

The background of the cover is an abstract painting. It features a series of concentric, slightly irregular diamond or square shapes. The outermost layer is a bright yellow. Inside this is a grey layer, followed by a dark blue layer, and then a lighter blue layer. The center of the composition is a solid, vibrant blue diamond. The edges of the shapes are somewhat blurred and textured, suggesting a painterly style. The overall effect is one of depth and geometric precision.

Contemporary Masters From Britain

85 British Painters of the 21st Century
Seabrook Press

Contemporary Masters from Britain

80 British Painters of the 21st Century

Yantai Art Museum, Yantai
7 July-3 August

Artall Gallery, Nanjing
10-23 October

Jiangsu Art Museum, Nanjing
30 October-5 November

Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts
1 December - 10 January

China 2017



Seabrook Press

David Ainley Iain Andrews Amanda Ansell Louis Appleby Richard Baker Karl Bielik
Claudia Böse Day Bowman John Brennan Julian Brown Simon Burton Marco Cali
Ruth Calland Emma Cameron Simon Carter Jules Clarke Ben Cove Lucy Cox Andrew
Crane Pen Dalton Jeffrey Dennis Lisa Denyer Sam Douglas Annabel Dover Natalie
Dowse Fiona Eastwood Nathan Eastwood Wendy Elia Geraint Evans Lucian Freud
Paul Galyer Pippa Gatty Terry Greene Susan Gunn Susie Hamilton Alex Hanna David
Hockney Marguerite Horner Barbara Howey Phil Illingworth Linda Ingham Matthew
Krishanu Bryan Lavelle Laura Leahy Andrew Litten Cathy Lomax Clementine McGaw
Paula MacArthur Lee Maelzer David Manley Enzo Marra Monica Metsers Nicholas
Middleton Andrew Munoz Keith Murdoch Paul Newman Stephen Newton Gideon
Pain Andrew Parkinson Mandy Payne Charley Peters Ruth Philo Barbara Pierson
Alison Pilkington Robert Priseman Freya Purdue Greg Rook Katherine Russell Wendy
Saunders Stephen Snoddy David Sullivan Harvey Taylor Ehryn Torrell Delia Tournay-
Godfrey Judith Tucker Julie Umerle Mary Webb Rhonda Whitehead Sean Williams
Fionn Wilson



Julian Brown
In his studio, London, 2013



Susan Gunn
In her studio, 2014

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Cover Image: *Dash*, 30 x 40 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2014
by Terry Greene

Text by Robert Priseman with statements made by the artists in their own words.

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Marco Calí is the contact for all artists in the *Contemporary Masters from Britain* exhibition in China. If you are interested in buying work by any of the artists presented here, please contact him directly on .



Introduction



Matthew Krishanu in his studio, London, 2016
Photograph by Jens Marott

Contemporary Masters from Britain

Historically, Britain has nurtured some of the world's greatest painters, from Hans Holbein in the 16th century to John Constable and Joseph Wright of Derby in the 18th, JMW Turner and John Atkinson Grimshaw in the 19th and Lucian Freud, R.B. Kitaj, Paula Rego and Francis Bacon in the 20th century. This level of excellence in the art of painting in the United Kingdom has continued to evolve into the 21st, with a new generation of artists who have made the production of significant painting their life's work.

In 2014, I came to realise that many of this new wave of British painters had yet to be collected with the same geographical and chronological focus of their predecessors and foreign contemporaries. So, with the help of my wife, I began the process of bringing together a body of work by artists which followed the very simple criteria of being painting produced after the year 2000 within the British Isles. The painters we began collecting included *European Sovereign Painters Prize* winner Susan Gunn, *John Moores Prize* winner Nicholas Middleton, *54th Venice Biennale* exhibitor Marguerite Horner, *East London Painting Prize* winner Nathan Eastwood, *John Player Portrait Award* winner Paula MacArthur, *Griffin Art Prize* exhibitor Matthew Krishanu, *Birtles Prize* winner Simon Burton and Mary Webb, who received a solo show at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in 2011, amongst many others.

So far, we have brought together 102 paintings by 78 artists, which has now become the very first collection of art dedicated to 21st century British painting in the UK. Creating this focus has enabled us to uncover a number of significant themes, which at first were hard to discern. In it, we can see that painting is now expressing itself along the same lines as the slow food movement, meditation and unplugged music. Within the era of the digital revolution it offers a direct and contemplative connection with the hand-made, with real objects which mediate

our emotional makeup. We see this most clearly in the fact that the paintings within the collection display no clear and consistent group narrative or movement, other than being broadly realist, abstract and surrealist, and are instead an assembly of highly individualistic interpretations which offer visual interactions with the physical world. One interesting thing has, however, remained consistent. When we look to the past, we notice how many of the greatest painters who practiced in the UK were born abroad, including Holbein, Freud and Auerbach who were born in Germany, Bacon who was from Ireland, Kitaj the USA and Rego who was born in Portugal. Indeed, it is this international influence which has probably helped create such a vibrant tradition in the genre in Britain, and which is most reflective of our civilization as a broadly international and multi-cultural society. In the 21st century we see this strand of internationalism continuing in British painting and being signified in the collection by Monica Metsers who was born in New Zealand, Claudia Böse and Silvie Jacobi who were born in Germany, Laura Leahy and Julie Umerle who are from the USA, Rhonda Whitehead who was born in Australia, Ehryn Torrell in Canada and Alison Pilkington who is from Ireland.

This roll call perhaps highlights the biggest change we begin to notice in British painting, and that is the shift from the predominantly male dominance the genre experienced up to the end of the 20th century, to a significant ascendancy by female practitioners. Indeed, of the 78 painters so far represented in the collection, 46 are women, placing male artists in the minority.

By using the term “masters” I aim to make a claim here, that 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, work in Britain. 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. Something else I wish us to consider, in looking at the works themselves, is 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.

Within the field, the multitude of “isms” which previously made up the landscape of 20th century art have instead been replaced by the one big “ism” of the 21st century, *individualism*. In this context, we may begin to think of and experience paintings 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.

Robert Priseman, 2017

Contemporary Masters from Britain draws 80 works from the Priseman Seabrook Collection of 21st 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.

Notes

The work is presented here in three loose themes: new realism, new abstraction and new surrealism and semi-abstraction. 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 two master prints to provide additional artistic context.

Between us:

British painting in China

At the time of writing this essay all the British paintings for the exhibition are in transit: they are lying packed and carefully wrapped in their crate. They are somewhere, could be anywhere, on their five thousand miles long journey. The paintings have been made in all kinds of studios: from small domestic spaces to large industrial warehouses, some in the happening inner cities, some in the post-industrial edgelands of those cities, some in the relative quiet of what once might have been, and still just might be, a rural idyll. Scattered far and wide across our green and not always quite so pleasant land there are very many painters, very many people with the widest possible demographic, all committed to making sense of the world they inhabit through making marks on a surface. Painting and painters have demonstrated extraordinary staying power here. The paintings that result, of which those included in this group exhibition might be thought of as a representative sample, take on as diverse a variety of visual forms as the places they were made in, but all share integrity, vitality and a preoccupation with what painting can offer at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The exhibition's strength is precisely that it is eclectic, bringing together not only a mix of geographies and generations, but creating surprising visual and material juxtapositions. Nonetheless, what all the works share is a fascination with the act of making. Whatever the visual idiom they might employ many of the artists explore and exploit the shared, familiar languages of the historical theories and practices of painting, what André Rottman terms the

...closely related antagonisms - colour and contour, transparency and opacity, gesture and facture, illusion and flatness, semblance and objecthood, chroma and contrast, chance and composition, mark making and the monochrome, ostentatious virtuosity and anonymous execution, figuration and abstraction ...
(Rottman in Graw, 2013, p9)

Some of the painters work between moving and still imagery, between fleeting digital images and the stubborn materiality of paint, moving to and fro between painting and digital work and allowing aspects of each process to influence the other, offering opportunity to consider how new technology might have transformed painting. Others explore, to use David Joselit's essay title, how *Painting is beside itself*. (2009) They are the sort of painterly works which explicitly visualise and establish relations with the wider networks of distribution and exhibition in which they are entangled, those "practices in which painting sutures a virtual world of images onto an actual network composed of human actors, allowing neither aspect to eclipse the other". (ibid, 129).

To return to our paintings, images in transit, on their way to be exhibited. Imagining the crate of paintings on its long journey to China not only addresses aspects of these networks to which Joselit refers, but in its very bulk emphasises the materiality, the thingness of these works. The anachronistic slowness of freight passage by sea in our fast-moving digital world offers us a pause for thought and reflection. The paintings have left those studios, where they were made, the paintings have left behind those who created them and they have not yet been seen in the gallery spaces of China. They are in between. Thinking of them as being so literally between places not only reminds me of vast global, social and economic networks, evoking questions such as: who makes what for whom? And what other freight might be a travelling companion for our crate of paintings? According to the latest list provided by the UK government which reads like an ode to the Anthropocene, this might be anything from machinery, mineral fuels, copper, ores, slag, vehicles and plastics to oily seeds, oily fruits and grains. When the paintings return perhaps they might share a container with an assortment of shoes, clothing, furniture, and of course, all sorts of toys. (Anon, 2017). However, the cargo of our crate invites thoughts of a much more intimate sort of in-betweenness. How might painting as practice and paintings as objects be considered as being between subjectivities in a more metaphoric way? Regarding the relation of the particularity of both the maker's and the viewer's experience/subjectivity Rosemary Betterton draws on remarks Keith Piper made at a seminar in the following passage:

...the question of artistic subjectivity lies in the creation of a place 'in between'.

As Keith Piper has suggested, this means occupying a space where the artist can make work that both comes out of his or her particularity and can be read by others within their different social subjectivities and cultural locations. (Betterton, 2005 p192)

This invites precisely the question that must be on the minds of every one of the British painters whose work is included in this exhibition. How might each individual work be read in such a very different context from which it was made? There are two ideas here that I should like to consider further: first, the notion of a place 'in between', and second, how work can both come out of an individual's particularity and be 'read' by others.

