

WINTER NEWSLETTER



LONDON | TOKYO

**SUCCESS AT
SINGAPORE
AFFORDABLE
ART FAIR**

**ENIGMA SHOW
INTERVIEWS**

with Carl Melagari
and Patrick Barker

**BEYOND
THE CAPITAL**

A closer look
at artists based
outside London

www.fineartconsultancy.com



Image: Henry Walsh
***Parapluie XX1*, 2024**
Acrylic on canvas
100 x 100cm
£2950 (Christmas Show)

Welcome back to our third edition of the Fine Art Consultancy newsletter. We would like to preface this latest edition by acknowledging the difficult times we are living in. For many of us, 2024 has been a year full of all sorts of surprises.

With that being said, all of us here at Fine Art Consultancy hope to take this opportunity to provide you with a moment of pause. We continue to hold faith in the power of art and artists to channel collective and individual feelings and thus facilitate moments of meditation and reflection.

Here is what you can expect from this *Winter* edition:

- ❖ Our director's report from Singapore
- ❖ "Beyond the Capital"
- ❖ An interview with Enigma show participants Carl Melagari and Patrick Barker
- ❖ Top Five Seasonal Favourites (works to catch at our Christmas show!)



To be of use

The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.

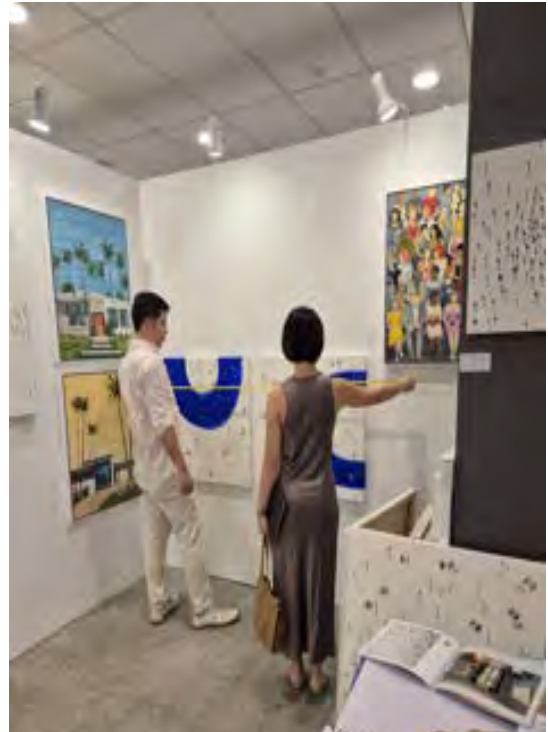
I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

**By Margy Pierce. Source: *Circles on the Water: Selected Poems of Marge Piercy*
(Alfred A. Knopf, 1982)**

Singapore Affordable Art Fair



From the minute we arrived in Singapore, we were greeted with 30 ° heat - which presented a stark contrast to the British weather. Nonetheless, we decided that on our first night we would head out for supper at Lau Pa Sat 'Hawker Market' for the best satay in town.

Leisure aside, Singapore and the Affordable Art air did not let us down. The art fair was housed in an unique venue - the Formula 1 Pit Building in Marina Bay. The booths were set up in the 'paddocks', floors that accommodate the cars and their teams during the F1.

The opening night on November 7th actually started at 2pm and was the



most busy private view we've had there, lasting until 10pm with all our artists receiving lots of attention.

On both Friday and Saturday, whilst clients were forced to dodge Singaporean downpours, it did not act as a deterrent as by Saturday evening we'd sold nearly all of Henry Walsh's works. His new 'Circus' series got the most attention, and on Sunday we sold his final piece, with clients beginning to register interest in commissioning him. We also had sales for Vanessa Pooley, Tomoko Matsumoto and one of our new artists Lindsey Hambleton.

As we packed up late on Sunday our three crates had become one and we left the building in search of (another) Singapore Sling.



