

Dave Beech
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[Excerpt]

[...]

What stole the show in my view, however, were the new paintings by BANK. They have painted dispersed Lowry figures and chimneys on Rothko-like duochrome backgrounds. Lowry's sense of place and the significance of the activities which brought crowds together has been eliminated. We are left, I guess, with a sense of desolation, or of a nostalgia for working class cultural politics. Better still, I'd say, these paintings revisit Terry Atkinson's 'Enola Gay' monochrome works. Instead of Atkinson's figurative element masquerading as a little stain, BANK'S political ciphers spread out, wandering across the surface, half threat to it, half lost in it. This is a fitting and perceptive allusion to the persistence of cultural tensions and divisions. It is also, in the wake of so much self-publicity on their part, about the best self-portraits they've done. The only trouble is deciding whether they identify with the Lowry figures or the abstract painterliness which they occupy.

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