

The book cover features a vertical split down the center. The left half is a solid, vibrant yellow-green color, while the right half is a lighter, pale yellow-green. Both halves are overlaid with a network of thin, dark, irregular lines that resemble a cracked or marbled texture. The title is centered across the split in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

**Contemporary Masters  
from the East of England**

Seabrook Press

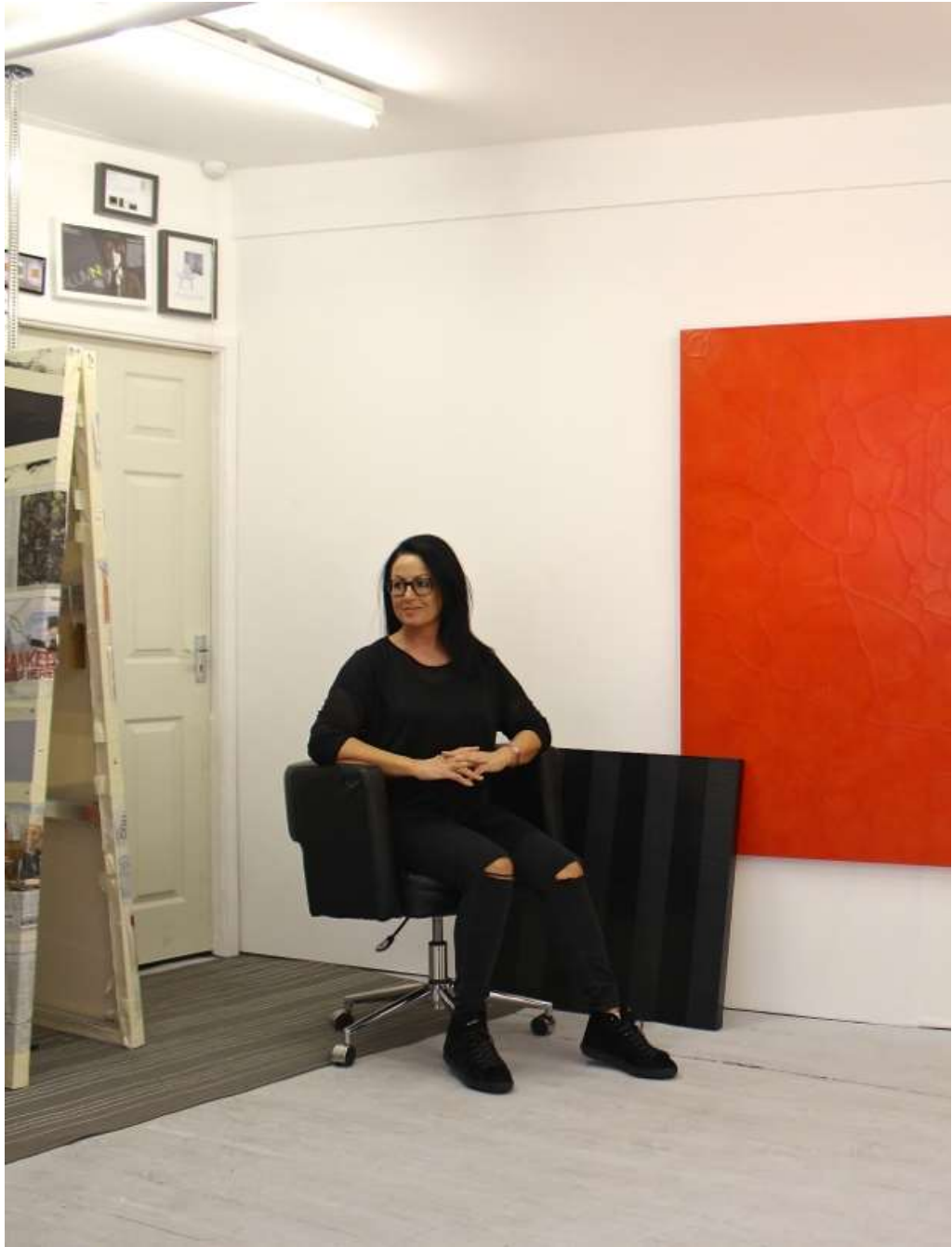


# Contemporary Masters from the East of England

The Cut, Halesworth, Suffolk  
25th April to 27th May 2017



Seabrook Press



Susan Gunn  
In her studio, 2014

# Contents

Alphabetical Index of Artists	3
Introductory Essay	5
The Paintings	11
Thanks	83

Enabled with the generous support of the East Anglia Art Fund

*Amanda Ansell Debbie Ayles Claudia Böse Emma Cameron Simon Carter Ben Coode-Adams Tony Casement Jenny Creasy Jeffrey Dennis Sam Douglas Annabel Dover Nathan Eastwood Wendy Elia Paul Galyer Susan Gunn Marguerite Horner Barbara Howey Linda Ingham Anushka Kolthammer Paula MacArthur Michael Middleton Nicholas Middleton Stephen Newton Laura Leahy Kirsty O’Leary Leeson Gideon Pain Ruth Philo Robert Priseman Freya Purdue David Sullivan Harvey Taylor Delia Tournay-Godfrey Julie Umerle Jemma Watts Mary Webb*

Cover Image: Divided Ground: Acid Yellows, linseed oil, wax, natural earth pigment and gesso on canvas, 91 x 91 cm, 2012 by Susan Gunn.

