

ACTION, CAMERA!

ION BÂRLĂDEANU & ALAN CONSTABLE



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THE GALLERY OF EVERYTHING

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ACTION, CAMERA! presents two distinct and separately curated solo shows, thematically linked by a fascination with the camera - or rather, the lack thereof. **ION BÂRLĂDEANU** and **ALAN CONSTABLE** have never been previously exhibited in Britain, where they are now represented exclusively by The Gallery of **Everything**.

The makeshift open-air studio of **ION BÂRLĂDEANU** was first discovered in a back-alley in Bucharest, Romania. Yet its proprietor, a modest and clandestine collagist, was unprepared for the visibility and success which swiftly descended upon his secret art-making practice.

As social commentary, **BÂRLĂDEANU**'s satirical anti-communist and anti-capitalist assemblages reveal a wry sense of humour and sharp political savvy. Their brilliance, however, is down to their maker's visual flair, where impossible eye-lines and one point perspective coincide effortlessly with the high-gloss, the pornographic and the surreal.

BÂRLĂDEANU describes himself as a maverick film director. In these, his movie-stills, he rules roost, setting world-famous actors and political big-wigs against each other, and primarily for his own amusement. At the tender age of 76, it is clear **ION BÂRLĂDEANU** has only just begun.

For the curious hands of **ALAN CONSTABLE**, there is little difference. The silent childhood hobby, the sustained studio career, both reflect his one abiding focus: the possibility of the camera.

As a teenager, **CONSTABLE** would salvage cereal boxes to craft reconstructions of his favourite optical gadgets. Today these tools are transformed. The ceramic sculptures for which he is renowned sit, majestic and collapsed, eyeing the world around them with their primary, pastel and silvery glazes.

It is the metaphor which compels us to touch them. For as **CONSTABLE**'s sight diminishes, so his fascination with the way we see intensifies. His objects are talismans. They challenge us and the meaning of our sight, at a time when perception is defined by a digital lens.

ACTION, CAMERA!

Visitors are urged to come see this exhibition in the flesh. Digital reproduction is no match for the eye and the hand.

The Gallery of **Everything** is London's first and only commercial space dedicated to non-academic and private art-making. The gallery's roster includes major historical master artists & newly discovered authors and creators. Events include group and solo exhibitions, talks, readings & happenings. Please visit www.gallevery.com

All proceeds from sales support The Museum of **Everything**, a British non-profit organisation, committed to the advancement, integration and celebration of artists and makers beyond the cultural mainstream. Please visit www.musevery.com.

The Gallery of **Everything**
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ION BÂRLĂDEANU



ION BÂRLĂDEANU, untitled, 1980

Born in Zăpodeni, Romania in 1946, **ION BÂRLĂDEANU** worked as farmer, docker, security guard and grave-digger, before becoming a full-time artist. Although he had been creating satirical drawings and collages from a young age, it was the Romanian Revolution of 1989 which really brought his creative practice into the light.

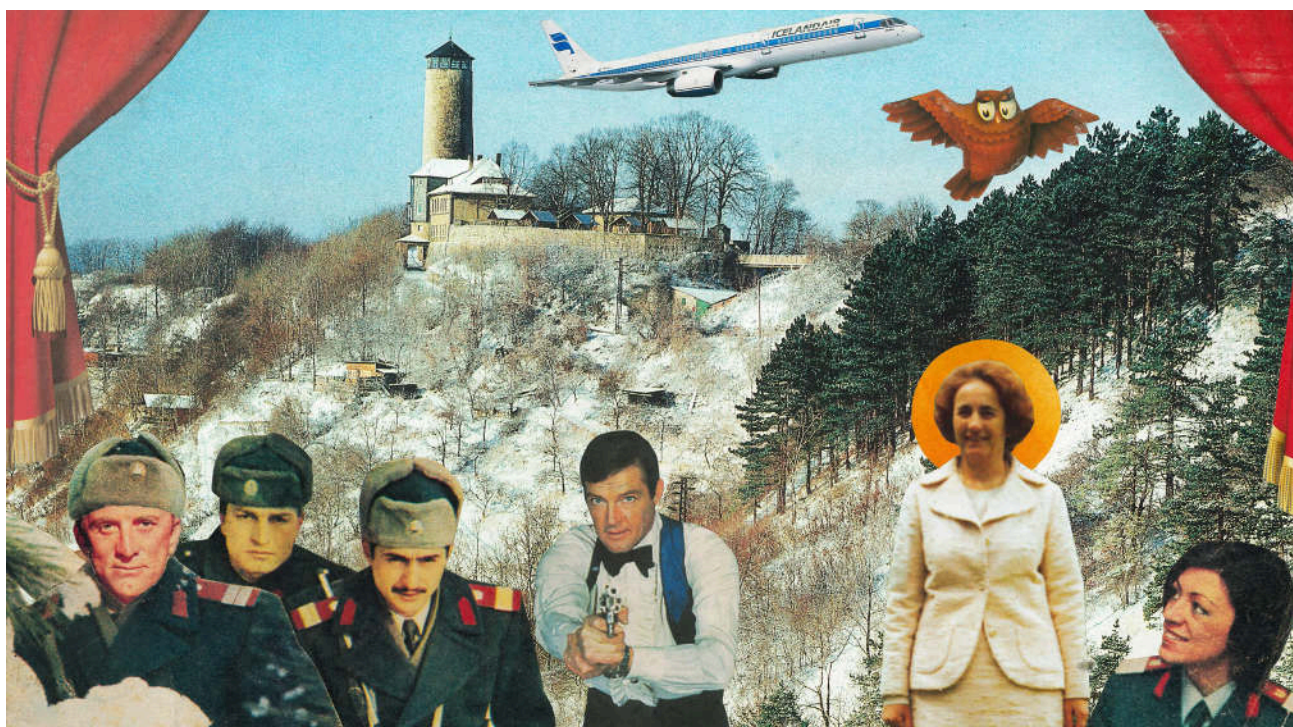
The long reign of militant communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu was an era of extreme censorship, draconian politics and state violence. It was during this time that **BÂRLĂDEANU** began his oeuvre, assembling subversive commentaries and illustrating them with collage and caricature. If discovered, this sarcastic imagery could have led to **BÂRLĂDEANU**'s imprisonment; yet he continued to make, ignoring any fears of recrimination.