In terms of the first question I would like to refer to Arnold van Gennep's notion of liminality as a place of transformation, of transition, which might be considered a place 'in between'. (Gennep in Morgan, 1995). In the catalogue for the exhibition *Rites of Passage: Art for the End of the Century*, Stuart Morgan proposes that artists might be considered as *passeurs*, having experienced their own processes of separation, transition and incorporation, their work in future might 'help to deliver others' (Morgan, 1995, p12). This idea that painting might be able to help deliver others might be a touch fanciful and idealistic and is probably not the conscious aim of many of the exhibiting artists. Surely such events cannot be planned, expected or arranged. It is only possible to arrange the circumstances which might enable such discoveries to be made, in the same way as in the space of the studio there is the possibility/opportunity to make a painting but it does not always occur. There are parallels here to the way that Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger considers art as the transport station of trauma:

The transport is expected in this station, and it is possible, but the transport station does not promise that the passage of the remnants of trauma will actually take place in it; it only supplies the space for this occasion (Lichtenberg-Ettinger, 2000, p91)

So, while we would certainly, not wish to read all painting in terms of trauma it can helpful or useful to consider painting as a place or space between, a space which provides the potential for a viewer to become a *passeur*. I propose that this way of viewing opens up the possibility of considering both making and viewing

painting in the terms that van Alphen describes as phatic art. That is “to make art that is the material condition and the scene of action of an encounter”. (Van Alphen, 1998, p159) The opportunity to show these physical works in this touring exhibition of the Priseman-Seabrook collection in the expansive Chinese gallery spaces provides just such a circumstance and opens up the opportunity and possibility of this sort of exchange.

In terms of answering the second part of my question, that is how painting can both come out of an individual’s particularity and then be ‘read’, in parallel with the unexpected turns a painting might take, the beginning of an answer suggested itself in an unexpected place. While checking a recipe in Max Doerner’s classic handbook for painters the following sentence caught my attention “Artists’ colours (pigments) have body in contradistinction to purely visual colours” (Doerner, 1935, p45) Paint has body in contradistinction to the purely visual. Paint is not the abstract notion “colour” it is coloured substance, indeed, a messy, sometimes harmful substance. This apparently simple sentence seems to sum up succinctly, if not in its original sense, much of what the very wide variety of contemporary British paintings as represented in this exhibition might have to offer. What might “paint having body” mean in relation to thinking of painting as an embodied practice for maker and for viewer? What happens if we consider painting as a *body between* as well as a *place between* as outlined above? How might the corporeal aspect of paintings become a conduit between the bodies that made them and the bodies that view them? The corporeal nature of painting (for example, the time taken, layering, the evidence of the body which made the marks) is one characteristic of what I consider to be to painting as a practice. That the activity of making paintings is without doubt an embodied experience is well-rehearsed from Merleau-Ponty’s emphasis on the centrality of the artist’s body in process onwards (Merleau-Ponty, 1964). Even back then this way of considering painting was hardly new of course. We only have to think back to the mythical origins of painting: the story of the Corinthian maid drawing around the shadow of her sleeping lover before he departs. The myth is permeated with ideas of the absent body.

If then we consider painting as embodied visuality, perhaps viewing painting could,

in fact, become the place where seeing becomes feeling. David MacLagan explores this idea in his article *Reframing aesthetic experience: iconographic and embodied responses to painting*. (2001) He traces the history of the aesthetic experience from Plato through Kant to the phenomenological position:

.... aesthetic experience is often presented, first in Kant, and then in later writers such as Bell, as being essentially disinterested and disembodied. This inclination itself belongs to a wider philosophical tradition which could be traced back to the Platonic conflict between intellectual and sensuous apprehension. I want instead to situate aesthetic experience in a different philosophical perspective, one that owes more to a phenomenological tradition (Merleau-Ponty), in which there is much more of a cross-over or 'interweaving' between mind and body. (MacLagan, 2001, p39)

This approach is one that sits easily with most painters, who in my experience never quite understood the whole mind/body binary. In her introduction to Marion Milner's "On not being able to paint" Anna Freud refers to painting as "a joining of that split between mind and body that can so easily result from trying to limit thinking only in words." (Freud in Milner, 1957, p xiv). While she is describing the activity of painting, David MacLagan is extending this to the activity of looking at paintings. He argues that an embodied response to a painting involves more of the charged areas of the human condition and through this line of argument suggests that seeing is more than a purely visual act. Paint has body in contradistinction to the purely visual.

Seeing is more than purely a visual act; it involves complex, subliminal and multi-sensory responses. Indeed a painting can evoke embodied responses at a number of overlapping levels: there are visible traces of the artist's creative process (the swipes, proddings or strokings of paint), the spectator's re-creation of these (which may not correspond to what actually happened), and a wider range of bodily fantasy which is usually accounted for in psychoanalytic writing about art (MacLagan, 2001, p41)

This approach to the viewing as well as the making of paintings as an embodied practice has been extended further of late. In almost all painting there are clear indications of the body of the artist: this is indexed in the marks, in the tactility of surface through those traces of the contact between brush and canvas. Drawing on

Gilles Deleuze's considerations of the relationship of sensation and thought and the way in which, through the artist's engagement, the medium (in this instance paint) does not become a residue of self-expression but emerges as sensation in the present, Jill Bennett argues that certain "images have the capacity to address the spectator's own bodily memory; to touch the viewer who feels rather than simply sees the event, drawn into the image through a process of affective contagion." (Bennett, J. 2005, p 31). More recently Isabelle Graw has taken this one step further, developing notions incipient in the work of art historians such as Hubert Damisch for whom painting can be regarded as traces of an activity that evokes subjectivity. Whilst acknowledging that painting has, of course, usually been seen to have a privileged relation to subjectivity Graw reconsiders both traditional paintings and painting in the expanded field as imaginary *quasi-subjects*. (Graw, 2012 and 2016) She argues that it is precisely the "enhanced physicality or, to use a more common term ... their emphatic materiality" (Graw, 2016, p81) through painting's very physical presence, that allows paradoxically, for them to also be imbued with the ghostlike presence of their absent author. (ibid, pp 79-81) Perhaps now we can consider that painting as *quasi-subject* has body in more than the sense than Max Doerner intended all those years ago.

The crate of contemporary British paintings will soon arrive at its destination. Someone will carefully unwrap each work, they will be arranged and curated in each of the gallery spaces. I wonder whose hands will touch the painting-objects, whose curious eyes will encounter the vast range of painted surfaces. Who will be our first viewer of these works in China? I wonder what effect the works might have on this unknown viewer and I wonder what this viewer's subjectivity might bring to bear on the works. One thing is certain: that to view British painting now in China will be a complex affair. Not only does China have one of the oldest and longest traditions of painting but there are also the legacies of nineteenth century European realism via the Soviet Union in play, there is also the influence of the ever-growing internationalisation of the contemporary art scene. As the first viewer handles the works he or she will have a very particular embodied experience of them, rather different from the rest of gallery viewers. Yet we know that the movement of the viewer's body in the gallery spaces will be key to their relation to the paintings and that in viewing the exhibition the temporal and

spatial will be intertwined. What may well emerge from all the artists' works is a paradoxical shared concern to make visible what is not visible, a bringing into play of uncertainty, doubt and hesitancy. What begins with questions about the meaning of the apparent simplicity of applying paint to canvas in a studio ends with the complexity of time and space within a gallery space. But what is really exciting about this, what is compelling about painting, is what is out of the control, what is beyond intention: the sensuous, viscous quality of paint. We hope that there is also sheer pleasure to be had in the viewing of it all, it is all here in the encounter, here, now, in this present moment.

Dr Judith Tucker, 2017

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New Realisms

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 (2013). He has also been short-listed 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* (2010) 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.”



Marguerite Horner

Hailing from Lincoln, Marguerite Horner completed her BA 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 CBE (former art critic for the *FT* and *Sunday Times* and a Turner Prize judge).



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.



Mandy Payne

Mandy Payne is a painter based in Sheffield. She studied Fine Art at Nottingham University, graduating in 2013.

Mandy is interested in marginal places, areas that are often overlooked and considered to be devoid of traditional aesthetic beauty. Her recent explorations include Park Hill, the Grade II listed Brutalist council estate in Sheffield, which is currently undergoing regeneration. For this body of work, she has used materials integral to the estate itself, namely concrete and aerosol paints. Her intentions being to create observational paintings that speak of the transitory nature of the inner-city landscape and urban communities.

Selected group exhibitions include the *Threadneedle Prize* 2013; *John Moores Painting Prize* 2014 (Prize winner) and 2016; *Royal Academy Summer Exhibition* 2014, 2015 and 2016; *John Ruskin Prize* 2014; the *Newlight Arts Prize* 2015, where she was the recipient of the Valeria Sykes Award (first prize); and the *Contemporary British Painting Prize*, 2016.

Her work is held in public and private collections both in the UK and abroad.



Nathan Eastwood

Winner of the East London Painting Prize 2014, Nathan Eastwood grew up in Plymouth and Kent. He has work in the permanent collections of Anita Zabłudovicz (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 it relates to the interior spaces, where you will find a painted radiator, skirting boards, or something like this.”



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, 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* (2007) 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.”



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.



Fionn Wilson

Fionn Wilson was born in South Shields in 1972 and now lives and works in London. She is a self-taught figurative artist, an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and an elected member of the National Society of Painters, Sculptors and Printmakers. From 2012 to 2013, she set up and ran the not-for-profit SPACE art gallery in Southgate, London, in a disused bank where she curated and hung seven exhibitions.

Of her work she says “My work relies on creating an immediate emotional impact through paint and examines the sensuality of presence in space and colour, not least the presence of the human form. My interest lies in the exploration of life force through sexuality, the energy ‘behind’ things, light and the creation of spaces. I work quickly and expressively, using heavy body acrylic paint. I don’t use preparatory sketches, I work straight to canvas in the moment point and then build up ideas and exploration from there. I like the texture heavy body paint gives, which is often built to impasto, it conveys a sensuality which fits with my work. My painting is instinctual, emotional and intuitive. As a body of work, I allow it to develop in its own way, rarely intervening or imposing a direction.”

