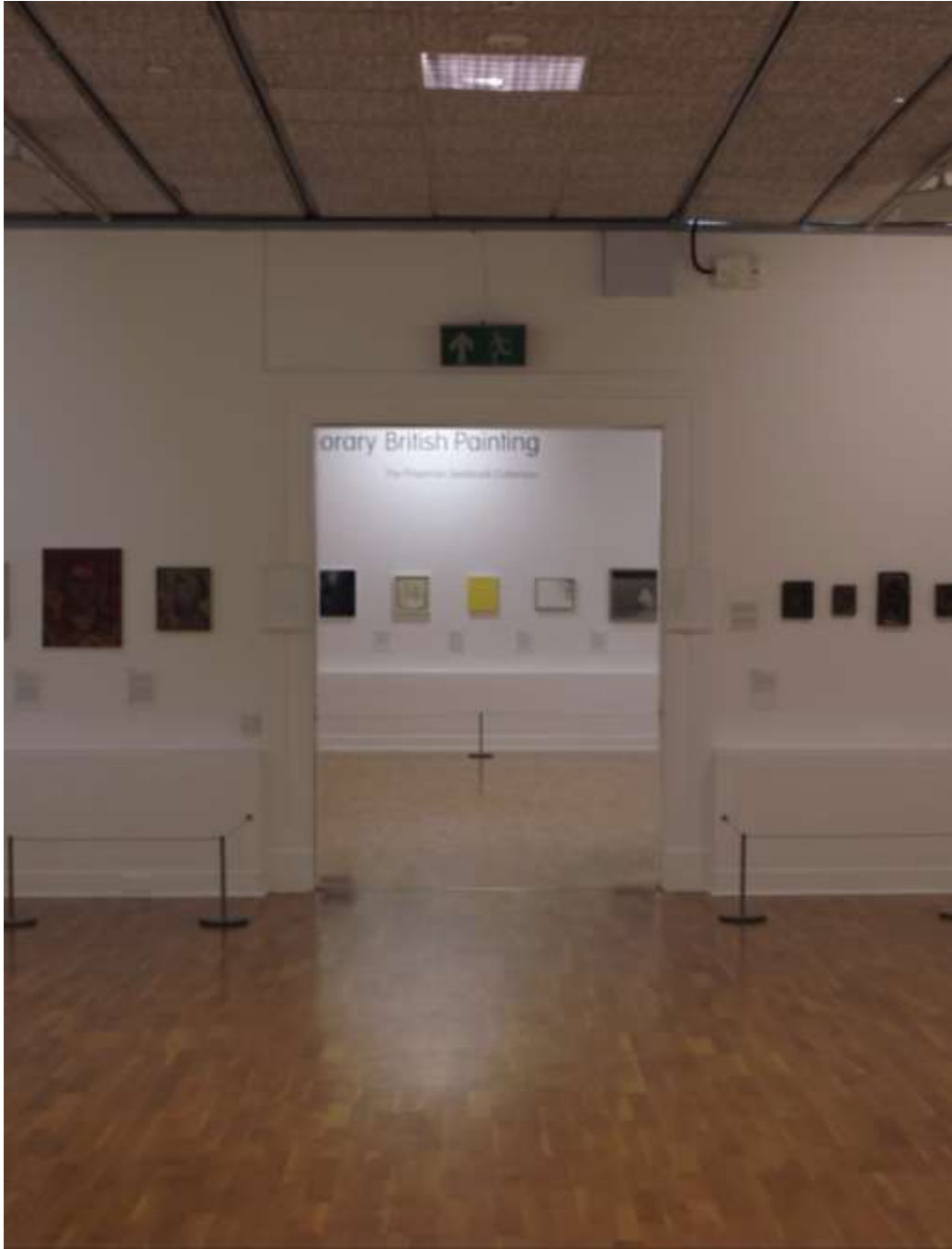


Priseman Seabrook Collection of 21st Century British Painting



Seabrook Press



Huddersfield Art Gallery
2014

**Priseman Seabrook
Collection of 21st Century
British Painting**



Nathan Eastwood
Bethnal Green, London, 2015

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(Top) Gill Gibbon, Huddersfield Art Gallery Interview (Bottom) Installation view 2014

Essay



(Top) Installation view (Bottom) Artists and Curators Lunch
2014

The Priseman Seabrook Collection of 21st Century British Painting

As a child, I used to sleep with a copy of John Constable's painting 'The Cornfield' over my bed. And by day, regular family outings to see the Joseph Wright Collection at our local museum, the Derby Museum and Art Gallery, developed my own love of painting from an early age. My passion deepened as a student when I read Aesthetics and Art Theory at The University of Essex in the late 1980's, a time when painting in Britain was experiencing one of its most exciting periods, with many exhibitions, books and magazines being published on the subject. It was the inspiration of this period which led me to take up painting myself, and in the summer of 2012 I was fortunate enough to co-curate the exhibition 'Francis Bacon to Paula Rego' at Abbot Hall Art Gallery with their Artistic Director Helen Watson. The aim of the show was simple - to revisit the landmark 'School of London' exhibition which Michael Peppiatt had curated in 1987 and see how painting had evolved in Britain during the intervening years.

Michael's original show had drawn together six of the leading British painters of the time. They were Michael Andrews, Frank Auerbach, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, R. B. Kitaj and Leon Kossoff; all painters who had met, worked and socialized together in London, many of whom were Jewish exiles from the inter-war period. What united their work was a desire to reduce everything down to the individual human form as a starting point, using paint as a metaphor to mediate their feelings about the human body, rather than as a medium which simply described its outward appearance. In essence they were engaged in an existentialist project which was rooted in figurative painting and which ignored the fashions of transitory artistic movements. This led to the creation of an enduring body of work which Michael Peppiatt described in his exhibition catalogue as possessing a *"...power and a relevance to the future of painting that would be hard to make anywhere else in the world"*.

Yet strangely, far from inspiring a new generation of painters, what followed the 'School of London' appears to have been the abandonment of painting in Britain by almost all serious artists. Despite a few notable exceptions who include Tony Bevan, Christopher Le Brun, Hughie O'Donoghue and Paula Rego, the 'School of London' appeared to have been the swan song of an entire art form for a whole country.

Putting together the exhibition 'Francis Bacon to Paula Rego' created an opportunity to explore the reality of this situation. It emerged that many of the regional art museums in Britain which had been constructed in the Victorian era had been slowly running out of storage space to house further painting acquisitions. Furthermore, public funding for putting on exhibitions outside London had also shrunk which made the costs of mounting major displays of paintings (which often require significant transport arrangements and insurance) prohibitive. The demise of contemporary painting as a high profile art form in many of our public museums, which became replaced by the more cost effective and easily portable forms of new media, performance and installation art seems, in this light, inevitable. This also coincided with a period which saw a general decline of artists wishing to work in 'movements' such as conceptualism, minimalism and abstraction, and who instead began to work in 'media'. The effect has been liberating for artists, who have become uniquely free to explore and respond to the complexities and nuances of the world we find ourselves in, in any way they see fit.

So where does this leave painting in Britain today?

As a painter myself I naturally knew a small handful of other painters, but like many other painters I also value long periods of time in isolation to think and work. This, along with the vastly reduced opportunities for showing painting in public spaces and a noticeable reduction in copy about contemporary painting in our art magazines, left me feeling that there really wasn't much painting going on in the UK anymore; that we had in fact entered a twilight period for the art form. Subsequently, I mainly sought openings for display and collection abroad, feeling this provided opportunities and outlets which no longer existed here.

Yet given the heritage of painting practice in Britain, with artists from Holbein to Turner, Constable and Reynolds through to Bacon and Rego all working here, I couldn't shake off the feeling that there must be more going on. So I asked Michael Peppiatt if he knew who the next generation of interesting painters might be? His reply was *"I think that's a job for you"*.

With Michael's words in mind I decided to take up his challenge and turned to my friend, the painter and curator Simon Carter, to see what we could discover together. Simon told me he had just been selected for inclusion in the 'Marmite Prize for Painting', a biennial artist-led painting competition which had first run in 2006 and seemed to be picking out many interesting people. The Marmite selected blind which meant it didn't adhere to any of the timeworn conventions of choosing artists on the basis of age, location or social standing. It only toured to a small number of art schools and 'not-for profit' spaces and was unhampered by the constraints of big finance - with the runner-up prize being a 'pat on the back' and the winning prize a 'marmite' (an artist-made vessel awarded by the judges in recognition of artistic excellence). By functioning on a shoestring budget in this way it had managed to create a freedom to operate with real integrity and genuine authenticity.

Simon and I came to see that the Marmite Prize was indicative of something more. That far from being in its twilight, there was a vibrant painting scene happening 'underground' comprised of many artists working out of garages, spare bedrooms and garden studios across the country. As individuals their commitment to serious work regardless of physical limitations and lack of recognition reminded me very clearly of how Jane Austen wrote five of the world's most famous novels in relative obscurity on a small twelve sided walnut table in the corner of a shared dining room in Chawton. And just as Jane Austen's work came to critical success slowly and democratically through the gradual growth of her readership, this contemporary new generation of painters is creating its own democracy for forming value judgments about painting by making use of Twitter and Facebook. In doing this they are forging active critical connections and new artistic communities from the ground up and outside of the old establishment networks. Out of this a number of innovative painter-led initiatives have begun to emerge which include forums for discussing painting such as 'Abstract Critical', 'Paint

Club' and 'Turps Banana', as well as a number of small artist-led exhibition spaces such as the Lion and Lamb, Studio 1.1, The Transition Gallery and Pluspace.

With this rich diversity of activity going on it seems timely to ask - What new themes are emerging in British Painting at the beginning of the 21st century?

The first thing Simon and I began to notice is how a lot of the new painting being produced is generally smaller in scale than the grand paintings of previous centuries. This may well be the direct result of increased costs in paint, canvas and brushes, but is probably much more indicative of the prohibitive expense of studio space and living accommodation in our big cities. Interestingly this has led to paintings in the broader sense becoming much more portable, with many artist-led exhibitions being transported around in suitcases or mailed directly to venues through the post in the same way as Amazon delivers books.

For the paintings themselves, whilst they appear at first glance to be eclectic, we can begin to observe the emergence of a few core issues. Notably we see a sustained interest in the advancement of abstract painting with a vibrant 'small abstract painting' community in London, individualistic responses to the urban and natural environment which are often connected to environmental issues, a continued engagement with surrealism and the development of a new kind of non-specific representational narrative painting. This new realism draws largely from photographic sources obtained via the internet, television, cell phones, newspapers and family albums and appears to operate as a kind of mediation of emotion around social memory. And just as 'The School of London' painters operated in a highly idiosyncratic manner, so this new generation of British painters responds to their subject uniquely. But where the post-war generation largely reduced their subject matter down to the single human form so as to avoid socio-political considerations, it is the communal issues which 21st century painters are using as their starting position. They are using paint to ask questions such as - How do we feel about ourselves and our country in the light of our past conflicts? What do our engagements with the Middle East reveal to us about ourselves? And does the mass-media provide a true mirror to our humanity? There is also a very strong movement in painting by women around issues concerned

with female identity.

With this wealth of creative activity taking place I thought it would be really interesting to put on a survey exhibition to help explore some of these emerging ideas. As I was thinking about this, I was lucky enough to meet the Revd. Canon Stephen Evans, Rector of the St Marylebone Parish Church. St Marylebone is a London landmark with a long history of connections to artists, being the burial place of George Stubbs and Allan Ramsey, the setting for one of William Hogarth's 'A Rake's Progress' paintings and home to a picture by the second President of the Royal Academy, Benjamin West. Fr. Stephen was keen to see art exhibitions in the crypt of the church, so in the Spring of 2013 we agreed to work together on programming a series of small scale solo displays ahead of mounting a more comprehensive survey show. Aside from exhibiting the work of these 'underground' artists whose work we have come to admire greatly, we wanted to help create fresh critical debate with a series of 'painter to painter' interviews, so I bought the web address *contemporarybritishpainting.com* (which was acquired for only £10) so that we might have a place to post the conversations along with other information about the painters themselves.

