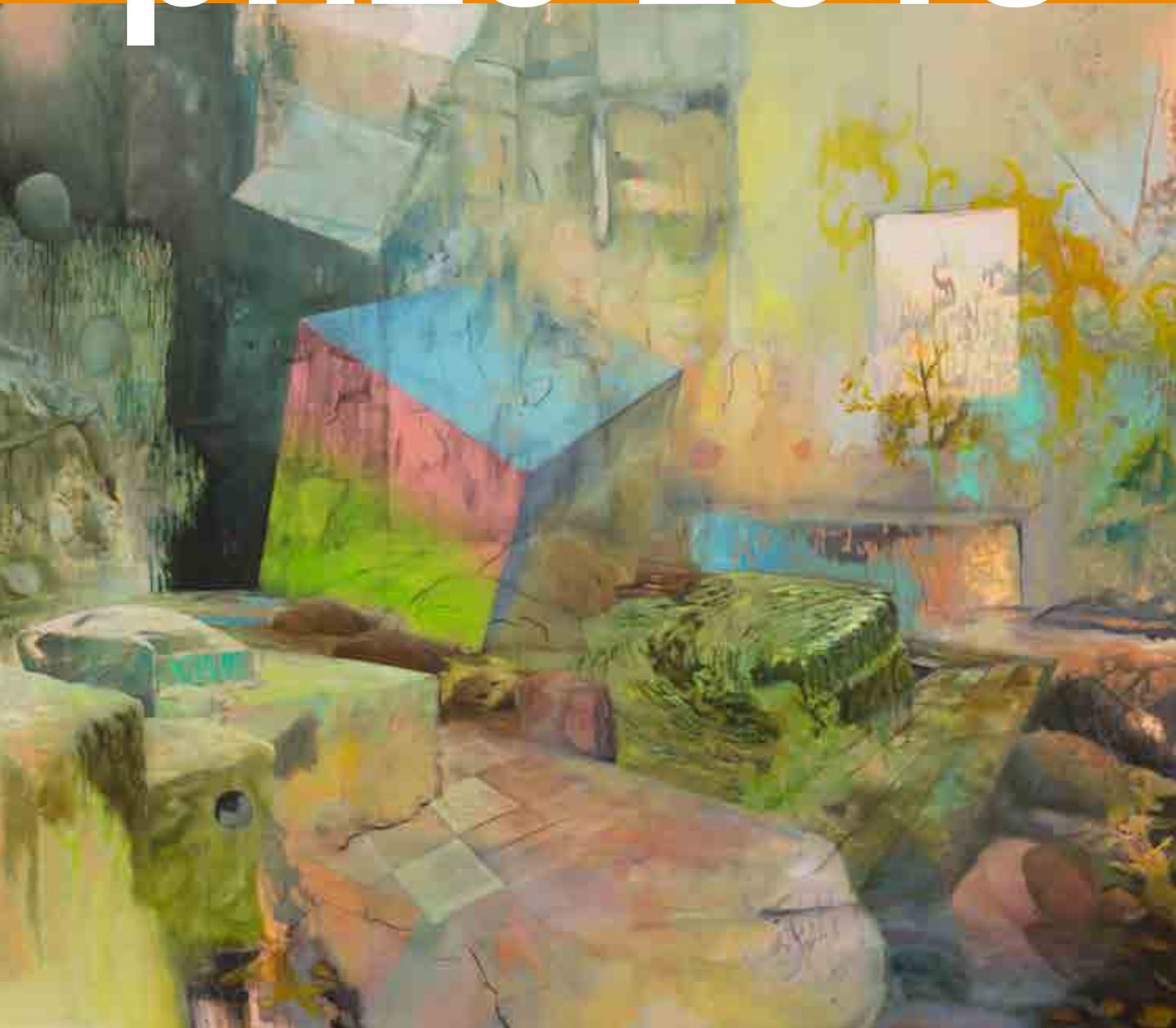


contemporary british painting prize 2018



the contemporary british painting prize 2018

Huddersfield Art Gallery

Princess Alexandra Walk | Huddersfield | HD1 2SU
1st December 2018 - 2nd February 2019

The Menier Gallery

51 Southwark Street | London | SE1 1RU
7th February 2019 - 16th February 2019

Keith Ashcroft | Lucy Austin | Benjamin Deakin | Kate Dunn
Jenny Eden | Andrew Ekins | Pippa Gatty | Alison Goodyear
Roland Hicks | Rachel Lancaster | Joe Packer | Jonathan West



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www.contemporarybritishpainting.com



paintings in hospitals

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Introduction

The Contemporary British Painting Prize 2018

Selected by

Simon Carter | Paula MacArthur
Ruth Philo | Narbi Price

The stated aim of Contemporary British Painting is to explore and promote current painting. The subtext to this is giving voice back to the artist, the originator and source of painting. The real discourse around current painting is generated painter to painter and emanates from the studio and not from the boardrooms of institutions, directors' offices, lecture halls or galleries. This prize is artists submitting themselves to consideration and selection by their peers. So I would like to thank all those artists who entered into this process this year and to say that over the past few weeks it has been a privilege to look through the work of the 642 painters who submitted to the Contemporary British Painting Prize 2018.

With no criteria in our selection other than the desire not to be dull or predictable, Paula, Ruth, Narbi and I, this year's four selectors, set out on the daunting work of reducing the 642 submissions to an exhibition of 12 artists' work. We began by independently selecting personal shortlists of 15. I came across much work that I was familiar with, artists I knew or knew of and many more that I didn't. I decided I could only make choices on gut reaction, waiting for that kick you get from good painting. And it came surprisingly often. I initially reduced the list to 60, then slowly to my selection of 15. I waited a few days and went back over all the entries and made minor adjustments to my choice.

