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Review of *Red, White and Blue: Pop, Punk, Politics and Place* at CHELSEA space

*Red, White and Blue* is a precise exhibition. In the Jubilee and Olympic year, the exhibition casts a pervasive shadow against the structures of government, nation and culture. The title itself reflects this idea; (*Red, White and Blue*) a grouping of three colours that group us as a mass under flag; (*Pop, Punk, Politics and Place*) our popular shared interests, our reaction to that very notion in the face of consumerism, our power relations in society, and how we situate ourselves within this world. It is these stances, viewpoints and cultural vistas that coalesce within and through the exhibition.

It is important that the gallery is in three segments; as stated earlier, there is a precision to the work (the exhibition as a work), each room has a nascent temporality, effervescing in relation to the content of the artefacts. When encountering the moving-image of the 'immersion tank' first room, you are indeed immersed and consumed by colour, culture, violent gestures and heady symbolism. On the walkway, you're made to look up, lean back, and pay attention to the multiplicity of icons, the exchange of referents, from static wall back down to a re-enactment of *The Cramps – Human Fly*. It is that question of acting, of artifice, that trails into the final room. In contrast to the preceding rooms, the breathing space, stark white walls and large windows create a different atmosphere that feeds into the context of the formal work of Sturgis, Clements and Carvell. These pieces of high art starkly engage with the idea of cultural paradigms, their mediated relation to the individual, and the very experience of historicity itself.

I feel it best to conclude this review, and my own experience of *Red, White and Blue*, with a series of questions and a final assertion. How can we qualify the emergent resonance between past and present contexts? Is resonance itself, an artifice, a curatorial signifier that situates the beholder in a meaningful relationship with an artwork? How does the materiality of art reflect upon the elusive nature of culture? Reflecting on this exhibition, I feel as though I'm grasping a complex machine, illusory and paradigmatic; within such action, I can attempt to position myself as a subject, mediated and mediating.