Cover Photograph by Alan Ward

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Cafe and Galleries open  
Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm



Amanda Ansell in her studio  
Photograph by Simon Carter, Suffolk, 2014

# Alphabetical Index of Artists

Amanda Ansell	12
Debbie Ayles	14
Claudia Böse	16
Emma Cameron	18
Simon Carter	20
Ben Coode-Adams	22
Tony Casement	24
Jenny Creasy	26
Jeffrey Dennis	28
Sam Douglas	30
Annabel Dover	32
Nathan Eastwood	34
Wendy Elia	36
Paul Galyer	38
Susan Gunn	40
Marguerite Horner	42
Barbara Howey	44
Linda Ingham	46
Anushka Kolthammer	48
Paula MacArthur	50
Michael Middleton	52
Nicholas Middleton	54
Stephen Newton	56
Laura Leahy	58
Kirsty O'Leary Leeson	60
Gideon Pain	62
Ruth Philo	64
Robert Priseman	66
Freya Purdue	68
David Sullivan	70
Harvey Taylor	72
Delia Tournay-Godfrey	74
Julie Umerle	76
Jemma Watts	78
Mary Webb	80

Contemporary Masters from the East of England  
Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title  
curated by Robert Priseman

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25 April - 27 May 2017

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# Introductory Essay



Simon Carter in his studio  
Photograph by Noah Carter, Frinton-on-Sea, 2014

# Contemporary Masters from the East of England

Historically the East of England has nurtured some of Britain's greatest painters, from Thomas Gainsborough and John Constable in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to Christopher Le Brun and Maggi Hambling in the 20<sup>th</sup>. It has seen the establishment of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing at Benton End by Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett-Haines in 1939, whose students included Lucian Freud and Valerie Thornton and the Norwich School of Design in 1845 whose alumni include Michael Andrews, Colin Self and Susan Gunn.

This level of excellence in the art of painting from the eastern region of the United Kingdom has continued to evolve and grow into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a new wave of painters who have made the area their home and the production of internationally significant painting their life's work.

*Contemporary Masters from the East of England* showcases a number of these new and emerging artists of both national and international significance, displaying work by John Moores Prize winner Nicholas Middleton, 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale exhibitor Marguerite Horner, East London Painting Prize Winner Nathan Eastwood, Kettle's Yard exhibitor Amanda Ansell, Leverhulme Trust awardee David Sullivan, Digswell Arts Fellow Freya Purdue and Mary Webb who received a solo show at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in 2011, amongst many others.

In defining the "East of England" I have sought to select works mainly produced in the heart of the region as it is widely known, that being Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex, and I have also cast the net further afield and included paintings produced in Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Kent and Lincolnshire. This ties in more broadly with the way the eastern region of England is represented by the BBC, commercial television companies and the Arts Council.

By using the term “masters” I aim to make a claim here that the many of the more interesting British artists practicing painting today are producing work which is being made at or approaching the highest level, and many of them, like their historical predecessors, hail from the eastern region of England. But something else also emerges from the use of the word “master” which is interesting; that up to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, art production and display has been dominated by men. Now however we are witnessing many more women artists coming to the fore as exceptional painters. Indeed, in this small selection of 35 paintings, 21 are by women, placing male artists very much in the minority.

Is it correct then to refer to women artists as “masters” which at first glance seems to be a gendered term? In the Cambridge English Dictionary a “masterpiece” is defined as “*a work of art such as a painting, film, or book that is made with great skill*” while in the Oxford English Dictionary the term “master” is described as “*a person who has complete control of something*”. Both of these definitions refer to “master” in a gender neutral manner, in the same way one might gain a “Master’s degree”, and which indicates the term “mistress” as being the gendered expression. Whilst language is always in flux and we may never find a completely satisfactory answer to this particular quandary, it is very much in this gender neutral spirit that I wish us to consider this exhibition. There is also something else I wish us to consider in looking at the works themselves, that just as there has been a major shift in fine art practice from male to female dominance, there is now also a shift occurring in the way painting is being perceived as an art form in the light of the digital age.

Painting, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is now expressing itself along the same lines as the slow food movement, meditation and unplugged music. It offers a direct and contemplative connection with the “hand-made” and with real objects which mediate our emotional makeup as people. We see this most clearly in the fact that the works presented here display no clear and consistent group narrative or movement, and are instead a collection of highly individualistic interpretations which offer visual interactions with the physical world. Gone now are the multitude of “isms” which made up the landscape of 20<sup>th</sup> century art, instead they have been replaced by the one big “ism” of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, “individualism”. In the light of this we may begin to think of, and experience the

paintings presented here, not as works of art produced from the hands of specifically female or male artists, but from a group of individuals; unique, talented and united by the common bonds of time and place and a desire to connect to the elusive experience of what it is to be human through the medium of paint.

Robert Priseman 2017

*Contemporary Masters from the East of England draws 35 works from the Priseman Seabrook Collection of 21<sup>st</sup> Century British Painting which is housed in North Essex. It is the only art collection in the United Kingdom dedicated to painting produced in Britain after the year 2000.*



# Paintings

# 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 her native Suffolk in 2006 to begin an artist residency at firstsite, Colchester. That same year a body of her work was selected for exhibition at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge.

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.”

Amanda's paintings are held in many public and private collections and she currently lives and works in Suffolk.