In October the four selectors came together in London, our lists collated into a league of 54 names. We started our selection at the top, viewing

and discussing each artist's set of work, declaring interest or knowledge of the artists as appropriate, basing our discussion on the 5 images and the statement submitted by each entrant. We reduced the list by stages to 19, then 14 and then the final 12. Towards the end of selection we began to consider whether what we had before us went to make an exhibition, running through permutations of images to see what they did and said together. There was a real sense that our final collective decision was not the result of compromise but that it exceeded any of our individual deliberations. We felt a good day's work had been done and we retired to The Southwark Tavern for a drink.

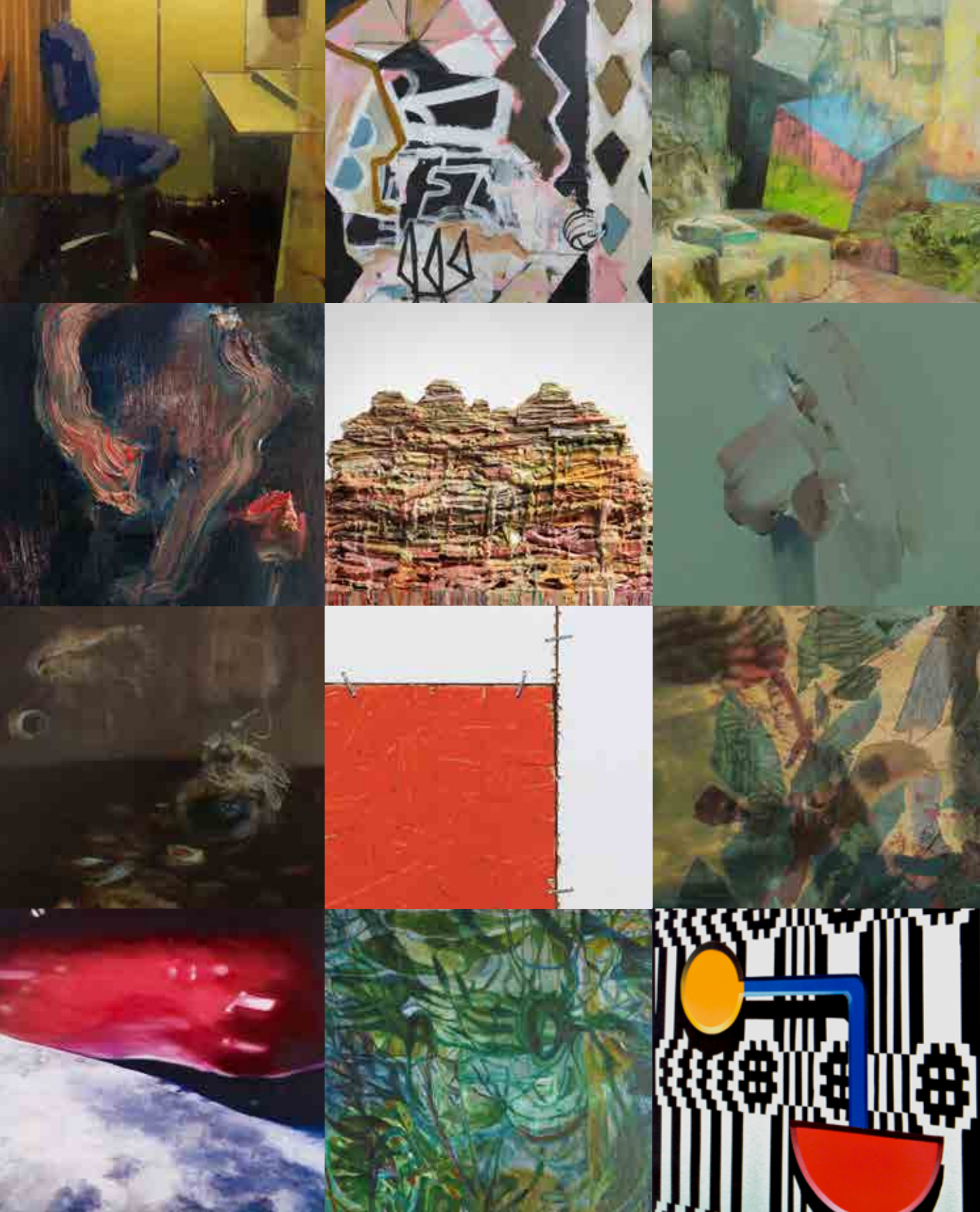
I write this to be transparent about the process, to highlight the difficulties and sometimes seeming near impossibilities of making the necessary choices and to show the thoroughness, care and diligence with which it was undertaken.

To some degree none of this selecting actually matters at all. None of the painters who submitted to the process will stop painting because we didn't choose their work. Another week, another month and we might have made different decisions. But this is our exhibition; it is the result of our decisions and the wide-ranging nature of the discussions we had: from whether it is possible to define what a painting is to the varying densities of paint, from meticulous craft to wayward marks, retro patterning to overt influences, from the influence of film to trompe-l'oeil to fashions in painting. We wanted to be provoked and challenged by what we saw and these 12 painters did that for us.