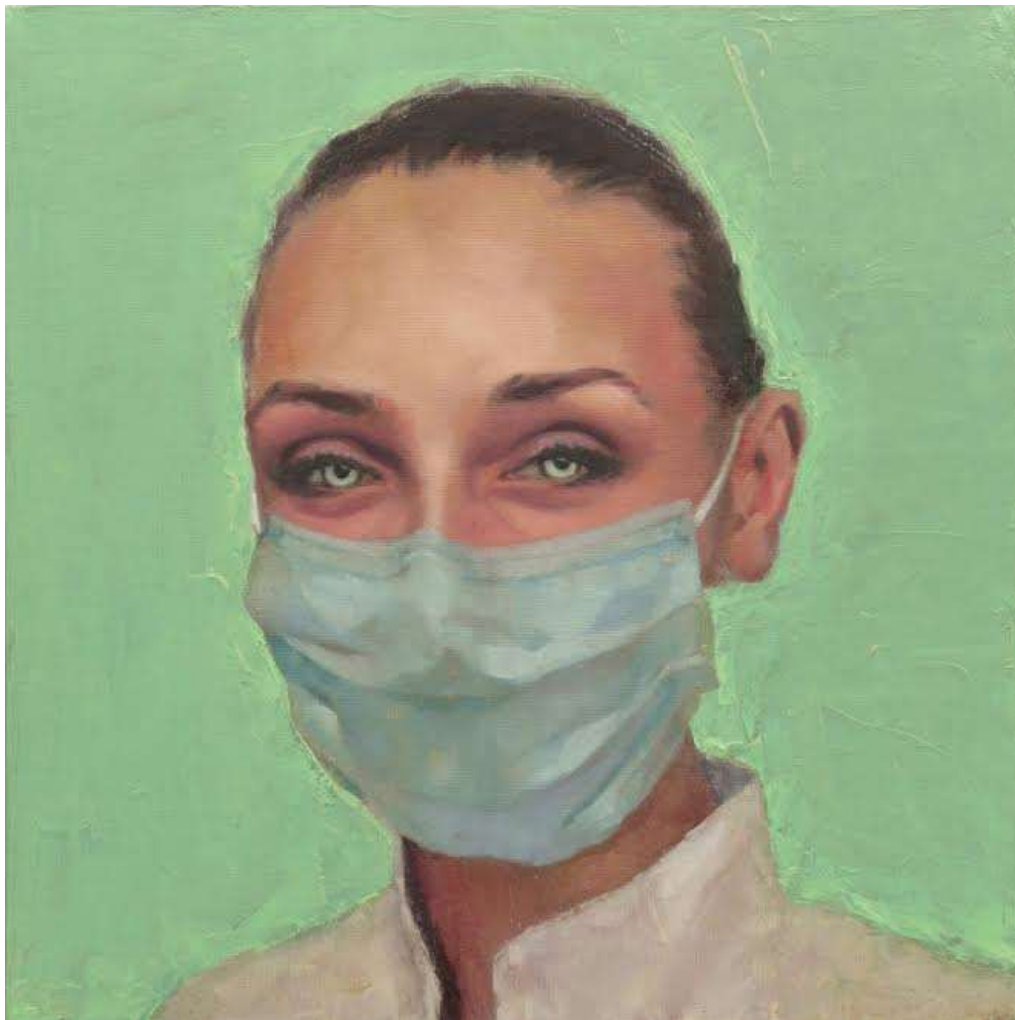


John Brennan

John Brennan was the First Prize Winner of the 2015 ArtGemini Prize for painting and sculpture, a finalist in the 2015 Arte Laguna Prize and a finalist in the 2016 Contemporary British Painting Prize.

He lives and works in Oxfordshire and his painting centres around emotional and contextual conflict.

Of his painting John says “I’m fascinated by a subtle sensation that I’ve come to recognise and regard as a visual paranoia of sorts. It can manifest itself in a wide range of subject matter, the common denominator being a sense of the uncanny or enigmatic. It could be a landscape that feels both uplifting and menacing at the same time, a micro facial expression that reveals an underlying darkness, or a posture that implies both invitation and rejection. I find these tensions compelling. The fiction and popular culture of my childhood and early teenage years continue to shape my interests to the present day. Whilst the result is a seemingly disparate range of subjects, in my own psyche these subjects are all connected and inhabit a single interior world.”



Wendy Elia

Wendy Elia is a London-based artist. She works in series which explore the social and broader contexts of our times. She trained at Central Saint Martins School of Art, London and has exhibited widely—being a finalist in a number of national and international competitions which include four times at the National Portrait Gallery, as well as the Sovereign European Art Prize and the Threadneedle Prize.

In 2011, Wendy exhibited at the 54th Venice Biennale in *Afternoon Tea* with WW Gallery. In 2012, she was commissioned to paint a portrait for the Cultural Olympiad in Weymouth. In 2017, she was awarded a grant from the prestigious Pollock-Krasner foundation in New York, USA.

Orson (2016) is from the series '*It will happen when you least expect it*', where imagery is culled from film, newspapers and the internet, questioning what is 'truth'.



Wendy Saunders

Wendy Saunders is an Australian-born painter living in London. She started painting in 2010 on an Art and 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 the Threadneedle Prize 2013, the Open West 2014 and has 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* including the book of the same title.



Lucian Freud

Lucian Freud (8 December 1922 - 20 July 2011) was a German-born British painter and draftsman who specialised in figurative art and is known as one of the foremost 20th-century portraitists. He was born in Berlin, the son of a Jewish architect and is the grandson of Sigmund Freud.

His family moved to Britain in 1933 to escape the rise of Nazism. From 1932 to 1933, he attended Goldsmiths College, London.

The etching *Bella* (1982) (signed L.F. lower right) is a 'working proof' measuring 15.2 x 17.8 cm. It was printed by Terry Wilson of Palm Tree Studios, London. A finished proof is held in the Museum of Modern Art New York, but the edition was never published.



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 include *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); and *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* (2007) 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.”



Marco Cali

Marco Cali lives and works in London.

Of his work he says “My current interest is the moment when photography and painting first collided. I am attracted by outline, form and the suggestion of depth. There are many aspects when looking at these very early images; the enigma of conflicting shadows cast naturally by the sun versus those imposed by flash photography or the way in which the photographer would often burn the tops of his images to obliterate unwanted elements, emphasize certain figures or create areas of brightness. A level of abstraction is introduced, something which is then extrapolated in experimentation with light and shadow. I deliberately retain these contradictory elements, to let the ensuing intrigue and implicit artistic and interpretative license become part of the final painting.

My choice of images goes further. I select ones that have some personal resonance to me. The current series is based on images from the Crimea War (1853-56), the first major conflict to be photographed. This war was a moment in time when the past crashed into the modern, when trench warfare, telegraphy and more professional armies in the contemporary sense were established. It was also a conflict of east and west, of empires over a Muslim nation, and of a nascent Italian national identity.”



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.



Linda Ingham

Linda Ingham lives and works from her coastal studio in North East Lincolnshire. Originally having studied European Humanities, she later returned to education to achieve her MA in Fine Art from Lincoln University of Art, Architecture and 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 *Easter 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.



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.”



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* (2010) 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.”



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.”



Geraint Evans

Geraint Evans is interested in the ways in which we perceive, encounter and experience the natural world and read it as landscape. His figurative paintings employ a stylized pictorial language to explore the idea that landscape is largely a social and cultural construct, responding to the writer W J T Mitchell's observation that "Landscape is a natural scene mediated by culture." (*Mitchell 2002: 5*)

His work depicts manicured or fabricated gardens and parks, shopping malls and suburban green belts, national parks and theme parks. The fictional protagonists that populate these landscapes include heavy metal campers, nudist hikers and ornamental hermits.

Geraint is interested in both the hybridized space in which the built and natural environments meet and in our complex perception of the wilderness. The effect of ever-evolving technologies and mass tourism on our relationship with the natural world is another important aspect of his practice.

Geraint's solo exhibitions include Newport Museum and Art Gallery; Wilkinson Gallery, London; Chapter, Cardiff; and CASA, Salamanca, Spain. He has been a resident artist at the Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada and, in 2003, received a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Award and the Berwick Gymnasium Fellowship. He was awarded a prize at the John Moores Contemporary Painting Exhibition in 2008.



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 3 (2006) 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.



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 1960s. 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’.



Louis Appleby

A shortlisted artist in the 'Contemporary British Painting Prize 2016' Louis Appleby's paintings suggest human presence in a banal, dystopian apocalyptic manner. They present an oscillation between human activity and the dry, 'interior design' quality of the paintings. This creates an interesting dialogue between the subject matter, the way the paint has been handled and the indication of biological/human intervention in the painting.

Their subject matter is a mix of teenage detritus and adolescent paraphernalia: video games, televisions, laptops, toy guns, Coke cans and McDonald's wrappers, which sit uneasily alongside lone pot plants, solitary angle-poise lamps or school science project relics. The titles are the first clue that there's more going on than appears on the surface, creating a tension between science and entertainment that results in a passive apathy, and they each convey the same message: we consume, we participate, we observe.



Richard Baker

Richard Baker studied Fine Art at Leeds Metropolitan University; he completed a BA (Hons) in Fine Art in 2003. His paintings have been exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts, London; The Mall Galleries, London; The San Francisco Arts Institute and Leeds City Art Gallery.

In 2016, Richard's work was shortlisted for the Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize and the Marmite Prize for Painting, as well as being selected for the ING Discerning Eye Exhibition for the third consecutive year.

He currently instructs 'Painting, Studio Practice and Exhibition Management' on the BA Fine Art programme at Leeds College of Art, alongside his practice.

His work investigates the hidden human histories behind seemingly insignificant objects. Often ignored, these objects bear witness to human sensuous activity, be it remembered, lived, forgotten, or mythologised. Dislocated from their conventional domestic settings and isolated within an intangible space, the objects appear as formal arrangements despite the narratives placed upon them.



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 Zabłudovicz, 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."



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; and *Post memorial Landscapes*, Armory Gallery, Blacksburg, Virginia, USA.

Of her painting Judith says “I have a particular interest in painting the unresolved remainders of human activity in landscape. I search out traces of past lives that might not be immediately obvious. Often the images I make depict man-made structures in relation to landscape, in this instance a collapsed holiday chalet on the Humberston Fitties, a part of the Lincolnshire coast that might be considered the epitome of a landscape in which the human and non-human are interconnected and entwined. Here, since between the wars, local people and visitors have erected their diverse dwellings, in order to enjoy the simple, restorative pleasures of seaside life. This small painting evokes the past and present of the place, complicates notions of what might be exterior and interior and invites questions about what is natural, and what is unnatural. Of course, all painting is made through applying physical layers onto a surface, is accretive and evolves out of the viscosity and liquidity of the paint. What is always at stake in representational painting is the tension between the materiality of substance and its metaphor. I speculate whether and how the practice of painting might be employed in an affective understanding of place.”



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.”



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.”



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.



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 the 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.





New Abstractions

Some Notes On Contemporary British Abstract Painting

“Before the work conveys reality it must achieve its own reality, before it can be a symbol it must rejoice in being a fact, and the more it affirms its autonomous reality the more will it contain the possibility of returning us to the reality of life.” David Sylvester

When abstraction was first at the forefront of radical artistic modernity, in the earlier part of the 20th century, the historical moment was not so unlike that of our own contemporary political moment. Global financial crisis and mass unemployment; rising nationalism; movement towards ultra right wing politics; leaps in scientific knowledge and technology are just some of the common features to both epochs. Those same issues informed the original modernist agenda which, while wavering between optimism and despair, was nevertheless convinced of the power of art and its ability to make sense of a rapidly changing world.

Artists today are uniquely placed to look back and assess the nature and development of British Abstract art since its flowering a little over a century ago. Recently, a new generation of British artists seem increasingly inspired by the non-representational and are actively engaged in a re-appraisal of its merits. But whereas those earlier artists, underpinned by either spiritual beliefs or a socially utopian ideology, developed new forms of abstract art, today artists are able to encompass many of the most characteristic historical forms of abstraction.