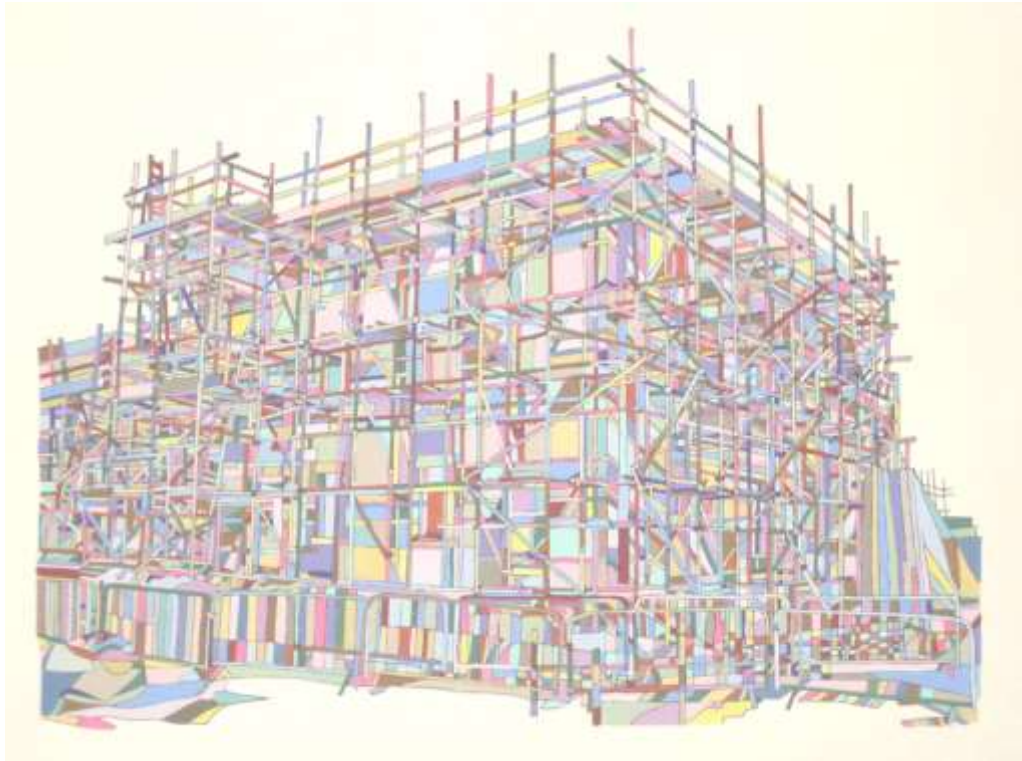


# Debbie Ayles

Debbie Ayles studied fine art at The Colchester School of Art. In 2004 she was granted a sciart Research and Development award by The Wellcome Trust to investigate 'Aversion to Contemporary Art', in collaboration with Professor Arnold Wilkins, Director of Visual Perception Unit at the University of Essex. Then, in 2005 Debbie won 1st prize in the 'Art meets Science' award in the Daily Telegraph /Novartis 'Vision of Science' Photographic Awards. Her work has also been selected for exhibition by the Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize, the Royal Institute of Painters In Water Colour, the Royal Watercolour Society, The London Group, The New English Art Club, ING Discerning Eye and the Science Museum.

She says of her painting "I am primarily interested in architecture which gives me the opportunity to explore order and structure. Whilst aiming to keep much of the integrity of the construction, I seek out unexpected patterns that are the consequence of fleeting distortions of light, weather and human intervention and use these chance elements to enrich my pictorial arrangements. I work in water-based media which allows an enormous amount of freedom for expressive paint handling juxtaposed with a more controlled representation of the subject matter. Each painting reflects a record and sense of the place at that particular moment in time."

Debbie lives and works in Colchester.



