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BY JENNIFER HIGGIE  
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# Being literal

In the last week I have witnessed two totally different discussions about the economic crisis drift wistfully into the inability of so many contemporary perfumes to mirror the turbulent times we live in. Wander the aisles of perfume counters and most of them are either irritatingly literal and cheerful – Happy, Weekend Woman, Passion, Energy, Pink, etc etc – or celebrity-driven (I do wonder how many people have bought ‘Jade Goody’, the perfume.) Whatever happened to perfumes being designed for women pilots possibly getting on a plane for their final flight, like ‘En Avion’, created by Caron in 1932 in homage to female aviators (notes of cedarwood, leather, goggles and gloves mixed with Carnation, orange flower, rose, lilac and violet) or Guerlain’s ‘Vol de Nuit’ from 1933 inspired by the book of the same name by Antoine de Saint Exupéry (notes of wood, iris, vanilla and narcissus, polished gear sticks etc)?

I know I’m moaning, but in the 1920s, the most popular bohemian cafe in London was ‘The Cave of the Golden Calf’. Now everyone eats lunch in ‘Eat’. I really hope the girl band currently in the top ten on *X Factor*, called ‘Girl Band’ don’t win.

It’s like the artist Paul Day who was commissioned to make a work of art to celebrate the opening of the wonderful newly refurbished St Pancras train station, who came up with a design ‘that portrays a commuter falling in front of a train driven by the Grim Reaper’. The frieze was to be part of Day’s execrable 20 ton, 30ft-high bronze sculpture of a couple embracing, which is meant to function as a meeting place for travellers. It’s titled ‘Meeting Place’.

There is, however, a light on the horizon. A piece in today’s *Guardian* reports that ‘A spokesman for the company has said: ‘The frieze as originally suggested will not go ahead and work on it has stopped.’

Oh happy day.

JENNIFER HIGGIE

Jennifer Higgie is editor-at-large of *frieze*, based in London, UK. She is the host of *frieze*’s first podcast, *Bow Down: Women in Art History*. Her book *The Mirror and the Palette* is forthcoming from Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

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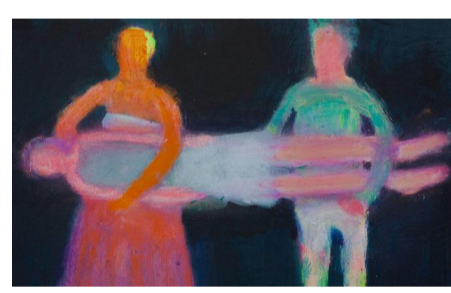
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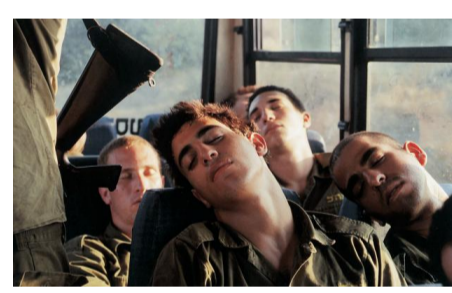
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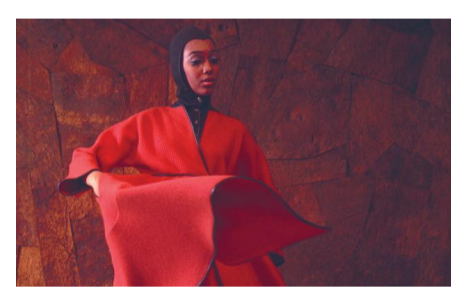
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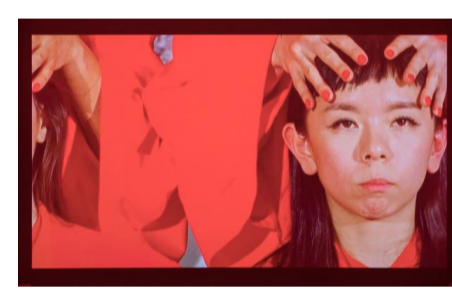
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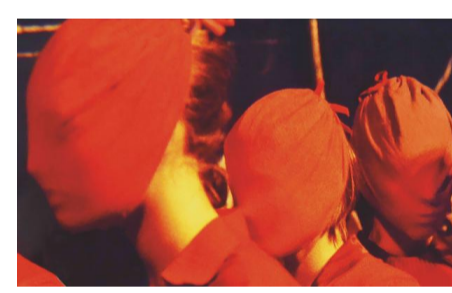
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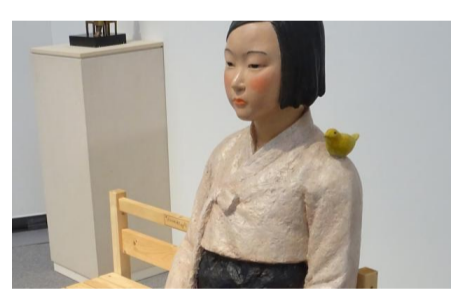
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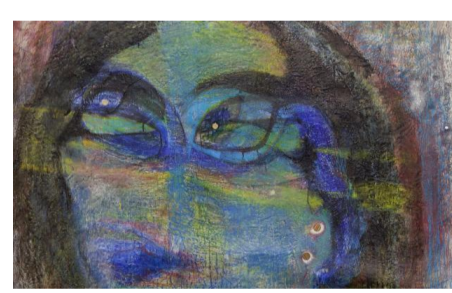
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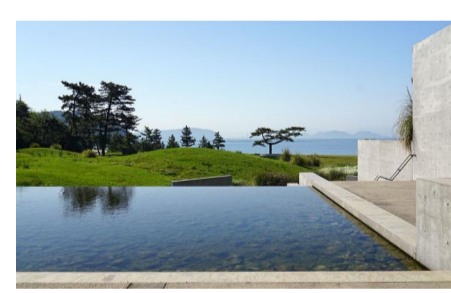
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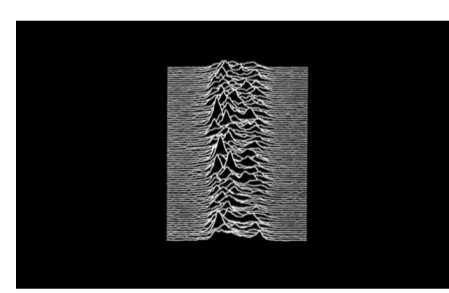
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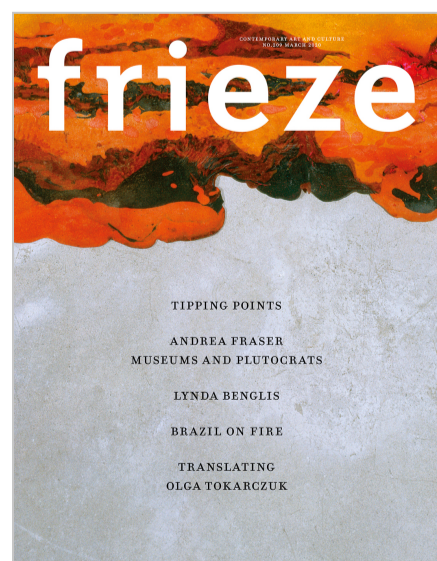


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