Working as a community of artists the project has yielded some remarkable results. The crypt has so far shown the work of European Sovereign Painters Prize winner Susan Gunn, John Moores Prize winner Nicholas Middleton, Wyss Foundation prize winner Harvey Taylor, Matthew Krishanu, Birtle Prize for Painting winner Simon Burton, 54th Venice Biennale exhibitor Marguerite Horner and East London Painting Prize winner Nathan Eastwood amongst many talented others. From this group and a wider circle of painters we have been getting to know through the shows, £1million worth of art has been donated to museum collections in the UK, Europe and the USA, and new exhibition opportunities both here and abroad have begun to open for the painters involved.

It has been both a privilege and an education to get to know these artists, through their ideas, working methods and friendship. And it is from this group that the Priseman Seabrook Collection of 21st Century Painting has emerged. This has been formed, somewhat in the spirit of Jim Ede's collection, on a tiny budget and by swapping paintings, writing on work and just from the sheer generosity of

outright gifts. I've been quite overwhelmed by the depth, quality and integrity of what has been assembled and hope it will form the foundation for a growing collection which reflects in some way the energy, thinking and seriousness of the new spirit in painting we are seeing emerge in Britain today. And it was with great pleasure that we were able to display the collection to the public for the first time at Huddersfield Art Gallery in an inaugural show from November 2014 to March 2015.

Robert Priseman, 2014



Susan Gunn
Manchester, 2014



(Top) Matthew Krishanu (Bottom) Installation view Huddersfield Art Gallery
2014

Notes

The work is presented here in three loose themes: surrealism, abstraction and realism. Of course these categories are only intended as a rough guide as a number of artists don't fit easily into any specific mode, often traversing a couple of different genres. But it is my hope that in presenting the paintings in this way we may more easily begin to see how painting is evolving as a vibrant and relevant art form for the 21st Century.

With the descriptions accompanying each painting I have aimed to adhere directly to the artists speaking about their work in their own words. Sometimes these have been edited for stylistic unity. When this hasn't been possible I have offered a brief outline of what the painter is aiming to achieve. And whilst the majority of the work here is painting in its pure sense, there are 2 drawings and one work using drawing and watercolour. I have included these because drawing is the solid foundation on which good painting is built.

Robert Priseman



Surrealism

Alison Pilkington

Alison Pilkington Lives and work in Dublin and London and is currently completing a PhD in Fine Art Practice - Painting at National College Art and Design Dublin. In 2012 she was awarded a British Institution Award for painting at the Royal Academy Summer Show London. She was selected for the Marmite Painting Prize, London (2012), shortlisted for the Kurt Beers 100 Painters of Tomorrow publication (2013) and was awarded 3rd prizewinner at the Artslant International Jurors Award in Dec 2013.

She says of her work “I focus on how imagery interacts with the intrinsic qualities of paint, how the paint material moves and how it can be played with. The paintings are carefully planned through several stages of drawing, and the quality of paint handling, although seemingly casual, is a result of repeated attempts at getting something ‘right’.

The uncanny which has been a frequent subject of the visual arts and literature is a central theme to my work and is associated with a feeling of disorientation, mild panic or confusion when faced with something strangely familiar. In my recent body of work I am interested in what Freud termed “the friendly aspect” of the uncanny. Strangely familiar yet comic images have the potential to disturb or disorientate. In this work I attempt to explore this aspect of the uncanny and invite the viewer to consider how this ‘un-homely’ feeling occurs through painting.”



Andrew Munoz

Andrew Munoz was born in London in 1967. He studied in the West Country, at Plymouth College of Art and Falmouth College of Art. He is currently based in Bristol.

“Painted between 2008 and 2012 these paintings belongs to a body of work titled *Cautionary Tales* which depict figures in urban, man-made environments which are intended to imitate nature; i.e. parks and green spaces. I feel that these places are Simulacra, (i.e. they have their own reality) rather than perversion/distortion of the traditional rural idyll. They are modern day settings for social narratives, familiar to the collective imagination which attract the vulnerable, isolated misfits of society; places where the public and private worlds come together and form a confluence of the comic and the tragic; the beautiful and the grotesque.

They perhaps point to the notion of the human as sick animal (Nietzsche); alien to a natural environment; and the endangerment is two-way. The figures depicted are generally drawn from the imagination and represent ‘characters’ or psychological ‘models’ which I relate to on some level and which I feel allude to certain universal primitive conditions which are perhaps only thinly disguised by the social veneer. I see the world as being full of fictional characters wandering around trying to fit into their own stories. These works are not intended to be read as parable, allegory or metaphor but rather as my personal, instinctive response to my own adult fears and childhood memory.”



19 (Top) Upside Down (Bottom) Cautionary Tale P80
(Top) 15 x 13 cm, Oil on board, 2008 (Bottom) 40 x 30 cm, Oil on paper on board, 2008

Iain Andrews

An artist and Art Psychotherapist Iain Andrews says of his practice “We live at a time where shifting cultural assumptions have shattered fixed notions of continuity and value. The essential truths that Postmodernism has denied - love, evil, death, the sacred, morality and soteriology have become absent from much contemporary art as they have from wider contemporary culture. Yet Postmodernism’s failure to offer consolations or answers to these enduringly relevant subjects means that as an artist, an awareness of modern developments must be balanced by a dialogue with established traditions and past narratives, and yet not become nostalgic.

My paintings begin as a dialogue with an image from art history - a painting by an Old Master that may then be rearranged or used as a starting point from which to playfully but reverently deviate. My recent work is concerned with the struggle to capture the relationship between the spiritual and the sensual, apparent opposites that are expressed in my work through the conflict of high narrative themes and sensuous painterly marks. The act of making becomes inseparable from the message that is being conveyed through the marks, that of transformation and redemption.”



Paul Galyer

Based in Grimsby, Paul Galyer is a new kind of surrealist. He says “*Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit* takes its title from a Latin quote given by Alan Watts in one of his presentations on ancient oriental philosophy. Translated it means ‘Out of nothing comes nothing’. What I was attempting to portray allegorically were rather metaphysical musings on the emergence of life and consciousness as well as the nature of reality more generally. Developments in the fields of psychology and physics in the last century would seem to imply the inseparability of mind and phenomena, something intuited by many philosophers of old.

Also at the time of painting this picture I had recently read *The Tears of Eros* by Georges Bataille, and had in mind thoughts around human experience in all its diversity and extremes. The image I used of a woman having an orgasm (though I personally think she’s faking?!) I thought could also be drawing a first breath or last gasp. The proximity of beginnings and endings, pleasure and pain made apparent in their ambiguity.”



Monica Metsers

Monica Metsers was born in Wellington, New Zealand in 1980, and now lives in the English Lake District. She graduated from the University of Dundee with a Masters Degree in Fine Art in 2005. Through her practice Monica aims to explore ways in which subconscious fantastical experiences may be visually manifested. Primarily she builds onto existing objects with various materials. These are all painted white and then photographed with different colour casts, depending on the effects required in a specific painting. Her paintings are based on these arranged compositions of the objects.

In 2007 she was short-listed for the Celeste Art Prize and in 2011 was short-listed for 'New Lights; The Valeria Sykes Prize' for young painters, and was awarded second prize from around 400 entries for regional art prize 'Open up North'. 2012 saw Monica exhibiting alongside artists such as Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud and George Shaw in "Francis Bacon to Paula Rego: Great Artists" at Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal, and in 2013 her painting 'Lechuguilla' was purchased by the Tullie House Gallery in Carlisle for their permanent collection.



Annabel Dover

Annabel Dover was born in Liverpool, Educated in Newcastle and London. She is currently studying for a PHD at Wimbledon exploring a practice lead response to the cyanotype albums of Anna Atkins.

She has shown her work nationally and internationally and says of her approach that “I explore the social relationships that are mediated through objects. We all have relationships with objects that simultaneously confound and support emotional expression. The personal narratives we impose upon objects often provide a hidden expression for the breakdowns in human relationships and the memories and emotions that they reflect: overlapping, disparate and disjointed, My research is in this way specifically engineered to be overlapping, mythical, disparate and disjointed.”



Of *Feldspar* Annabel says “Throughout my painting I find myself drawn to objects and the invisible stories that surround them. Through their subtle representation I explore their power as intercessionary agents that allow socially acceptable emotional expression. The work presents itself as a complex mixture of scientific observation and a girlish enthusiasm.

My father had a Reader’s Digest Atlas, very common in the 1970s, almost every household had one. In the back of the atlas there was a double page spread entitled *Wonders of the World* it showed large colour reproductions of rocks, jewels and minerals. The atlas was hidden in my father’s study and off bounds. In an act of petty rebellion I’d look at *Wonders of the World* on Sundays when my father was with his mistress.”



James Quin

James Quin was born in 1962 and currently lives and works in Liverpool, studied Fine Art at Sheffield (BA) and Newcastle (MFA) and is currently PhD research student at Newcastle University. Recent group shows include the Marmite prize for Painting ,Cave Art (Liverpool Biennial) and the Creekside Open. He was prize winner in the Liverpool Art Prize and nominated for the Northern Art Prize.

He says of himself and his work “All painters to some degree are mediums; they both commune with and resurrect the dead. I have been in conversation with dead painters on a daily basis for over 30 years. These conversations have focused my attention on the temporal conditions of painting, both externally (why certain paintings from the past continue to resonate in the present), and internally (what specious present does the static image resemble and represent). A solution to the former might be best approached temporally.

These untimely conversations, re-insertions of the ‘then’ into the ‘now’ raise questions about the nature of what it is to be contemporary, and specifically a contemporary painter. Paintings by Breughel are images that continue to resonate despite duration of some 449 years, separated from the historical and cultural ties to their moment of production.”



Bren Head

Based in Yorkshire Bren Head has a natural curiosity about people and is fascinated by the human face, saying “I would like to think that my ‘heads’ tread the line somewhere between figurative and abstract. They are rarely about capturing an accurate likeness.

A layering process is an essential part of the development and evolution of my painting, achieved through a process of creation and destruction. During an exploration of texture and surface, layers are painted over and obscured, or partially destroyed, and then re- worked to produce rough tactile elements embedded in the surface of the canvas. The paint and surface dictate what appears. Chance scratches and fractures, changes in colour, cracks and eroded layers alter the subject’s identity and significance and what you see is not just a face. These shadowy heads have emerged from my imagination and the resulting experimentation. Blurring the line between what we might consider portraiture, or representation, they have evolved through an investigation of traditional techniques with more unconventional media and methods where the form of the figure can be recognised as a collection of marks.



Emma Cameron

“I work in an intuitive, unplanned, embodied way. For me, the process of painting feels dialogic, with a call-and-response element in which I strive to listen and respond to what the materials – and my own senses and yearnings – seem to require from moment to moment. Nonetheless, the influence of artists I admire underpins all my practice. In this piece, faint echoes of Pasmore and Frankenthaler sit alongside allusions to Titian or Velasquez. My work is also deeply informed by psychoanalytic thinking.

This painting asks questions. What is the quality of the boy’s gaze: seductive, self-contained, calm, defensive, vulnerable, interrogatory? Can we stay in that uneasy place where sensitivity and tenderness can co-exist with boldness, rawness and perhaps even clumsiness without one forcing out the other? Can we allow ourselves to simultaneously hold ‘the tension of the opposites’ without reverting to a position that denies the fullness of experience? Can we allow chaos and mess and spatial confusion to ‘be’ without rushing to cover it with something more orderly?”



Kelly Jayne

Kelly Jayne's work explores feelings or senses of something from an internal perspective whilst her method of delivery is through the use of paint that has been diluted and stretched out to its full capacity. Not only is Jayne's work a direct response to her employment as an Art Psychotherapist, but results from a state of mind and identity as a woman, mother and professional.

The fertile female body, more particularly the torso and concepts around reproduction, are the primary focus of her subject matter which she begins by taking snapshots of herself. Jayne then transforms these photographs into painterly exercises on heavy textured paper or gessoed grounds. Her works are necessarily small in scale, creating an intimacy which lends the gestural marks an intensity and directness which runs counter to the vastness of abstract expressionist antecedents.



Watercolor and acrylic on paper

Silvie Jacobi

Born in Werdau, Germany, Silvie Jacobi describes her work as being based on German historical references and my curiosity around them as a “post-reunification child”. She is fascinated by how our perceptions about discipline and hierarchies have changed; and how gestures of people, architecture and public spaces can portray this.

