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Life&Arts

FTWeekend



One steppe beyond
An epic journey by
truck into Siberia

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Hot stuff
The dos and don'ts
of summer menswear

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Mint condition
Are we on the cusp
of a cashless society?

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FTWeekend

8 July/9 July 2017

Critics' choice

Life&Arts

Visual arts Jackie Wullschlager

Portraying a Nation: Germany 1919-1933

Tate Liverpool
Superb double bill covering
photographer August Sander
— whose direct, crystalline,
detached yet empathetic
"People of the 20th Century"
fixed types in the defeated
postwar Germany, from
beggar amputee to sinuous,
androgynous "Secretary at
the West German Radio in
Cologne" and massive stoic
widower "Pastrycook" —
and the cool yet grotesquely
expressive portraits and
great print series "War" by
Neue Sachlichkeit painter
Otto Dix.
tate.org.uk, 0151 702 7400
to October 15

Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power

Tate Modern, London
A landmark show exploring
new ways of working by
black artists during the Civil
Rights movement when race
and identity became major
issues in art, music and
literature. Among 60 artists
included are Frank Bowling,
Sam Gilliam, David
Hammons, Wadsworth

Jarrell, Faith Ringgold and
Jack Whitten, whose 1970
"Homage to Malcolm X" —
political leader Malcolm X —
goes on public display for
the first time.
tate.org.uk, 020 7887 8888
July 12–October 22

Joseph Beuys: Boxkampf für die direkte Demokratie

Waddington Custot, London
At the 1972 Documenta, a
Kassel art student challenged
Beuys to a boxing match in
order to pit "representative
government" against Beuys's
ideal of "direct democracy".
This show features archive
footage of the match, related
photographs, and a vitrine of
the gloves, helmets and
boxing ring ropes from what
Beuys called his conceptual
"farewell action".
waddingtoncustot.com
020 7851 2200, to August 11

**Jiro Takamatsu: The
Temperature of Sculpture**
Henry Moore Institute, Leeds
First UK show for the
conceptual sculptor central
to Japanese postwar art. In
the 1960s-70s Takamatsu's

True to Life: British Realist Painting in the 1920s and 1930s

Scottish National Gallery
of Modern Art, Edinburgh

In Stanley Spencer's "Adoration of
Old Men", plump girls in frumpy
sweaters collapse in ecstasy at the
thought of seducing a bunch of
wizened, bearded old men. Very
different utopias appear in Albert
Rutherston's "Pastoral", a country
house with willow figures in
pale colours painted on wooden
panels, and Fortunino Matania's
bright panorama of bathers,
waves and pier in "Blackpool".
All three were painted in 1937
— but the most popular work at
the Royal Academy Summer
Exhibition that year was a
scrupulously exact delineation of
a Monmouthshire farmer in rain-
soaked mac and old hat dangling
trapped animals. It was "The
Welsh Molecatcher" by Stanley
Lewis, who refused gallery shows,
kept his slowly executed canvases
and died in 2009 aged 103.

Drawn largely from museum
stores, this wonderfully varied
exhibition in Edinburgh revives
neglected interwar British
figurative art, and argues that its



'The Snack Bar' (1950) by Edward Burra

Estate of Edward
Burra/Leslie Fine Art

diversity is partly responsible
for the oblivion. Europe's return
to order after the first world war
took myriad forms — Surrealism
led in Paris, Neue Sachlichkeit
in Berlin (see Tate Liverpool's
show, left), neoclassicism in
Rome — but no single British
movement stood out to be
pigeonholed by history.

The Edinburgh show celebrates
individualists ranging from the
well-known Edward Burra — the
seedy, angular "The Snack Bar" —
to forgotten surrealist Edward
Baird — the platinum blonde
nude with outsize seashells "Birth
of Venus"; from fashionable
portraiture of uneasy beauties
Gerald Leslie Brockhurst
("Dorette", "By the Hills") to Art
Deco mannerist Gladys Hynes
(the arresting "Noah's Ark").
Throughout runs an undertow
of foreboding and menace:
Gluck's poisonous white plant
in "The Devil's Altar", Glyn
Philpot's mournful "Resting
Acrobats" slumped in pink satin,
Meredith Frampton's precise,
eerie "Still Life" of broken vase,
cut trees and damaged masonry.
nationalgalleries.org
0131 624 6200, to October 29

performances included
scrubbing the streets with
toothbrushes, dropping
handbags from high-rise
buildings and capturing the
shadows of passers-by on
construction walls. "A habit
of questioning" determines
his use of everyday objects
— bottles, string, stone,
furniture — in sculpture,
drawing attention to the
nature of perception.
henry-moore.org, 0113 246
7467, July 13–October 22

George Rowlett

Art Space Gallery, London
Asked about his favourite
painters, Rowlett says they
are those who "bring this
quality of living paint".
He exhilaratingly does so
himself, working from life,
adding layer after layer to
almost relief effect. Kent
landscapes are his familiar
subject but here he shows
new paintings from the
archaeological site of
Paestum: light-filled
compositions impressively
balancing sensuality of paint
with architectonic splendour.
artspacegallery.co.uk, 020
7359 7002, July 14–August 11