Robert Motherwell wrote that “The function of the *modern* [his italics] artist is by definition the felt expression of modern reality.” And that “The past has bequeathed us great works of art; if they were wholly satisfying, we should not need new ones.” He goes on to expand, “From this past art, we accept what persists [as] eternally valuable....It is the eternal values that we accept in past art. By eternal values are meant those which, humanly speaking, persist in reality in any space-time, like those of aesthetic form, or the confronting of death.” (1)

Many contemporary artists are presently engaged in an exploration of the recovery

of some themes and forms from the tradition of modern art in an inquiry into their 'values' to better enable them to express the social, political, and spiritual experience of our own time. Contrary to a perceived sense of being based on a regressive, 'nostalgic' attitude, abstract painting is perhaps a unique 'platform' in offering such a direct means to ably acknowledge the co-existence, for example, of mathematical order with the bodily. It's a combination we, as a society, are increasingly forced to encounter and is central to how our relationship with the world is increasingly changing.

In an article, from 2016, '*When music can be made on a screen, we lose abstraction*', introducing a new app for the iPad which enables anyone to make music on a touch screen by moving shapes around with their fingers, Russell Smith makes the following observation: "this pretty technology can be seen as part of a larger tendency in our lives towards the graphic representation of everything. Very little is abstract any more. Sounds and words and numbers are all spinning and glowing, colourful three-dimensional objects in our minds, because that's what they look like on our screens. When we check the weather forecast on our phones we see an image of a stormy sky or a sun. That hits us before the actual temperature does." (11) We detect in Smith's (online) article, which navigates a space between a review (of a new 'product') and a critique, this sense of a certain condition of loss being communicated. (Interestingly, a loss of the *abstract* in the realm of the technological).

We perhaps all feel that there appears to be this generalised sense in our culture that something may have been lost, this power of the screen and the Internet in this the 'information age', hovers over us. An ever present charged border between the human and the technological. And it is in perhaps in meeting this challenge, of offering a site for negotiating a 'mediated life-world', where contemporary abstract painting differs to previous incarnations.

As might be expected, the paintings of Contemporary British Abstract painters are as rich and as varied as one would imagine. Any partial list of some of the features of Contemporary British Abstract paintings might include both geometric or biomorphic compositions, irregular grids, lattice and stripes. Some CBAP's employ

a large vocabulary of smudges, stains, spray paint, flecks, dribbles and painterly marks, in saturated colour—others employ almost-monochromatic fields. Gestural techniques are mobilised on the painting surface, perhaps re-enacting the conversation about control and freedom happening in the wider world. The expressive gesture, serving as reminder of the material domain of the human body—a visceral mode of abstractly figuring the bodily in and through the material of paint.

Contemporary British Abstract painting ably evokes a host of themes, from landscape to bodies and signs to architecture, and much more. At the level of reception we may feel the artists are tangentially exploring subjects: such as commodity culture, aspects of the social, personal, or art history. In some instances the process of painting is itself the content—or the content might be discovered, revealed through the very act of painting. “Its order as well as its subject-matter can be evolved in the act of painting, for the ultimate reality of painting lies in painting.” (III) David Sylvester

Some of the artists produce work which deliberately resembles something coarse, inelegant and provisional. Others are deftly executed or cerebral. When someone chooses to make a surface, that painting will largely refer to that surface. When they choose to include a form or an outside reference in a painting, they are knowingly opening it up to another world of possibilities. In some instances, artists’ works offer up their graphic field to be taken in at once. Seeing it and getting it fast as an intentional acknowledgement of today’s reality of the endless distribution of digitised images and viewing on all manner of digital devices.

Contemporary abstract painting’s re-emergence appears to answer deep cultural concerns at this time, aiding us, as I believe that it does, to begin to make sense of our digital, screencentric experience today. There’s little need (or will) for any binary position to be taken, it’s clear that artists don’t have to choose between the computer and the hand. But rather, it’s in an ongoing conversation between the two that I believe painting has been given its latest surge in vitality.

Terry Greene, 2017

Notes

(I) Robert Motherwell, *The Modern Painter's World*, written in 1944 and presented as a lecture at a conference at the Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts.

(II) The app is called 'Rotor', which enables anyone to make music on a touch screen, and record it and alter it, by moving shapes around with their fingers. Published Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2016, in the *Globe and Mail*. Article by Russell Smith, a Canadian writer and culture columnist.

(III) David Sylvester, *English Abstract art, 1957*, from his collected writings: *About Modern Art, Critical Essays 1948-97*, published by Pimlico, 1997.

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 which was launched at the Guggenheim, Venice.

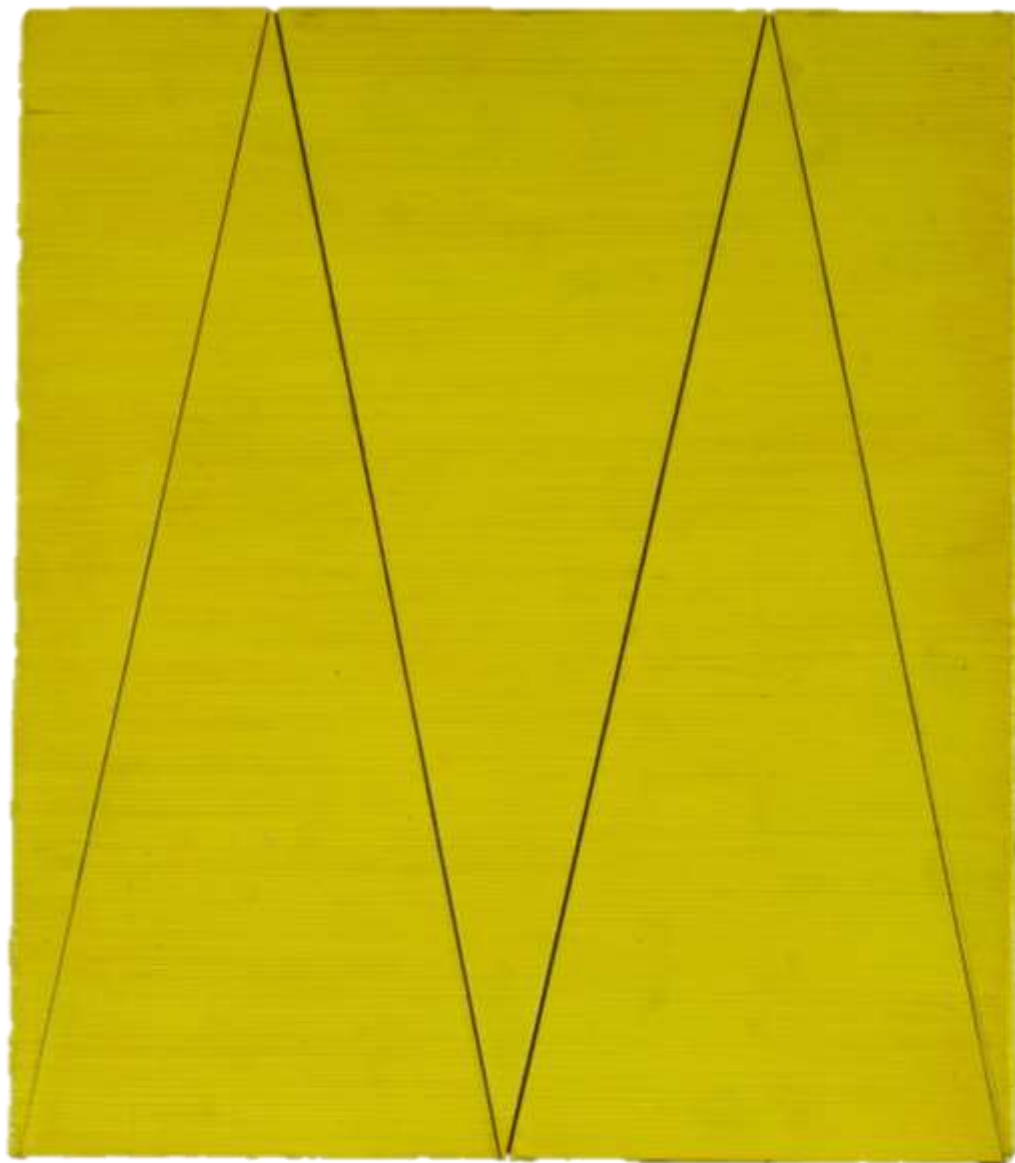
Susan has lived in Norwich for many years and worked as a visiting tutor in Fine Art at the Norwich University of the Arts.



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 *ING Discerning 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.

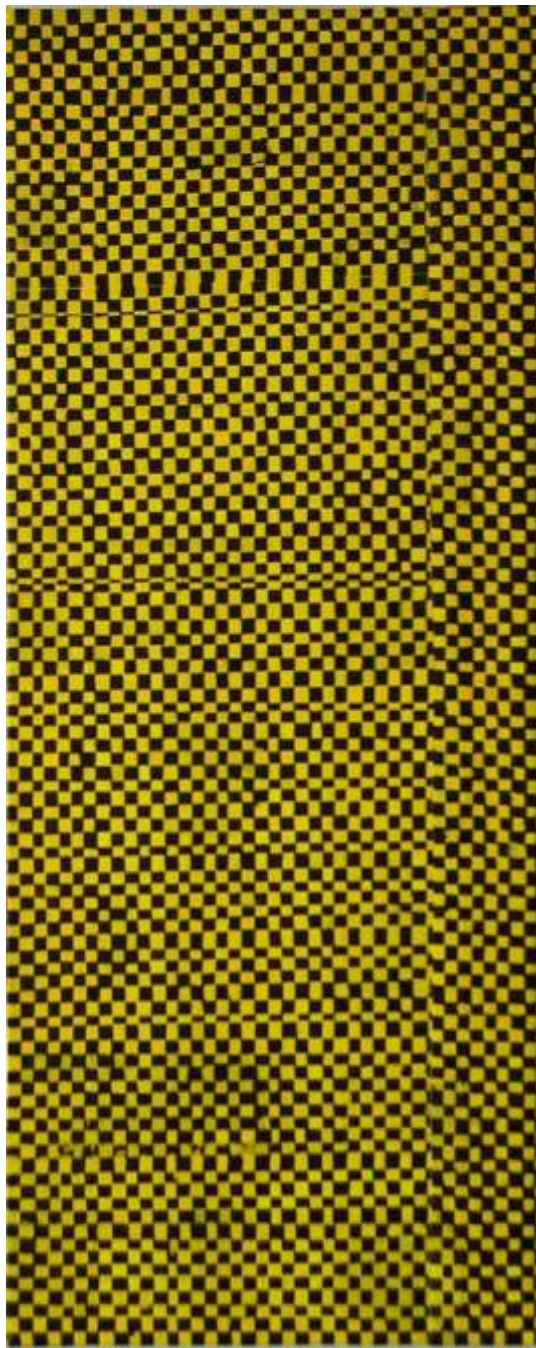


Andrew Parkinson

Andrew Parkinson lives and works in Nottingham.