“I use historical photographs and documents from family archives to establish the content for my work. Instead of developing sketches, I analytically research elements in my sources that signal an instinctive meaning and aesthetic transferability to me. This is a non-rational inductive process, where the process of imagination is highly important to develop new links and contexts. I believe that analyzing, interpreting and newly imagining my sources somehow connects me with the people and situations that I portray - however romantic this may sound in an art world that is increasingly concerned with looks, quantitative values and impersonal concepts.”





40 (Top) 50 x 40 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2013, (Bottom) 70 x 65 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2012



Simon Burton

Simon Burton was born in Yorkshire in 1973 and currently lives and works in London. He trained at the University of Brighton (1992-95) and attained an Masters Degree in Painting at the Royal College of Art (1995-97).

He has exhibited both solo and alongside important artists including Francis Bacon and Graham Sutherland. Recently his work was included in A Sort of Night to the Mind ARTARY Gallery, Stuttgart (2011), Opinion Makers 2, Curated by LUBOMIROV-EASTON (2014), Enclosures, Elsewhere at the Lion and Lamb Gallery (2014), Some of My Colours at the Eagle Gallery (2014) and About Face Swindon Museum and Art Gallery (2014).

Burton has received numerous awards including the Birtle prize for painting, the ARCO studios award, Lisbon, Portugal, The John Minton Travel award, The Jenny Hall Scholarship and the Robert and Susan Kasen-Summer studio award. He also has work in various international collections including the Aldrich Collection, PWC Collection, Dimensional Media Associates Collection, Robert and Susan Kasen Summer Collection, Kirklees Collection, Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, Rugby Museum and Art Gallery, and the Abbot Hall Collection.



Amanda Ansell

Amanda Ansell studied at the Norwich School of Art and Design (BA Hons 1995 - 1998) and The Slade School of Fine Art, London (MFA 1998 - 2000). After studying and painting in London for seven years, she returned to Suffolk in 2006 to begin an artist residency at firstsite, Colchester. The same year, a body of work was selected for exhibition at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge and she was nominated for Jerwood Contemporary Painters. Her work is held in UK public and private collections. Amanda Ansell currently lives and works on the Suffolk / Essex border.

In her more recent work the expression of intuition and emotion is combined with her use of repetition, a limited palette and references to nature. However abstracted her pictures become, the reconstituted image is not far from stirring up memories of landscape and the synthesis between place and experience.

She describes her work as being “interested in a sense of place, watery places, the interrelation between the familiar and the changeable: how I can represent this sensibility either through the language of painting or through a concept which is developed and represented in a series of paintings.”





Abstraction

Julian Brown

Born in 1974 and trained at The Royal Academy Schools.

Public collections include Abbott Hall Art Gallery, Falmouth Art Gallery, Debenhams and Oliver Spencer, while awards include British Academy and Debenhams travel bursary.



Of his paintings Julian Brown says “The imagery in my work is very heavily influenced by childhood visions and the folk art from my mother’s Polish heritage. Both of these worlds have a handmade geometric quality that has a playful and primitive relevance to the world we now live in.

I try to explore this ‘clunkiness’ with tactile images that sit somewhere between order and chaos, structure and collapse, expression and control. While the underpinning of the process is held together by predetermined structures, the freewheeling application is purposely engaging and ambivalent to the expressive urge to dictate the paintings.”



Sue Kennington

Sue Kennington is a London born painter whose work explores how colour can be used as a visual language, using touch, esoteric systems, and the totally random to arrive at a visible solution. She received her MFA from Goldsmiths College, London in 2002, and her BA in Fine Art specializing in painting from Chelsea in 1994. In 1996 her work featured in 'Newcontemporaries' at Tate Liverpool and the Camden Arts Centre, London.

Recent exhibitions include: 'Sue Kennington at Magazzini dell'Arte Contemporanea in Sicily, @PaintBritain at Ipswich Museums, and 'Colour and Otherness' at Grace Teshima Gallery in Paris. She showed at Mercus Barn in southern France in 2015 in a three-hander with Sharon Hall and Caroline de Lannoy and recently completed a residency at VSC in Vermont, USA. From 2011 to 2013 she was Professor of Painting at the Siena Art Institute in Italy. She currently lives, works and exhibits in both London and Italy.



Fiona Eastwood

Born in Rochester in 1983 Fiona Eastwood studied at Camberwell College of Arts, London, 2011 - 2014.

Previous shows include *Irminsul You are Lost Perrotts Folly*, Birmingham, 2011, *The Vault Shoreditch Town Hall*, London, 2013, *The Provisionals* (curated and exhibited in) *The Asylum Peckham*, London, 2013, *Contemporary British Painting*, *The Priseman-Seabrook Collection*, Huddersfield and *@Paint Britain*, Ipswich, 2014. She has been selected for the Royal Academy Summer Show London 2013 and 2014, was Short-listed for the Hans Brinker Painting Prize Amsterdam 2013 and is a 2014 John Moores Painting Prize exhibitor.

Turnaround draws on the disorientation and awkwardness to be experienced while sharing the confines of the non-place. The fluidity and speed of the marks indicates a quick application, indicative of the initial instantaneous and surreptitious apprehension of the image and the transient nature of the space. The frugality of the marks gives just enough to imply a presence, to reference relationships in the space, that instant of an uncomfortable glance at the anonymous other. The unease identified in the work stems from this observation of the unwitting model.

The black ground is both impenetrable and void-like, any illusionistic depth is disrupted constantly as the flat surface of the painting is addressed. Paint becomes its own preclusion not confined to revealing a represented image but its own presence on the surface, the pursuit of eschewing a complete adherence to either being important to the work.



Lisa Denyer

Lisa Denyer graduated from Coventry University in 2009 with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art. In 2010 she received second prize in the Gilchrist Fisher Award, held at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London. Other awards include being short listed for Salon Art Prize 2010, The Title Art Prize 2011 and Bankley Open 2013 and 2014. Her interest lies predominantly in exploring the materiality of the medium. For her, each painting begins with a careful consideration of colour, which then often evolves into a prolonged investigation of an idea over a series of works.

Found plywood and wooden panels are deconstructed and reconfigured during the painting process, with existing elements such as nails, staples and indentations in the surface being incorporated into the composition. She finds that layering the paint and a subsequent scraping back of colour often creates juxtapositions between the delicacy of painted washes and the solidity of the support where the hues and shapes end up resembling crystalline structures and elements of landscape. The materials incorporated have their own history and Denyer is particularly interested in the subversion of these discarded items and how subsequent value can be added to them through the action of painting and the emotions and ideas this provokes.



Ruth Philo

Ruth's paintings are concerned with colour, light and surface and their power to evoke feeling and memory. Her work is not an explanation or depiction of the world although work may begin from abstract qualities found there. The paintings are rather distillations of sensation and feeling, experiences of being in the world. Through a dialogue with the painting process, they become a record with their own condensed histories revealed in their surfaces.

Abstract expressionism and minimalism are at the source of Ruth's practice, her painting is located in contemporary 21st century abstraction, where gesture has become touch and the scale is often intimate, working 'face to face' with the viewer.



Andrew Crane

Born in London in 1949, Andrew Crane studied graphics at the Central School of Art. It was here that he developed his love for letterforms and numerals and the power of the written word. A self-taught painter, he will often use cement as a medium in his abstracts. He now lives and works in remote Northumberland, overlooking the river Tyne. From his isolated studio he creates abstract paintings which often utilizes unusual materials such as cement, pvc and plaster as the primary medium, producing works which reference 20th Century masters such as Antoni Tàpies and Victor Pasmore whilst maintaining an integrity all of their own.

His paintings speak of a human need for an assertion of our own individuality within a complex world; he says of his painting process that “When I’m painting I find Gershwin and Bach equally sparky. J.S. Bach nurtures my love of mathematics and Gershwin, my romantic side. Sometimes I may have some spiritual discourse playing in the background. The Gospel of Thomas is a favourite. Don’t get me wrong though, I’m not into religion - it’s more a combined process of uncovering who or what I am. Or if, indeed, I am at all!”





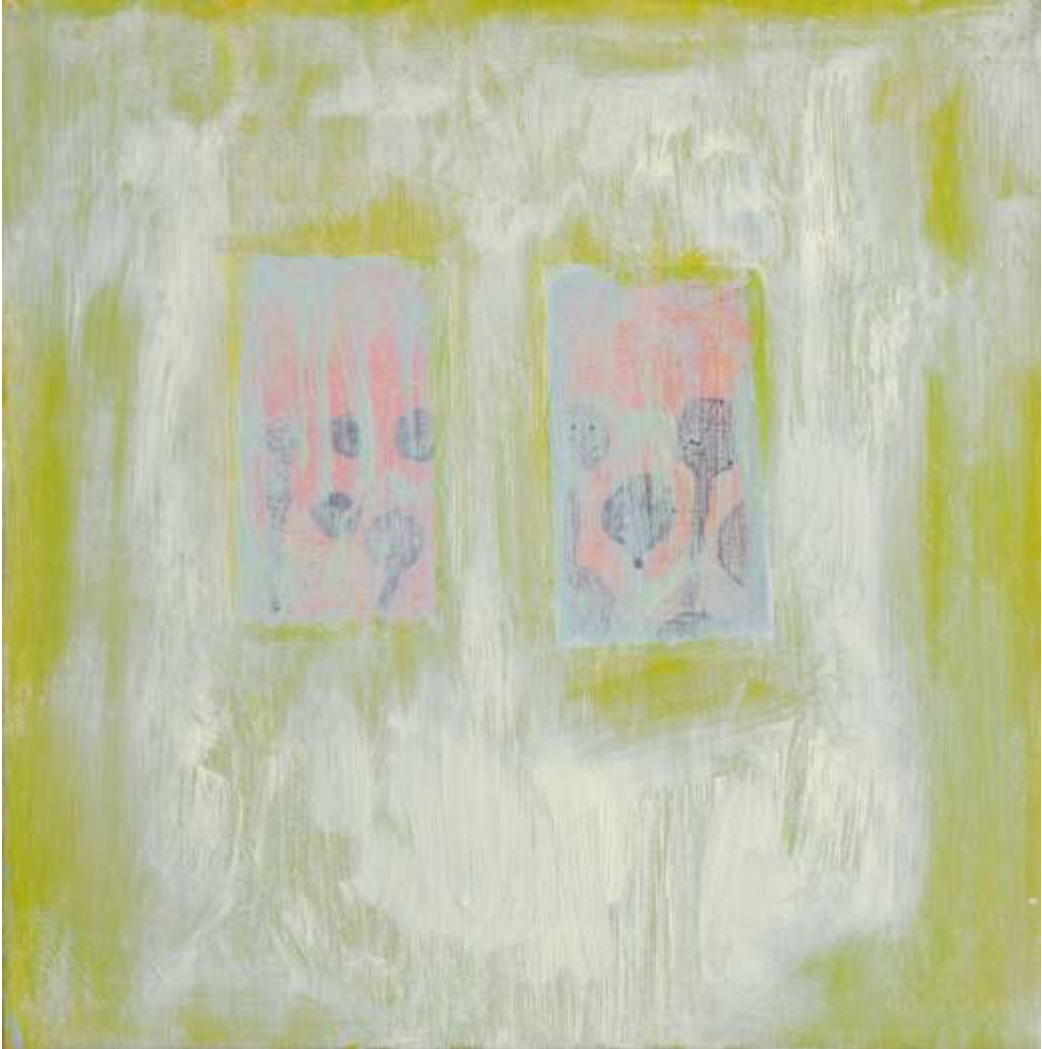


Claudia Böse

Claudia Böse trained at Central St. Martins and the Royal Academy Schools in London. Her awards include the International Bursary, Arts Council Ireland; Travel Grant, European Cultural Foundation for residencies in Ireland and Poland (2007). She was the recipient of the Firstsite bursary award (2012) and the blog based Reside Residency and show 'About Painting' at Castlefield Gallery in Manchester (2014) as well as being a collaborative artist of 'Obscure Secure', a project supported by the Arts Council England.

“In *Keep it All* two window like shapes are framing paint drips. As with all my paintings, this work was painted over a number of years, in this particular case during a period where I was trying to work out my own way of talking about paint itself. The layers in turn have been built up slowly, meditatively, accumulating like deposits of dust.

