

## Pixels and Peas: A Supermarket Digital Drawing Odyssey

by [Mark Sheerin](#) on August 19, 2014



Simon Faithfull, 'Things' (2014) Commissioned by Hoodwink, Morrisons, Tunbridge Wells, 2014 (photo by Nigel Green)

LONDON — For those not already aware of its existence, Middle England is, in its way, as mythical as Middle Earth. But copies of the *Daily Mail* outnumber the elvish runes. This is the narrow-minded heartland of our small island, evoked by village greens and locals' pubs. It is the last place you'd expect to find a radical drawing project.

Simon Faithfull is nothing if not adventurous. The British artist has crossed the ocean on a container ship, braved a scientific expedition to Antarctica, climbed aboard a burning plane and walked on the bed of the sea.



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Simon Faithfull, "Self Portrait" (2010) (courtesy the artist)

But if this evokes some kind of art stuntman, it probably shouldn't. Because what Faithfull is perhaps best known for is a quiet, studious drawing practice which has seen him amass thousands of digital renderings of his travels near and far.

Which brings us back to Middle England, where the artist is [staging an intervention in the fabric of everyday life](#). The venue is a branch of Morrisons supermarket in a well-heeled commuter town called Tunbridge Wells; the project is produced by Kent arts organization Hoodwink.

And so along with food and drink, the busy store will be stocking 500 copies of a book of drawings: free to browse, just a penny to buy. And Faithfull, who will at other times quite happily record a face or a landscape, is focusing on the material world of things, many of which you will no doubt find roaming these aisles.

"I end up drawing the things that are sitting on my desk in front of me now, or at the café table, or when I'm waiting in a departure lounge," he tells me on the phone from Berlin. "And there's an odd sort of way that our relationship with things creates an inadvertent autobiography."

He compares it to the life stories glimpsed in someone else's basket at the checkout. And his drawings may be digital and hence ephemeral, but Faithfull insists: "I think I've always been interested in things, as well as the dematerializing, the ghosts of things."







