

PRETTY ABSTRACT

HELEN FRANKENTHALER | FRANK AUERBACH | ROBERT TILLING | JASON MARTIN

HAZEL WYNN | MARK GUEST | DANIEL PORTER | GUY LE CLEF | JANE YATES | TOBY MULLIGAN

CLAIRE HAITHWAITE | DANNY BOOTH | DEREK TRISTRAM | OLIVIA MARYON

Preview Evening & Drinks Reception
Friday 28th October 5pm – 8pm

Exhibition runs until Friday 18th November | Weekdays 12 – 6pm | Saturdays 10am – 2pm



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For more information contact: chris@privateandpublic.com

Introduction

Chris Clifford, BA (Hons) MA - Gallery Director

As I write the introduction to this exhibition catalogue I am lying on a bed in Venice feeling mildly exhausted from three days of trawling the displays in the 2022 Biennale. The window is open and the warm late summer sea breeze blows the curtains gently into the room as I recline against the headboard.

The idea for this exhibition came to me in 2010 after a meeting in London with the art acquisitions committee of a major global bank which prides itself on having one of the most important corporate art collections on earth.

Having made my presentation I was politely asked to leave the boardroom whilst they made a decision on whether or not to purchase five works for their new Beijing offices.

I was shown into a small waiting room on the side in which a very beautiful painting by the late Howard Hodgkin, arguably Britain's greatest post-war abstract painter, was displayed.

I was left alone for over an hour so had time to marvel at the beautiful brushstrokes, confident use of colour, the evocative tonal arrangements and suggestive pattern making. "This truly is a magnificent abstract painting" I recall thinking to myself.

Eventually I was asked to re-join the meeting and was delighted to learn that all five works had been unanimously accessioned into the collection. I nervously joked that an hour was an awfully long time to wait for a decision but at least I had the comfort of being in the company of such a wonderful abstract work.

"Abstract painting? That's not an abstract painting!" they tutted as it was quickly pointed out to me that this was in fact a representational image of a human figure reclining on a bed with a headboard adjacent to a chest of drawers whilst the breeze gently blew the curtains into a sunlit room. The title of the painting was 'In bed in Venice'.



Howard Hodgkin, In bed in Venice, 1984 – 1988, Oil on Wood, 98.2 x 119.1cm

I immediately went back to look at it again somewhat disbelieving but then everything clicked into place and I was overwhelmed, and also intrigued, with the way my brain was able to see the same painting in two entirely different ways. 'In bed in Venice' is one of Howard Hodgkin's greatest paintings because it manages to operate on differing perceptual levels and straddles the boundaries between representational and abstract painting, hanging if you like, between one world and another.

As the title of this exhibition suggests 'Pretty Abstract' is a carefully curated exhibition that brings together works by artists whose inspiration is firmly rooted in the everyday but who then push through a process of creative transformation to present alternative realities. Some go further than others when pushing these boundaries but the commonality between them all is that they've found a unique and distinctive visual language that creates a set of highly successful outcomes.

Pretty, of course, is often used as a pejorative term in art to describe purely decorative arts or crafts that are devoid of critical thinking or deeper

meaning but within the context of this exhibition it is intended to deliberately set up a challenge to the viewer by asking them to look beyond the initial aesthetic richness and consider the underlying ideas contained in each of the paintings and sculptures on display.

On closing I would like to make a point of which I am most certain. All of the greatest works of art very cleverly hover between one reality and another and require the viewer to go on a transformative journey with the artist as they draw a line around their ideas. This is the real magic that lies within art and in many ways is the perfect metaphor for the city of Venice. Caught in majestic medieval and gothic architectural aspic but fixated with the idea of continually renewing itself through the currency of new ideas and creativity.

I genuinely hope that you enjoy this exhibition which has been 12 years in the making. It's something of a relief to finally see the idea come to fruition but I am delighted that works by titans such as Helen Frankenthaler and Frank Auerbach can comfortably coexist with the hugely talented Olivia Maryon who is only 18.



