

EXTRACT: BEN CAIN

The spaces here have never really felt lived in, have they? More like somewhere one gets taken to on a tour, shown around.

There can be a particular kind of freshness to such spaces, even if they are covered by cobwebs and dust sheets.

Freshness?

In that they have a kind of emotional isolation and are clear of people and of habit, of memory...

But you were describing a space inhabited by artworks?

I was thinking about a collection populating, or repopulating a former home, a palace, about an oscillation between raw forms and worked forms, things that have developed all by themselves and things that appear to be the result of human actions. The basic properties of objects in space are inherently interesting.

Specifically?

Inanimate things, the extra-live, nearly live, non-live, and the relationship with whoever experiences them, with their bodies. The same weight, balance, care and precariousness...

What are the works in the space?

There are light and temporary supports, platforms, and some heavy bodies sitting on edges. The bodies are a collection of abstract and figurative forms. Bronze, stone, marble, wood. All dark and solid, some with a sheen and wear that comes

from years of caressing (even though that's impossible). Cheeks, heads, thighs, torsos, chests, breasts, bottoms, records, monuments. Most of them very roughly head-size. The other forms are rocks taken from the seashore, smooth and rounded. These rocks are painted, treated, shellacked, to match the sculpted forms which are taken from this collection.

What is this space?

It was built originally as a private residence, a palace and many years later evolved into this museum. The work is sited in what would have been the main hall. Fleur-de-lys inlaid in the light green terrazzo floor. Four-metre-high doors leading to the terrace, and beyond that the sea and beyond that a small island. There are two bent steel bar chairs, white with ornate curls and curves. There is a large sheet of flat, un-used crisp and clean cardboard on the floor, and another sheet resting on a large stage area of single-story wooden pallets. The objects from the collection, which feel like found objects and the found-then-altered objects – the painted rocks – are placed along the very edges of the platforms, and seated on chairs. All very light colours; greens, greys, grey-blues, apart from the nearly-spheres which are very dark.

And who would see them? Would an audience exist?