Simon Carter

Lead Selector 2018

Co-founder of Contemporary British Painting



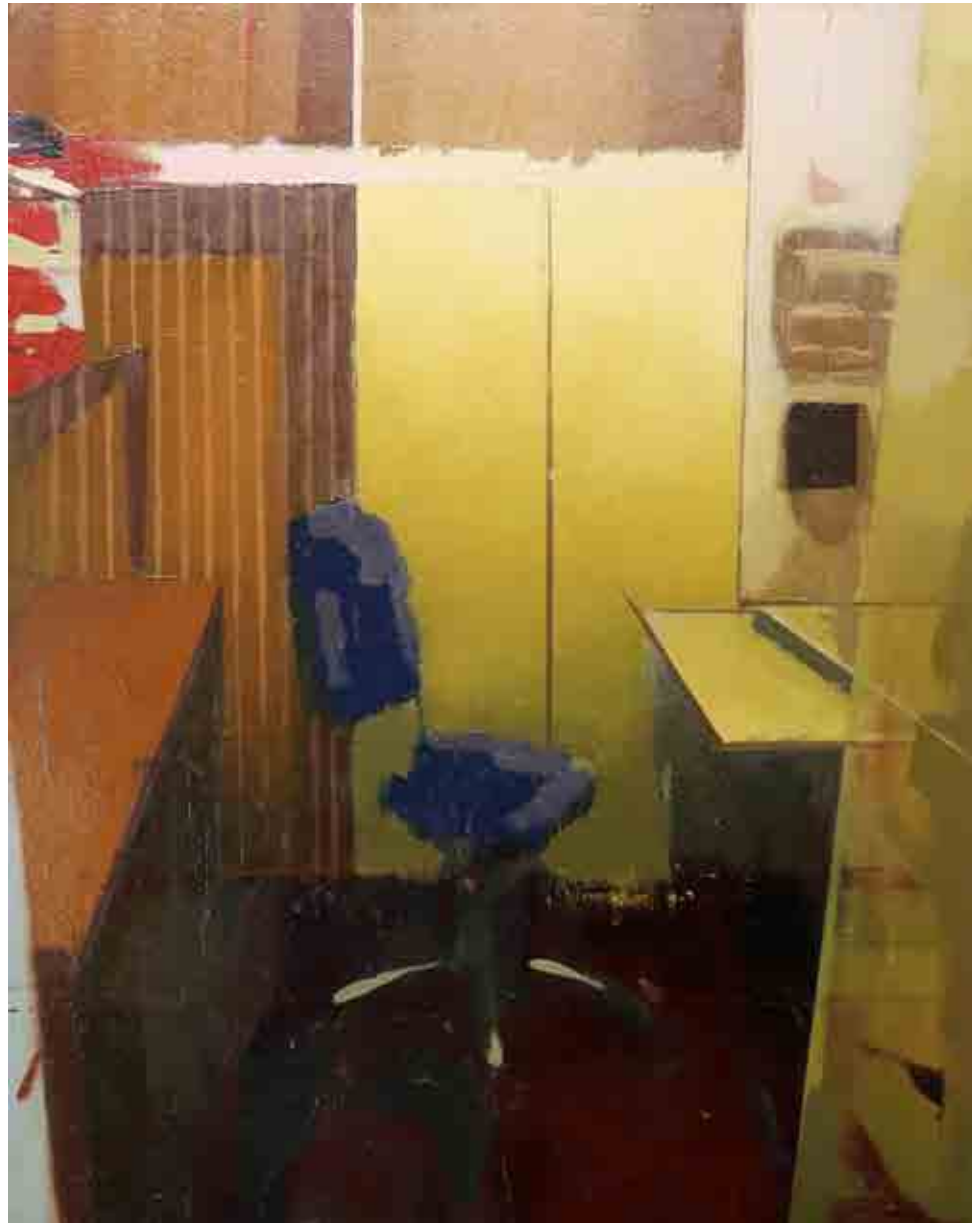
The artists...

Keith Ashcroft

My practice is rooted in the practicalities of process and the embodiment of time, dealing with the painterly process of representing ambiguous internal spaces. Through the materiality of process – laying paint down on a surface – these spaces are reconfigured and interrupted by elements of abstraction. Paint is first applied using traditional methods as a foundation, until a point – different in each painting – when rules are subverted and the painting gains a contemporaneous independency. Whilst originating from found or donated photographs the activity of painting challenges the photographic moment of documentation locating the pictured content in flux, somewhere between the past and the present.



Interior Motive A
Oil on canvas, 63cm x 51cm, 2017



Interior Motive D
Oil on canvas, 63cm x 51cm, 2017



Inside Out
Oil on canvas, 61cm x 76cm, 2017

Lucy Austin

These paintings are part of a new series called 'Shelf life'. The title comes from the use of cardboard packaging (soap, toothpaste, tea, biscuits) collaged onto the canvas surface, creating edges, which jut and form raised creases; holes in the card make windows, through which the linear drawing forming the under-painting is revealed.

Cut out ink drawings made on rice paper make areas of sharp focus which are then softly obscured by the misty transparent rice paper overlaid on the background. Black felt and hessian add areas of fuzzy texture and once painted are reminiscent of a blank TV screen transmitting off the station.

Scavenger is the only work so far which is formed from a square canvas with three much smaller rectangles added to form a more satisfactory proportion. Its messy surface is forensically created by layering.

The painting process takes between two and three years and the titles result from collecting words and scrawling them on the studio wall during this time; these are used to name the finished works.

A struggle with gravity through twenty years making 3D drawings using fragile materials such as paper straws glued together to form a six foot tower and pipe cleaners twisted to make a wobbly one metre square cube - have informed the description of space in these paintings; they speak about vulnerability and a human search for the restless line.

The paintings emerged out of a first layer of dark indigo; because of this they retain something of a heavy seriousness, they are not joking around, they mean business. They are paintings for our austere times.

