road, SW3, until 15 March

Gauguin: Tales of Paradise
Ordovas, 25 Savile Row, W1, until 18 April

Pilar Ordovas continues to mount remarkable museum-quality shows in her Savile Row gallery. Currently you can see a small but choice selection of works by Paul Gauguin: just four pieces, all from private collections, but what a sense of originality inhabits the gallery through them. My favourite is 'Jeune homme à la fleur', painted in Tahiti in 1891, a portrait of a young man against a modulated blue ground with a flower behind his ear. I'd love to have seen this painting juxtaposed with one of Craigie Aitchison's best portraits. Gauguin was a seminal influence on Aitchison, and I've no doubt that Craigie would have been enchanted by this depiction of a young man. We are offered, however, by way of contrast, a patinated plaster sculpture, 'Masque de sauvage', and two other paintings. The better of these is 'Le toit bleu' or 'Ferme au Pouldu', an earlier picture, painted in Brittany and constructed around a central area of pink, which is the farmyard. Gauguin's great skill with colour is beautifully evident here, long driving brushstrokes alternating with briefer marks. The fourth work is a late woodland scene of magical incantation; exotic and intriguing, it doesn't have the seemingly effortless splendour of the Brittany farm or the portrait.

man against a modulated blue ground with a flower behind his ear. I'd love to have seen this painting juxtaposed with one of Craigie Aitchison's best portraits. Gauguin was a seminal influence on Aitchison, and I've no doubt that Craigie would have been enchanted by this depiction of a young man. We are offered, however, by way of contrast, a patinated plaster sculpture, 'Masque de sauvage', and two other paintings. The better of these is 'Le toit bleu' or 'Ferme au

Academy, is a very different kind of installation: four frosted-glass screens animated by immensely sophisticated displays of LED lights. These four individual works are by James Turrell (born 1943), master-manipulator of how we perceive colour and light. Turrell can make you look at the sky with new intensity and heightened awareness, and his walls of interior light have beguiled viewers for more than 30 years. His work draws upon nature, but also upon astronomy, physics, architecture and theology; it is exceptionally beautiful and thought-provoking.

On the ground floor of Pace, the gallery has been divided into three separate booths: in the middle is 'Sojourn' from 2006, a 'Tall Glass' (upright or portrait format), while the two outside works are from the 'Wide Glass' series, in horizontal or landscape format, entitled 'Kermadec' and 'Pelée' respectively, both new and never previously exhibited. Talking about these screens as portrait or landscape is little help in summoning them up. The best description would be as living, breathing Rothko paintings — screens of constantly evolving colour and light. The effect is mesmerising and calming, as colours mutate, fuse and fade. Some of the elisions and transformations are simply exalting, like watching a more controlled sky at sunset. Mars violet and rose madder changes to turquoise, lilac and orange, to pink, brown and green. Upstairs there's another 'Tall Glass', entitled 'Sensing Thought' (2005), with a bench in front so that viewers may sit at ease and just watch. Hours could pass in these chambers of light...



'Cut Field (1)' by Liam Hanley

Pouldu', an earlier picture, painted in Brittany and constructed around a central area of pink, which is the farmyard. Gauguin's great skill with colour is beautifully evident here, long driving brushstrokes alternating with briefer marks. The fourth work is a late woodland scene of magical incantation; exotic and intriguing, it doesn't have the seemingly effortless splendour of the Brittany farm or the portrait.

At Pace London, at the back of the Royal