His paintings are systems which explore themes of identity and similarity, repetition and the impossibility of repetition.

Of his work he says “I am interested in the idea and the tradition of abstraction and particularly in systems painting, the relationships of part to whole, and patterns of patterns.”



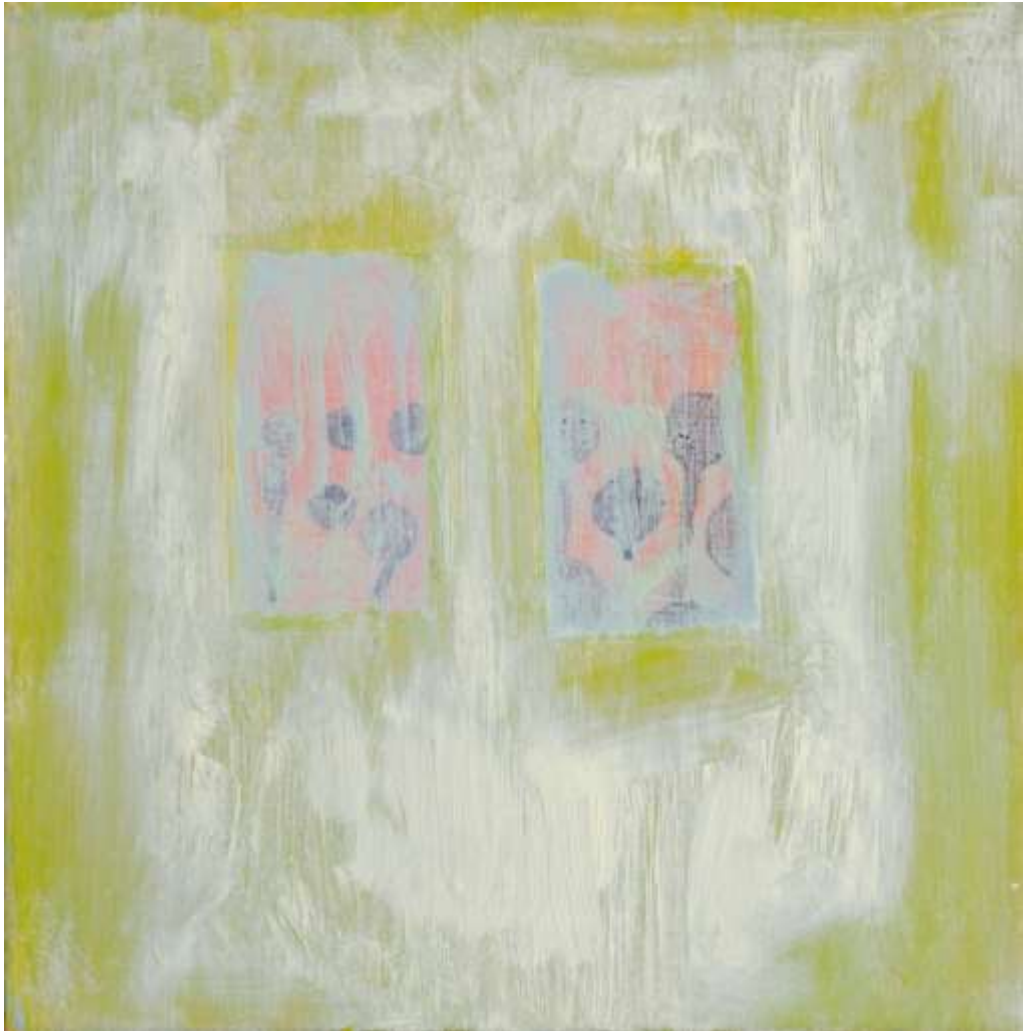
Claudia Böse

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

Her awards include the International Bursary, Arts Council Ireland; and 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* (2010) 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.”



Lucy Cox

Lucy Cox graduated from Wimbledon College of Arts in 2015 with a BA Hons in Fine Art. Exhibitions include *Geometry: Wonky and Otherwise*, Deda, Derby (2015) and *Piercing the Veil*, Simmons & Simmons, London (2015). In 2016, she co-curated *Multiple Choices* at Simmons and Simmons featuring twenty-one not-for-profit institutions across the UK.

Cox's abstract paintings juxtapose the autonomy of geometry with repetition and spontaneity. Compositions are unplanned yet planned—expression and luminous colour are constrained by geometrical discipline and sober grey. Technically drawn forms dance across the canvas, coming to sudden stops or recesses; other elements jostle for supremacy with repetitive grids impacting the figure ground relationship.

“Lucy Cox’s unmoored, sometimes patterned rectangles delight in the ambiguous spaces they themselves create, whilst her coloured circles can be read equally as autonomous shapes situated in front of a rectangle or as being cut-out, revealing a further coloured plane behind it. My friend wondered, tongue in cheek, whether we might make three-dimensional versions of these paintings, knowing that such a project would quickly fail. To borrow a Greenbergian idea, the spatial relationships are available only to eyesight.” (*Andy Parkinson, Patterns that Connect, 2015*)



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 to 1963 and was a Hatton Scholar from 1962 to 1963 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 include *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 upon Tyne in 2012-13.

Mary describes *San Luis VI* (2000) 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.



Ben Cove

Ben Cove graduated from Goldsmiths College with an MFA in 2008, having previously completed undergraduate degrees in Fine Art at Sheffield Hallam University in 2001 and Architecture at the University of Nottingham in 1995. He made art across a broad range of media, frequently producing works which formed coexisting relationships.

Practicing as an artist from 2001, his solo exhibitions included: *Vernacular Hangover* at the Acme Project Space, London, 2013; *Practical Mechanics* at Cell Project Space, London, 2006; and *New Plastic Universal* at Castlefield Gallery, Manchester, 2004.

Widely respected and liked by all who knew him, Ben sadly passed away in March 2016.



Stephen Snoddy

“Snoddy always starts by picking up on elements from a previous painting. Then he constructs a multi lined grid, and the interjection of these lines helps him to arrive at a new work. While this sounds methodical, intuition plays its part and is revealed in the pentimenti inherent in the act of painting. He often regards it as a cousin of the earlier painting—related, yet not too closely. Snoddy likens the whole activity of making art to building a family. But he is even more convinced that structure is the absolute key to a fully considered and contemplative painting. He invites us to think about process, and work out for ourselves how the images have been arrived at. He says, *‘I would hope that the paintings reward looking at to induce a slow, inexorable awareness of intricate relationships’* and *‘through the reworking of the paintings glimpses of the decision making reveal themselves’*.

Perpetually looking at work by other artists, Snoddy now finds stimulus in painters as diverse as Mark Rothko, Vanessa Bell, Richard Diebenkorn, Hans Hofmann, Callum Innes, Piet Mondrian, Robert Motherwell, Blinky Palermo, Gerhard Richter, William Scott and Sean Scully. In very different ways they are, like him, fascinated by the manifold possibilities inherent in abstraction. It is easy, for example, to imagine how these artists affect him; Rothko’s arresting bands of colour could have strengthened Snoddy’s resolve to investigate an equally mysterious region of his own; the small but startling *Abstract Painting* by Vanessa Bell of 1914 in the Tate collection provides a clear bold structure; Diebenkorn’s *Ocean Park* series harnessed his determination in pursuit of an internal struggle for ‘rightness’; the ‘push pull’ of Hofmann; the formal beauty of Innes; the measure of Mondrian; Motherwell’s elegiac Spanish series; Palermo’s constructivist purity and order; Richter’s sheer elan; Scott’s balance and poise and Scully’s building blocks of colour.” (*Richard Cork, ‘Looking Out’, Roberto Polo Gallery, Brussels*)



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. She was shortlisted for Salon Art Prize 2010, The Title Art Prize 2011 and Bankley Open 2013/14/15. In 2015, she received first prize in the PS Mirabel Open and in 2016 she was shortlisted for the Greater Manchester Arts Prize.

Solo exhibitions include *Geode* (2014) at South Square Gallery, Thornton and *Paintings as Objects* (2016) at PS Mirabel, Manchester. Group exhibitions include *About Painting* (2014) at Castlefield Gallery, Manchester; *@PaintBritain* (2015) at Ipswich Art School Gallery; *Contemporary British Abstraction* (2015) at SE9 Container Gallery, London; *Semiotic Guerrilla Warfare* (2015) at PAPER, Manchester; *Contemporary British Painting* (2016) at St Marylebone Crypt, London; *Precious Little* (2016) at Art-Athina, Athens; *CBP Summer Exhibition* (2016) at Quay Arts, Isle of Wight; and *Paper Dialogues* at Kir Royal Gallery, Valencia.



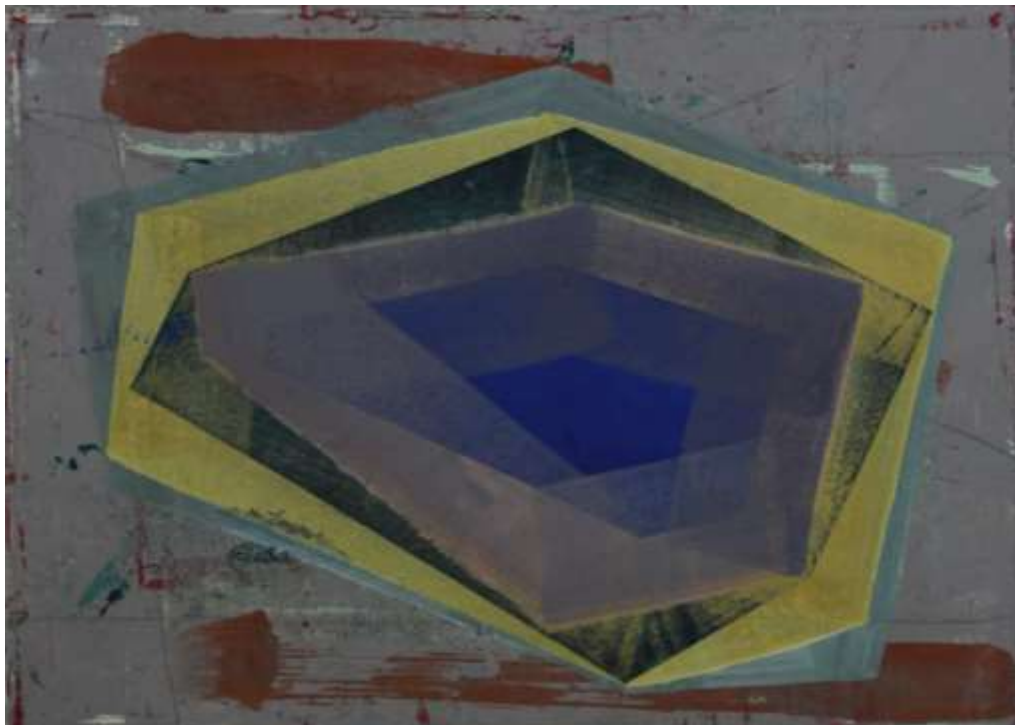
Terry Greene

Terry Greene is a painter living and working in West Yorkshire. His BA in Art and Design was received from Bradford College. Subsequent to that, he received his MA 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 and Jerk*, Transition Gallery, London; and *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

Charley Peters' work is concerned with the spatial potential of the painted surface. She develops her paintings using subtle variations in colour, tone and scale to suggest illusionary light and structural depth. They often exhibit properties that present as disorientating or other-worldly, but are perhaps also familiar through our experiences of the 3D environments of computer games or digitally-generated terrains. She is interested in the position of abstract painting in the post-digital landscape; her work suggests a sense of materiality and space informed by the experience of looking at screens.