Helen Frankenthaler

Thanksgiving Day Painting, 1973

Ceramic stoneware with glazes

34cm x 44.5cm

£33,000



Frank Auerbach

Sketch for Camden Theatre, 1978/79

Felt pen on paper

24.5cm x 27cm

£16,000



Frank Auerbach

Study for Mornington Crescent, 1988/89

Black ink and coloured crayon

35.5cm x 29cm

£32,000



Frank Auerbach

To the Studios, 1982

Crayon and paint on paper

29.5cm x 18.5cm

£30,000



Jason Martin

Alentejo Primavera (Rose & Turquoise), 2022

Cold process dye on paper

76cm x 55cm

£10,000



Jason Martin
Alentejo Primavera
(Deep Violet & Royal Blue), 2022
Cold procees dye on paper
76cm x 55cm
£10,000



Jason Martin
Alentejo Primavera
(Golden Yellow), 2022
Cold procees dye on paper
76cm x 55cm
£10,000



Robert Tilling

Harbour Crane I, 2008

Watercolour on paper

69cm x 51cm

£2,500



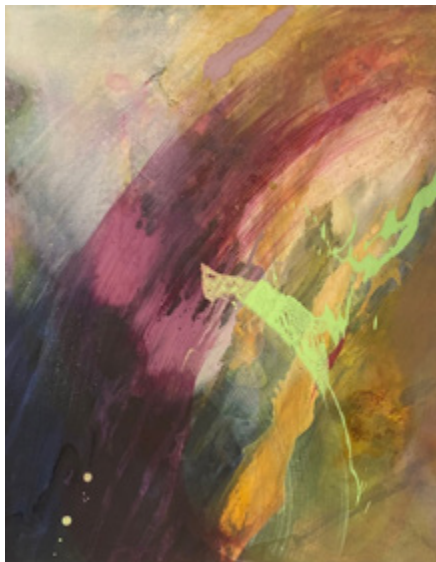
Robert Tilling
Harbour Crane II, 2008
Watercolour on paper
69cm x 51cm
£2,500



Robert Tilling
Abstract Landscape, 2008
Watercolour on paper
69cm x 51cm
£2,500



Hazel Wynn
Empower, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
150cm x 100cm
£1,500



Hazel Wynn
Vigour, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
76cm x 71cm
£1,000



Hazel Wynn
Congruent, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
152cm x 122cm
£1,750



Hazel Wynn
Stuff Happens, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
152cm x 122cm
£1,750



Hazel Wynn
Uprising , 2022
Acrylic on canvas
122cm x 92cm
£1,500



Hazel Wynn
Nebula, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
101cm x 101cm
£1,500



Hazel Wynn
Heatwave, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
152cm x 122cm
£1,750



