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# Aesthetica

## 5 To See This Weekend

January 15, 2016

This week's 5 to See navigates through an ocean of January blues and steers a journey into intimate explorations of the self and abstract representations of identity. Steve McQueen stages a spiritual and cultural enquiry in his eponymous film and light installations at **Marian Goodman** in Paris, and photographer Martin Schoeller's *Up Close* propels the viewer beyond the public façade, pooling metaphorical interpretation in his portraiture of celebrity and the everyday. Elsewhere in Derry, Turner Prize nominee Ciara Phillips roves between the blurring spheres of the public and private in photography-print screening hybrid *What we recognize in others*.

### 1. Steve McQueen, **Galerie Marian Goodman**, Paris.

With his Oscar winning *12 Years a Slave* propelling Steve McQueen into the mainstream, it is easy to sometimes overlook the artist's ventures in video, sculpture and photography. Revitalizing his presence in installation, McQueen's show at Marian Goodman mitigates between sculpture and film; leading the viewer into a journey of the senses and self. 77 deep blue neon lights line the gallery walls with unique handwritten versions of the words 'Remember Me'. Then there is *Ashes*, which returns McQueen to his documentary aesthetic and his Grenada heritage. The dual-channel film centres on a Grenadian boy and explores the juxtapositions of Caribbean imagery: both the idyllic and the hellish. The show offers a unique opportunity to peel back the layers of the multifaceted artist, with an intimacy that allows the viewer their own self exploration.

### 2. Martin Schoeller, *Up Close*, **Fotografiska**, Stockholm.

As one of the world's most renowned portrait photographers, Martin Schoeller's images

illuminate the unique and fascinating details of his subjects. His work spans an eclectic range of muses: Jay Z, Hilary Clinton and Zlatan Ibrahimovic, to the everyday man and female body builder. There is a unhindered enthusiasm behind the pieces featured in *Up Close*, that jovially peer behind the public façade: Quentin Tarantino breaking loose from a straight jacket in a flurry of doves, a blood splattered Christian Beale consuming us with an uninhibited gaze and Jay Z appearing regretful at his choice of a cat for a dining partner. The series provides metaphorical musings on life and celebrity, drawing the viewer into a snakes and ladders of interpretation and perspective.

3. **David Mann**, *Sympathetic Strings*, **Thatcher Projects**, New York.

New York based artist, David Mann presents an exhibition of paintings inspired by the sympathetic strings found on instruments, such as the sitar, that are only heard when touched by the vibrations of other strings. The sounds of which are only but also covered by a top layer. This feeling of intimacy and immensity resonates throughout the show. The paintings are lacquered with layers of acrylic, oil and translucent glazes. Gradients of colour saunter across the expansive surfaces, which erupt with mineral spirit bubbles and are contoured by taut white lines. The paintings are aesthetically liberating but also carefully restrained, offering the viewer a precise yet ambiguous artistic experience,

4. *Champagne Life*, **Saatchi Gallery**, London.

Raising one for the girls, the Saatchi Gallery's exhibition *Champagne Life* is an exclusively all female show. Having helped propel the careers of art icons Tracey Emin and Nan Goldin, Saatchi is giving the next generation of women artists a helping hand in a predominantly male art world. From the cow sculptures of Stephanie Quayle to Julia Wachtel's pop-tastic prints of Kanye West, the show intertwines mediums from differing levels of female artists. Offering a broad perspective of feminine art, the age of the artists range from the early 20's through to the late 50's, giving the exhibition a well rounded representation. *Champagne Life* is a celebration of female art and intends to publicize the disparity between male and female artists still felt today.

5. Ciara Phillips, *What we recognize in others*, **CCA: Centre of Contemporary Arts**, Derry.

In her first solo show since being nominated for the 2014 Turner Prize, Ciara Phillips melts her background in printmaking into the medium of photography in new

exhibition *What we recognize in others*. Phillips plays with the spheres of the public and private, using candid shots of friends in their studios, that are then screen printed onto fabric and collaged with layers of colour and text. The layers of material draped across the images veiling but also undressing the snippets of reality, privacy and publicity. The show provides a fascinating locus between abstraction and representation; blurring the lines between the public and the private.