

frieze masters



**Ideas from the past in the art
of the present**

**The influence of Francisco de Goya
Ali Smith on Sonia Delaunay
Art, Alcohol and Altered States**



depicts two tropical birds mingling with black and pink swirls, painted on patterned flannel. It recalls a setting from a Las Vegas casino, a night scene in Cuba or a faded 1980s tourist advertisement, with its shadow revealed. The material has sucked up the paint with a thirst matching the eagerness with which it appears to have been executed: a cat-and-mouse game between Polke and the surface. With each layer, the painting appears de-layered. The paradox makes for a perfect storm between subject, technique and intention. I sense his influences — the shaman Joseph Beuys, anarchic dada, American pop — yet Polke is crossing over into something beyond.

I find this painting fundamentally mysterious. A great analogy could be drawn with the measurement problem in physics, in which atoms defy our attempt to calibrate and make sense of them. As with the atoms, this painting is in a state of perpetual probability. I can imagine it talking to Polke in a dream or through roaming sensations. 'Get out of your own way,' the painting says. 'There are more like this to come!' And, with an unparalleled effortlessness, many more did come.

Rannva Kunoy lives in London, UK. This year, she had a solo show at Centre PasquArt, Biel, Switzerland.



Renee So

Unknown artist, Emperor Yongzheng in European Dress, 1723–36

I love this portrait of the Emperor Yongzheng in *European Dress* (1723–36). He wears a flamboyant wig of poodle-like curls, with a classically draped tie and a densely patterned shirt so flat that it looks stuck on. The Emperor is coiffed, groomed and picture-ready. The purpose of this portrait was to assert Yongzheng as the divine ruler of 'all under heaven' (specifically Europe, hence the fashion). But even with the same symbols of power and accessories as his contemporary, King Louis XV, the picture is drastically different in tone to European court painting of the same era: less pomp, more playful and strange.

I prefer to see it as a portrait of a Chinese man fascinated with curly hair (Chinese hair is naturally straight) and other Western exoticisms. He gazes into the distance, contemplating the world beyond the walls of the Forbidden City, realizing it is much bigger than he had ever imagined.

Renee So lives in London, UK. This year, her work was included in 'Busts' at Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland, New Zealand. In 2016, she will have solo shows at Kate MacGarry, London, and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, Australia.