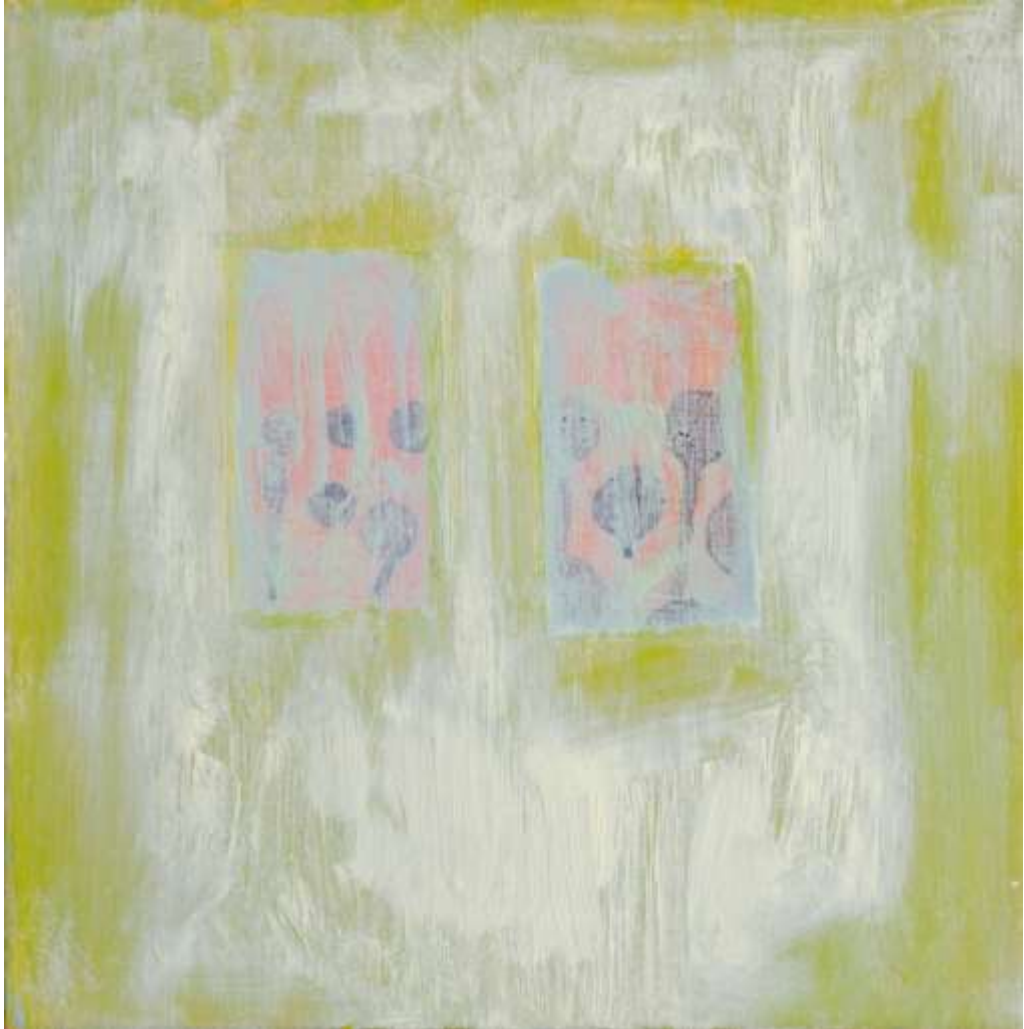
# Claudia Böse

Claudia Böse was born in Germany and trained at Central St. Martins and the Royal Academy Schools in London. She now lives and works in Ipswich.

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. Of this work Claudia says "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."



# Emma Cameron

Raised near Inverness in the north of Scotland, Emma Cameron studied Fine Art between 1981 and 1987 at Camberwell School of Art and Central St Martins College of Art & Design in London.

Of her painting she says, “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?”

Emma now lives and works in Wivenhoe, Essex as an artist and art therapist.



# Simon Carter

Simon Carter is an artist and curator who was born in Frinton-on-Sea, Essex in 1961. He studied at Colchester Institute (1980-81) and then North East London Polytechnic (1981-84). Often described as a 'painter's painter', solo exhibitions of Carter's paintings have been held by The SEA Foundation, Tiburg; Messum's, London and Firstsite, Colchester. His work has been acquired by several art museums including Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Falmouth Art Gallery, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, Swindon Art Gallery and the University of Essex.

Simon's painting lies between figuration and abstraction, illustrating both landscape and the subjectivity of looking, to reflect a perceptual and psychological experience of the world. In 2013 he collaborated with artist Robert Priseman to form the artist led group Contemporary British Painting and then the 'East Contemporary Art Collection', the first dedicated collection of contemporary art for the East of England which is housed at UCS, Ipswich.

Simon is President of Colchester Art Society, he still lives and works in Frinton-on-Sea and is represented internationally by Messum's.



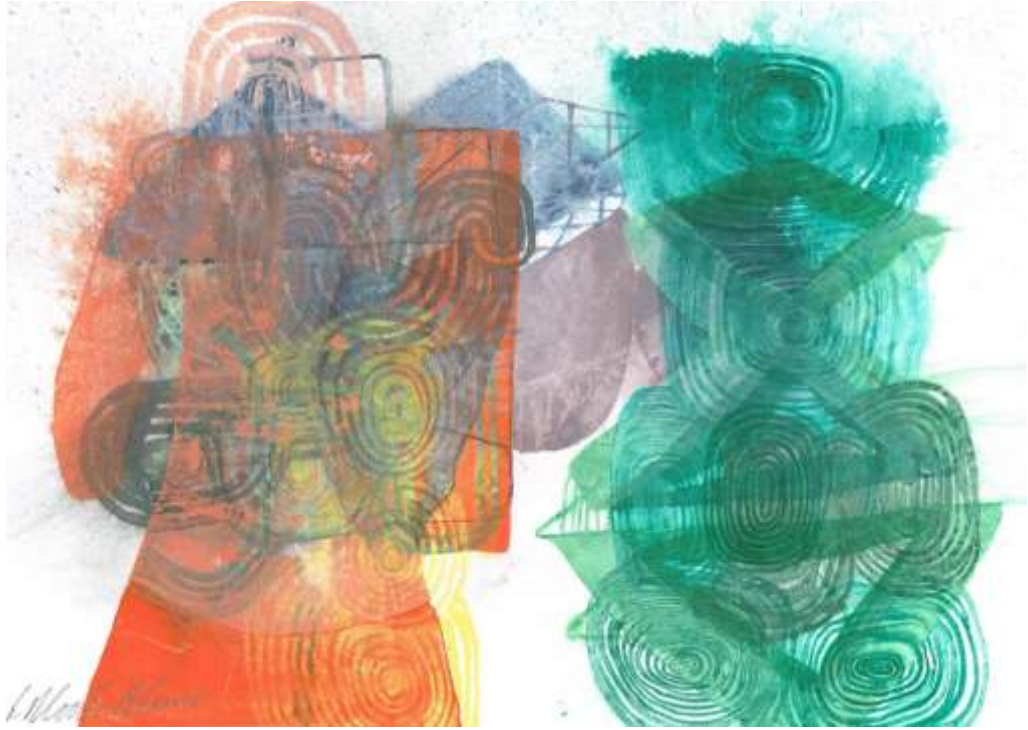


# Ben Coode-Adams

Born in Essex in 1965, Ben Coode-Adams studied Fine Art at The University of Edinburgh and Art in Architecture at the University of East London. Most of his career he has produced large scale sculptures for housing associations, local authorities and private clients. He pioneered the public art methodology of historical research coupled with community engagement. This expertise in audience development led to projects based in museums funded by NESTA, the Wellcome Trust, and the Manchester Museum, developing ideas about communicating complicated subtle narratives which turned into a series of performance projects about exploration, produced with Grizedale Arts, Hastings Museum and the Banff Centre in Canada.

Ben Coode-Adams has always produced drawings alongside his sculptural practice. He has exhibited these periodically, in Berlin in 2004 and Mainz 2006. He was shortlisted for the Jerwood Drawing Prize in 2008 and the Sunday Times Watercolour Prize in 2016. In 2013 he fell ill. Unable to produce sculptures he turned to making watercolours which led to exhibitions with Wayfarers Gallery and Theodore:Art in Brooklyn, New York in 2014.