Recent exhibitions include *Counter Shift*, Art 3, New York (2016); *Exceptional*, Scream Gallery, London (2016); *Tutti Frutti*, Turps Gallery, London (2015); *Demimonde*, Amberwood House, London (2015); *Autocatalytic Future Games*, No Format Gallery, London (2015); *Drawing: Punti di Vista/Viewpoints*, Z20 Sara Zanin Gallery, Rome (2014); and *Tracing Fields*, Ten Haaf Projects, Amsterdam (2014). In 2006, Charley Peters completed a PhD in Fine Art Theory and Practice, writing about Freud's theory of The Uncanny and notions of spatial interiority in art. She is a contributing writer to *Abstract Critical*: contemporary writing on abstract art, *Turps Banana* painting magazine and *Saturation Point*: the online editorial and curatorial project for reductive, geometric and systems-based artists working in the UK today.



Julian Brown

Born in 1974 and trained at the Royal Academy Schools, Julian Brown says of his painting that “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.”

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



Karl Bielik

Karl Bielik lives and works in London. His work has been in numerous shows at home and abroad and in 2015 his work was chosen for *The London Open* at The Whitechapel Gallery and *Contemporary British Drawing* at The Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts in China. He has recently been selected for the John Moores Painting Prize, the RA Summer Exhibition and the Contemporary British Painting Prize, 2016. He is the Founder and Director of Terrace Gallery and Studios.

Of his work Karl Bielik says “I am an abstract painter. I work on canvas, linen, panels and paper. I work exclusively in oil paint on thirty or so paintings and drawings at once and these vary in scale from intimate to large. The studio is the place where practically everything happens for me. Occasionally, diagrams from medical books or photographs I have taken may inform the work in its formative stages, but essentially my work emerges from the physical process of painting.

The works are sometimes not touched for weeks or months, which offers an incubation time to contemplate where I want them to go, them to take me or if they become complete. In contrast to my sometime emotive imagery, banal solitary words form my titles, tempering and balancing the melancholy character of my work.”



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 having 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.”



Fiona Eastwood

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

Previous shows include *Irmisul You are Lost*, Perrott's 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 (2014) 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, whilst 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.



Keith Murdoch

Keith Murdoch studied Fine Art at the University of Central Lancashire between 1992 and 1995.

He says of his work “My paintings reflect the time they take to produce. In many respects they are as much about time as they might be about landscape. They are born from countless decisions made over many weeks. Often these decisions will contradict one another, but the goal remains constant: to attain a purity and truth. Ghosts of rejected truths remain visible, betraying the history of a painting—the toil of its creation laid bare for all to witness.”



David Manley

David Manley lives and works in the Midlands. His practice encompasses painting, drawing, photography, digital manipulation, sculpture, assemblage and installation although language, spatial arrangements and scale in painting are central ongoing concerns. The poetry of materials, both traditional and provisional, is of paramount importance to the artist whose intellectual curiosity and interest in spirituality imbues his work with startlingly original and often non-specific jumping off points.

In addition to painting, he is currently lecturing and examining in higher education in the visual arts. Current teaching includes Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln where he is a module leader for final year students. During 2013, he curated the Harrington Mill Studios exhibition space and acts as a curator for a range of other exhibitions including *Happy Little Fat Man—the art of Kevin Coyne* and *Geometry: Wonky and Otherwise* (Derby 2014/15).



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.



Clementine McGaw

Clementine McGaw graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2010 with BA Hons in Fine Art. She then went on to complete her MA Degree at City and Guilds School of Art London in Fine Art Painting and graduated in 2015. Of her work, Clementine states “My aim is to question and explore the potentiality of our own existence and presence through paint. I use painting to record and express my feelings about what I will call a profane sense of ‘nothingness-as-flesh’. I am attempting to describe in near-abstract images the isolation of Being.”

Clementine has had solo exhibitions at Doyle Devere, London 2011 as well as the Westminster Art Library, London 2015 and most recently had the body of work *The Nothingness Of Our Existence* tour in London and Milan in 2016. Clementine’s awards include The Graingers Award For Best Young Artist 2012/2013 awarded by TNOAC and AKDK 2113- E-Creative 2010/2011 Best Emerging Fine Artist 2011 awarded by Kate Stanners by the Directory of the Best Emerging Artist and Designers.

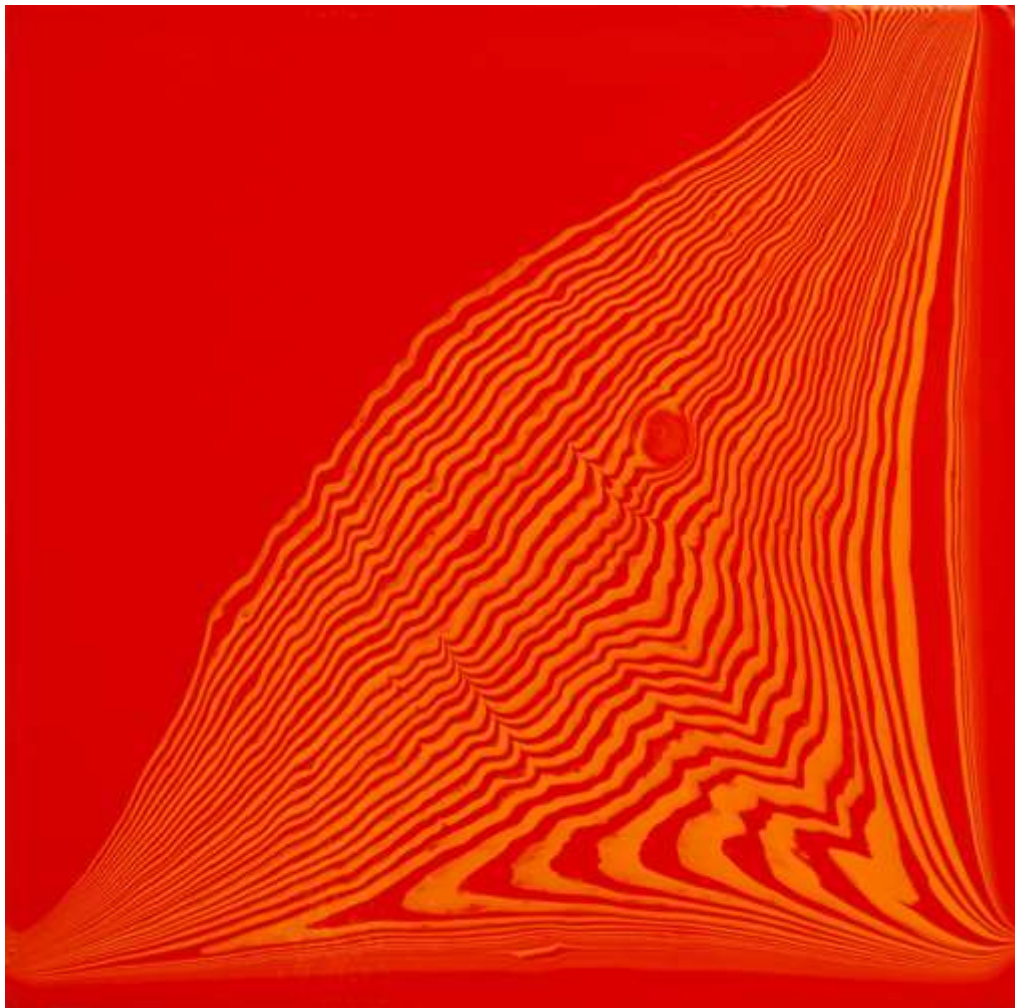
Clementine continues to live and work in London.



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.



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.



Rhonda Whitehead

Rhonda Whitehead was born in Sydney, Australia in 1950. She studied Fine Art at the Royal College of Art, London from 1968 to 1971.

Past awards include the Silver Medal, Europe Prize for Painting (1973) and First Prize in the Byard Open (2006). Rhonda describes her work as being “as much influenced by modes of abstraction as they are by weathering patterns in Italian city buildings. Solid areas of warm, earth (mid toned) colours are a contrast to earlier work inspired by scouring patterns in nature.”

Rhonda lives and works in the Suffolk-Norfolk borders.



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 utilize 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!”



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.

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* (2000) 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.”





New Surrealism and Semi-Abstraction

David Hockney

David Hockney OM, CH, RA was born on the 9th of July, 1937 in Bradford. He is an important contributor to the pop art movement of the 1960s and is considered one of the most influential British artists of the 20th century.

Two Apples & One Lemon & Four Flowers (1997) was conceived as a print to be published by *The Independent* newspaper.

Described as a “NewsPrint”, the processes of its making were explained on page 3 of the supplement: “Hockney has provided us with four separate pieces of work, all in black and white. Each corresponds with one of the four colours of the printing process—cyan, magenta, black and yellow. The print itself only exists once the presses roll.” (*Curator, British Museum*)

A copy of this work is held in the collection of the British Museum.



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 belong 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.”



Ruth Calland

Ruth Calland lives and paints in London, completed her MA at Chelsea School of Art and is a Jungian analyst. Selected for the New Contemporaries and twice for the Marmite Prize for Painting, she is also a prize-winner of the CGP London Annual Open and has shown widely including at Transition Gallery, studio 1.1 and Flowers East. She has been a Boise Scholar and won a Fellowship in Painting at GLOSCAT, Cheltenham. She is a recipient of a grant from the Henry Moore Foundation and her work is held in private and public collections.

Calland is interested in the psychological adaptations and mal-adaptations we devise and co-create in relationship with each other. She has come to see painting as a performative ritual process, which has elements of both exorcism and fetishism. In live performances she has produced work from dramatised one-to-one relational situations, using the premise of psychic connection. She is currently making work about dissociated post-traumatic states.



The Patron Saint of Innocent Bystanders Will do As She is Told
65 x 85 cm, Oil on canvas, 2004

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 third 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.”



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 distil 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); and *Paradise Alone*, Ferens Art Gallery, Hull (2002).



