



Life & Arts

FTWeekend

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4 January/5 January 2020

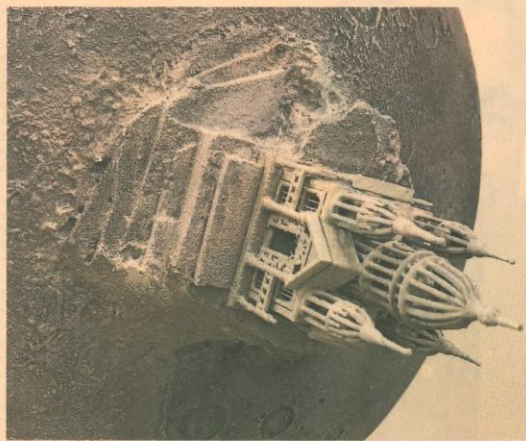
Critics' choice

Life & Arts

Visual arts Jackie Wullschläger

Saad Qureshi:

Something About Paradise
Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield
The Bretton estate's beautiful sandstone, light-filled, Palladian chapel has since its restoration in 2015 formed a stunning gallery at YSP for intimate, spiritually charged work – Ai Weiwei's trees, Chiharu Shiota's filigree threads. It is an ideal site for 2020's inaugural exhibition, the first solo museum show for 33-year-old Pakistan-born British sculptor Qureshi, whose poetic, fantastical architectural models are infused with ideas about faith, fusion of cultures, belonging. "The Gates of Paradise" are seven huge hand-cut painted wooden gates, their ornamentation echoing Arabic, art nouveau, geometric styles. A five-metre ladder teeters to the ceiling, its rungs ever smaller: a dream of infinity. "Night Jewel" is a glass fibre and resin moon studded with an elegant columnar building, sci-fi meeting classicism. Constructed from wood, steel, Celotex and sand, the three pieces comprising the new titular work "Something About Paradise" are monumental, tilting, unstable, enchanting structures. One is a pile of towers and spires, the others organic landscapes, strange geological formations, by turns smooth and crumbling, depicting mountains,



deserts, forests, waterfalls, cataclysms, and spread with fragmented minuscule buildings: churches, temples, palaces, modernist houses, plus little doors and windows across the surfaces, suggesting secret gardens, wonderlands, paradises of the imagination. The Tower of Babel,

post-apocalyptic ruin, torrential Chinese scroll painting, and Eliot's metaphor for regret "the passage we did not take/Towards the door we never opened/Into the rose garden", all come to mind; the pleasure of play, games of scale, folly, utopias, time, stillness, are themes. "Quranic

allegories of the seven heavens formed part of the backdrop to family life," says Qureshi; he is interested in evoking the different "paradises that others spoke of . . . never too far from our consciousness". ysp.org.uk, to March 15

Saad Qureshi's
"Night Jewel"
(2019)

Courtesy of the artist

Emily Young

Bowman Sculpture, London
Near her Tuscan home, Young has turned environmental activist, carving the enormous face of Cautha, the Etruscan dawn goddess, on a rock above the Zancona river in protest against a new power station. Young's majestic work gains ever more resonance in the climate change era: her carved heads, compelling, individual, ravishing in their complex hues – luminous onyx "Blue Sea Head", green patinated bronze "Wind Head", golden "Honey Crystal Quartzite Head" – take power from their rugged, unfinished appearance, as if the stone speaks alongside the artist's hand and chisel, suggesting the vast reach of earth's history, connecting natural and human, past and present. bowmansculpture.com to January 31

Nam June Paik

Tate Modern, London
The Korean artist worked collaboratively with more famous names – Joseph

Beuys, John Cage, Merce Cunningham, as explored here – but he was a defining, playful, eclectic pioneer of video art, coining the phrase "electronic superhighway" in anticipation of the internet age. This retrospective of five decades of work, by turns lively, crazy and heavily conceptual, begins with robots made from old television screens, and features innovative video works and immersive sound installations. tate.org.uk, to February 9

Cars: Accelerating the Modern World
Victoria and Albert Museum, London

The first production car, the Benz Patent-Motorwagen 3, a 1922 Hispano-Suiza Type H6B; the Czech Republic's sleek Tatra T77; an autonomous flying car; a converted low-rider; a 1950s concept car; how the car changed the pace of the 20th century, our relationship with speed, landscape and cityscape, told through leading designers and technological innovators. vam.ac.uk, to April 19

Bridget Riley

Hayward Gallery, London
This is the last month for this largest retrospective ever dedicated to the queen of op-art, now 88: early figurative compositions, rarely seen studies, dizzying perceptual games in the 1960s black and white paintings, expansive canvases in colour and recent wall paintings. southbankcentre.co.uk to January 26

George Stubbs: 'all done from Nature'

MK Gallery, Milton Keynes
It is also the final weeks for the biggest Stubbs exhibition in 30 years: a fully rounded picture of this artist-scientist of the Enlightenment, displaying his groundbreaking depictions of cheetah, rhinoceros, mouse, alongside the major horse portraits, including "Whistlejacket" and "Eclipse", the famous 18th-century thoroughbred and progenitor of 90 per cent of subsequent racehorses, whose depiction is shown here with his actual skeleton, which Stubbs studied. mkgallery.org, to January 26