Ben lives and works in Feering, Essex and runs The Blackwater Polytechnic from a converted barn with his wife, the artist Freddie Robins.



# Tony Casement

Born in 1949 in St. Eval in Cornwall, Tony now lives and works in Wangford, Suffolk. He studied Fine Art at Newcastle University between 1967 and 1971 before going on to become a Research Assistant in Fine Art Printmaking at Northumbria University.

Having moved to the east of England, in 1990 Tony became co-founder of the Suffolk Open Studios and in 2003 co-ordinator of art at The Cut, Halesworth.

He has exhibited widely in U.K. and Europe and says of his art “I try to make work that has a physical presence and an identity of its own. There are various sources- people, journeys, maybe things heard on the radio. For example I get as much pleasure from looking at a pavement as I do from looking at a sunset. There is usually a starting point in my mind- a particular shape, perhaps or a concept to get things started, but the work is not descriptive and the subject is not defined. As the work proceeds, often things get included that were not there at the start. If successful the work will involve you in its own world while connecting with the here and now.”



# Jenny Creasy

Jenny Creasy went to Ealing Art School between 1957-62 and was taught by Frank Auerbach, Bernard Cohen and Roy Ascott.

Through her husband Brian Wall she met the St. Ives based artists Roger & Rose Hilton, Patrick Heron, Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth who went on to become a touchstone for the development of her work as she moved from an expressive figuration to the full abstraction of her later work. She worked mainly in a 2m square format and also on paper and wooden door panels of 30cms square.

Living in Suffolk, she only became an exhibiting artist in the 1980's and then only infrequently at venues such as Gainsborough House, The Cut and Mandells Gallery in Norwich.



# Jeffrey Dennis

Jeffrey Dennis was born in Colchester and now lives and works in London.

A lecturer in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts, his paintings are in the collections of the Arts Council of England, the British Council, the British Standards Institution, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris, Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei, Leeds Art Gallery, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Swindon Art Gallery, the Tate, Unilever plc and private collections in UK, Europe, USA and Asia.

Of his paintings Jeffrey says “My work is rooted in daily experience: how people move around, inhabit spaces and make sense of their daily routines. Of particular relevance to this and to the structure of my paintings are the ideas of proximity, contiguity and adjacency: these terms express the abrupt collisions of incident and thought, the habits nurtured by travellers and inhabitants to protect personal space and the interrupted narratives of encounters and conversations. The paintings themselves provide a fluid, mutable net to hold narrative fragments and connective elements in place; a landscape corresponding to the fragmentary mental maps which people construct in order to give their existence some measure of meaning.”

In 2009 Jeffrey co-founded Paint Club at the University College of the Arts as a forum to explore and discuss current issues in the practice of painting.





# Sam Douglas

Living in the southern part of Essex, 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 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

Sam 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.”



# Annabel Dover

Annabel Dover was born in Liverpool and educated in Newcastle and London. She now lives in Ipswich with her partner, the artist Alex Pearl, and 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 both 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.”



# Nathan Eastwood

Winner of the East London Painting Prize 2014, Nathan Eastwood grew up in Plymouth and then Kent. He 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 represent 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.”



# Wendy Elia

Wendy Elia lived for many years in Southend. She works in series which explore the social and broader contexts of our times. She 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. In 2012 she was commissioned to paint a portrait for the Cultural Olympiad in Weymouth.

*Judith* was the very first painting in a series of paintings of her female friends (and one male pre-op transsexual) entitled Half Naked. Wendy says “These are all 166cms by 91cms and ‘*Judith*’ was painted when I 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 which is often present 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.





# Paul Galyer

Born and based in Grimsby, Paul Galyer says of *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.”

