Chris Thompson: Old Bones
9 June - 2 July 2022

Bobinska Brownlee New River
Canonbury Street
London N1 2US

Underground garage, 3x2 timber, Recticel foam insulation and spray foam.

Stained 3x1 timber, re-claimed kitchen cabinets doors, cheap Wickes laminate floor (and cheap gaffer tape), pinewood furniture board (not so cheap), cabinet hinges.

Ceramic elephant (and Araldite two-part glue). Strip lights, LED Panels.

Plasterboard (Various grades) + accompanying dust. Polyethylene dust sheets. Twin core wiring. Polyurethane casting resin (bones), Polyurethane transparent casting resin (Cabinet doors)

Projector, PA system (PULSE), found footage and audio; Metal Gear SOLID 4, ‘Microwave corridor scene’, © Konami.

Mammoth rib bone and fragments, c. 30,000.BC


OLD SNAKE
You've got to keep moving!


OLD SNAKE
Please!


RECT


OLD SNAKE


PULSE


PULSE


PULSE
PULSE


SOLID EYE MODE
NORMAL
SOLID EYE
Snake, that place is saturated with microwaves.

It’s a peculiar space, sort of in-between.

Not really dissimilar to the sort of squashed one-bedder that landlords turn their garages into. It’s not quite sure if it’s coming or going, beneath those sheets. Is this old-hat-tat on the way out, or has this just been put in? Either way, whose god-awful idea was that pinewood?

Violently, this tableau becomes punctured by the intrusion of an old man, crawling. Solid Snake, the stoic protagonist of the infamous Metal Gear video game series, has one last job to do. He’s been stabbed, shot, watched his mother die, killed his own father, had his face burnt in a nostalgia fuelled Mecha battle with his dead brother, come back to haunt him.

He’s good at enduring.

It’s all he has to offer, at this point. His body failing him through artificial ageing, he crawls as he is cooked alive by microwaves as his friends suffer in war, their lives dependent on his capacity to *just keep going*. He must be exhausted. I’m exhausted just watching it. The space seems exhausted.

It’s warm, vaguely nostalgic yet also so misguidedly ugly, violent even, like the DIY skills of the builder. (I mean look at that wiring job!) Hazardous to health, whether that be from plaster inhalation, electrical fire or just the overload of orange. The structure of the space seems to be offering up old bones. Something seeps through the floor. That flickering light, the cabinetry is shifting into a memory of itself.

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Photography by Andy Keate