Opposite: Scavenger
Acrylic and collage on canvas, 122cm x 91cm, 2017





Cartouche - Acrylic and collage on canvas, 76cm x 60cm, 2018



Fuzzy Logic - Acrylic and collage on canvas, 35cm x 25cm, 2018

Benjamin Deakin

I make paintings of fictional hybrid spaces using a range of stylistic and historical references. My most recent paintings combine personal experiences of places and landscapes with broader ideas about our relationship with certain types of environment. I am interested in the way in which places take on cultural associations as well as political and economic significance. Why do we value one type of environment more than another purely on aesthetic grounds? This question reveals the complexity behind the genre of landscape painting and landscape imagery in general. I try to probe this by making paintings which fuse my personal observations with the shapes and forms I have seen in traditional landscape paintings. Most recently I have become interested in the role of geometric shapes and patterns in images of landscapes, which are often used as signifiers of civilisation or the symbolic value of places. In pursuing these ideas I create densely layered paintings in which architectural traces suggest ruination and geometric interventions disrupt and bisect the composition and organic forms.

When travelling, I am often drawn to fairly challenging natural environments, yet even in those harsh surroundings associations and familiarities abound. I believe that we bring expectations and past experience to all our physical encounters. Painting is a way for me to process all these different experiences and re-construct the physical and emotional experience of being in those places. The paintings become composites of memories and mediated experiences as well as physical ones. In this way I hope to show how landscapes are not only cultural constructions but a form of dialogue between ourselves and the physical world.



Navigator
Oil on canvas, 120cm x 140cm, 2017



Coadunator
Oil on canvas, 45cm x 60cm, 2018



Caesura
Oil on canvas, 120cm x 140cm, 2018

Kate Dunn

Having undergone a classical training in Florence, my practice looks at the contemporary languages of paint with reference to the historical. Having spent four years in such rich surroundings, I find myself returning to those encounters as opportunities to discuss the evolution of painting and in particular the materiality of paint. My work remains largely abstract so as to encourage the experience of paint as paint, as opposed to its imitation of something else, yet through the use of a historical structure I am contradicting this very abstraction as I reference a large archive of imagery. In their adaption of the historical and contemporary, the paintings become a kind of conglomerate, a contemporary fossil that belongs to no specific time.

These works are from the series Profanations, which takes its name from the notion in which religious artworks are the property of God, and sacred, however if these artworks are returned to the property of the people, they then become profane.



Matter
Oil paint on panel, 30cm x 25cm, 2018



Mouth of a cave, I'm a slave, I'm free
Oil paint on panel, 30cm x 25cm, 2018



Swollen, Sickened and Smiling
Acrylic on panel, 180cm x 150cm, 2018

Jenny Eden

My paintings are driven by process, colour and the dynamics involved in the painter-painting relationship. From the position of paintings as living things capable of having an important role in their own development, the work is made through the oscillating and sought after states of having knowledge and being uncertain. I am interested in the conscious and unconscious forces at work in the relationship and how these aspects of the activity encourage progress in individual paintings and the practice as a whole. Colour decisions facilitate the process and allow the content of the paintings to sit between non-representation and representation, making associations with external material objects whilst maintaining loyalty to the reality of paint matter on a flat surface.



Highland - Oil on linen, 37cm x 25cm, 2018



Locus - Oil on calico, 37cm x 25cm, 2018



Roused from a Deep Sleep - Oil on calico, 42cm x 30cm, 2018

Andrew Ekins

My paintings have mass and substance, employing a sculptural language to question an allusion between a geo-topographical landscape and a landscape of the human presence. I aim to explore the substance of human presence, the lustre and grime, the fugitive relationship between form and idea related to contemporary perceptions of beauty, the sublime, the abject. I'm interested in paintings as embodied thinking, tropes of the self, revealing trace elements of sensual presence and matter. Paintings formed over time and bearing the marks of time whose form, stacked, sagging, misshapen (*Fat of the Land*), aims to carry some of the narrative of the work, a crumpled fleshy landscape, the materiality of a body of land, a trope of landscape and human intervention, an equivalent anatomical topography per se.

Ideas entwined within this are: the substance of painting, the imprint of human existence, the marks we make on the land we inhabit, the compelling fetish of making, and the abstraction of thought and thing. Themes of mortality and renewal, growth and decay are asserted and cloaked by a corrupted decorative motif surfacing through an erupted imperfect skin. Repetition, layering and impregnation regenerate items that have been discarded as used, soiled. The worked and reworked pixelated meaty brushstrokes (*I Am My Brothers Keeper*) are emblematic of the notion of a commonwealth of people, and a confection of degraded beauty within the media obsession with skin and beauty.



Fat of the Land
Oil on paint skins, fabric, panel, paint tin, 62cm x 72cm x 32 cms, 2014



Small Step
Oil on paint skins, panel, 30cm x 29cm, 2017



Untitled, I am my Brother's Keeper
Oil on t-shirt, 40cm x 28cm, 2014

Pippa Gatty

Rooted in the language and history of painting, I am motivated by the idea of the fourth dimension (as in Time), and the discourse between that and my environment, (the here and now). The conversation this creates is beyond the symbolic and I try to represent this ambiguity within my work by creating a register of symbols and layers of meaning.

My paintings are generally dark and small in scale, and this intimacy invites the viewer into my unsettling world with its 'Nature' resonances.

These microcosms document my experience of my environment, my sense of wonder and foreboding and grief, and reflect a nostalgia for a time of ecological innocence and yet the reality of the situation.