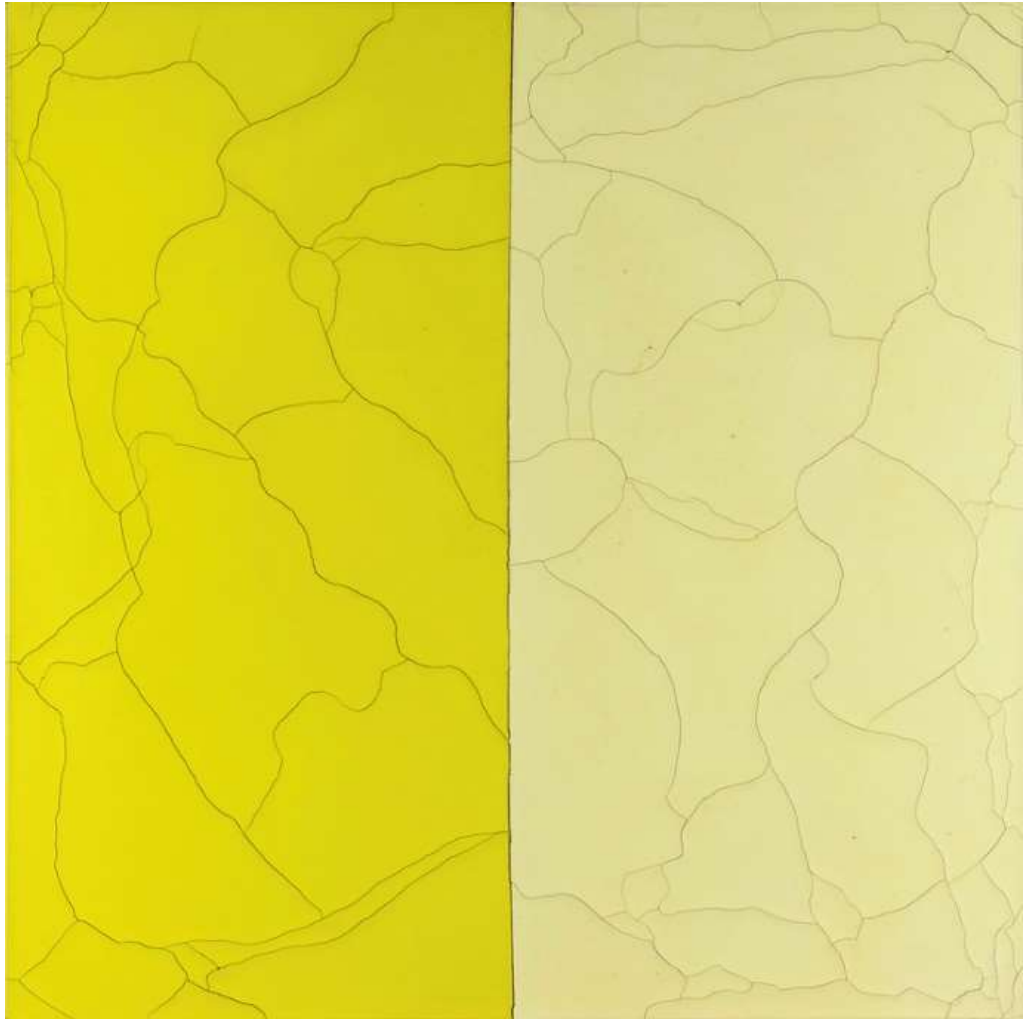


# Susan Gunn

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.

Her work has been 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 lived in Norwich for many years and worked as a visiting tutor in Fine Art at the Norwich University of the Arts .



# Marguerite Horner

Hailing from Lincoln, Marguerite Horner completed her B.A. degree in Fine Art in her twenties and was promptly 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).



# 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.”

Barbara lives and works in Norwich and is co-founder of the group Paint Club East.





# 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 the passage of time and memory-works in relation to 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 Ingham has been the recipient of several awards from the Arts Council England for her studio practice and curatorial activities.

The Easer Self Portrait series arose inadvertently as a response to her 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 the series and it along with the first pieces show her with a head band woven from the pages of *The Wide Wide World* an 1880s 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 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 includes a twig of Sea Buckthorn with a cocoon writhing with the caterpillars of the Brown-Tailed Moth.



# Anushka Kolthammer

Anushka Kolthammer grew up in Manningtree and read for an MA in Art History at the University of Essex. Of *The Girl with a Pearl Earring* she says “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.”



# Paula MacArthur

Paula MacArthur grew up in Hoddesdon and graduated from the Royal Academy in 1993 where she was awarded the Royal Academy Schools Prize for painting.

Paula was the First Prize Winner in the John Player Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery, London and was also a Prizewinner in the John Moores 18, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Her work is held in numerous collections including The National Portrait Gallery, London, the collection of Baron and Baroness von Oppenheim and The Hilton Hotel, Park Lane, London. She has given lectures on her work at Walker Art Gallery, Norwich University for the Arts, Jerwood Gallery, Hastings and at Glasgow Artist Guild. She runs the De La Warr Pavilion Artists Discussion Group and coordinates the exhibition programme at Rye Creative Centre as well as working on outside curatorial projects which include 'Disturbance', 'Slippery and Amorphous' and 'Correspond'.

Working with a bold palette and painterly marks, Paula enlarges ornate decorations or tiny jewels and transforms these minute details into dramatic moment-mori. The objects she selects have very specific resonances, the painting process becomes a meditation on her personal relationships and experiences which echo universal themes of love and life and loss.



# Michael Middleton

Born in 1950, Mike studied fine art at Sheffield Polytechnic and Chelsea School of Art between 1968 and 1974.

A member of both the Royal Society of Printmakers and The Royal Watercolour Society Mike's work has appeared in many exhibitions including The Sunday Times Watercolour Competition, The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition and The ING Discerning Eye as well as being a permanent exhibitor at the Bankside Gallery in London. His work is held in numerous public collections including the V&A, Ashmolean Oxford, MIMA Middlesbrough and Harlow Arts Trust.

Mike lives and works in Colchester where he is a member of the Colchester Art Society and Paint Club East.





# Nicholas Middleton

Nicholas Middleton was born in London in 1975 and grew up around Essex. His father is Mike Middleton, the highly respected painter and printmaker who for many years taught printmaking at the Colchester Institute.

Nicholas studied at London Guildhall University 1993-94 and Winchester School of Art 1994-97. He was shortlisted for the BOC Emerging Artist Award in 2002 and has exhibited in the John Moores Painting Prize five 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.