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.”



The Duke and Duchess of Torquemada
50 x 40 cm, Acrylic on canvas, 2013

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 Saint Martins College of Art and 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.

Watch (2009) asks questions of us; 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.



Day Bowman

Day Bowman is a graduate of Chelsea School of Art and London University. Her work seeks to explore the great unnamed and ignored landscapes of our urban landscapes.

In 2012, as part of the Cultural Olympiad, Day was commissioned to produce a series of posters for Weymouth Railway Station, host town to the 2012 Olympic Sailing and Paralympic Sailing Events. *Weymouth/Portland 9* (2012) is part of that series of works.

Recent exhibitions include *Edgelands* at A.P.T Gallery, Deptford, London and The Crypt Gallery, London (2016); *The Columbia Threadneedle Prize* at The Mall Galleries, London (2016); *Borders, Boundaries and Margins* at Art Gene, Barrow in Furness and Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton (2015); *The Sunday Times Watercolour Competition* (2015/16); *Soft Estate* touring exhibition (2013/14) at the Bluecoat Liverpool and Spacex Exeter; and the *Royal Academy Summer Exhibition*, 2015.



Paul Galyer

Born and based in Grimsby, Paul Galyer says of *Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit* (2010) “it 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.”



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 and 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.



Enzo Marra

Enzo Marra says of his practice that “it is concerned with the exploration and pictorial analysis of the art world. I am occupied with how the art world can be seen from the insider’s and the outsider’s point of view—the valuing of artworks and their auctioning for astronomic figures, the processes and activities that occur behind the privacy of studio doors, the hanging and display of works animated by the commodified space of the gallery, the milling of observers in gallery spaces, the way that their presence then gives life and purpose to the works on display.”

The use of texture is of great importance in his work as he feels that it gives oil paints an added dimension and gives the brush used a necessary dominance in the final image created. The dragging away and building up of pigment is relevant in the final image, as is the tonality and colour balance that they are used to express.



Barbara Pierson

Born in Newcastle upon Tyne, Barbara Peirson trained as an actor and spent many years touring in the UK and abroad, eventually settling in the Essex coastal town of Wivenhoe.

Perhaps it is because of her roots in the theatre that a sense of implicit narrative pervades her painting, albeit elusive. “My work in theatre is often more concerned with ideas and language, through painting I am aiming to capture something that can’t be pinned down, understood or put into words.”

Though essentially a painter of landscapes, her paintings often draw upon half-remembered images perhaps from plays, imagined characters, moments caught in time and forgotten fragments of text. These are then fused with the environment that surrounds her—the mud flats, water meadows, big skies and sea.

Barbara’s work is held in collections at Falmouth Art Gallery, East Contemporary Art Collection and Swindon Museum and Art Gallery.



Ehryn Torrell

Ehryn Torrell is a London-based Canadian artist. Her practice includes painting, collage, and text, which she uses to contemplate experiences within the built environment, visual culture and private life. Her work has been featured in exhibitions across Canada, Brazil, and Europe. Recent exhibitions include Museu de Arte de Joinville (Brazil), Gerald Moore Gallery (London), The Invisible Line (London), Grimsby Public Art Gallery (Canada), Cape Breton University Art Gallery (Canada), St. Mary's University Art Gallery (Canada), and The Art Gallery of Guelph (Canada). Her work was included in *The Painting Project*, a 2013 survey of contemporary Canadian painting organised by Galerie de L'UQAM in Montreal. Torrell is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Joseph Plaskett Foundation Award for painting and grants from both the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council. Travel plays an important role in her research. She has been invited to numerous international residencies, including the Doris McCarthy Artist Residency (Canada), The Expansionists (UK), Florence Trust (UK), Fiskars (Finland), LKV (Noway) and The Banff Centre (Canada).

Torrell's major body of work *Self-Similar*, which explores the contemporary built environment through the lens of 2008 China, toured to several Canadian public galleries and was the subject of her first catalogue. *Mount Emei* (2011) is based on a scene experienced while hiking a sacred Buddhist mountain in China. She writes: "I hiked the mountain on the first anniversary of my mother's death. The day before, I had visited Dujiangyan, a city at the epicentre of the May 2008 Sichuan Earthquake. The visit to Dujiangyan was a major influence in my *Self-Similar* paintings, which feature scenes of earthquake devastation alongside construction sites and urban slums. The small painting *Mount Emei*, is evidence of a rare moment during the making of the series when I allowed myself to paint a personal experience within the natural environment, as opposed to the built environment."



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. In 2012, Monica exhibited 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. In 2013, her painting *Lechuguilla* was purchased by the Tullie House Gallery in Carlisle for its permanent collection.



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.”



Cathy Lomax

Cathy Lomax gained a BA Fine Art from London Guildhall University (2000) and an MA from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (2002). She is the director of Transition Gallery in east London, which focuses on new contemporary art by both emerging and established artists.

She also publishes and edits two magazines: *Arty*, an idiosyncratic publication featuring artwork and thoughts by a group of invited contributors, and *Garageland* which examines pertinent art themes such as beauty, machismo or nature.

Cathy says of her work “I am interested in the seductive imagery of popular culture, how it draws us in and pretends to involve us but ultimately shuts us out. In my work I assimilate media fictions around fame and glamour, and the shared immersive experience of watching film, and juxtapose these with elements of personal identity to create scatter narratives that play with notions of reality.

To make the work I isolate, crop or re-configure filmic moments, found and personal photographs and old master paintings and re-present these as new, painted taxonomies, which hint at a curious contemporary longing for something unobtainable. I tend to paint quickly using washes of thin oil, and sometimes add text and collaged elements.

Fontana, a work started while at the British School at Rome and finished in East London, features a series of women, cut out and re-arranged on a staircase as if it were a Cinecitta film set. The goddess-like women, who are costumed from film and fashion, descend the stairs, frozen like the omnipresent statues in the Eternal City. *Amazon Fragments* and *Black Venus* (2014-15) are also inspired by my time in Rome.”



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 the Colchester Art Society. He still lives and works in Frinton-on-Sea and is represented internationally by Messum's.



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.



Pippa Gatty

Born in London, Pippa Gatty studied at Chelsea College of Art, gaining both a BA in Fine Art Painting (1990) and an MA in Fine Art (2008). In 2014, she relocated to rural Scotland, where she now lives and works. Since 2008 she has exhibited widely. Recent exhibitions include: *Spectrum*, Herrick Gallery 2016; *Paramender*, Portico Library 2016; *Royal Academy Summer Exhibition* 2016, London; *Orange Time* at the Kunsthof Gallery, Halberstadt (MK Biennale) 2015; *All things New*, Man&Eve Projects, London 2014; and *Brittle Crazie Glasse*, Islington Mill, Manchester 2012. She has been previously shortlisted for the Jerwood Drawing Prize 2012, Threadneedle Prize 2012, Discerning Eye Drawing Bursary 2011 and the Marmite Painting Prize 2008.

Of her works she says “Often drawing on historical paintings and found images as visual prompts, I construct and deconstruct the surface of the painting—trying to find a balance between the suggested and the concrete. I have been concentrating on evolving a process and creating a body of work which I feel addresses and reflects ideas of the sublime, the romantic tradition, and at the same time a contemporary unease at our wider situation. I am interested in creating an archive of these paintings, part imagined, part real, which documents my sense of wonder and foreboding, and also addressing the metaphysical potential of this time. I paint on several paintings at once, often working and reworking each painting for months before finally the surface is resolved.”



Andrew Litten

Born in 1970 in Aylesbury, Andrew is a largely self-taught artist. His recent work has established strong humanistic themes such as social alienation, ageing, drug use and other wide ranging issues of identity disturbance.

“I want to create emotively-led art that speaks of the love, personal growth, anger, loss and the private confusions we all experience in our lives. Perhaps subversive, tender, malevolent, compassionate—the need to see raw human existence drives it all forwards.”

In 2012, he appeared as ‘Guest’ artist with a solo exhibition at L-13 Light Industrial Workshop, London. Solo exhibitions *ID Smear* 2013 at Motorcade/FlashParade and *I Wish You Ill And Hope You Suffer As Much As I Have* 2014 at Spike Island (Test Space) both took place in Bristol. He was included in *No Soul For Sale*, an exhibition of independents in 2010 at Tate Modern (turbine hall). He has exhibited in numerous international art fairs with Jill George Gallery, London and with WW Gallery at the 54th Venice Biennale.



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 Birtles 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.