A human or animal presence is often suggested but seldom depicted, although a consciousness is always present and a primordial feature of things.

At its outset each painting poses a series of open-ended questions. The outcome is always unknown. My process engages with a discourse between my heritage and environment, an exploration of time and space.

I paint on the edge of figuration. It is emergent, and in the process of becoming or revealing itself. I build up the surface with glazes and often scour or scrape areas of the picture plane back to reveal its foundation. I have been evolving a process and creating a body of work, which I hope addresses and reflects elements of the romantic tradition and a contemporary unease. I am interested in creating an archive of these images. I live and work in the Inner Hebrides.



Ja
Oil on linen/ply, 33cm x 28cm, 2018



Islet
Oil on linen/ply, 28cm x 33cm, 2018



Canopy
Oil on linen/ply, 34cm x 28cm, 2017

Alison Goodyear

I am a visual artist/researcher/educator working in the field of abstract painting. In November 2017 I was awarded my practice led PhD from Chelsea, Camberwell, Wimbledon Graduate School, UAL under the supervision of Professor Malcolm Quinn and Dr Dan Sturgis. My research examines the threshold between aesthetic and banal absorption (drawing on the theories of Denis Diderot and Michael Fried) in painter to painting relationships through collaborative address to and from practice.

The abstract paintings I make explore the idea and possibility of how an artwork might intervene in the 'normal' regime of vision. They examine the processes of painting and the distinction between banal and aesthetic thresholds. This practice continues my enquiry into the theoretical and practical implications of aesthetic absorption, testing the theories of Diderot and Fried. Here the relationship of painting-beholder to painting is addressed by various attempts at toying with the viewing experience and shifting the perspective plane. It does this by using different paint mediums and processes combined with digital photography of my painting palettes, followed by further layers of paint. This chronicling of process within process also explores the relationship between the mindless and mindful through the intentionality of a paint stroke. It shifts between the digital with physical with the representation of paint through photography alongside actual paint. And it confuses what we might understand as 'authentic' with 'inauthentic' through its processes of production and reproduction.

Opposite: Akraenkafina
Acrylic, ink and oil paint on silk over canvas, 150cm x 100cm, 2018





Xanadualulu
Acrylic, ink and oil paint on silk over canvas, 50cm x 40cm, 2018



Zipdidapp
Acrylic, ink and oil paint on silk over canvas, 50cm x 40cm, 2018

Roland Hicks

My recent 'Dissemblage' paintings are slow, labour intensive trompe l'oeil pieces that reconstruct or reimagine hastily made abstract assemblages – apparently stapled together from found offcuts of different types of chipboard, plywood and melamine shelving.

Sitting precariously on the fence between objective and non-objective art, the work is layered with dualities: at once suggesting a primitive, spontaneous creative act and something more carefully considered, and occupying a murky space somewhere between painting and sculpture, figuration and abstraction, object and image, authenticity and simulation. Paradoxically the work celebrates materiality despite the deception over the materials used – and as such aims to be both concrete and illusory. The thing is not the thing. And it is what it is.

I could try and claim some kinship with 17th century Dutch still life painting, Arte Povera and Minimalism. Or, maybe I could refer to Post-Duchampian re-made readymades (and it seems I now have done). But perhaps it's more important to say these are small, quiet things, slightly amplified.



Three Part Dissemblage (MMO)
Acrylic gouache on birch ply gesso panel, 25cm x 20cm, 2018



Five Part Dissemblage (OMPOC)
Acrylic gouache on birch ply gesso panel, MDF and paper, 30cm x 28cm, 2018



Two Part Dissemblage (OM)
Acrylic gouache on birch ply gesso panel, 25cm x 20cm, 2018

Rachel Lancaster

My practice takes photographic stills from found moving imagery, translating them into paintings. I use the process of photography as a filter through which images are selected and seen afresh, disassociated from their origin. Sources are eclectic, ranging from the mainstream to the obscure and occult.

I am drawn to seemingly insignificant passing shots, extreme close ups of inanimate objects and commonplace domestic interiors. I interrogate the mundane fragments of a greater narrative, focussing on the split second moments that are 'in-between' the action.

In translating the source imagery into paintings, I manipulate scale, cropping and editing to play on notions of the cinematic and narrative. Oil paint is integral to this process as these stilled images, when combined with the tactile materiality of paint, invite the viewer to trace over their surface and linger in potentially overlooked expanded moments. The act of looking itself is pivotal to me in both how the works are created and received. A tension is set up between the visually seductive qualities of oil paint and the often unnerving, off-kilter atmosphere hinted at in the selected scene. Colour and mark making are used to fracture and recompose images onto canvas and to draw out the otherness and dreamlike qualities often found in cinema. My work draws upon the uncanny, exploring a latent psychological charge within each selected image and the subliminal evocations dependent on our familiarity with the language and conventions of cinema. Divorced physically from their position within a narrative structure, these images become abstract and ambiguous, enabling another view of the unknown events which have preceded or may follow.



Untitled
Oil on canvas, 122cm x 150cm, 2015



Untitled
Oil on canvas, 30cm x 40cm, 2018



Untitled
Oil on canvas, 80cm x 100cm, 2018

Joe Packer

My recent paintings could be described as invented landscapes with a psychological element. These paintings try to evoke the memory of a place whilst at the same time, having evolved through making processes that are not preplanned or prescriptive, are images that can visually function in a self-contained way, with a kind of inner life of their own. The paintings occupy a kind of hinterland between abstraction, where the brushstrokes are non-referential, and figuration, where the spaces depicted allude and relate to landscape, without being overtly descriptive.



