

Natasha Kidd: Microswitch / Houldsworth Gallery

Untitled; (white emulsion on canvas) detail

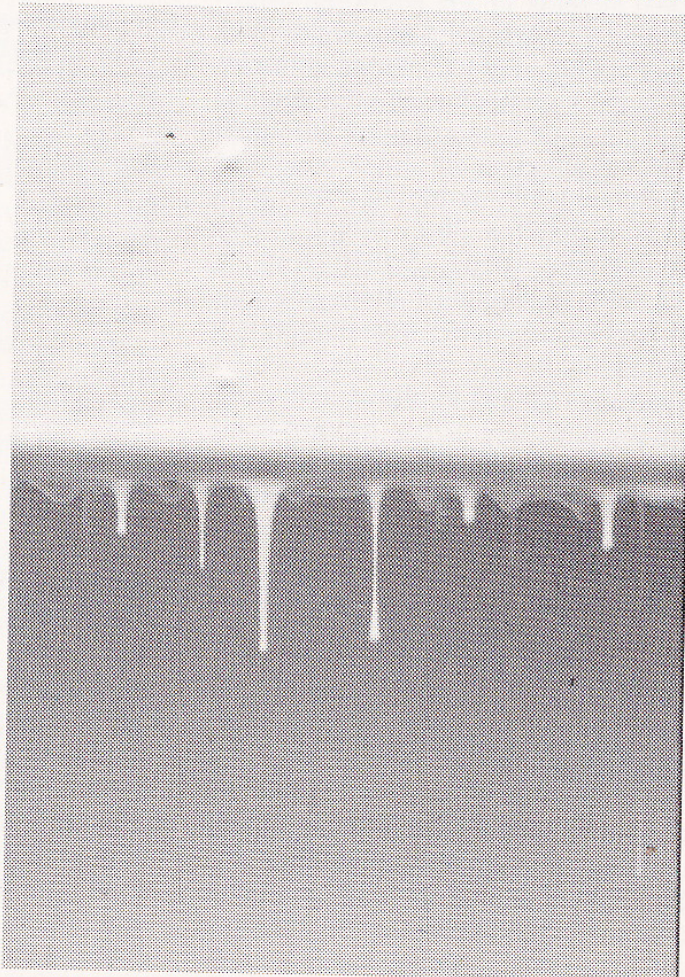
emulsion. The stillness of the gallery is periodically broken by the whirr and click of machines and the steady drip of paint, which forms ridges and bubbles as it spreads across the canvas and solidifies to form freshly created sculptural works.

The laying bare of the mechanics of production in this way doesn't demystify the making of the painting, as Kidd would like us to believe, but instead refocuses attention on an earlier stage of the artistic cycle. The viewer is more forcefully engaged by the machines and the painting process than by the product or finished work. In effect, the works become merely the output tokens: the centre of Kidd's art lies in the mechanical process.

The overall effect is industrial - but Industrial Lite rather than light-industrial, perhaps reminding us of a microbrewery or the lights-out hi-tech plant. Strangely, in this context, the metal and perspex machines themselves appear a little old-fashioned - arguably, like painting itself.

Ends 29 April

Jim Healy



The gallery space has been transformed into a workshop by the installation of Natasha Kidd's 'painting machines'. Three microswitch controlled contraptions 'paint' by repeatedly dipping the canvas into a vat of white