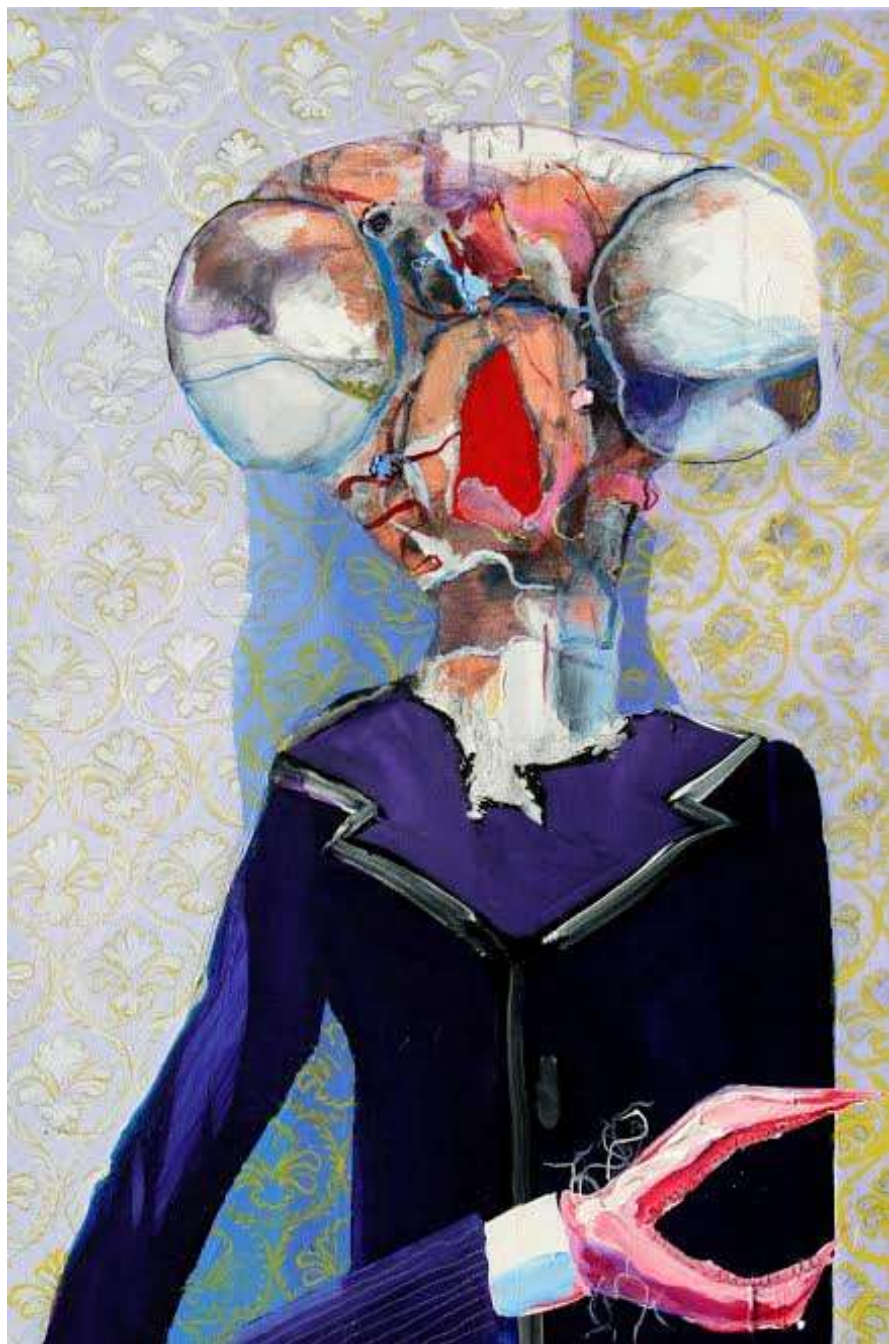


Paul Newman

Paul Newman's work shifts between landscape, the figure and abstraction. Recurring references include 18th century English landscape painting, classic monsters of the movies such as *The Fly* and the Ford Escort white van. His studio environment influences his imagery; peripheral residues that result from the creative process, such as daubing on the studio wall, creep into the finished works.

The *Brundle* portrait series is based on a still from *Return of the Fly* (1958) in a 1986 WHSmith publication *Monster & Horror Movies*. Paul says "My childhood was spent discovering these movies and wearing masks in front of the mirror. This pastime had a natural influence on my painting and performance-based work."

Born in 1973, Paul lives and works in Birmingham. Solo exhibitions include *Stage* (2015) at mac birmingham and *After the Flood* (2014) at Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery. Group shows include *Contemporary Drawings from Britain*, Xi'an, China (2015); *Marmite IV Painting Prize* (2012-13); *Rotate* (2012), Contemporary Art Society in London; *Painting Show* (2011-12) at Eastside Projects, Birmingham; and the *Jerwood Drawing Prize* (2004-05). Collaborative projects include *Babelling* (2013) with David Miller and Ian Andrews and *Solitary Natures* (2008) with Matthew Krishanu at Lewisham Arthouse, in London. Paul is a visiting lecturer at Birmingham City University and Loughborough University.



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-led response to the cyanotype albums of Anna Atkins.

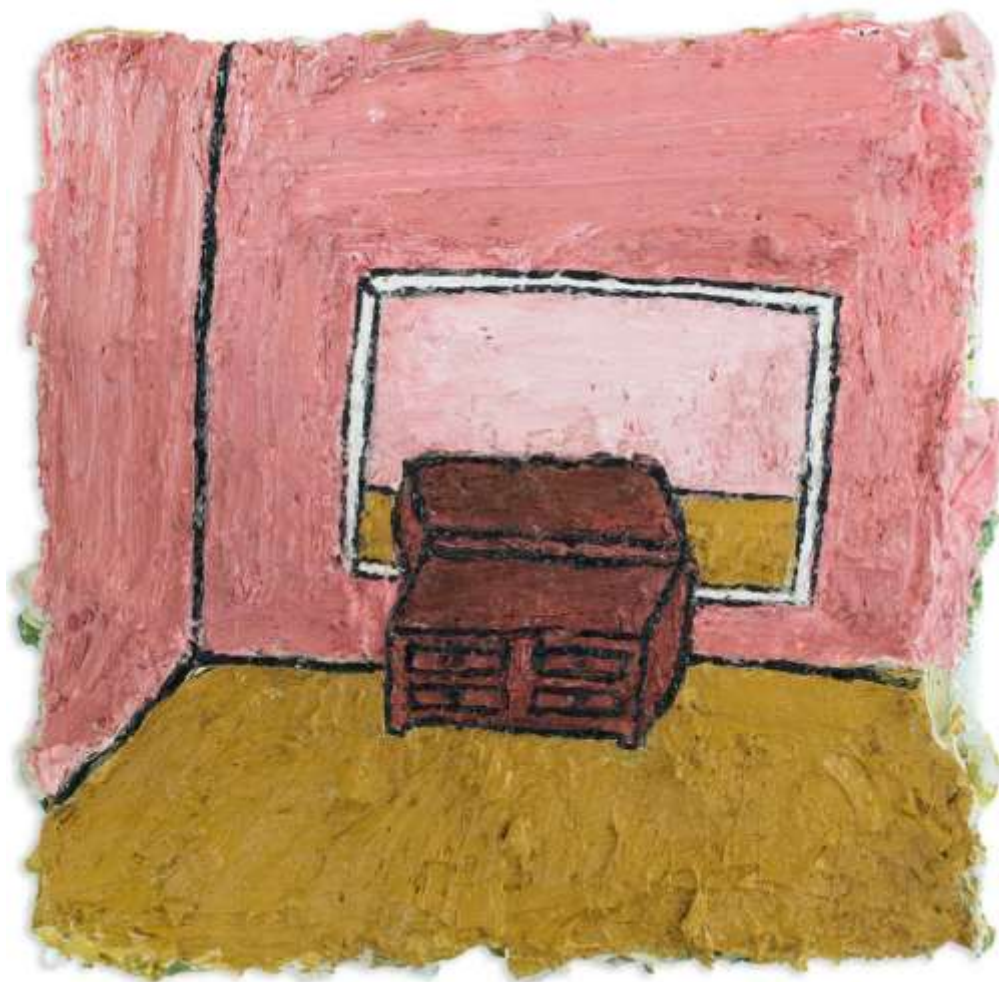
She has shown her work both nationally and internationally and says of her approach that “I explore the social relationships that are mediated through objects. We all have relationships with objects that simultaneously confound and support emotional expression. The personal narratives we impose upon 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.”



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.”



Phil Illingworth

Phil Illingworth's painting practice is almost wholly experimental. Driven by concept rather than discrete process, his choice of materials and the quality and method of execution is always very carefully considered. Working across a variety of media, and playing with scale and form, he explores a broad spectrum of concerns. Much of Phil's work is three-dimensional which he says is "partly because I like working that way, but mostly because painting in 3D has a lot of potential for me. Fundamentally, it's a matter of approach—this work is all about paint and painting. It's also about a genuine love and respect I have for painting and its rich history." He goes on to say "I choose my materials and processes very carefully; I hand stitch, for example, as an acknowledgement of, and respect for, the long tradition of the craft of painting. At the same time I play games. I'm also trying to push to the limit what a painting can be."

He has exhibited in the UK, the USA, and at the 53rd Venice Biennale with works selected for the John Moores Painting Prize in 2010, the Marmite Prize IV and the Jerwood Drawing Prize in 2013-14.





The Priseman Seabrook Collection

In the works of the Priseman Seabrook Collection, there is a sense of time being slowed down. Whether in the geometric, deliberate abstract constructions of Charley Peters, Ben Cove or Mary Webb, or the closely observed detail of Linda Ingham's self portrait, the paintings feel considered, slowly built up, and realized over a period of concentration, focus, and solitude.

Perhaps this solitude is most apparent in Nick Middleton's painting *Projection*, which is painted in intense photographic detail. The subject is a solitary painter working in the light of a projection - she is entirely focused on the flat surface of her canvas, slowly creating an illusion of verisimilitude, from tiny strokes of a thin brush. When painting, the painter is almost invariably alone: whether the subject is abstract or figurative, the painter builds a relationship with their subject, which is then put out in the world for the viewer to relate to.

The paintings in the Priseman Seabrook Collection speak to me of intimacy. The subjects are usually pared down: a person, a face, a grid of squares, two triangles. They are not showy, ostentatious paintings that labour for meaning, but ones that tend towards a simple idea, articulated in paint as clearly (and generously) as possible.

The paintings are mainly small to medium in size (no painting in the collection exceeds 160cm along its length). They do not overwhelm the viewer, but invite her to draw close. Unlike gigantic works seen in public spaces which speak of monumentality and grandeur, these works are more suited to a domestic interior - works that can be lived with, can be handled and moved by a single person, and that invite inspection.

There is something intimate in the tone of the works themselves. As in Robert Priseman's *Girl Looking Down* (the painting of a girl's face against a dark background, gazing downwards), there is a silence - even a mystery - to most of the works in the collection. The paintings do not easily reveal themselves (they are not 'one-liner' works), but ask for a personal engagement from the viewer to look, reflect, and return some of the time taken in making the work through beholding it.

For me there is an echo in the work between the time taken by the painter, absorbed in their solitary task, and that given by the viewer, welcomed in by the painter to engage for however long in its private world. This intense engagement feels particular to viewing small paintings: statues, large paintings, theatre or the cinema address large crowds, in the plural, but a small painting demands a close engagement by a single person. The paintings speak to their viewers as equals, one-to-one.

The paintings speak of people, places, forms and colours that are well known and close to the artist. Whether in the vignettes of buildings in Sean Williams's, Marguerite Horner's, or Mandy Payne's paintings, the battered sink in Lee Maelzer's, or the vigorous red and black brushstrokes in Karl Bielik's work, each painting has a voice built up from the nuances of visual and painterly choices that the artist has taken through making the work. They make the general particular: from (in most cases) a rectangular canvas surface, and tubes of colour, the artist finds their way to expressing something they are satisfied with - that they want to communicate to the viewer.

Paintings answer back - as in a game of chess the painter puts down each layer, hoping they might win that turn, or at least advance their chances of success - if the layer is not 'right' another will follow until eventually the painting either 'comes off' or is discarded (until perhaps another time when a new game can begin). Through all these choices, and indeed from all the works the painter has ever made, a voice starts to form for the individual artist's practice - potentially as recognizable as Billie Holiday's.

What is fascinating about the Priseman Seabrook Collection is that all the paintings it brings together were made in Britain, and in the twenty-first century. It assembles the individual voices of the painters in a single grouping - inviting the viewer to tease out connections and overlaps in approaches (as has been done in this catalogue - the works organized into three broad categories).

Now, as the collection is seen in another country (and another continent) for the first time, we invite viewers in China to see the work through two lenses: as individual works that may speak to you personally, and as a grouping of paintings that might suggest something of the location in which they were created - whether in the colours, the atmospheres, the brushstrokes or the subjects. Perhaps in seeing the responses to the works in new countries, we may gain a better understanding ourselves of what makes this collection Contemporary British Painting.

Matthew Krishanu, 2017



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