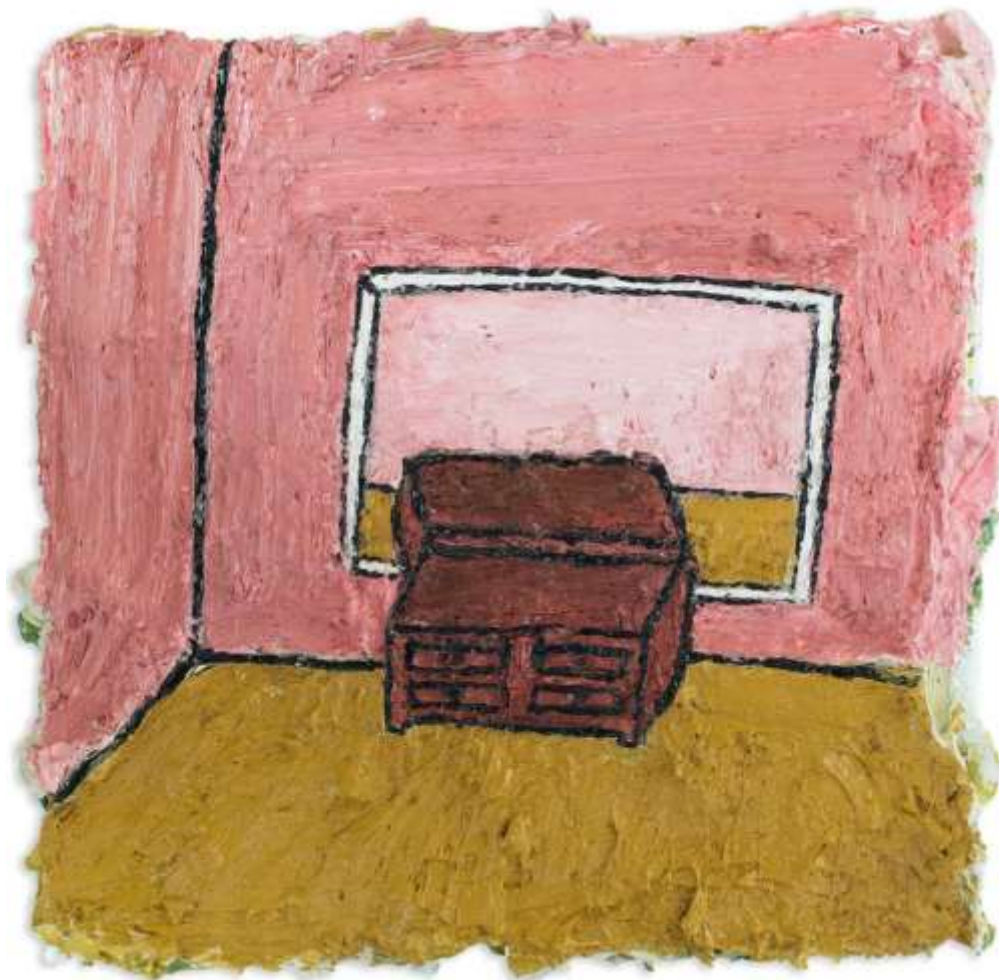
He says of 'Projection' that it is part of "a series of large scale black and white paintings that take the form of tableaux, frequently inspired by earlier paintings seen through the visual language of photography. 'Projection' explicitly references Joseph Wright of Derby's 'The Corinthian Maid', c.1782-5, which illustrates Pliny's myth of the origin of painting. Wright's picture shows the eponymous maid, the daughter of a potter, tracing in slip the shadow of her sleeping lover on the eve of his leaving for war. My painting transposes the figure to that of a contemporary painter working with a photographic projection, showing a detail of Charles Sergeant Jagger's Royal Artillery Memorial, and reverses the temporal staging of Wright's original."



# Stephen Newton

Stephen Newton is an academic and painter who divides his time equally between his homes in Grimsby, where he was born, and London. He 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.”



# Laura Leahy

Laura Leahy was born in Yonkers, New York in 1965 and completed a degree in psychology at Syracuse University in 1987. In 1995 she worked as assistant to the printmaker Randy Owen in McLean, Virginia, before moving permanently to Suffolk in 2001 where she has lived and worked ever since.

In 2011 she gained a first class degree in Fine Art from the University of Suffolk and in 2015 an MA with Distinction. Following this Laura worked as a studio assistant at the University itself and then more recently as its Art Co-ordinator. At the University of Suffolk she has co-organised the symposiums *The Immediacy of Paint: The Role of Painting in the Digital Age* in 2015 and *Exchanging Notes with China* in 2016.

Laura has exhibited in a number of shows including *Contemporary British Painting*, at The Crypt Gallery in Marylebone, London, and in New York as part of *The Moving Image Project*, Curated by Charlie Levine. She describes her practice as “mainly project based. Each project begins by using an object chosen as a trigger for social and artistic exchange, articulated through the use of paint, video, photography and participatory events.”



# Kirsty O’Leary Leeson

Kirsty O’Leary Leeson lives and works in Norfolk. She 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.”





# 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.”



# Ruth Philo

Ruth lives and works in rural Suffolk and says her 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.



# Robert Priseman

Robert Priseman is a painter, curator and writer whose projects include *No Human Way to Kill*, *SUMAC*, *The Francis Bacon Interiors* and *Nazi Gas Chambers: From Memory to History and Fame*. In 2013 he established the group 'Contemporary British Painting' to help promote and explore current trends in British painting through group exhibitions, talks, publications and the donation of paintings by living British artists to museums in the UK and USA.

His work is held in The V&A, The Museum der Moderne Salzburg, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Musée de Louvain la Neuve, The Allen Memorial Art Museum, The Mead Art Museum, The Royal Collection Windsor, The Honolulu Museum of Art and The National Galleries of Scotland.

Robert lives and works in Wivenhoe, Essex.



# Freya Purdue

Freya Purdue grew up and lived in Hertfordshire until her recent retirement. She was a lecturer at Chelsea School of Art and 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.”





# 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.

He has exhibited extensively and has work in many private and public collections including Rugby Museum and Art Gallery, The East Contemporary Art Collection, The Komechak Art Gallery, Chicago, and the RCA. In 2007 he was awarded the Leverhulme Trust Award 2007-8 and the Mercury Art Prize.

David Sullivan lives and works in Norwich.



# Harvey Taylor

Harvey Taylor graduated from Winchester School of Art in 1993. He lives in Colchester and combines his painting practice with a teaching post at the Colchester Sixth Form College where he is Head of Art.

His work has been regularly selected for the Eastern Open in Kings Lynn and in 2011 he won the Wyss Foundation Painting Prize.

Harvey 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.



# Delia Tournay-Godfrey

Delia Tournay-Godfrey lives and works in Ipswich. She has been selected for the Lynn-Painter Stainers Prize, New English Art Club, Discerning Eye and RA Summer Exhibitions and was recently awarded the Lincoln Seligman Purchase Prize.

