

'Barn Burner' by James English Leary at Carl Kostyál, London

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Artworks in "Barn Burner" by James English Leary
(Courtesy of James English Leary at Carl Kostyál, London)

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Carl Kostyál is hosting "Barn Burner," a solo exhibition of paintings by James English Leary in London. The paintings on shaped canvases show truncated four-fingered hands, fingers painted in different monochrome colors. The pieces are placed on the floor of the gallery space at different angles so that they signify different gestures and objects. Different colored pieces are sometimes stacked on one another. Primary colors: yellow, red, blue mixed in different proportions to achieve a rainbow of colors with violate, green and orange so that the viewers have an impression of 'Pop Art' of the design firm — MEMPHIS. Sometimes the fingers are oriented to signify a torso or some other body part. In some pieces, other body parts are added to the hand: a pair of lip or a nose protruding out of the frame. Leary's creations are highly influenced by the American comic artists like Robert Crumb, but he is mostly influenced by Philip Guston which is evident in the diptych "Totalitarian Bebop" (2015) showing five hands with smoking cigarettes. "The hand is an instrument of invention, self-expression, agency and destructive will. The hands point, signal, gesture, reach out. There are little stories you can start to project onto them (especially when they are in groups with each other) — affection, submission, protection, communication, protest. And I like that when they are piled up they become a 'crowd' all clamoring for attention."

"Barn Burner" is on show through January 27, 2018, at Carl Kostyál, London.

For details, visit: <http://www.kostyal.com/>