Feelings and emotions are also important to me and I am often struck by what an amazingly old and complex world it is we live in. This painting reflects and references the tiny things of our built environment, the minutiae of our surroundings, the surfaces and atmospheres which seem somehow to matter to me and which create a desire to record the slow transience of just being here.”



Freya Purdue

Freya has been the recipient of a number of awards including the Junior Fellowship in Painting at Cardiff School of Art, the Digswell Arts Fellowship and the Boise and Villers David Travelling Scholarships. She has exhibited with Gimple Fils Gallery London, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, Vimonisha Gallery, Madras, L.T.G. New Delhi, Galeria Stara Bwa, Lublin, and Christies, London.

She describes her paintings as “Inhabiting the border between abstraction and figuration and have their basis in exploration through seeing and engagement with the tactility of the process. I draw on a wide range of sources from the most obvious classical themes in painting to the subtlety of philosophical and mystical thought. In making paintings I am absorbed in the discovery of an energized sense of connection and consciousness between things that are emerging from that which is hidden into that which is seen.”



Pen Dalton

Pen Dalton is a Londoner who now lives and works in Walthamstow. She trained at Goldsmiths Art School and Brighton University and gained a PhD in Creative studies from Plymouth University in 2008. She has published and lectured internationally and taught studio practice and psychology to graduate and post graduate students, notably at Dartington College of Arts and Birmingham City University.

In the past, Pen has been involved in socially contextualised arts and feminist art practice in issues of identity, sexuality and subjectivity and has exhibited widely. Some work is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, The Musee D’Affiches in Paris, and other collections and publications. Today she is re-engaging with the self-critical project of Modernist painting; revisiting Greenberg’s notion of painting as a ‘holding operation’ against prevailing challenges to art.



Pen says of her work “Having spent most of my artistic life in the academic atmosphere of university art departments: reading, thinking, lecturing, writing - I wonder now - what ever happened to ‘Art’? ‘Socially committed’ arts in contemporary mediums - once critical - are being absorbed into education, cultural tourism and social welfare. Their dissemination defers to the economic ideology of ‘bums on seats’. They are subjected to literary and linguistic criticism that forgets the ‘stuff’ they are made of. Art is losing its identity and its potential as creative and transformative rendered impotent.

Painting’s present critically unfashionable position allows it to continue in exploratory terms as art’s paradigm practice. There exist vast historical archives on its methods, social contexts and economic dynamics that provide a research-like arena in which to think about what art is today. Painting’s democratic ubiquity, flexibility, privacy, relative cheapness and ease of access make it an ideal practice to quietly explore the aesthetic. My rejection of an intellectual - in favour of an aesthetic - approach via the ‘stuff’ of paint, has led me to a reworking of the underlying themes of the anti-rational Rococo: paint as mere surface. Like make-up: seductive, illusory, feminine and meretricious. Which, in an uncanny turn brings me back to the political ...”



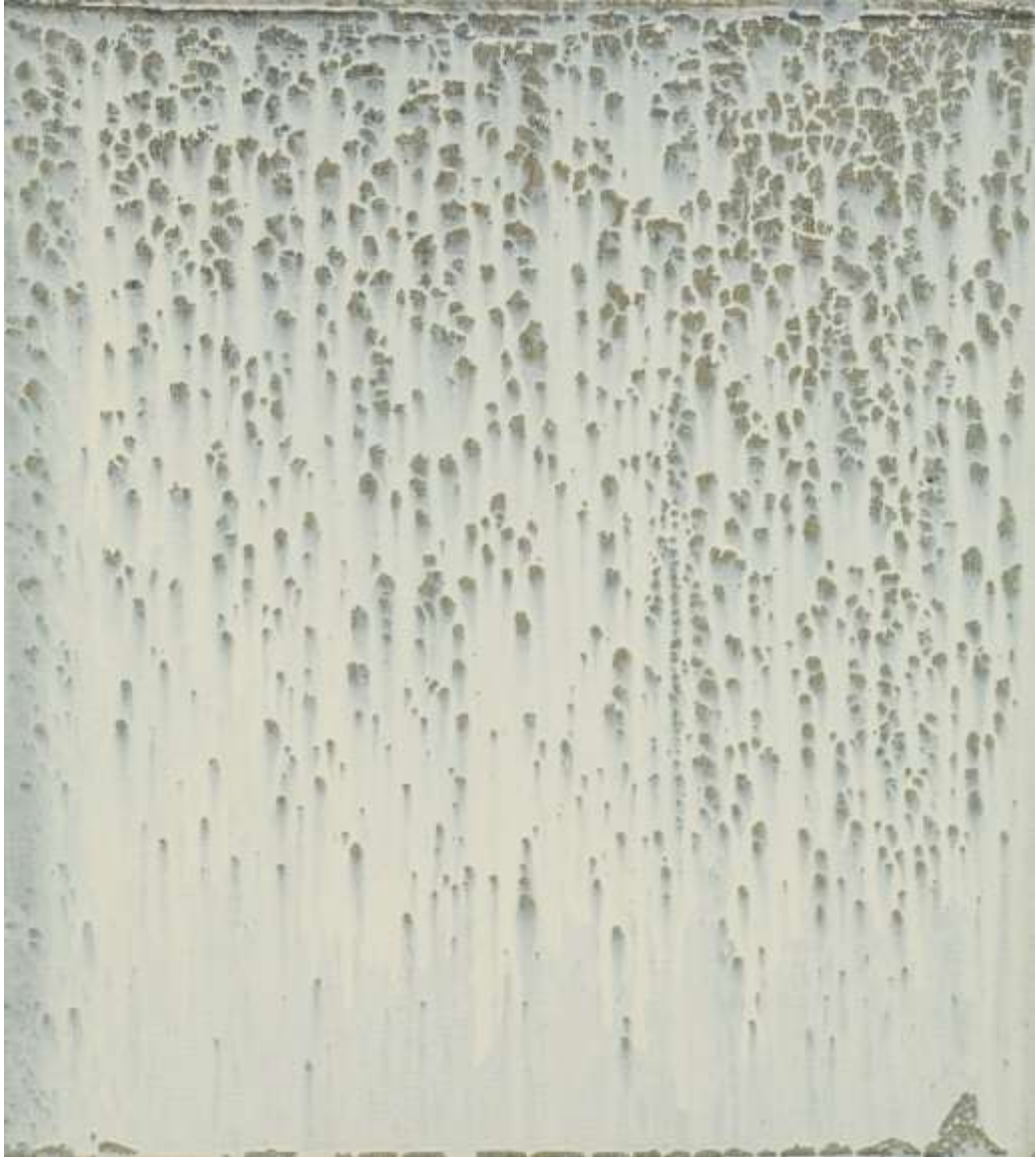
Julie Umerle

Julie Umerle was born in Connecticut, USA. She studied Fine Art at Parsons The New School for Design in New York City and at Falmouth University, Cornwall. She read French Literature at the University of Sussex.

Her paintings have been exhibited both in the UK and internationally. She has exhibited as a solo artist as well as in group shows. Her most recent solo show 'Cosmos or Chaos' was held at studio1.1, London (2010). Recent selected group exhibitions include 'Present Tense' at Swindon Museum and Art Gallery (2015), 'Contemporary British Painting' at Huddersfield Art Gallery (2014) and The Royal Academy 'Summer Show' (2009) among others. Internationally, she has exhibited in Berlin, Paris, New York, Philadelphia and Miami.

Julie Umerle has been the recipient of a number of awards from Arts Council England. Her work is held in public and private collections including Deutsche Bank, The Connaught, Swindon Museum and Art Gallery and Madison Museum of Fine Arts, USA. She lives and works in East London.

"I am interested in exploring the physicality of paint, making paintings that exist at the meeting point of decision and accident. *Eclipse* replaces brush strokes with the direct interaction of liquid elements on canvas. By alternately layering oil and acrylic, a reaction is produced between the two mediums that is a by-product of the materials. The interaction of the materials, together with the effects of gravity, activates the surface."



Susan Gunn

Susan Gunn's paintings present us with a delicately fractured surface of uniformly coloured gesso contained within a series of straight edges which are carefully defined by human hand. She received international recognition when she was awarded the Sovereign European Art Prize in 2006.

Susan has exhibited widely over the past decade including exhibitions in association with Candlestar-London; Arts Council England, Bonham's, Rollo Contemporary Art-London, The Fine Art Society-London and Philips Gallery-Manchester. She was employed as a selector and nominator for Axis MA Graduates programme, sat on the regional Arts Council for the East of England and was on the select panel of judges for the Sovereign European Art Prize 2007 that was launched at the Guggenheim - Venice. Susan has lectured at Norwich University of the Arts and worked as a visiting tutor for Fine Art.

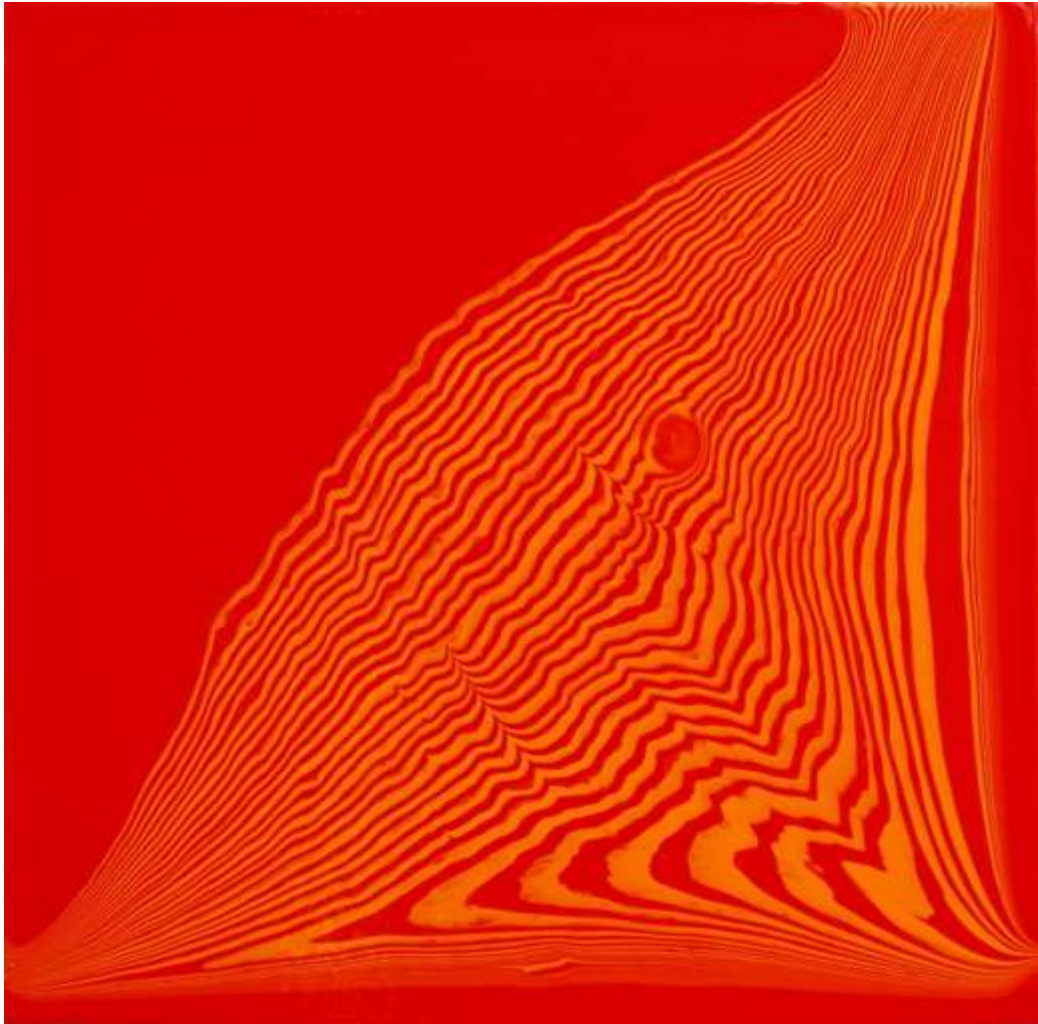
She lives in Cheshire and works from her studio in Manchester.