Darklingthrush Wood 2
Oil on canvas, 170cm x 154cm, 2018



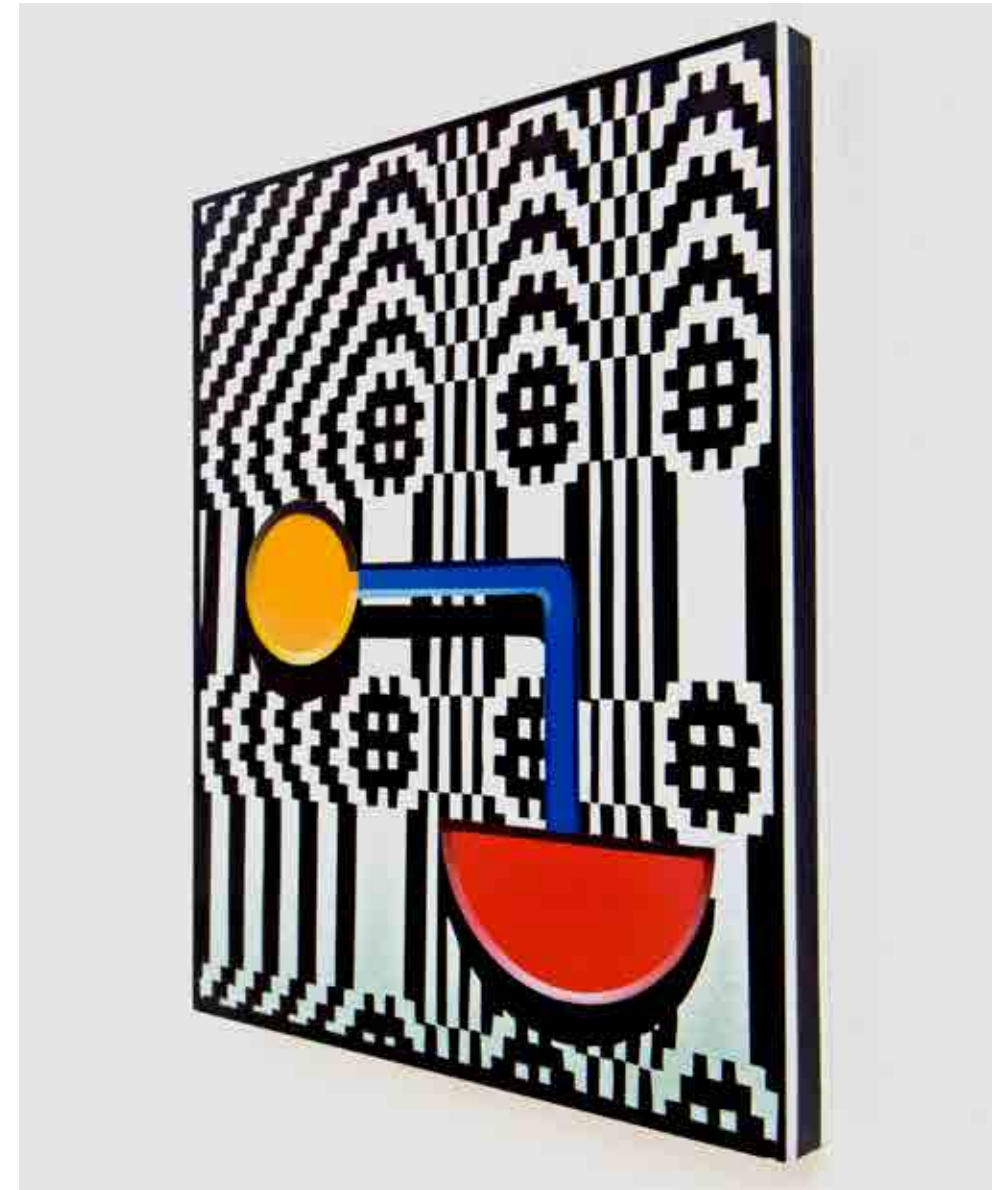
Heartland - Oil on canvas, 127cm x 86cm, 2017



PitScape
Oil on canvas, 86cm x 61cm, 2017

Jonathan West

Over the past four years, I have produced a series of paintings, sculptures and animations which layer varying styles of imagery: ranging from 19th century European folk textiles, to computer generated graphics and Modernist designs. Each piece is the result of an overlapping of stylised and inconsistent fragments in order to see what happens when, in the era of copy and paste, symbols and patterns become divorced from their context.



Funscreen
Acrylic on panel, 25.4cm x 20.3cm, 2017



Untitled
Acrylic on panel, 20.3cm x 15.2cm, 2017



Untitled
Acrylic on panel, 25.4cm x 20.3cm, 2018



The winner...



Joe Packer

Joining and Continuing

Matthew Collings

“At the house I grew up in,” Joe Packer says, “You could walk straight out of the back door into a wood. It was in a small place called Shottesbrooke in Berkshire. Childhood memories involve being in the enclosed, interior/exterior space of a wood. The filtering of light through trees and foliage.” He says his paintings are not of those places, but he thinks of them collectively as “some sort of landscape and somehow connected to places familiar to me where I grew up.”

His studio is in St Leonards on Sea, near Hastings. A seaside location suggests light and space, but it’s actually cluttered, smallish, with small windows, and he finds himself working mostly by strip-light. *PitScape*, the painting for which he won first prize, in the Contemporary British Painting Prize, 2018, is typical of his recent pictures, which all seem to be about emanation, light radiating from a certain point, not quite the centre. There are three of these paintings in the CBPP exhibition. In *PitScape* and *Heartland* the glow comes from the lower centre, and in *Darklingthrush Wood 2*, the origin is a zone in the upper half over to the right.

