

DOMOBAAL

**DERMOT O'BRIEN
(NOT ONLY) BUT ALSO
AT TENSION FINE ART
06.09.25 – 11.10.25**

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04.10.25 – 15.11.25**

This autumn, domobaal gallery and Tension Fine Art are proud to collaborate on a joint exhibition of works by Dermot O'Brien (b.1968), presented concurrently across both venues. This unique partnership brings renewed attention to an important yet under-recognised figure in British contemporary art whose work explores transformation, presence, and perception through everyday materials.

O'Brien studied at Chelsea School of Art and Goldsmiths College (1987–90) during the height of the YBA movement. While many peers embraced provocation and spectacle, O'Brien pursued a quieter, more introspective path rooted in material sensitivity, conceptual clarity, and philosophical inquiry. His practice seeks and continues to offer a powerful counterpoint to contemporary visual noise: slow, thoughtful, and deeply engaged with the metaphysical potential of objects.

Best known for subtle transformations of diverse materials ranging from the rarified through to industrial and found. O'Brien's works invite careful attention, rendering familiar objects both silent, strange and simultaneously playful and profound. Other works involve minimal text, altered surfaces, and spatial reorientations that challenge assumptions about form, function, and meaning. His interest in Aristotelian distinctions between substance and appearance runs throughout his practice, informing a visual language that is poetic, restrained, and quietly radical.

In a moment defined by speed, spectacle, and image overload, O'Brien's work resonates with contemporary concerns around presence, tactility, and perception. His pieces function as portals—thresholds where language, form, and thought intersect. Rather than dictate meaning, they suggest, question, and invite.

This collaborative (dual) presentation by domobaal and Tension Fine Art marks a rare and significant cross-gallery partnership in London's independent art scene. Both galleries, while distinct in programme, share a commitment to artists working with conceptual rigour and material exploration. O'Brien's practice bridges these approaches, making him an ideal subject for a dual exhibition.

domobaal, known for championing artists engaged with material history and intellectual depth, recognises O'Brien's consistent and evolving voice within the post-minimal and conceptual traditions. Tension Fine Art, with its emphasis on the physical language of objects and poetics of form, sees in O'Brien's work a quiet force, subtle, rigorous, and deeply relevant.

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By hosting overlapping exhibitions, the two galleries aim to offer audiences a multi-faceted experience of O'Brien's work. This two-part presentation encourages movement between spaces, allowing viewers to encounter his art in dialogue with different curatorial contexts and architectural settings.

Together, domobaal and Tension Fine Art affirm their shared belief in thoughtful collaboration, reflective art practices, and the importance of sustaining critical attention in an increasingly distracted world. Dermot O'Brien's work stands as a timely reminder of the power of transformation, stillness, and the poetic potential of the everyday.

**DERMOT O'BRIEN . NOT ONLY (BUT ALSO) . TENSION FINE ART . 06.09.25 – 11.10.25
(CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT BY THE DOOR)**

UNTITLED (DIAMOND)

paint on wall

7.5 x 7.5cm

2025

IMPEDIMENTS

30 'pebbles' assorted materials

mounted on A4 card, glazed wood frame, 37.5 x 30cm

2000

UNTITLED

lightbulb, flocking

6 x 4 x 10cm

1995

(One of 364 parts of 'Forest' originally exhibited in 'Now Wash Your Hands', Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, 1995)

SILENCE

foam earplugs, adhesive

16 x 74cm

edition of 5 (+2ap)

2021

UNTITLED (RYB)

Canford card, conservation putty

3 Parts

12.2(h) x 57cm

2025

SCHWABIAN CYCLE

200(h) x 800cm long (approx)

616 x A6 drawings (from a total of 835) silver ink on dark blue Canford paper

2015

(exhibited in 'Slip' Städtische Valerie Villingen-Schwenningen, Germany in 2016)

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VISION

4(h) x 63.6cm

braille silicone dots on glass

edition of 5 (+2ap)

1995/2025

(installed on gallery street window)

ABSOLUTE PIN

350 (approx) black polymer chess pieces, adhesive

120(h) x 70 x 70 diameter (approx)

2025

(installed on and around central metal support)