

Gallery: It's not chaos, it's just art

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NOT everyone will enjoy the sculpture exhibition Material Intelligence at Huddersfield Art Gallery.

Quite a lot of it is an intellectual exercise as the eight artists involved show their own reaction to various familiar materials.

But there are one or two highlights and plenty of accompanying notes for those with the patience to read them so you are not left completely in the dark!

In this exhibition – which comes courtesy of the well-known Kettle's Yard Gallery in Cambridge – familiar objects, materials and processes are 're-purposed', while remaining recognisable.

The first exhibit we come across is probably the best. Tony Feher creates quite a magical atmosphere with an installation attuned to the shifting light and colour in the room. He uses 25 plastic bottles, filled with water suspended with string from the ceiling and tiny red squares scattered all over the walls.

A circle of blue paper filled with pieces of blue plastic foam lies on the floor in the middle of the installation which is titled Singing Room. It's a place you might like to linger.

Claire Barclay, who has exhibited previously in Edinburgh and London, is showing a piece in which strands of wheat are threaded through elegant brasswork.

Matt Calderwood in Double Ladder (Parallel) uses two buckets, two spades and two sports balls as well as ladders in a delicately-balanced work. But more hard-hitting is a piece of his performance art seen on video in which the artist is seen burning gradually through a piece of rope. This leads to a suspended car battery falling and just missing his fingers.

Pleaser is the title of Carla Black's 'thin sculpture' consisting of a large piece of cellophane suspended from the ceiling with a painting-like appearance at the bottom incorporating pockets of wet paint and powder in cling film.

A reference to the development of the first computer comes from Shirley Tse whose 'loom' pieces use fabrics developed by the military stretched over aluminium and brass frames.

An inkjet printer was used by Wade Guyton for his painting which is a series of varying

images of the letter X.

Robert Hall, senior visual arts officer, said: "It is interesting to see a range of different artists' approach to materials and the idea of the show is to promote artists who work in this way and a group of younger artists who have not shown in this gallery before."

Some casual gallery visitors will no doubt walk straight past this exhibition which looks chaotic at first glance. But some of it, at any rate, is worth a closer look, showing what expressionism is leading to today. However, you find yourself wishing that more of the exhibits had the charm of Tony Feher's Singing Room.

The show runs until October 3.