The paintings prioritise light and transparency, which sounds airy, and at the same time they have an unavoidably opposite character as objects. Their buildup of physically substantial paint, resulting in surfaces that glow but are also crusty and gnarly, is a meaning in itself. It tells you about his particular way of painting, as a process of finding or uncovering. Unearthing, digging up, revealing a rhythmic unity via an approach of bit-by-bit stumbling – it’s an interesting idea. It implies that ideas as such might be overrated.

He says of the imagined reality each painting offers that it is “contained within the paintings’ own internal logic.” They take a long time to finish and he typically has several on the go at once. There can be long gaps between sessions on a particular work. Sometimes he needs to stop caring about or being attached to what he already has. The end result in any one case tends to be an accumulation of several paintings.

Joe Packer being awarded the Contemporary British Painting Prize 2018
by Matthew Collings at Huddersfield Art Gallery, December 2018

In *PitScape* an inner frame can be made out. It has been painted-over at certain points. Marks brushed on in a certain loose structure over that partially submerged frame, in one session, were added-to in other sessions. Further marks gradually added over many sessions, caused these areas to build up into their own independent structures, related to but separate from everything else. Microworlds. A patterning that visually talks both to the main area of the painting and to its outer edge, and to itself.

The paintings share a sense of crude things: marks, shapes, contrasts of light and dark, that somehow find a way of bouncing around that makes visual sense. We see the world as subjects of it and as somehow outside it looking in: in the special way his paintings have of gradually coming into being he seems to be saying something about that. He offers atmosphere; memories of a place someone has known. Believable not because there's proof we as viewers can consult. But because, even if there is no scene or view, the balance of elements in the paintings has a feeling of reality.

Each of the three paintings has something in it suggesting or resembling a visual property both the others have to some degree. The paintings feed off each other while also looking quite obviously different. A red one, a green one, and one with black. Next to *Heartland*, which seems all red, *Darklingthrush Wood 2* is all green. Then when you're "in" the latter it is clearly all blue atmosphere, and innumerable variations of yellow leading to green. It is not "all" anything but, rather, a web of differences. And *Heartland* when you are in it is deep crimson grading into all sorts of differences: into black, into dusky pink, bright pink, and light green. Light cascades in *Darklingthrush Wood 2*, from an area around a shape like a knot in a tree or an opening in a human body. It rises in *Heartland*, pushing out in the middle so the glow and space are both at maximum intensity there.

PitScape has black seaweed bladder shapes against light. Towards the bottom of the painting is the tentative beginnings of the grid that *Heartland* has with full-on strength. The scape could be sea or land. A pond, a swamp, a distant place, a jungle, the woods outside the door. One zone is a ghostly drained white. It has a band of black

below with a curved edge. And above the white, which is really a muted dirty blue area made out of dash-shape little strokes, is a stinging yellow-green, holding within it tangles, fronds and pods.

A complication of the paintings is the weird way wooden frames are made pictorial. They seem almost organic as much as sawn-up and nailed. In *Heartland* the painted broken grid structure, is answered by a grid of frames, with surfaces glazed in the same way transparent effects in the painting itself are achieved by glazing. In a zany logic painted wood cuts into painted transparencies denoting a "wood."

Heartland is like looking into gaps between boughs and leaves. It has a lattice or trellis structure, not streamlined but clearly recurring everywhere. Your perceptions are played with in relation to it. The painting might seem at first to have a geometric grid below and formless loose open marks above. These are actually a continuation of the grid, however, not a departure. Although they're that, too. Contrasts and similarities, variation and repetition: this opposition is a principle of design where something being slightly different to something else causes you to perceive the whole thing in a heightened way. Design in paintings doesn't mean rules that must be obeyed for the painting to be good. A painting can be good by any route whatsoever. It just means seeing. We see the world in a certain way, by virtue of our humanity. Design is a condensing and compression, an idealization, and intensification, of that seeing.

Heartland can seem to be one thing below and another above. With both things actually joining and continuing to make one thing everywhere. Crimson and black side-to-side and up-and-down blunt strokes, countered by a cloud or swarm of loose, open, lightly done, thin, curving strokes of yellow. They jointly make up a shimmer.