Thank you Singapore - you were a ball!

Beyond the Capital

A closer look at artists based outside of London

This article explores the ways in which artists throughout the country continue to draw inspiration from their local surroundings and community in their practice.

The contemporary art world has typically marketed itself as a space in which all are welcome. In fact, differences in backgrounds, cultures and artistic approaches have long been presented as defining features of contemporary art today. This past autumn, London hosted Frieze week 2024, whereby 270 galleries were present to exhibit works from artists spanning 43 countries. As usual, there was a focus on whose work would be acquired by notable acquisition funds. For example, the Contemporary Art Society, a charitable organisation which acquires and donates contemporary works to museums and public galleries across the UK, acquired the works of Haegue Yang (b.1971 Seoul, Korea) and Nour Jouda (bb. 1997, Libya) for the Hepworth Wakefield gallery in Yorkshire, which will represent them for the first time.¹

Notably, the placement of Haegue and Jouda's works in the Hepworth demonstrates a subtle yet critical step towards situating the UK's art collections beyond the capital. The art scene, like the cultural sector more broadly, is attempting to move away from a London-centric approach which encapsulates artists, their works, and the places in which they are exhibited. Notably, some of the UK's most successful and recognised artists found their inspiration away from the city. For example, David Hockney (b.1937) and Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975) are names that need little introduction. Representing some of the most celebrated and established artists of our time, their works are held in permanent

¹ "UK collections boosted by Frieze art fair acquisitions", Museums Association, <https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2024/10/uk-collections-boosted-by-frieze-art-fair-acquisitions/> (15 October 2024)

collections across the country including Tate and the Arts Council Collection.



Originally from Bradford, Hockney paid homage to his rural origins in the nineties by producing a number of works depicting the Yorkshire landscape, such as *The Road to York through Sledmere* (1997).² With its vibrant colours and expressionist quality, his

painting depicts the winding road from York to Bridlington on the East Yorkshire coast where Hockney called home until 2015.³ The nature of the composition invites animation, bringing to life what may initially appear to be a sleepy English village. There are also glimmers of local character, from the familiar red telephone box to the lonesome Sykes Monument in the distance, constructed in 1865 in honour of the 4th Baronet of Sledmere.⁴

Comparatively, Hepworth, born in Wakefield, West Yorkshire, is known for the many years she lived and worked in St Ives, Cornwall. Considering St Ives her “spiritual home”, its surroundings proved to be a continuous source of inspiration in her artistic practice.⁵ Her Trewyn Studio provided her with much needed space for her work,

² *The Road to York through Sledmere* (1997), David Hockney Collection website <https://david-hockney.org/collection/the-road-to-york-through-sledmere/>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Atlas Obscura website <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/sir-tatton-sykes-monument>

⁵ Tate St Ives: Barbara Hepworth Art & Life <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-st-ives/barbara-hepworth-art-and-life>

with a garden that allowed her to carve outside as well as observe nature's movements more clearly. Moreover, her works also show clear parallels with her surroundings. For example, the sculpture *Curved Form (Trevalgan)* (1956) takes its name and inspiration from the Trevalgan hill on which Hepworth had spent time, observing how "forms seem to enfold the watcher and lift (them) towards the sky".⁶

However, sharing more than just their renowned reputations in common, Hockney and Hepworth are also examples of artists whose backgrounds have typically been defined as "regional". This term has become particularly loaded and scrutinised in recent years due to its implication that cultural authority is centralised in the capital, positioning other areas as secondary. In 2022, the Arts Council England attempted to right this wrong in a controversial move that saw a cut in £50m worth of grants in London in order to support other cultural institutions and organisations beyond the capital.⁷ More recently, in October 2024, culture secretary Lisa Nandy revealed plans to extend the Government Art Collection to communities across the country, hoping to "lead by example" and counteract what she dubs as the "eras(ure)" of culture and creativity across "classrooms and (...) constituencies".⁸ Whilst the decision has been welcomed for its attempts to increase access to art and culture, it has been criticised for sweeping over fundamental issues of structural funding. There is also the casual implication of London being the primary "cultural hub" from which art can be dispersed. Sharon Heal, director of the Museum Association, appears to address this when reminding us not to forget the "plenty of great art" and "nationally significant