Bryan Lavelle

Bryan's work is an investigation into the properties of his chosen materials and the process of painting. His work has no layers of hidden meaning or narrative waiting to be uncovered, nor does it elude to be anything that it isn't; through making external references outside of the work itself. His painting can be considered a structured representation of what the viewer is actually looking at; that is, materials and process (MDF, paint and gravity).

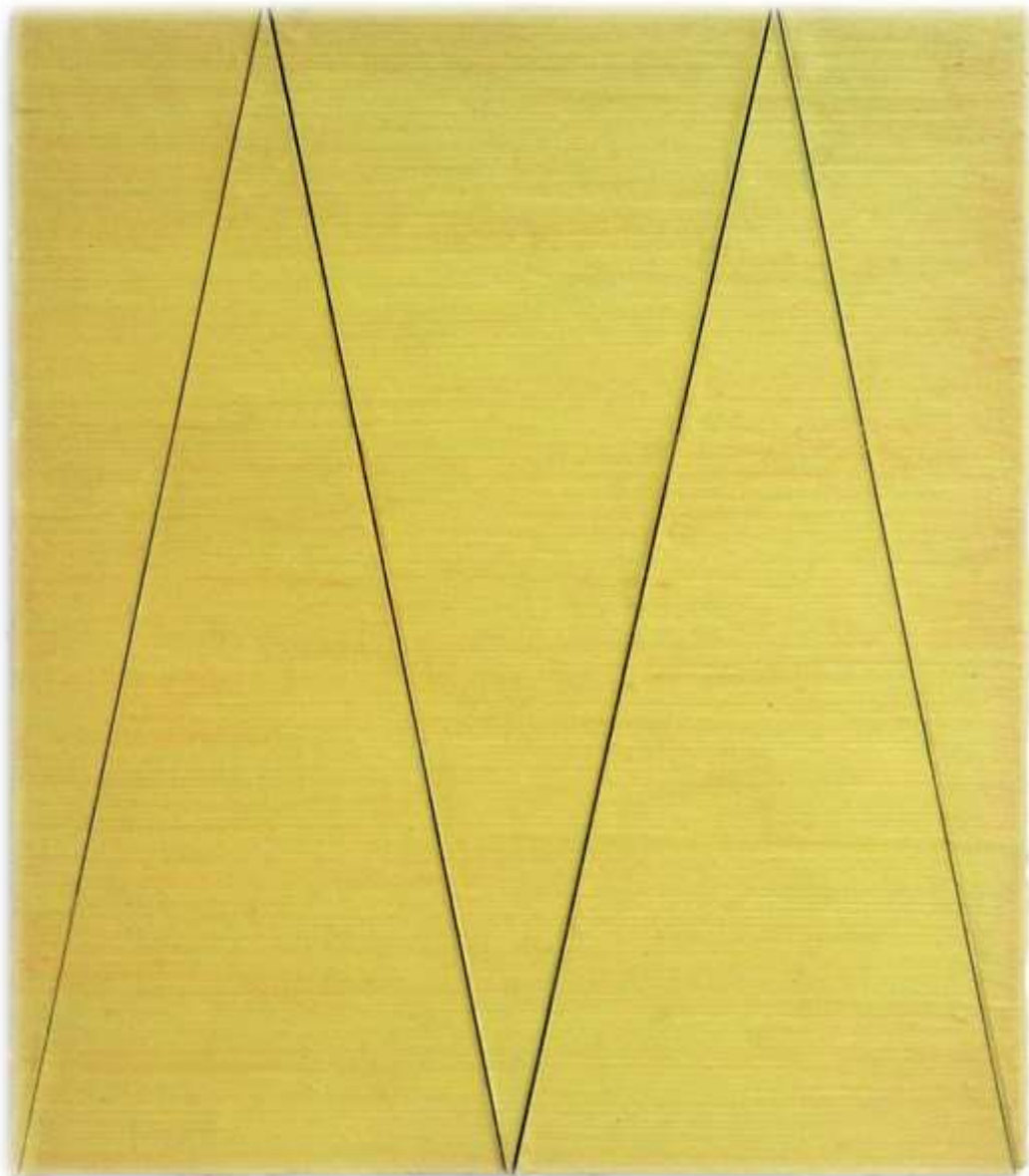
Through his choice of materials and the use of gravity to ultimately make the mark, he is able to make abstract paintings that become self-referential, questioning only themselves as artworks. Through subverting the viewer's attention in this way, from seeking narrative that may not necessarily be there; the only conceivable narrative within his work becomes the materials and the process itself.



David Ainley

Having regard for Cézanne's exemplary persistence David Ainley is in art for the long haul. Since his first acclaimed exhibition at Ikon, Birmingham, in 1966 he has exhibited regularly in many solo shows and numerous selected group exhibitions including the Jerwood Drawing Prize (twice), the INGDiscerning Eye and, in 2015, 'Contemporary British Abstraction'.

An ongoing concern he has is for the exploration and distillation of content in painting by adopting procedural strategies that have strong metaphorical associations. The systems method he developed in the 1970s evolved from an engagement with the 'Game of Life' devised by the mathematician John Horton Conway. Since 1995 much of his work has been concerned with ideas and experiences of landscape and labour informed by research into mining and quarrying in relation to human endeavours that have shaped our surroundings but which are frequently overlooked in art.



Ben Cove

After studying for an undergraduate degree in architecture Ben Cove switched to fine art. His practice consists largely of painting and sculpture, frequently creating works in both forms which operate in a close co-existing relationship to one another. Both his paintings and sculptures exhibit a clear 'architectural' aesthetic which explore ideas of 'the construct', whether it be on the physical nature of substance or instead investigating ideas of historic and personal narratives.

Cove's paintings, such as *Head Construct 1* demonstrate a personal evolution of a painting style which draws directly from modernist abstraction of the 20th century, yet which lucidly demonstrates a strong affinity to the original form it has been derived from, and in doing so knowingly moves a deliberately non-narrative art form into the realm of one which leads us to reflect on the stories of our own lives.



Mary Webb

Mary Webb was born in London in 1939. She studied Fine Art at Newcastle University under Richard Hamilton and Victor Pasmore from 1958-63 and was a Hatton Scholar from 1962-63 and Postgraduate at Chelsea School of Art in 1963.

Past exhibitions include the John Moores 1974, Serpentine Summer Show 1974, Royal Academy Summer shows, Five Abstract Printmakers at Flowers East, 2002 and the Northern Print Biennale, 2009. More recent exhibitions including Journeys in Colour, a one person survey show at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, 2011-12 which then toured to the Hatton Gallery, University of Newcastle on Tyne in 2012-13.

Mary describes *San Luis VI* as “one of a series of paintings and prints I made as a result of a riding holiday in Portugal in the coastal region of the Alentejo. One was always aware of the massive presence of the Atlantic, and the light it generated on the landscape. We rode through the little town of San Luis where the buildings, nearly all painted white, have distinct coloured surroundings to their windows and doorways, often a deep ultramarine. Some buildings had their lower walls painted a solid colour bisected by white lines on a grid. It all helped kick start the language when I came home. A series of watercolours resulted from which I made silkscreen prints and paintings.”



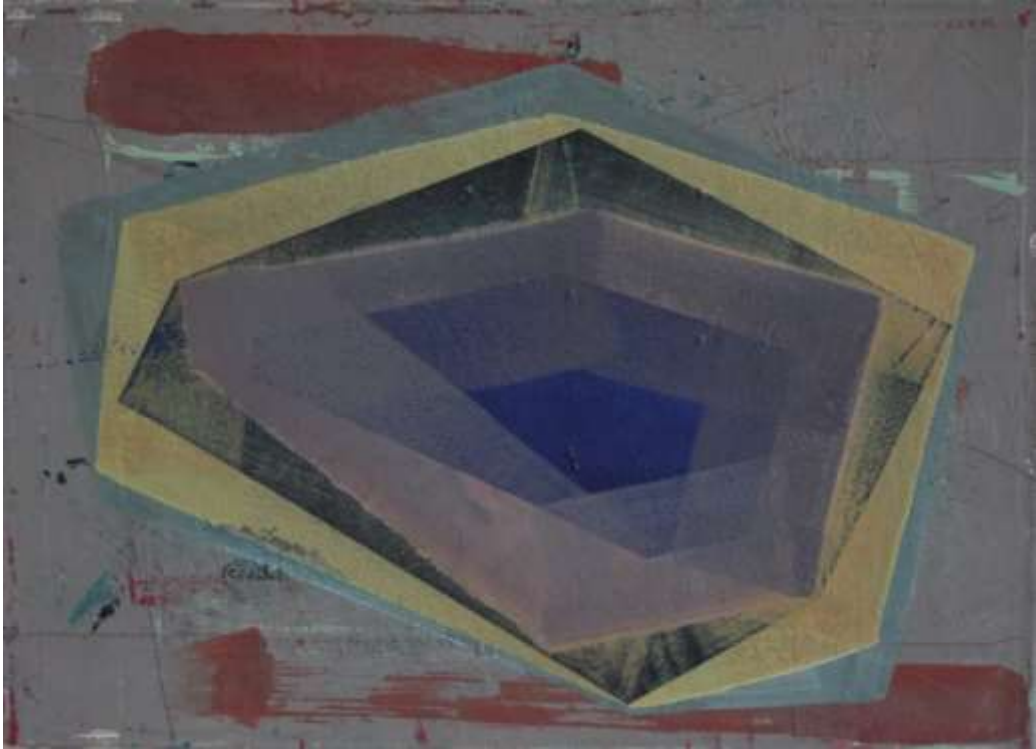
Terry Greene

Terry Greene is a painter living and working in West Yorkshire. His B.A. in Art & Design was received from Bradford College. Subsequent to that he received his M.A. in Theory of Practice from Leeds Metropolitan University.

He is engaged in an exploration of the duality of paint; as structure (the historically located medium of high art) and as agency (in its natural fluid state). His work can be found in a number of private art collections both in the UK and abroad, and has been seen in numerous exhibitions including the recent CROSS SECTION/03, dalla Rosa Gallery, London; Writhe & Jerk, Transition Gallery, London; About Painting, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester. Greene authors the online Blog: 'Just another painter'.

“My aim, in pushing colour around, is an open-ended method of investigation during the creative process - trying to be in the moment during the act of applying, removing and the adjustment of paint over a surface. I'm directly engaged in an exploration of the duality of paint: as 'structure' (the historically located art medium of image making) and as 'agency' (in its natural unconfined fluid state). The canvas by turn becomes the site for this discourse between structure and agency: where organising tendencies (conscious will), one of the competing forces, intertwines with an attempt to allow the 'natural qualities of the art medium': paint to be paint.

I am, essentially, attempting to arrest that instant when a dialogue or tension appears within each work. Eventually individual works emanate a level of autonomy, acquiring a visual tension. This whole 'aim' and creative process is continually compromised: my attempts to maintain a level of distance, without giving primacy to either structure or agency, often fails. However within that failure there emerges a tension - the real subject of the work.”



Charley Peters

Based in London Charley Peters' work employs a rational methodology of drawing and painting to generate work with a refined, reductive aesthetic. Interested in the point of collapse between two and three dimensions, her practice examines notions of folded space and visual construction. Using systematic and logical approaches such as repetition, perspective, mathematical patterns and geometry, her work explores the interruption of the two dimensional plane and the manifestation of flatness in three dimensions.



Simon Carter

Simon says of his work that “I hope my paintings inhabit the world as real things; as their own selves. That they have a metaphoric relationship to things seen but do not rely for their worth on degrees of similitude to those things. I make drawings in the landscape, usually on the beach, and these drawings act as a compendium of marks to be investigated in the paintings. Observational drawing also acts as a measure of the way a marked surface relates to things seen and to the ways of seeing those things...

There is an ongoing unspoken conversation with other artists. I’m interested in most painting, but I do like the means by which a painting is made, the actual stuff of paint and the evidence of a decision making process, to be visible.

Swimmers seem to recur as a subject in my painting. Figures interrupting the painterly surface of the sea, part dissolved and lost among the light and the waves. There is no horizon, the plane of the painting equated with the surface of the sea.

