

Mhairi Vari: Domain



Domo Baal Galleries Central

Featuring shiny balls and woven twigs covered in coloured fronds, this new show of sculpture by Scottish-born artist Mhairi Vari has more than a hint of Christmas to it. That may be by coincidence rather than by design, however, as the unifying theme behind these four arrangements is that they all relate to the complex ways in which data and statistics are collected and connected. Like her previous works, featuring substances such as tea, food dye and nail varnish, Vari's choice of materials also adheres to a theme, in that they all have, or once had, a non-art purpose. It's a strategy that could tip into folk art territory but Vari stays on the right side of the divide.

Gazing balls (those mirrored spheres used as garden ornaments) and coloured, hot-melt glue (used to fix flowers in wreaths) are employed in two works. For 'Repeater', Vari has stuck together a number of shiny spheres (from ball bearing up to beach ball size), which rest on a hardened pool of marbled green, red and blue adhesive. The work's title refers to a mechanism that amplifies internet signals, a function which is



'Hub (John Street)', 2011

simply but effectively reflected – in all senses of the word – as one walks round it, looking at different scaled versions of one's own image.

For 'Hub', a 78cm-high gazing ball sits amid a nest-like tangle of branches, again held together by blobs of bright glue, each of which has drooped down and spooled on to the floor in thin strings. Colonising the old desk on which it sits, 'Hub' might be perceived as a slightly unsettling variation on the Christmas tree or, more appropriately, as an analogue representation of the tangled strands of digital information that ping around the internet. **Helen Sumpter**