

BLAST THEORY: UNCLE ROY ALL AROUND YOU
CORNERHOUSE, MANCHESTER, 28 MAY TO 7 JUNE

"Complete adrenaline rush," is a phrase usually reserved for Vin Diesel films. Fact is, these days it takes more than explosions at 24 frames/second to trigger a gut response. To make the audience truly feel suspense in their veins, you have to drop them directly into the realm of the unknown. With Blast Theory's latest project, 'Uncle Roy All Around You', the heart-thumping fanfare is completely warranted. Participants are sent out, alone, into the city without keys, money or mobile phone - only a hand-held computer and a few clues to find 'Uncle Roy' within 60 minutes. Strangers may be willing to steer you through the crowds and alleyways of Manchester, but you can never know who might be a deceptive plant. Participants can also play online, tracking and communicating with street players via their palm-tops. This is the London-based trio's third collaboration with the University of Nottingham's Mixed Reality Lab, which experiments with merging physical and digital worlds. Dave Maass

WE DIDN'T MEAN TO BE BAD KIDS - TV MADE US DO IT
WARRINGTON ART GALLERY, UNTIL 26 JUNE

Just when you thought we couldn't blame TV for anything else, a group of artists come along to incite their childhood love-hate relationship with the 20th Century entertainment-phenomenon. 'We didn't mean to be bad kids - TV made us do it' would no doubt, have the likes of Adorno turning in his grave. That being said, the reality of this show is one of humour, wit and playfulness. Vincent James kidnaps cartoon anomalies and brings them to the foreground in his stark animations. Simon Woolham (who's currently showing at the Lowry, Salford) curates a series of carbon and paper constructions to sit within antique Edmonds cases. Jim Medway's anthropomorphic feline drawings act menacingly upon the printed pages of both Richard Scarry illustrated books and Disney annuals. Other artists in this show include Dawn Woolley, David Hancock, Little Artists, Pamela So, Anna Mitchell and Brya Weths. Mike Dawson.

TOM FRIEDMAN: SOLO EXHIBITION,
SOUTH LONDON GALLERY, 15 JUNE UNTIL 1 AUGUST

Go ahead and write your dissertations on the differences between craft and art and how pop art is bullshit. Say what you will about mass appeal, pretentious fool, but don't thumb your nose at Tom Friedman. While good conceptual art leaves you intellectually impressed, Friedman's brow-neutral creations are thrilling and awe-inspiring. His work is too meticulous to be considered play, but too playful to be labour. So let's simply describe it as fun, brilliant and anal. Friedman achieved fame with works like a star-explosion of toothpicks, a self-portrait carved into an aspirin, and the splattered construction paper remains of someone who'd fallen from a skyscraper onto the gallery floor. This summer we will see if he can top himself with an exhibition of his latest works at the newly refurbished 'South London Gallery'. On site: an elongated box of Cheerios cereal, a guitarist made of silver-foil and a tarantula made of human hair (pictured). Dave Maass

SIMON FAITHFULL: VANISHING POINT
THE PUMPHOUSE, LONDON, 5 JUNE TO JULY

In this modern age there seems to be physical representation for every journey we could consider taking. For Simon Faithfull's body of work, Vanishing Point, however the idea of the recorded journey is only the beginning. Expanding on this notion he explores alternative ways of viewing the environment that surrounds us, giving his audience a new angle on the world. In his most recently commissioned video installation, 30Km Faithfull, releasing a weather balloon records in a single continuous shot the journey away from the earth up into the atmosphere. Projected onto a circular screen, this dream-like sequence not only presents the spectator with a unique view of the earth but with the sense of an out-of-body experience. The viewer is taken on a journey from intensity to insignificance as the perspective increases. This theme continues through his works the Lea Navigation and Orbital No.1, recreating the journeys that permeate our lives. Clare Green

EXPO 21: STRATEGIES OF DISPLAY
WARWICK ARTS CENTRE, COVENTRY, 29 MAY UNTIL 26 JUNE

Within the seclusion of the studio the creation of an artwork is a purely private romance. The first showing is usually both the climax and end of the affair. In Expo 21 Simon Moretti brings together an eclectic group of artists (from France, Italy and the UK), who share his preoccupation with the issues of display within the different traditional settings for artwork, such as museums, galleries, trade fairs and retail environments. The paraphernalia of galleries is parodied in Gareth Jones' printed version of the humble MDF gallery plinth and Mercier's re-interpretation of strip lighting arrays. Walls and framing are scrutinised in Goshka Macuga epic installation 'Picture Room'. In true Moretti style this is not so much a group show, as conversation between artists about the showing of their creations and about that other lover, the gallery itself. Elizia Volkmann

A PRIVATE COLLECTION WORKS FROM THE HOME OF ERNEST AND KATE BOTTOMLEY
MILTON KEYNES GALLERY, 15 MAY UNTIL 20 JUNE

Imagine it's Sunday morning and a jubilant Charles Saatchi hurries back from the domestic breaker's yard of a car boot sale, clutching the flittered polybag that holds his latest acquisition, a small-change 'find' totally without provenance. Ernest and Kate Bottomley would have beaten him to it. Their collection is the antithesis of trend-dependent trophy art. This is art loved for its irreducible value as keepsake. There's 47 years of acquisition here. Psychometrists would implode, overwhelmed by a psychic-tsunami of residual memories. The pieces are an eclectic assemblage of donations, gifts, exchanges with other artists, and purchases over 47 years of deeply affectionate yet insightful collecting - including paintings by Brian Organ and Bill Billings, etchings by Rembrandt and Samuel Palmer. Every piece has been removed from display in the Bottomley's home. There will be bright rectangles of wallpaper like wristwatch-shaped pallor on a weathered arm. Lavinia Murray