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "Wednesday briefing: Inside Arts Council England's devastating cuts", The Guardian (23 November 2022)
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/23/wednesday-briefing-inside-arts-council-englands-devastating-cuts>

⁸ "Nandy plans to get Government Art Collection 'out of the basement'", Museum Association
<https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2024/10/nandy-plans-to-get-government-art-collection-out-of-the-basement/> (9th October 2024)

collections” that can already be found in “regional settings” today.⁹

Furthermore, terms like “Levelling Up” and “Regional” have the danger of slipping into an attitude of condescension and class divide that fail to respect all that local areas outside of London have to offer. Unfortunately, these all form part of a reputation the art world runs the risk of already having.

At Fine Art Consultancy, we pride ourselves on representing a range of artists across the UK, whose education, practice and livelihood resides outside of the capital. The reasoning for this lies in the gallery’s overriding focus on the quality of execution and authenticity in artistic practice, something which Director Kathryn Bell believes can be largely found outside of major cities like London, which can function as a sort of “pressure cooker”. We therefore recognise the significance of spaces beyond major urban centres in facilitating the development of an artist’s craft. Furthermore, by showcasing a range of artists, we hope to encompass an array of works that effectively represent the nation’s diverse and varied art scene, as opposed to a “hip London bubble”.

Born and raised in South and North Wales, Kathryn has rooted the gallery in her interest in how artists move between cultures. She was able to develop this during her early career whilst working in both London and Tokyo. During her early career, Kathryn worked in various galleries in both the UK and Japan, whilst running an exchange programme to transport artists between the two nations. Kathryn’s years in Japan nurtured her growing appreciation for the way in which artists also work in the UK.

“On my return to the UK, I continued to be drawn to quality of practice rather than fashion. I often find this outside of cities like London. Increasingly, I am drawn to artists working quietly away from the madding crowd” – *Kathryn Bell*

⁹ *Ibid.*

Liz Hough

One artist who has featured in both of our previous newsletters is Liz Hough. She is a Cornish artist best known for her colourful abstract oil paintings representing the area around St Ives, where she now resides. Navigating and replicating the essence of her surroundings is what drives Hough's work who, much like a poet, looks for "the bones" of the landscape and its other clues. Last year, she described the importance of "feel(ing) in tune with one's surroundings," as the spaces we take for granted are always subject to change. The landscape's livelihood is brought to life by the brushwork, a layering forward and pushing backwards process, that provides the image with a sense of movement. Her work therefore shows signs of meditative introspection, facilitated and shaped by her local surroundings.

Colour and memory also play an intricate dance in her work, with the former recording the latter. In one of her works, *Over the Bridge* (2022) she includes reference to the hills of Trevalgan – the same landscape which inspired Hepworth all those years before. More than just an artistic influence, the space also provided Hough with a sense of closeness during times of grief.¹⁰



It is not only the landscape itself that inspires Hough, but the influence and legacy of other Cornish artists that came before and their interpretations of the surrounding. In *Brushwork* she refers to the likes of Peter Lanyon, Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth as

¹⁰ *Bygone Land*, Liz Hough Exhibition catalogue

having walked across the terrain and “made it their own”.¹¹Hough also ponders the legacy of mining and industry in the region, and the ghosts that may linger. Subsequently, the social and cultural elements of the land become points of engagement in her practice.

