

SEAN KELLY

Low, Matthew. "Last Chance to See: Iran do Espírito Santo," *The Student*, September 15, 2010.

IRAN DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

INGLEBY GALLERY

UNTIL 25 SEPTEMBER



Before now, Iran do Espírito Santo's personal interpretation of the minimalist aesthetic had been presented at the Venice Biennale, the Bienal de Sao Paulo and the Istanbul Biennial. And yet, despite this distinguished profile on the world stage, do Espírito Santo remains almost unknown in the United Kingdom. I was surprised to find that this exhibition, mounted as part of the 2010 Edinburgh Art Festival, was his first ever one-man show in a British gallery.

The Ingleby Gallery exhibition is a forcefully quiet affair, or perhaps quietly forceful. Downstairs, photograms evanesce on the walls, while in an ante-room a mirror folds down the wall to the floor, presenting a jarringly solid representation of its molten qualities. Elsewhere, what appears (and yet does not) to be a glass of water on first glance is in fact a solid object made entirely of Swarovski crystal. Occupying a lonely plinth, its seductive weight and luminescence give it the kind of allure you might feel for a glass of water in the Sahara desert.

The main focus of this exhibition, however, was the large-scale wall painting in the main gallery area; a direct response, one would imagine, to the first floor gallery space. This precise, hand painted installation is as much a physical experience as a visual one; the hypnotic grey scale gradations, from white through to black interact with the ever changing light, the subtle tonal variations quietly questioning the nature of perception.

His characteristically limited palette, fading from dark to white, would up until now, be asserted as evidence of his minimalist tendencies. However, this series of repetitive, painted, light-regimenting surfaces is, according to Espírito Santo himself, an attempt at "sorting out the chaos of everyday existence". This laborious achievement urges you to stop a moment, and watch as the light, soaking through veiled windows, transforms the painting.

Matthew Low