The execution of Ceausescu and the subsequent fall of Communism both liberated and crippled the country, as hundreds of thousands of manual labourers found themselves without work. For **BÂRLĂDEANU**, the lack of employment brought with it a freedom. Technically homeless, what he had was time; and so he would spend his days sifting through discarded newspapers and magazines for imagery to assemble into film-stills.

BÂRLĂDEANU's collages should be considered as a filmography. They employ many of the formal properties of film: they are presented in Cinemascope (2.35:1), use Hollywood stars wherever possible, and are constructed on miniature sets, where the actors are organised in dynamic action and against epic backdrops.

In **BÂRLĂDEANU**'s oeuvre, hypocrisy is punished and the humanist spirit prevails. The world is in the midst of chaos, be it the fall of the Soviet regime, or the influx of pop culture and capitalism. His is a dense drama of triumph and fall, where cigarettes are the currency and every argument is settled with a bottle or a gun.

It was a chance meeting with contemporary curator Dan Popescu which brought **BÂRLĂDEANU** into the public eye. He has since been the subject of numerous group and solo shows, including the 2015 Vienna Biennale and The Museum of **Everything** at Kunsthal Rotterdam in 2016. Bârlădeanu's work has been featured in The Guardian and Vice Media and is included in numerous international collections.



ION BÂRLĂDEANU, *untitled*, 1982



ION BÂRLĂDEANU, *untitled*, 1982

ALAN CONSTABLE



ALAN CONSTABLE, *untitled*, 2016

Incredible ceramic sculptures of cameras, which should, in my opinion, be in every major museum collection. Matthew Higgs, White Columns (New York)

Born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1965, **ALAN CONSTABLE** is multi-disciplinary art-maker whose prolific output includes drawings, paintings and sculptures. His two dimensional works appropriate imagery found in newspapers and magazines, sometimes with a political or social aspect. Yet it is his iconic ceramic sculptures which have propelled him to international acclaim.

CONSTABLE's theme is the camera; and his oversized clay replicas reflect a lifelong fascination with visual technology. Some are household brands: Leica, Canon, Rolliflex, Nikon and Konica. Others are large formats, lesser known Eastern European models or discontinued lines. There are movie cameras (both Super 8mm and 16mm), slide projectors, binoculars and telescopes.

The architecture of the original object determines the proportions of the sculpture. **CONSTABLE**'s process interprets the utilitarian designs and abstracts them. As the oversized structures sag and collapse, so his fingerprints remain in the clay. They give the cameras their personality and connects them to a thousand year history of hand-made ceramic objects.

Profound philosophical questions are contained within each artwork. **CONSTABLE** himself is legally blind, meaning that his eyes do not provide him with adequate sight. Similarly, the function of these cameras is not photographic. If they do not see the world, do they ask their audience to consider perception without vision? Or simply through touch? **CONSTABLE** does not say.

ALAN CONSTABLE has been based at the Arts Project Australia studio in Melbourne for 25 years. Through their advocacy, his work is now in significant public and private collections, including the National Gallery of Victoria (Australia). Exhibitions include The Museum of **Everything** in London in 2011 and Rotterdam in 2016.



ALAN CONSTABLE, *untitled*, 2016



ALAN CONSTABLE, *untitled*, 2016