

SCENE & HERD

[RECENT](#) [ARCHIVE](#)

- Linda Yablonsky in London before the 15th Frieze Art Fair
- Kate Sutton at the 7th Moscow Biennale
- David Colman at a memorial for Glenn O'Brien
- Gökcan Demirkazık at the 15th Istanbul Biennial
- Kaitlin Phillips on Susan Cianciolo at Bridget Donahue
- David Huber at the 2nd Chicago Architecture Biennial

Go places



Go places

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Newest Headlines

- Maine's Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture Receives \$250,000 Donation
- David Shrigley Named Guest Director of 2018 Brighton Festival
- Riga Biennial Announces Theme of First Edition
- Family Persecuted by Nazis to Receive Restitution for Lost Art
- Whitney Museum Unveils Design of David Hammons Hudson River Artwork
- Frieze London Announces Winner of Stand Prize and Tate Fund Acquisitions
- Fifteenth Edition of Frieze London Opens Thursday

Scottish Rites

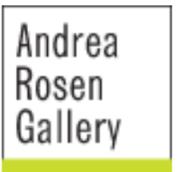
EDINBURGH 08.19.17



Ross Little, *The Heavy of Your Body Parts and The Cool Air of the Air Condition*, 2017, HD video, color, sound, 42 minutes and 24 seconds. Installation view, Collective, Edinburgh.

BETWEEN THE OPENING OF THE EDINBURGH FRINGE FESTIVAL AND THE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL, ALONG WITH THE EDINBURGH ART FESTIVAL KICKING UP DUST OF ITS OWN, traffic of both the foot and the vehicular variety converged spiritedly on the efforts of a wide range of art institutions. When the opening of the Art Festival came around on Thursday, July 27, many of the affiliated exhibitions had already been open for days or weeks. Two days prior to kickoff, between bursts of sunshine and rain, I made my way through the street performers and commercial hurrah of the city center to see [Jac Leirner's](#) "Add It Up" at the Fruitmarket Gallery before wandering up Calton Hill, slowly to avoid being out of breath, to the nonprofit gallery Collective to see Ross Little's film, *The Heavy of Your Body Parts and the Cool Air of the Air Condition*, 2017, which deconstructs the functions and contingencies of the cruise ship-borne lifestyle of "digital nomads."

Later, I arranged to meet with [Kate Gray](#), the director of Collective and mastermind of its project to convert the City Observatory into a new gallery complex. Over a cup of tea, Gray pointed out the benefits of the arts festival and its potential to encourage "sector-wide momentum in the city." Its model remains different from the likes of Documenta or Glasgow International, as the main body of art on view, although under the festival umbrella, is not specifically commissioned and funded by it.



- Lawrence Abu Hamdan Wins \$100,000 Abraaj Group Art Prize
- Gilbert & George to Launch London Foundation in 2019
- David Geffen Pledges Historic \$150 Million to LACMA's New Building



Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop's courtyard. Photo: Debi Banerjee.

When the opening night itself came around, I walked from the city center to the end of the former Victorian North British Railway for Charlotte Barker's first major solo exhibition at Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop. The venue's courtyard was full of people drinking wine around a large clay mound, there for use in a series of events accompanying the show. The installation itself is an elegant and somber display of monochrome ceramic works and benches that, like much of the festival, speaks to material and ecological themes. As the sun went down I met up with artist [Ewan Murray](#) and curator [Grace Johnston](#), who had taxied from the opening at Inverleith House for "Plant Scenery of the World."

From flitting around and talking over bottles of Paolozzi beer, it sounded like the [once-beleaguered institution's](#) new show was well-received, but conversation soon drifted to the considerable backlash following its near-closure last year and the subsequent negotiations over a new relationship between the gallery and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. Touring the exhibition later in the week with RBGE curator [Chloe Reith](#), I came to understand the difficulty of the undertaking, and her savvy and successful negotiations of institutional politics. With an unfavorable review from the *Daily Telegraph* still in mind, Reith explained that the exhibition's complexity reflects the "rich associations" of the garden's archive and also its "fragmentary nature."



Laura Aldridge, *SIGNALS AND GET WET*, 2016-17; *DISPLAY SCAPE #6 FOR INVERLEITH: DROP.CLOTH (REMOVE SHOES AND COLLAPSE YOUR METONYMIC IMPULSE, REPLACE IT WITH A REFRESHED SENSE OF HOW WE RELATE TO THE THINGS AROUND US)*, 2017, mixed media, dimensions variable. Installation view, Inverleith House, Edinburgh.

MAUREEN PALEY

LESLIE
TONKONOW
ARTWORKS +
PROJECTS

GLADSTONE
GALLERY

MARIANNE
BOESKY
GALLERY

Xavier
Hufkens

I spent the following weekend sober while making my way through the buffet of options offered through both the partnered exhibition initiative and the festival's commissions program. Highlights included Stephen Sutcliffe's "Sex Symbols in Sandwich Signs" at the University of Edinburgh's Talbot Rice Gallery and Kate Davis's "Nudes Never Wear Glasses" at the Stills Center for Photography. Although distinct in their themes, with Sutcliffe focusing on masculinity and theatricality while Davis zeroes in on motherhood and work, both artists employ diverse archival materials to develop intricate emotional narratives in film.

The social and ecological themes of Inverleith House's exhibition complement the commissioned works program, which this year had the mandate of responding to renaissance man Patrick Geddes's text *The Making of the Future: A Manifesto and a Project* (1917). In the Johnston Terrace Wildlife Garden, located on the south side of Edinburgh Castle, was a temporary studio building, surrounded by kids eating toasted marshmallows with festival volunteers. This is an urban incarnation of Bobby Niven's "Bothy Project," which constructs, through various collaborations, structures for art residencies. Here, it reactivates Geddes's original green space, allowing for fresh public engagement.

I have standing plans to drive to Ian Hamilton Finlay's garden, *Little Sparta*, 1966, in the Pentland Hills, and then further, to remind myself that "little walks by purling streams in meadows and through cornfields, thickets etc. are delightful entertainments," as one work in Finlay's plot proclaims—words which certainly complement Geddes's emphasis on locality and contact with nature.



Bobby Niven's *Palm House*, 2017, at the Johnston Terrace Wildlife Garden.

— [Calum Sutherland](#)

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