Mick Kirkby-Geddes

Another longstanding and much-loved artist of ours is Mick Kirkby-Geddes, a metal sculptor whose designs draw on childhood cartoons and animations. Mick appears to have spent much of his life and developed his career almost exclusively outside of London. Born and raised in Sheffield, his surroundings literally provided him with the materials he needed for his craft from an early age. Initially working with clay, his mother presented him with a cog that she had found on the moors in Sheffield, which was later reused as a candle holder on the windowsill of his family home. Since then, Mick carries this sense of intrigue and intuition forward in his work, fascinated by things that could be found “out and about”.¹²

He currently resides outside Holmfirth in the Pennine Hilles of West Yorkshire. Part of the *Sculpture Lounge*, he can be found in a mechanic workshop surrounded by discarded metal – what to the average eye may appear as “junk”. The workshop is situated in Holmbridge Mill, a historic textile Mill with its origins in the late



¹¹ *BRUSHWORK* (2022), St Ives School of Painting

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1-qQdRhPkA>

¹² Mick Kirkby-Geddes Website <https://mkg.me.uk/about/>

eighteenth-century.¹³ He has also run countless sculpture-making courses that have attracted people from all over the country – making his own workshop a buzzing hub and people-orientated space.

Lindsey Hambleton

A recent addition to the FAC family, and who continuously returns to their natural surroundings for inspiration, is Lindsey Hambleton. Lindsey was born in Derbyshire, a county known for its illustrious parklands and hilly terrains. As a child, Lindsey frequently referenced trees, water and wildlife in her art, and this continues to be the case today. She describes being drawn to “enclosed ‘safe’ landscape spaces” whilst her paintings allude to “specific” and “often well-known place(s)”.¹⁴ Similarly, the colours reflect her response to changing moods and seasons. Furthermore, when it comes to the large-scale composition of her works, Lindsey directly draws from the local woodland’s open space and winter floods.¹⁵



¹³ Yorkshire Industrial Heritage: Holmbridge Mill
<https://yorkshire.u08.eu/cartworth/63194/>

¹⁴ Hayloft Website :
<https://thehayloftgallery.co.uk/artists/lindsey-hambleton/lindsey-hambleton/>;
Hope gallery website
<https://hopegallery.co.uk/product-category/artist/lindsey-hambleton/>

¹⁵ Lindsey Hambleton website: <https://lindseyhambleton.co.uk/about-the-artist/>

Overall, whilst London's cultural reach and privilege is hard to ignore, its perception as the primary space in which one can see their artistic ideals realised and resolved is far from accurate. It is true that despite the difficulties that come with navigating the city, with its high competition and soaring cost of living, it still holds an allure for many that can feel hard to understand at times. Nonetheless, artists today actively continue to seek spaces outside of London, with their unique cultural identities, to provide them with the space, time and inspiration they need to develop their artistic practice, as well as build a sense of community. Ultimately, one would hope that the mere presence of these artists across the UK should be enough to allow for a more holistic and integrated perspective of the art world, where value is moved beyond the capital.

Enigma

From **30th October - 24th November**, the gallery space was filled with the works of two of our newer artists: Carl Melegari and Patrick Barker. The resulting exhibition ***Enigma*** brought the two artists together, displaying their works in conversation with each other.

Both Melegari and Barker live and work in the South West of England and serve as some of our most innovative artists. Despite apparent stylistic and material differences, both artists centre the figure in their work, playing on the notion of ever-changing form and a curious mystery of identity. Their work is never quite what it seems; an 'Enigma'? Perhaps.



Below are two interviews conducted with each artist, delving deeper into their artistic practices and processes.

In Conversation with Carl Melegari



In our first newsletter we provided a brief introduction to one of our artists, Carl Melegari. He joined Fine Art Consultancy in 2022 and has since shown with us at a number of fairs in London and across the globe. Carl is an artist who is not afraid to break with convention, producing "portraits" that lend themselves to something between figurative painting and abstraction. In this Q&A, gallery assistant Alisha O'Brien-Coker chats with Carl about his artistic style and the physical demands of his practice, as well as what it is like to be an artist based in Bristol.