Hazel Wynn
Blaze, 2022
Acrylic on canvas
71cm x 91cm
£1,000



Hazel Wynn
Jewels of Autumn I , 2022
Acrylic on board
27cm x 27cm
£350



Hazel Wynn

Jewels of Autumn II, 2022

Acrylic on board

27cm x 27cm

£350



Hazel Wynn

Jewels of Autumn III, 2022

Acrylic on board

27cm x 27cm

£350



Mark Guest

Tree, 2022

Crème mocha limestone basalt base
£1,800



Mark Guest

Black star, 2020

Black granite/crème
mocha limestone base,
£900



Mark Guest

Figure of Eight, 2022

White onyx on palissandro marble

£900



Mark Guest

Octopus, 2022

Turquoise quartz, slate base

£3,000



Mark Guest

Eight Fish, 2014

Portland limestone, granite base

£1,500



Mark Guest

Split Ring, 2022

Portland limestone basalt base

£1,800



Danny Booth
Stargazing, 2022
Oil and cold wax on canvas
60cm x 91cm
£1,500



Danny Booth

Winter Heather, 2022

Oil and cold wax on canvas

50cm x 40cm

£750



Danny Booth

Ice Cream Headache, 2022

Oil and cold wax on canvas

60cm x 91cm

£1,500



Danny Booth

Autumn Canopy, 2022

Oil and cold wax on canvas

61cm x 122cm

£1,800



Danny Booth

Autum Birches, 2022

Oil and cold wax on canvas

61cm x 122cm

£1,800



Danny Booth

Rock Pool I, 2022

Oil and cold wax on wood

30cm x 30cm

£500



Danny Booth

Rock Pool II, 2022

Oil and cold wax on wood

30cm x 30cm

£500



Danny Booth

Rock Pool III, 2022

Oil and cold wax on wood

30cm x 30cm

£500



Danny Booth

Rock Pool IV, 2022

Oil and cold wax on wood

30cm x 30cm

£500



Danny Booth

Sky's on Fire, 2022

Oil and cold wax on canvas

40cm x 40cm

£1,000



Danny Booth

Cold Sand Hot Fire, 2022

Oil and cold wax on canvas

50cm x 40cm

£750



Jane Yates

Party Time, 2022

Oil paint and collage on wood

54cm x 47cm

£1,500



Jane Yates

Light in My Eyes, 2022

Oil paint on wood

68cm x 40cm

£1,600



Jane Yates

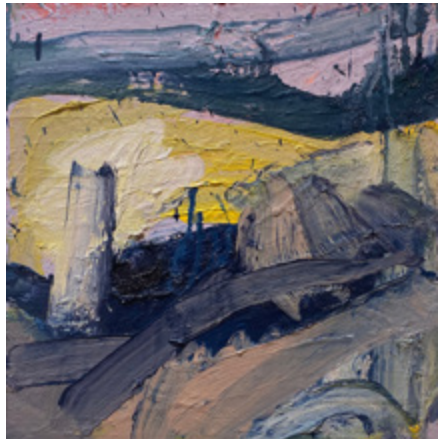
The Room That Let's the Light In, 2021

Oil paint on wood

42cm x 45cm

£900

Jane Yates
Cold Water , 2020
Oil paint on wood
43cm x 44cm
£900





Jane Yates

Out Across, 2021

Oil paint on wood

46cm x 30cm

£900



Jane Yates

It Became Known, 2020

Oil paint on wood

55cm x 41cm

£1,200



Jane Yates

Hot Nights, 2021

Oil paint on wood

46cm x 42cm

£900



Guy Lecler

Book Composition, 2014

Recycled paperback books

202cm x 202cm

£7,500



Toby Mulligan

Untitled Abstract, 2015

Oil on canvas

245cm x 195cm

£5,000



Claire Haithwaite

Byssus I, 2022
Ceramic panel
57cm x 37cm
£1,500



Claire Haithwaite

Byssus II, 2022
Ceramic panel
41cm x 23cm
£1,200



Claire Haithwaite

Byssus III, 2022

Ceramic panel

28cm x 22cm

£800



Claire Haithwaite

Grey Binary, 2022

Ceramic panel

36cm x 36cm

£750



Claire Haithwaite

White Binary, 2022

Ceramic panel

28cm x 28cm

£500



Olivia Maryon
Legs Crossed, 2021
Plaster of Paris
25cm x 28cm x 15cm
£800



Olivia Maryon
Negative Space, 2021
Plaster of Paris
28cm x 20cm x 15cm
£800



Olivia Maryon
Seapod, 2022
Plaster of Paris
60cm x 50cm x 50cm
£2,000



Olivia Maryon
Noiseless, 2021
Plaster of Paris
55cm x 29cm x 20cm
£1,200



Derek Tristram

A Piece of Infinity, 2020

Black granite

20cm x 17cm x 17cm

£3,000



Daniel Porter
Sunshine, 2019
Oil on canvas
152cm x 176cm
£2,200



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