I like to start with small drawings made at the beach. The best drawings seem to me to be given from somewhere else; to be made without conscious thought overriding the process. Drawing something as transient as moving figures and water forces quick responses and can elicit unexpected results. In the studio these drawings then act not so much as reminders of a subject, but they become the subject. The paintings looking at and learning from the marks made at speed and under pressure. I edit and copy these drawings over and over, slowing them down, seeking from them an approach to the painting. I think the paintings have elements of sacrament; a quiet other space; a kind of baptism.”



89 (Top) Swimmers (Bottom) In Wivenhoe Park
(Top) 50 x 50 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2007 (Bottom) 60 x 84 cm, Acrylic on paper, 2014

Stephen Newton

Stephen Newton says of his painting “Many years ago I was an abstract painter and the monochromatic canvas collages I painted then were a defining moment. I unearthed the creative process - a bit like taking the back off a watch to see its inner mechanism. You could say it was the type of experience where the ‘mental slate was wiped clean’.

My painting after that was never the same again. The objects, elements and spaces inside and out were re-learned anew in much the same way as an infant learns to identify objects one by one. The infant must also go through the phase of mental abstraction in order to accomplish this and will then paint or draw things and objects as they are known or understood to be and not as they might be seen randomly every day. In my painting the objects and spaces function to channel emotion and hopefully to act upon the viewer’s emotional responses.”



Susie Hamilton

Susie Hamilton lives and works in London. She studied painting at St Martin's School of Art, Byam Shaw School of Art and read English Literature at London University.

Her work focuses on single figures in urban or natural wildernesses. They are based on rapid drawings from life which abbreviate and distill figures into mutating or vulnerable creatures. Solo exhibitions include *Hen Nights*, House of St Barnabas, London (2015); *A New Heaven and a New Earth*, St. Giles Cripplegate, London (2011); *Madly Singing in the Mountains*, Paul Stolper, London; *Black Sun*, Studio Hugo Opdal, Flo, Norway (2009); *World of Light*, Triumph Gallery, Moscow (2008); *New Paintings*, Galleri Trafo, Oslo (2007); *Leisure Paintings*, Paul Stolper, London (2006); *Immense Dawn*, Paul Stolper, London; *Dissolve to Dew*, St Edmund Hall, Oxford (2004); *Paradise Alone*, Ferens Art Gallery, Hull (2002).





New Realism

Alex Hanna

Based in Hackney, East London, Alex Hanna's practice is based around objects and their spatial relationships. Some of these objects are packaging and surfaces. The motif chosen is sufficiently vague enough to enable representation and abstraction to overlap. The paint reads as paint and the desired outcome is one in which the paint is both an element within the compositional dynamic and also the object itself.

He takes the table top and interior as the construct and reference point for the process of painting. The disposable, packaging material, the functional and utilitarian are vehicles for visual study. Reductionist composition and colour/tone synthesis are balanced with the representational. The subjects used are both selected and arranged to question visual assumptions. However they also aim to question to some extent the painting of objects within the still life genre. The rhetorical consideration involving notions of representation into abstraction is a factor, which ultimately conditions the painting. The lowering of colour values, towards at times a neutral scheme allows the composition to operate under a more restrained organisation.



(Top) Pill Packaging 4a (Bottom) Containers
(Both) 30 x 40 cm, Oil on board, 2013

Nathan Eastwood

Winner of the East London Painting Prize 2014, Nathan Eastwood has work in the permanent collections of Anita Zabludovicz (London), Goldhill Family (London) and The Swindon Museum and Art Gallery.

He describes his practice in terms of being “all based on photographs that I take using a camera phone. Using the photograph as a vehicle the objective is to re-present and examine everyday life. The aim is to reveal real life, one’s human conditions; social relations. At certain moments, when making the bed, cooking dinner, sitting in a cafe, picking up the kids from school, cleaning the bathroom; surfing the internet, or watching question time, I think, yes, this is real life; this is what one knows, and so this is what one should paint. Painting and lived experience in the ontological sense has become symbiotic for me. My intention is to make a contemporary Kitchen Sink painting that comes from out of lived life.

The paintings that I make reveal loose brushwork marks and the surfaces are riddled with imperfections, such as trapped dust and hair. These imperfections inherent within the paintings reveal the inability to make the painting simulate the photographic print; this then positions my paintings as not being photo real. I specifically chose to work with enamel paint as they relate to the interior spaces, where you will find a painted radiator, skirting boards, or something like this.”



Anne-Marie Kolthammer

Having read an MA in Art History at the University of Essex, Anne-Marie Kolthammer says of *The Girl with a Pearl Earring* “For this painting I wanted to reinvent a classical portrait in a contemporary format, bringing the old together with the new, reimbursing traditional paintings styles as valid for the present age. Updating Vermeer’s original portrait of an anonymous girl with a self-portrait, I hoped to explore the transitory nature of identity, adding a hand-held mirror to symbolize themes of vanity and narcissism: the inescapable consequence of self-portraiture.

The mirror also represents self-doubt; the constant scepticism of myself, beginning work as a contemporary artist living in a modern age, always looking to an ever-changing reflection, trying to capture it and make a record. The inability to pause time before you age, make your mark on the world or truly know oneself. In many ways, *Girl with the Pearl Earring* also explores mortality. The girl of Vermeer’s original has disappeared, yet her direct gaze survives through my self-portrait. I pay homage to her, and Vermeer, through the title, as *Self-Portrait* would be inappropriate; one day it will be as irrelevant to identify myself, as it would be the original model.”



Wendy Saunders

Wendy Saunders is an Australian born painter living in London. She started painting in 2010 on an Art & Design Foundation at CityLit Institute.

Her work reflects her broad interest in how one intuitively ‘reads’ faces from fleeting impressions and the subtle combination of features, even if they are largely absent or covered, that contribute to human expression. Subjects are often drawn from news and other social media and reflect her current interest in women and society. She has been selected for Threadneedle Prize 2013, the Open West 2014 and exhibited in various group shows. In February 2015 she organised and co-curated DISTURBANCE, a nine woman show and was one of eleven painters making up the exhibition Documentary Realism - Painting in the Digital Age and book of the same title.



Natalie Dowse

Natalie Dowse has exhibited her work nationally and internationally. She was the recipient of the Jonathan Vickers Fine Art Award, a year-long residential project which culminated in her solo show *Skimming the Surface* at Derby Museum and Art Gallery. Natalie was awarded an international residency to Riga, Latvia, by the Arts Council England International Fellowship programme in partnership with Braziers International Artists' Workshops. Natalie is a graduate of Falmouth School of Art (BA Fine Art) and the University of Portsmouth (MA Fine Art).

Olga 1, 2, 3 is part of a larger series entitled *Little Girls in Pretty Boxes*, that focuses on gymnasts from the 1970s and 80s; a time when Eastern Bloc countries dominated the sport and used it to showcase their political agenda. This was a golden age in the sport, a period when gymnastics became increasingly popular in the UK, mainly due to the impish superstars who won the hearts and minds of their audience.

Like film stars immortalised in celluloid, these romanticised images of young 'super beings' tap into a fantasy of perfection, capturing an essence of a time, which beyond the imagery has many different facets from the personal and nostalgic to the political. These young athletes remain encapsulated and unchanged, forever young and haunting in our memories. However, behind the façade of rehearsed expressions and conditioned routines is the reality of rigorous hard work, lost childhood and the aching bodies of these young women; alongside the fear of injury and the pressure to remain pre-pubescent and child-like, for a somewhat fleeting moment of perfection.



Wendy Elia

Wendy Elia works in series which explore the social and broader contexts of our times. In her portrait work she confronts our voyeurism and asks questions about the female gaze and painting's relationship to authenticity and illusion. She moves from the personal to the political not only in the range of content and form in the various series, but also within individual paintings, using a range of pictorial symbols and signifiers to extend the meaning/narrative of the work.

Wendy trained at St Martins School of Art, London and has exhibited widely being a finalist in a number of national and international competitions which include 4 times at the National Portrait Gallery, as well as The Sovereign European Art Prize, and The Threadneedle Prize.

Rhed was the very first painting in a series of paintings of my mainly female friends (and one male) entitled *Half Naked*. These are all 166cms by 91cms and painted when she was living in North London. "I had wanted to explore the idea of 'The Gaze' more particularly the female gaze. To examine if it was at all possible to present women naked or half naked without sexual connotations and the passivity, objectification and abjectness often presented when men paint women. I think for women it is often hard to see ourselves anew, rather than (by default due to the hundreds of years of scrutiny by the male artist) through the eyes of men."



Linda Ingham

Linda Ingham lives and works from her coastal studio in North East Lincolnshire. Originally having studied the European Humanities, she later returned to education to achieve her MA in Fine Art from Lincoln University of Art, Architecture & Design in 2007. Her interests lie in the subjects of memory, place and human experience; the self-portrait genre is one through which she frequently explores her themes.

She exhibits internationally and has work in many public and private collections in Britain and the USA. Her work is often composite in nature, and mostly comprises of series of related pieces rather than ones which stand-alone. Since 2008 been the recipient of several awards from the Arts Council England for her studio practice and curatorial activities and most recently for the 2015 Aesthetica Art Prize.

“The *Easer Self Portrait* series arose inadvertently after being diagnosed infertile back in 2004.

Easter, with folk-lore and religious connotations attached, is traditionally a time of awakening from the darkness, a moving through to the light. This is the third in a series of self-portraits and along with the first, show me wearing a head band woven from the pages of *The Wide Wide World*, an 1880's book by American author Susan Warner, Aka Elizabeth Wetherall, often acclaimed as America's first woman best-seller. The book is a rites of passage story of a young girl as she becomes a young woman, and this element combined with the headband is a modification on the Easter bonnets traditionally worn by young girls and women - this time, a headband worn by a woman passing firmly into her middle years which includes a twig of Sea Buckthorn with a cocoon writhing with the caterpillars of the Brown-Tailed Moth.”



Matthew Krishanu

Matthew Krishanu is a painter based in London. He completed an MA in Fine Art at Central Saint Martins College in 2009. Selected exhibitions Griffin Art Prize, Griffin Gallery, London (2014); @PaintBritain, Ipswich Art School (2014), Another Country, The Nunnery, London (2014); We Were Trying to Make Sense, 1Shanthiroad Gallery, Bangalore, (2013); The Marmite Prize for Painting IV, UK tour (2012); The Marmite Prize for Painting III, UK tour (2010); In Residence (solo), Parfitt Gallery, London (2010); The Mausoleum of Lost Objects, Iniva, London (2008); Let Me Tell You, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2008); Creekside Open selected by Victoria Miro, APT Gallery, London (2007).

Matthew's essays and articles have been published by The Courtauld Gallery, British Council, and a-n Magazine. He has curated collaborative exhibitions for English Heritage and Iniva, and co-curated exhibitions at the RIBA and Whitechapel Gallery. He is a visiting lecturer at Chelsea College of Arts and teaches at Camden Arts Centre and The Courtauld.

Of this painting Matthew says "*Girl with a Book* began as a small (A6) pencil sketch in a sketchbook. From my imagination I drew a girl - perhaps adolescent or pre-adolescent - sitting on a single bed, with an open book propped up on the wall behind her. I was thinking of my then partner (now wife), who had a Catholic upbringing, but grew up as an atheist. She is part Maltese, but the figure in the painting could as well be from India, or Latin America. It is not intended as a specific portrait."



Jules Clarke

Based in London Jules Clarke describes her approach to work as being based around “The fragility of withdrawing a still image from a moving one which is revealed in areas where the camera struggles to process something, where it compensates for missing information. As these technical distortions are materialised in paint, figures begin to erase themselves or become part of their surroundings.

The sources are photographs taken from film or TV in motion, with subjects ranging from home-videos of accidents and blunders, to dance contests, music videos, Hollywood films and family footage. Borders between people and things are allowed to become ambiguous, at times creating new forms like animals or ghosts.

The fluidity of paint is used to describe one moment becoming another, and to explore a visual expression of memory.”



Nicholas Middleton

Nicholas Middleton was born in London in 1975. He studied at London Guildhall University 1993-94 and Winchester School of Art 1994-97. His exhibitions include the solo shows 'Black & White Paintings' Arch Gallery, London 2010, and 'Provisional Cities', The Crypt at St Marylebone, 2013 and the group exhibitions 'Towards A New Socio-Painting', Transition Gallery 2014 and 'Documentary Realism: Painting In The Digital Age', The Crypt at St Marylebone, 2015.