A: Something which really strikes me about your work is the role of physical movement within your pieces. I recently came across one artist, Oscar Murillo, whose work is all about the physical labour behind it. For you, the physical movement is not just about you actually painting, but also about the way in which the paint interacts with the canvas. Why is this physicality so important for you?

C: I think that's just the method I began to paint seriously with. I was more of a plein air painter, so quite sedate, sitting down with a French easel painting the landscapes. It was a very different method behind the painting.

When I started to paint in the studio I never sat down and I prefer to stand up. It has been quite physical in that sense. The method I've adopted has been one where it is an interaction with the surface as

well as the medium and the paint. The exploratory use of the marks alongside with what the paint will do on the canvas. It's almost like a form of attacking the canvas.

A: Can you tell me about that? When you say attacking the canvas? Why is that?

C:I have a walled easel and if you imagine the studio, although not huge, I'm continually going from the back of the studio to the front. I probably spend more time away from the easel than at the easel as that's the natural process that works for myself. For me, it's a rhythm, it's a method and an energetic process. I love the physicality of being able to use the whole of the body, rather than just when I am sitting down and have to be more methodical and almost quite technical in the process. I don't like to be too formulated in mark making. Also, I think when I'm working from further afield, that's where some of the abstracted parts of the imagery sometimes starts to formulate.



A: I had a question regarding the scale of your works, because I've noticed they do vary, but I know that some of them can be around or over a meter in length. What purpose does scale serve for your work and practice, if it does at all?

I think from an expressive perspective, the bigger the canvas, the more exciting the challenge. When I work with a small canvas it's quite difficult because I have to restrain myself. I feel much more at home working on a slightly larger surface. I think if I work on a set size, and that's the size I always work to, it'd be a bit too regimented and too conformed. I do like that variation of scale, because it changes your mental concentration to some degree. My studio

is not probably large enough to accommodate the sizes I'd love to paint.

A: Tell me about the mystery of your sitters and the characters you depict. In a lot of your work, the viewer doesn't get to directly look at the sitter - withholding themselves. But there is also an emotional vulnerability. Could you speak about that a little bit? Is it a conscious decision?

C: It isn't, but it's something I'm more aware of. In the beginning, it was totally just a normal way I painted. I think it's a sensation you feel as a creative that is very hard to put into words. It's an emotional, internal feeling. It's not stereotypically portrait painting that I do. People will say, "Oh, but you paint portraits", but for me it's more of an expressive, emotional observation of a figure. So if I'm going to paint you now, I wouldn't try to specifically make the painting look like yourself. I would paint as I feel at the time.

I'm not painting to a formula or specifically to people's normal requests. My work sits, I think, on a sliding scale of representation to almost abstraction depending on my emotional feelings on the day in the studio. A lot of the more abstract paintings probably do resemble a sitter. I taught life drawing for over 20 years, and from those sessions I took on board an awful lot of information in terms of sitters and methods of observation. But I tend to not not showcase the eyes, because in most portraits, that's the key ingredient as it creates an emotion. But the emotion you have to find from elsewhere in the work.

You yourself have your own interpretation, including in some cases whether it's male or female.

A: I think that really puts a whole new perspective on your work for me. The fact that the viewers themselves are to kind of fill in any gaps that there may be. A quick question on the logistics. Are your sitters painted from your own imagination or real life? Do you have somewhat of a reference point?

C: It's a bit of everything. In all honesty, the beginnings of my works were completely from just my imagination, so they were probably a lot more ambiguous in terms of their overall finish. They were resolved in their own way, but there was no reference point. I've had sitters. My son sits for an awful lot of my work. I have also had friends sit and I use reference material too. I'm not afraid to even use photographic referencing, which there's a taboo about. At the end of day, it's not about what you use, it's how you use it, as not everyone can have the luxury of sitters. In an ideal world, I would choose a sitter as my reference to work from.

A: From talking to you Carl, it seems that freedom in your work is quite a key thing for you.

