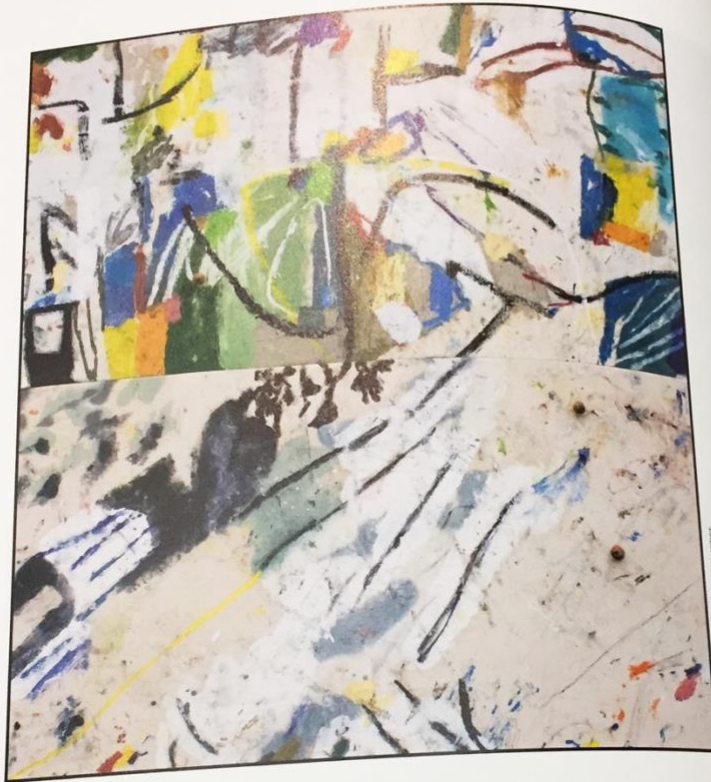


**ELEPHANT**

Elephant Magazine (#41), by Carey-Grant, P. *Can Art Move the World*. pp.32-36.





Peter Matthews  
*Ek-Balam*, 2018 (above)

Peter Matthews takes plein-air painting to extremes as he works alongside oceans, seeking to capture his experiences of the sublime. He lives with his large spreads of unprimed canvas, carrying them on his back—they double up as sunscreen, roof or hammock. He lets the sea wash over them, attaches objects found on the shore, and is as likely to use sticks and stones as brushes to apply the paint. No wonder Matthews covers a lot of territory: *Ek-Balam* was made in part on the Pacific coast of Mexico and partly on the Cornish Atlantic coast—hence the two sections sewn together—and is named after an archaeological site where the Mayan way of using glyphs and signs inspired him.

PRIVATE COLLECTION, AMENCO. COURTESY THE ARTIST

John Akomrah  
Still from *Purple*, 2017

John Akomrah's immersive installation *Purple* explores the Anthropocene in fashion through the production of archival footage film. Pictured is Scotland, countries across an era of the Industrial Revolution; the past always lies in Akomrah's bricolage, appears from time to time, standing in for the artist to ask the question he formulates as: "Historically, ethically and morally, if we continue, on the..."





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*Ek-Balam*, 2018 (above)

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## Can Art Move the World?

What is the role of art in dealing with environmental destruction? Artists can choose to evoke the consequences subtly or call direct attention to the issues. In doing so, they might use recycled materials or look for ways of reducing their own carbon footprint. As for possible solutions, many artistic pseudo-proposals highlight the inadequacy of official responses to date rather than coming up with practical answers. Asking an artist to find a real, powerful solution might be too big an ask, but it's fair to say that any viable suggestion will require a connection between the technical and the natural.

By Paul Carey-Kent