He was shortlisted for the BOC Emerging Artist Award in 2002. He has exhibited in the John Moores Painting Prize four times, and won the Visitors Choice Prize in 'John Moores 24' 2006, and was a prizewinner and again won the Visitors Choice Prize in the John Moores 2010. He says of his work that "my paintings are primarily influenced by experiencing the urban environment as a visual arena where unexpected juxtapositions occur.

Previously I used collage, either physically or digitally, as a means of processing and synthesising this visual information to create work with obvious references to Pop and Photorealism. This allowed for a broad breadth of imagery to be combined within a single work. However, for a number of years since I have been making monochrome oil paintings to a strict postcard format, working on paper with the size constraint of a typical 6x4 inch postcard, with a white border as an intrinsic part of the painting. Within that size, the picture's proportions may vary. This is an approach I frequently come back to as it allows a certain freedom within. Partly, these limitations allow me to be more direct with my use of the photographic referent in my paintings, but I also have in mind associations with the postcard as a cultural artefact, and the imagery that is typical to the postcard. Many of these paintings are a topology of urban environments in different cities, and each postcard sized painting forms part of a larger whole."







Barbara Howey

Barbara Howey studied at Leeds University and completed a PhD in Creative practice in 2001 at Norwich School of Art and Design.

Barbara says of her painting “My work uses painting to think about issues around location and memory. I use images from the internet of places I once lived. What is interesting is that these images have very personal resonance for me even though they were taken by other people. They track the past and present by showing places that once existed, still exist or have been redeveloped. They even suggest the future through the documentation of building sites in progress. How we access personal pasts and memory through collective and cultural memory is an ongoing theme in my work.

This painting emerged as part of a series of investigations into the use of the internet as a memory archive. I lived abroad in various RAF camps during my childhood but had little visual memory of them.

The internet was a revelation, in that many of the places I had lived were now documented by other people and readily available to see on line. Some places had disappeared, some abandoned and ruined and some were just as I remember them. This painting is based on an image of a piece of modernist architecture in a tropical garden in Singapore during the 1960’s. I remember places like this or something like this when I was a child. The paint is applied quite quickly as if trying to catch the moment like a fleeting memory.”



Lee Maelzer

Twice shortlisted for the John Moores Exhibition Lee Maelzer's work is held in the permanent collections of The University of the Arts, Frank Cohen, Anita Zabludovicz, David Roberts and private collections internationally.

Of her work she says 'My paintings originate from photographs which are extensively tampered with or physically broken down by chemicals before I begin working from them. I'm particularly interested in exploring redundant sites and discarded objects and finding visually poetic meaning in them. With the sites specifically, the signature trace of rituals and a 'ghost' of the human presence is especially powerful to me and I find myself constantly drawn to the idea of the melancholic and its location in the discarded.'



David Sullivan

David Sullivan was born in Plumstead, London in 1969, and studied at Erith College of Technology, the Kent Institute of Art and Design (Canterbury), and the Royal College of Art.

“Philosophically and ideologically I stand with Marxism, and the works I make in general have a political resonance or undertone, and are located within the traditions of Realism. As far as possible I try to keep the concerns I explore in the studio unbounded - that is to say I allow myself to draw inspiration from wherever it might present itself - and work from a range of ‘found and appropriated’ imagery’. The problem, however, is always the same - to discover the complex set of conditions that make for successful painting so that an individual work contains its own bounded poetry, its own world, and its own infinity.

Different strategies are allowed, from the ambiguous to the oblique. The register shifts, and the themes can drift - from historical conflict or optimism, to contemporary social, psychological, or moral anxieties, but the works must have something real to say about our condition of existence, and have a connection with lived experience. Sometimes the paintings oscillate at the cusp of the surreal, or our sense of the beautiful, and sometimes they just emerge from the tragedy of fate... or the politics of survival. Despite typically working from reproduced imagery the real search is for the expressive language which can adequately describe the fractured world of man. Ultimately painting has the necessary conviction if the aesthetic evaluation can determine its truthfulness.” *DSW i* forms part of a pair and were made simultaneously. *DSW i* is based on a well-known black and white photograph from the First World War of an unknown British casualty (if memory serves I found it on the front page of the Sunday Times magazine).

For the two paintings in this collection David says “*DSW i* forms part of a pair and were made simultaneously. *DSW i* is based on a well-known black and white photograph from the First World War of an unknown British casualty (if memory serves I found it on the front page of the Sunday Times magazine).

For *DSWii* I have no information... Possibly a small black and white photo I found in a book or an article? I can't really remember but always believed this to be of a German soldier from the uniform and liked the idea of creating a contemplative balance in painting between the two opposing sides. I was especially drawn to bringing some kind of meditative attention to the contrast between the horrific subject of the work and the beautiful aesthetic of the painting... the beautification of war... and also to counter the official celebratory note of our remembrance rituals...”





Sam Douglas

Sam Douglas works in a tradition of British visionary landscape painters of the past such as Samuel Palmer, Graham Sutherland, and Paul Nash. Like many of his 19th and 20th century forebears, Douglas spends a large amount of his time travelling, sketching and painting outdoors. Whilst this is where his artistic process begins, it is only the starting point for the production of paintings which are much more to do with how he ‘feels’ about the natural environment and the emotional responses it stimulates than the physical topography that initially lies before him.

Douglas writes, “I’m always working on a lot of paintings at once in the studio, building up and sanding back layers of paint and varnish in a way I like to think of as akin to the geological processes of sedimentation and erosion. Beneath many paintings is often the strata of previous images that sometimes emerge like archaeological remnants.”



Kirsty O’Leary Leeson

Kirsty O’Leary Leeson describes her approach as an exploration of “the spaces we exist in, both physical and psychological, using the landscape which surrounds me as a metaphor for my inner life of imagination and emotion.

Drawing dominates my practice as the media most compliments and mirrors my subject matter, which is expressing facets of our existence. In drawing there is a relation with the provisional and unfinished, it exists in a state of suspense so connecting it with the lived life experience. Drawing records the unfolding of an event, not the fixed reality of an object. It is a dialogue between our thoughts and our experience of the real; drawing has always been aligned with thinking and ideas, having as much to do with reflection as with observation. The fragmentary nature of the images reflects that although we live a linear existence, what we currently experience is altered by memories and expectations, our present being created by these absent moments.”



Marguerite Horner

After Marguerite Horner completed her B.A. degree in Fine Art in her twenties, she was offered two solo exhibitions, at The Mappin Art Gallery Sheffield and Usher Art Gallery Lincoln. Art historian and critic Professor Frances Spalding CBE reviewed these exhibitions in 'Arts Review' writing *'The intrigue of her work depends partly on the knife-edge balance maintained between painterliness and hard-edge photo-realism by varying the sharpness of focus'*.

She has since been exhibiting widely in Art Fairs and Group Shows, including the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition the ING Discerning Eye Exhibition The Threadneedle Prize and The Lynn Painters Stainer Exhibition. In 2011 Marguerite exhibited at the 54th Venice Biennale in *'Afternoon Tea'* with WW Gallery and in 2012 had her first London Solo Exhibition *'The Seen and Unseen'* at The PM Gallery in Ealing. The catalogue essay was written by Lady Marina Vaizey C.B.E. (former Art Critic for the FT and Sunday Times and a Turner Prize Judge).



Harvey Taylor

Harvey Taylor graduated from Winchester School of Art in 1993. His work has been regularly selected for the Eastern Open in Kings Lynn and in 2011 he won the Wyss Foundation Painting Prize. He combines his painting practice with a teaching post at the Sixth Form College in Colchester.

He has developed a labour intensive painting process whereby each painting can take up to two months to complete. He starts with a photographic image which he breaks down using a grid. A mask is then placed over the image so he only sees a small portion of the image at the time. He then aims to meticulously and objectively build up a painting from very close observation of these pieces. The distance he places between the photographic image and the painting enables him to stay focused and work over a long period of time on a piece of work. The subject is usually close family members however he has also started to develop a parallel theme in his work, using local woodlands and the sea as a starting point. These spaces are analysed in the same objective manner but allow the artist to detach himself from the need to replicate a particular person and instead focus on the paint. He is influenced by the work of Malcolm Morley, Chuck Close and Gerhard Richter.

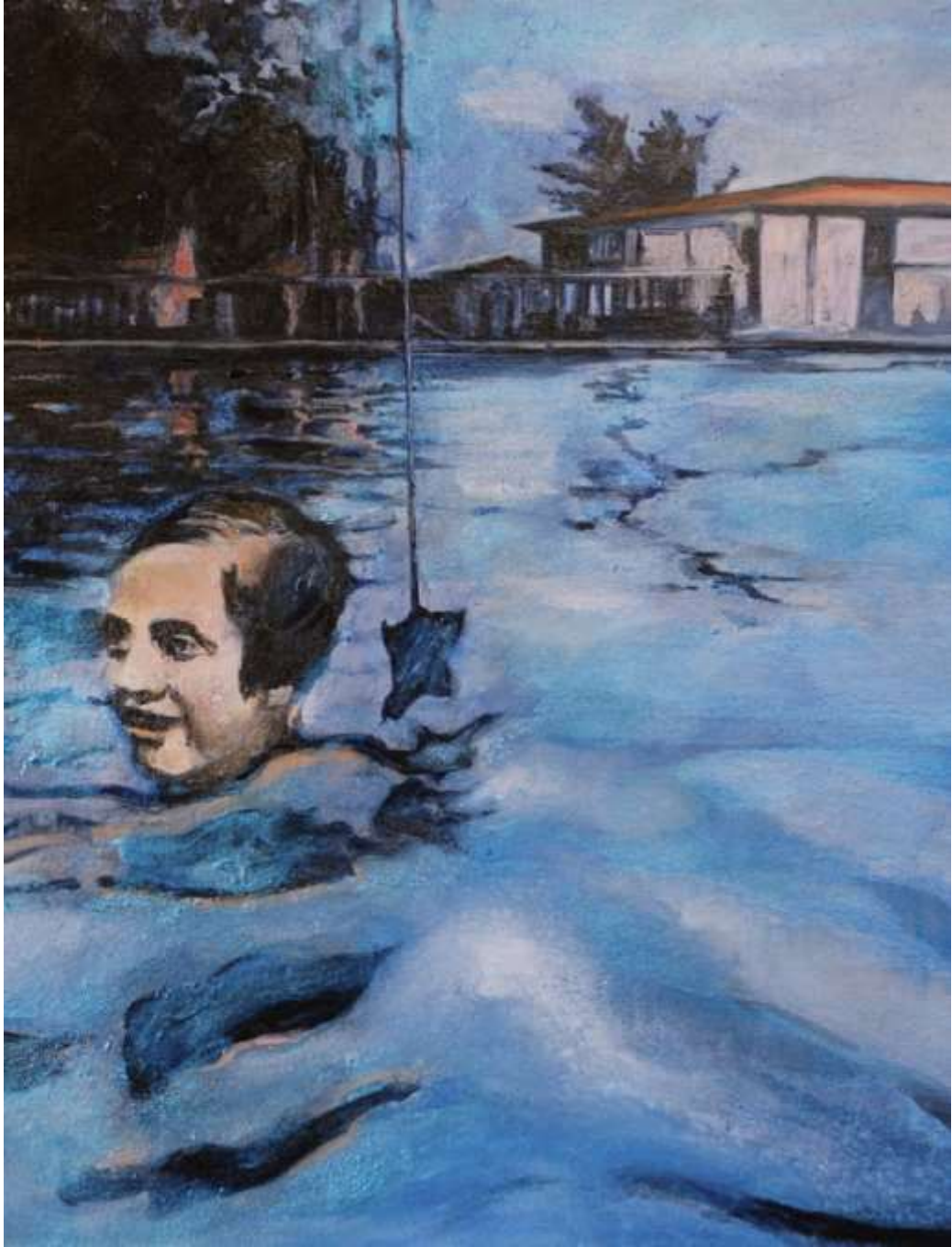


Judith Tucker

Judith Tucker studied at the Ruskin School, University of Oxford and at the University of Leeds, where she is currently a Senior Lecturer. She co-convenes the networks *Land2* and *Mapping Spectral Traces* and exhibitions include *Landscape during times of uncertainty* Southampton City Art Gallery, *Drawn 2013*, Royal West of England Academy, *shadows traces undercurrents* Katherine E. Nash Gallery, *Regis Centre for Art Minneapolis USA*, *Arts and Geographies Exhibition*, Lyon, France, *Postmemorial Landscapes*, Armory Gallery, Blacksburg, Virginia, USA.