Yes, it is. I found this new spirit of painting, which is what I wanted to do from when I left school but I wasn't probably brave enough. I've always been a creative person and this is the free spirit in myself. This is what I wanted to do from day one but I've never properly had the opportunity to do so. I can see that when I look at my work I feel I have achieved something that I set out to do.

A: That actually leads on quite nicely, actually, to a question I had about your exhibition at the gallery, Enigma, where you will be shown alongside Patrick Barker, who does the sculptural works. Do you think there is a kind of dialogue that might be going on between yours and Patrick's works?

I have had some shows with works that are definitely quite sculptural, so they sit very comfortably alongside my paintings. I have had a series of shows where there was a sculptor working figuratively and they did sit quite well in harmony.

A: Finally, this newsletter edition attempts to explore the position of artists outside of the capital. I am aware that you were born in Northern Wales. I would like to ask you your thoughts on the current artistic landscape and what your hopes might be for the future when it comes to the artworld beyond London. I also feel a bit hesitant about

asking you this question as I am aware I hold certain ignorances as a Londoner myself.

C: I suppose I have been fortunate to have shown across the board. I have never found it a hindrance living in Bristol. I was fortunate to have a very good gallery that gave me my first showcase in Cardiff, followed by Bristol, Bath and London simultaneously. I have also done a lot of art fairs around the world. So when it comes to the exposure, for me, it didn't seem to matter geographically where I was positioned. When I left college and was working as a commercial artist, most of my colleagues went up to London. I think geographically it has now changed as there are some very interesting galleries dotted around the whole of the UK.

What I will say about Bristol is that we are a great creative hub but there is not a fantastic outlet for fine art artists. I have no idea why. It is a hub for artists of all types, musicians, artists and sculptors. We have communal artist collectives around in Bristol. It is a very creative city, but commercially Bristol is a difficult place to be if you want to showcase your works. But I do think social media will be helpful for younger artists, in terms of allowing them to be based in all sorts of places. Overall, nothing has been negative about being based in Bristol.

In Conversation with Patrick Barker



Patrick Barker is also showcased in our Enigma exhibition. Originally trained as a stone carver, Barker's figures are bursting with character, his work often marked by intriguing dichotomies. At once strange, they are also playful; intricately realistic, yet heavily stylised; and though recognisably human, they are also an enigma. Barker's work consists of an eclectic mix of figurative sculpture, their curious poses and playful gestures leave much to the imagination - our Outrigger (2024) figure is positioned with their leg extended to the side whilst the figures in Noughts and Crosses (2024) fold into each other, disappearing in the process. As for The Distance In Between (2024), the figure extends his two fingers towards each other, humorously echoing Michelangelo's iconic The

Creation of Adam (c.1508) that adorns the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City.

Despite knowing Kathryn since the late 80s, Barker is one of our newer artists in the gallery, after the two reconnected in 2022. Since then, Barker has become an important artist in the gallery, making a distinct contribution in both subject matter and medium. Gallery Assistant Daisy Griffin sat down with Barker to learn more about his artistic processes, his recent ventures into bronze, and where on earth his inspiration for these curious figures comes from.

D: I wanted to start off this Q&A at the beginning, to try and get a sense of when exactly you first came into contact with art - and sculpture as a practice - and whether this was something that can be traced back to your childhood?

P: Yes, well I am currently based just South of Bristol and have always been based in the countryside. Both my mother and father were quite into their art - my dad was a vicar, actually, and had a large vicarage and he used to put on art exhibitions which now include some quite well-known painters. I used to stick a few things in there made out of driftwood or something... I was about 13 or 14. From there, I progressed onto A-Level and then I was off to art school and that's where I studied sculpture. It was called Bath Academy of Arts, sadly no longer with us, but it was just down the road from the Bath stone mine so I could get a block of Bath stone for nothing, for a fiver, make my own chisels, got a hammer, and off I went! And that's really where it all started.