She describes herself as "a figurative painter working directly from the subject either out in the landscape, in my car or in a studio overlooking the Suffolk coast. Large paintings are produced in my studio at home from these smaller works. I use oils as I love their painterly qualities and the diverse colour range achieved with a limited palette. I am interested in a strong underlying two-dimensional design and enjoy simplifying what I see, omitting unnecessary detail, emphasising close tones, using these elements to evoke a mood or atmosphere."



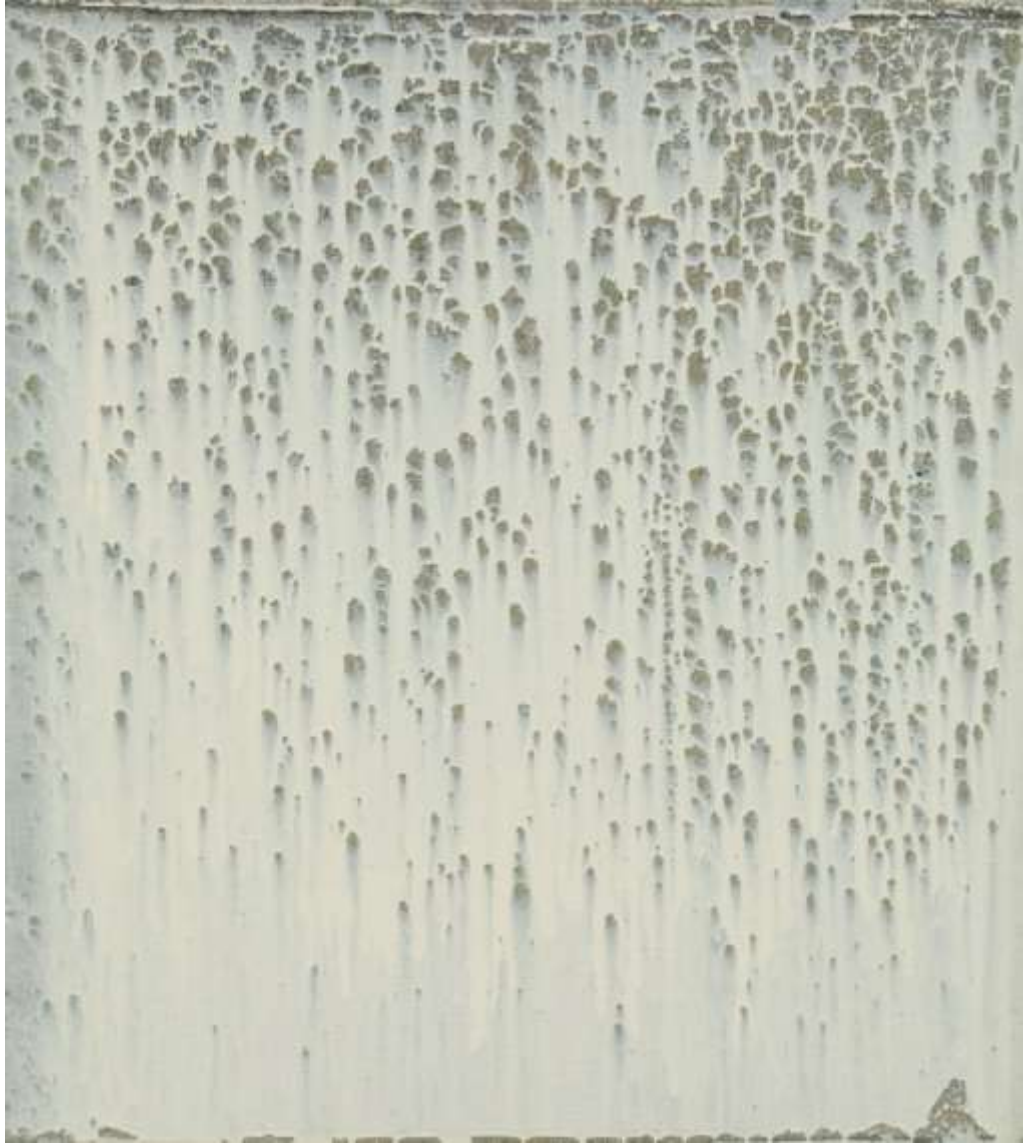
# Julie Umerle

Julie Umerle was born in Connecticut, USA and currently lives and works in East London. She studied fine art at Parsons The New School for Design in New York City and at Falmouth University, Cornwall. Her connection with East Anglia is through her family. She has had relatives in the area for many years and spent a good deal of time there whilst she was growing up.

Umerle has exhibited both in the UK and internationally. Solo shows include: 'Rewind' at Art Bermondsey Project Space, London (2016) and 'Cosmos or Chaos' at studio1.1, London (2010). Group shows include: 'SCOPE Miami Beach' in Miami, Florida (2016), 'Present Tense' at Swindon Museum and Art Gallery (2015), and 'Priseman Seabrook Collection' at Huddersfield Art Gallery (2014). She 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.

Of her work she says "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. This interaction of the materials, together with the enlistment of gravity, activates the surface."





# Jemma Watts

Originally from Norwich where she still lives, Jemma graduated with a BA (hons) in Visual Studies from the Norwich University College of the Art in 2004.

She is currently working with the psychogeography of cities, exploring the idea of the sacred and mystical in the modern world, and specifically urban environments. This links to her fascination with human culture in general, which was sparked and fostered by the collections at The Sainsbury's Centre for Visual Art where she has been an artist educator for 5 years, running the weekly Arts Lab session as well as school workshops.



# 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.”

Mary lives and works in rural Suffolk.





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