

Featuring work by Chris Evans, IRWIN, Pil and Galia Kollektiv, Joseph Lewis, Patrick Moran, Oscar Nemon and Public Movement

Castlefield Gallery

2 Hewitt Street

Manchester

M15 4GB

29.11.13 – 3.2.14

In 1938, Yugoslav sculptor Oscar Nemon arrived in Britain, having fled the Nazi invasion of Brussels, where he was living with Magritte. He was part of the European avant-garde that came to the UK as a refugee. Shortly thereafter, Nemon proposed a bold architectural plan to construct a temple of universal ethics in London and was in correspondence over this with central figures in Britain. After the war, he became known for his portrayal of figures like Churchill, culminating in a bust of Margaret Thatcher that is currently at the Tory HQ.

Radical Conservatism explores the space between these two moments and asks whether these two terms are really antithetical. In the British context in particular, where the European avant-garde never really took hold, a kind of reactionary modernism has always defined a culture wary of revolution. But today more than ever, with the left increasingly holding on to the past of the welfare state as an ideal, and the right quietly revolutionising our world through neoliberal reforms, the paradigms of radicalism and conservatism need to be redefined. Can conservatism be seen as a radical position in itself? If art is defined by a movement towards the new - could 'holding on to the past' stubbornly be seen as a critical position, now that neo-liberalism has forced a far more radical shift in politics than the left has managed in a long time?



Radical Conservatism

curated by Pil and Galia Kollektiv