“*Evi Swims* is from a series of work called *Tense* where I utilised family photographs taken in the inland forest resort Friedrichroda during the mid-1930s. The photographs are all snaps of woodland walks, teas in villas and swimming lessons. The ones I found most intriguing were of an outdoor swimming pool and in particular one of my mother learning to swim, wearing a swimming-aid apparatus that has the look of a hangman’s noose.

I find the peculiar mixture of innocent enjoyment and intimations of death inherent in the belated viewing of these holiday photographs compelling. I discovered that there was a pool in Friedrichroda in which the 1936 German Olympic diving team practised, bringing to mind the diving sequence that concludes Leni Riefenstahl’s film *Olympia* (1938). My mother had holidayed there that very year, a strange coincidence. Furthermore, public swimming pools and the interest in the healthy body not only reminded me of my grandmother, who against her parents’ wishes trained to be a gymnast; the architecture and setting all seemed to evoke and locate the interwar era very specifically.”



Katherine Russell

Katherine Russell has exhibited extensively in London with a recent solo show at the A&D Gallery 2014 and Battersea Park, London 2011.

She describes her work as an “attempt to deconstruct a fraction of the mass media imagery which we encounter on a daily basis. In doing this I aim to capture a particular moment, more specifically the feeling within that moment which will allow a deeper contemplation and penetration of the inevitable associations, both objective and subjective.

In this way I hope my painting questions what real meaning these images hold for us, not just as non-discerning mass consumers, but instead, in a personal and emotional way. By doing this what often results in the finished works are images which on the one hand may appear at first glance superficially familiar, but which on the other, are ultimately imbued with a new emotional understanding.”



Greg Rook

Greg Rook was born in London in 1971. He studied at Chelsea School of Art 1997-2000 and Goldsmiths College 2000-2002. He is currently the course director of a Fine Art BA for London South Bank University. He has exhibited in Europe, America and Asia in both solo and group exhibitions. Recent exhibitions have included the East London and Marmite Painting Prize and a solo show at Fred, London.

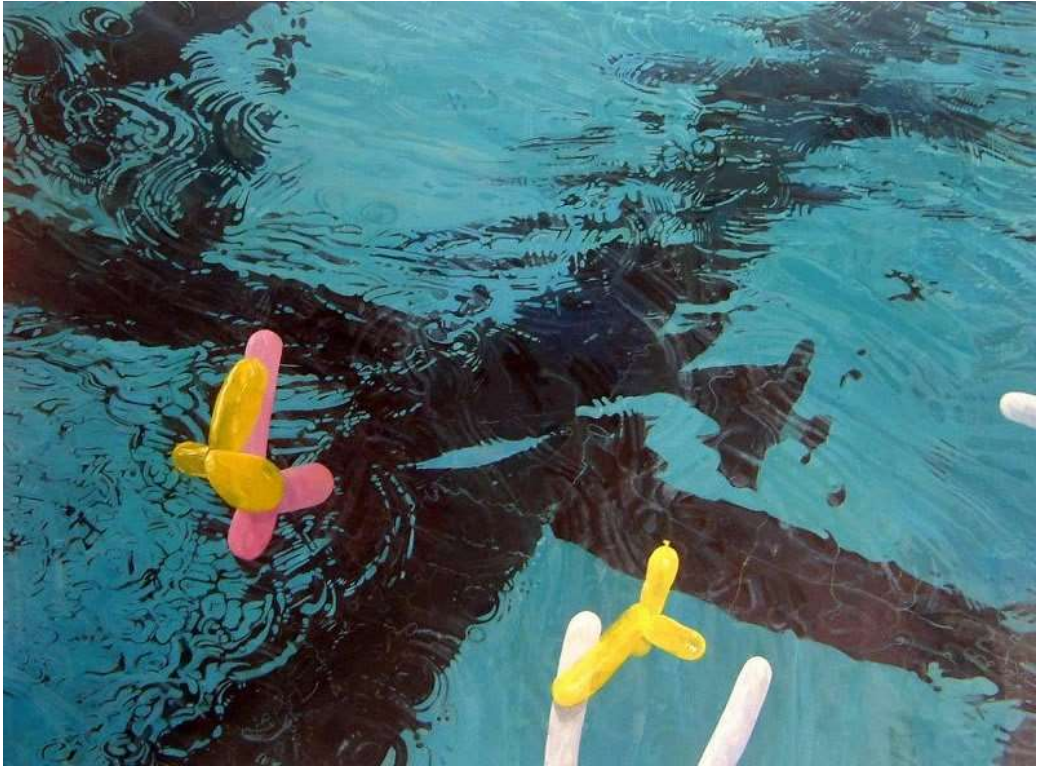
He says “In my paintings I am continuing the attempt to coalesce painting and drawing into one thing.

In order to inform imagery for these paintings my research involves futurology as assessable now - that is past potential futures. These projects, such as the 70’s Hippy communes in the western United States, English communitarian ‘digger’ projects and the Soviet social experiment are to a great extent over, and to a certain extent discredited. I am interested in the motivation behind them (whether they were born more from optimism or pessimism), the reasons for their failure and their relevance as contemporary potential futures. In attempting to describe them as ‘drawn paintings’ I wish to use the medium to create blueprints that make them both accessible and utopian.”



Steve Upton

Born in Cleethorpes, Steve Upton attended Grimsby School of Art, followed by Maidstone and then Manchester University. Exhibiting widely in the Midlands before settling in the East Riding, Yorkshire in 2004. Of his work he says “I paint what is around me, the bus station, the people and the fairs on the local field. I like that uniquely English outlook that can be an uneasy combination of the humorous, somewhat grotesque and surreal.”



Gideon Pain

Gideon Pain was born in Wiltshire in 1967. He currently lives in Cambridgeshire and works in London. He studied at Gloucestershire College of Art and The University of Reading.

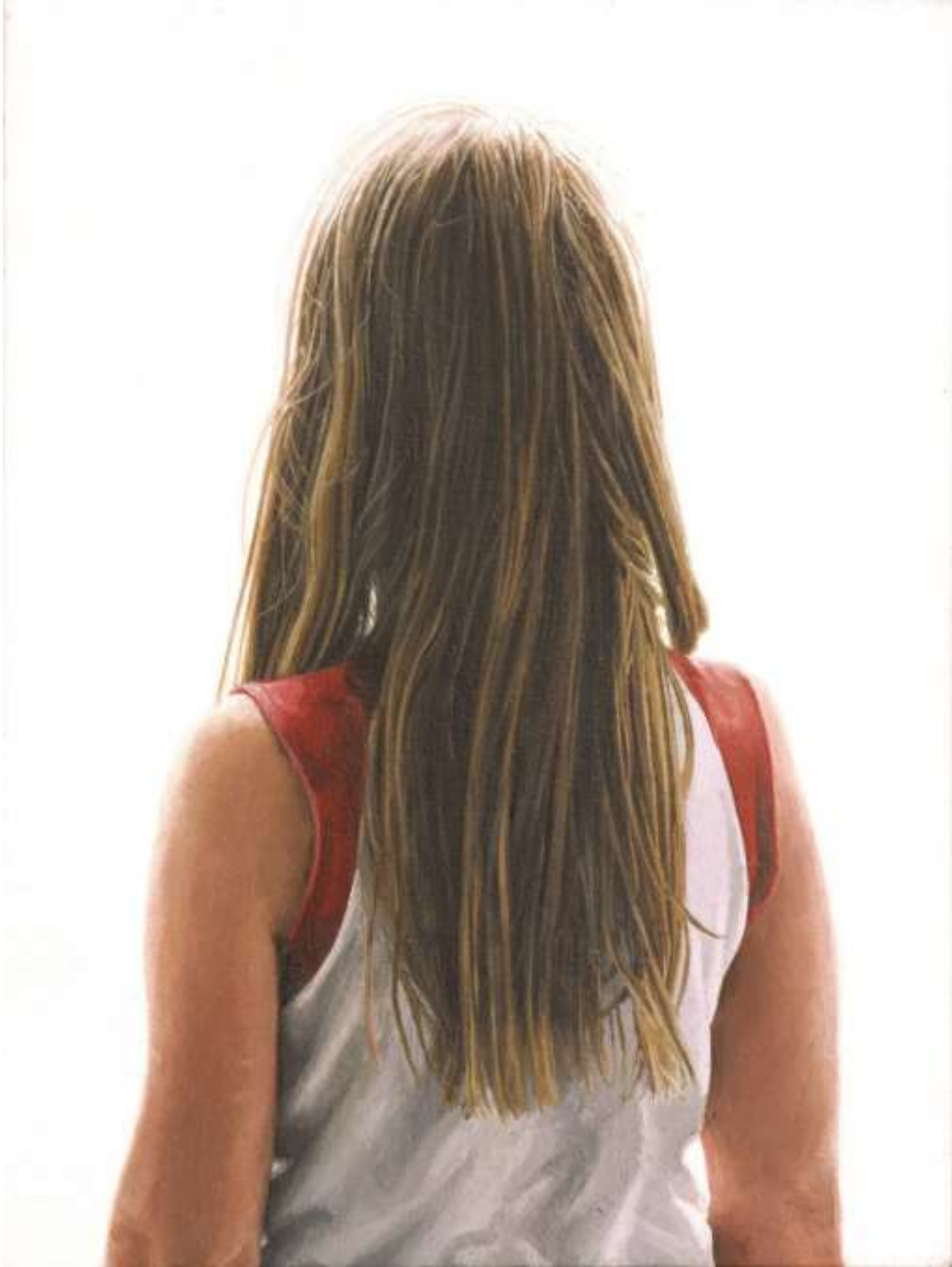
Of his work Gideon says “My paintings are about the small, often overlooked, instances and events quietly occurring in the world around me. Their banality and insignificance makes them easily forgotten but collectively they combine to reveal a deeper truth of where and who I am.

I wanted *Hand Wash 2* to be a riddle that had no answer. The painting is about the frustration of looking for significance and meaning in mundane everyday activity. I am naturally drawn to a belief that there is a purpose and unity that underpins everything but often find upon reflection that there’s little to substantiate this. The contradiction however, is that I still keep looking.”



Robert Priseman

This is a painting of a friend of our daughter, and for me it marks the conclusion of a phase where I had concentrated on beauty, landscape the human figure. Shortly after completing *Lily* I began to produce work in series around socio-political themes, and so for me this painting marks the closing of one chapter and the beginning of another.



Sean Williams

Sean Williams was born in 1966 and is based in Sheffield. His most recent solo exhibition was 'This Could Be The Right Place' at Watford Museum. He has also been shortlisted for the 2014 John Ruskin Prize, the 2013 Neo:Art Prize and the 2010 Marmite Prize for Painting.

His paintings present views of the fringes of suburbia, places that feel as though they are familiar, but then escape our conditioned response. He aims to place the viewer as 'still points of a turning world' - alone, for a while, then possibly watched as they look on. The scene switches between mundane and suggesting something may be about to happen attempting, in part, to recreate the almost inexplicable psychological weight of della Francesca's 'Ideal City', with a modern twist.

Sean describes *No-One is Quite Sure* as "The building is a shell, seemingly stripped down to four walls and little else. The tonal scheme is inverted, against our expectations, with the house lighter than the sky. But apart from the wall, there wasn't much else to get excited about - the decorative Virginia creeper remains, and any building work appears half-hearted, if not having ground to a halt, in an ambiguous state somewhere between dismantling and rebuilding. The skeletal scaffolding, the support for construction, echoes the construction of a painting perhaps, suggesting a possible metaphor for an often frustrating creative process.

My paintings are views of the fringes of suburbia, places that feel as though they are familiar, but then escape our conditioned response. I aim to place the viewer as still points of a turning world - alone, for a while, and then possibly watched as they look on. With each scene switching between the mundane and a suggestion that something may be about to happen."



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