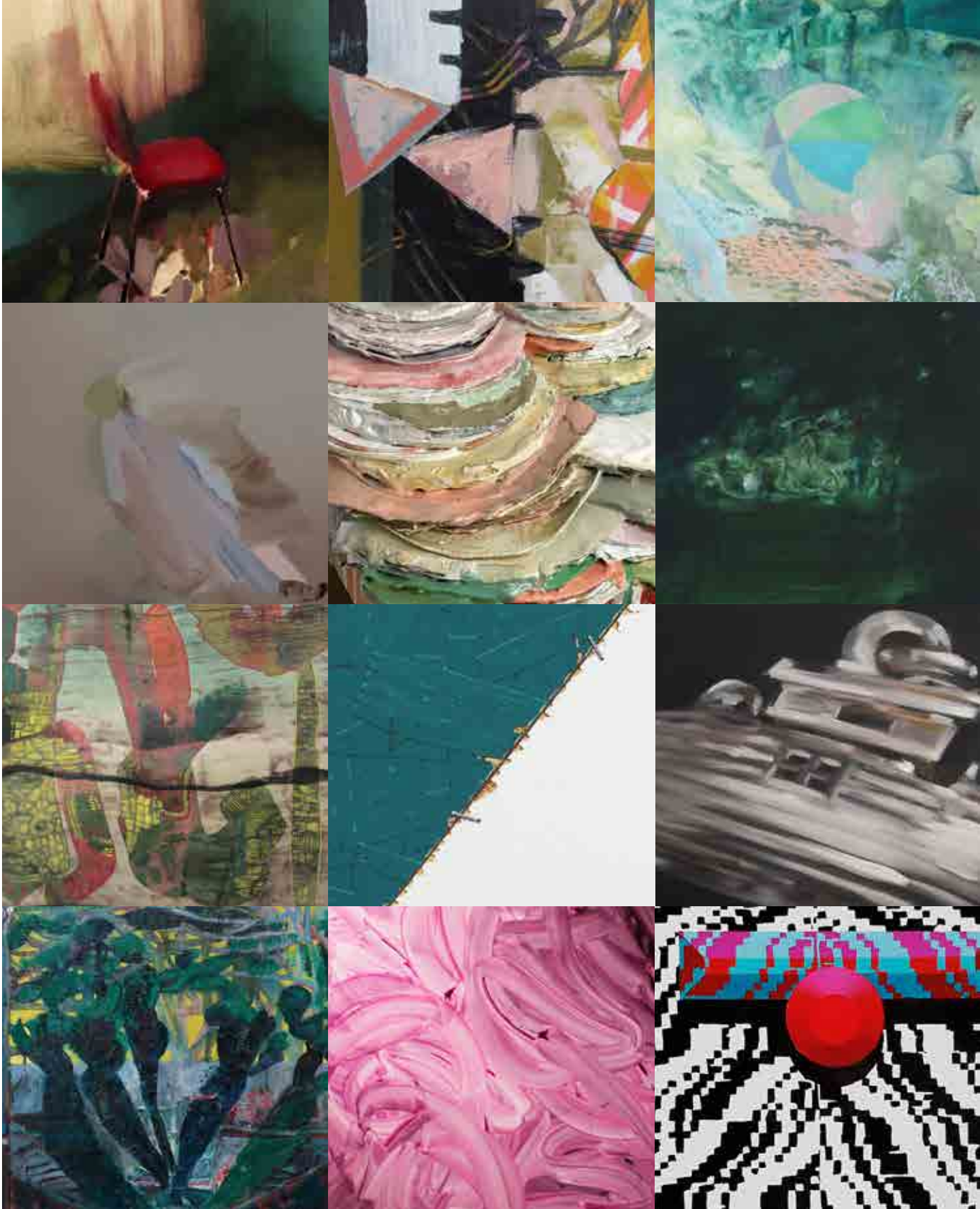
This is the structure which reflections in a metal and glass skyscraper have, as well as views under water in the sea when it's clear and there's bright light above. And the same structure mottled darkness coming through a dramatic sunset has. In all those cases an optical effect has no particular substance or physical underpinning. There are no objects that can be seen somehow coming together to produce the shimmer.

But *Heartland* is pleasurable precisely because of the presence of them. Obdurate stuff – grungy bluntness – is caused to transform in the eye into airy depths.

Is a painter a designer? They might be. But in his case a design is not conceived and then executed. It is arrived at by trial and error, making and unmaking. Nothing in the end is like what there was at the start. What was it, then, to begin with? Only a feeling about what a painting could be ultimately, and how its sense of a particular presence could be produced by how it was made. The actual stuff at the beginning, the marks on the canvas, were only that: a few contrasting marks. Something to work with. And accompanied by a certain amount of self-consciousness. Will a mark made on Day 1 still be seen as a remnant, at least, in a year's time? If a set of tonal contrasts looks immediately lively can't it be accepted and preserved even if it came easy? Should you avoid what comes easy? Repeated worries.

He went to art school in Norwich, then the Royal College of Art, and he tried some neat ideas when ideas were in, and then evolved the way of working he still pursues. He is a smart guy and has always been interested in what goes on in painting, what is accepted as the right thing to do by the institutions, the market, the popular audience. "I think my work probably does fit in, if that is the right term, with a general renewed interest in, or a renaissance, for want of a better way of putting it, of modernist ideas. Particularly the modernist belief that a painting can have an unashamed integrity." He finds himself often thinking about and looking at paintings done a hundred years ago, by Picasso and Braque, where a new kind of folded space was jointly investigated. As the beginnings of modernism, it could be seen as old fashioned. He sees it on the contrary as unfinished business.

Matthew Collings, January 2019



Acknowledgements

'Contemporary British Painting' sincerely thank our artist selectors Simon Carter, Paula MacArthur, Ruth Philo and Narbi Price for choosing such an exciting shortlist with so much care. We also thank our judges Matthew Collings, Amisha Karia and Grant Scanlan, for lending a serious critical eye to the show. Thanks are also offered to Huddersfield Art Gallery and The Menier Gallery for hosting us, Natalie Dowse for producing the beautiful posters and catalogue and Ruth Philo, Lucy Cox and Wendy Saunders for excellent work promoting the prize. Special thanks also to John Wallett for continued and dedicated website support and painting prize application processing, a huge job which cannot be underestimated. We also thank Robert Priseman for founding the CBP Prize in 2016.

Most of all though, we wish to thank all the painters who submitted their work to this year's prize, for without all the artists' participation none of this would be possible.

Simon Carter and the Contemporary British Painting Prize 2018 organising team



paintings in hospitals



Keith Ashcroft

Lucy Austin

Benjamin Deakin

Kate Dunn

Jenny Eden

Andrew Ekins

Pippa Gatty

Alison Goodyear

Roland Hicks

Rachel Lancaster

Joe Packer

Jonathan West