D: Could you tell me a bit more about the importance of the relationship you have formed with stone - French limestone specifically - which is so central to your artistic practice as a sculptor?

P: Though I have used Bath stone in the past, I predominantly work with French limestone these days. It's just great quality stuff and

I have used it for years and years. It's finer, it's stronger. There's a French stone mason who lives near Stroud, so I can go up and get lumps off him. I really love the stuff - it's got a bit of soul, it's got life to it. I feel as though I can do anything I want with it and I'm confident in using it. If I wanted to stick an arm out - such as *Outtrigger* - I'm not worried about the thing snapping.

D: I am always curious with artists as to the extent to which the context in which they grew up and currently live or work in any way has an influence on their artistic practice. Would you say that is the case, if at all, with your work?

P: I actually don't think it really does! My work is really quite different to the ideas of the likes of Henry Moore - incorporating the landscape into the figure - that really doesn't work with me. What I am most concerned about is the stone. One thing about a block of stone is that it's only so big. So, you're sort of restricted by where you can go.

I am always looking to push my skills as a carver. With *The Distance in Between*, where you have the figure's arms bent and two fingers sticking out, I was really pushing myself to achieve that in stone. It made me think of the Sistine Chapel, you know that one? I just thought that imagery was so powerful. So that was the sort of thought process with that one. With the tall fella, that block of stone had been broken off a larger block. With such little stone to play with I thought I could try and get a really tall and thin figure that is twisted slightly. And then I really like the folds in the neck to really accentuate the twisting motion. I'm quite pleased with that one!

D: I am personally drawn to the unusual and almost dream-like quality of your figures. Their poses and expressions make me question and wonder what they're doing and why. Could you tell me a bit more about where your inspiration comes from?

P: I really like patterns and rhythms - there's *Noughts and Crosses*, which is all about the patterns and rhythms you get with one or two or more people and that is reflected all the way through. I just want to have fun with the figure. It's more about what comes into my head in the moment. I've got a sketch book with all these squiggles in it - sometimes it'll be two years down the line and I'll think "Oh, that'll work!". Sometimes you only realise an idea that is great two years after you've had that idea. And I don't really know why that will be the case - why was it not a good idea two years ago? It's about how I am feeling at the time. In my head they are quite self-explanatory. But I guess there is this enigma quality to them. I find it tricky talking about my work... you just kind of do it.

D: I definitely notice multiple dichotomies in your work. I would say the same for their more realistic features - such as the folds and creases in skin - contrasting with the complete smoothness of their surfaces and the more stylised quality of their bodies.

P: Their poses are often like a fleeting glimpse of something like the *Outrigger* one. There's a sort of dichotomy - you want to do things that are slightly wonky, but then they're smooth and cuddly. There's a slight conflict about it. In your head you think, "Oh stone, that's a really hard material" - but then you're trying to give it a softness by the bends and the folds.

D: Following on from that, we are very excited to have two new bronze works of yours in the gallery and included in the *Enigma* exhibition. Has this been a recent venture, branching out into this new material, and how would you describe the process compared to your work with stone?

P: Yeah absolutely. It's a recent thing partly because I am less constrained financially at the moment, having done well during

lockdown and since. It has certainly given me more freedom to explore ideas that I otherwise couldn't have in my stone works.

D: Given the precariousness of stone as a material?

P: Exactly. In pushing off in a slightly different direction, it has allowed me to think more about what else I can do. I am so used to working with stone that I know exactly how I can work it, but with bronze the process is essentially the opposite. Modelling requires building up, not building down. It's allowed me to consider: What makes something better than something else? If I can stick a leg out one way, or if I don't like something, I can change it. It makes my practice quite different. And I am learning, again, about a different medium. What I can and can't do, what will work and won't work, which I quite enjoy.

D: It's definitely nice to keep evolving as an artist. I also guess, with stone, the block really determines the dimensions that the sculpture will take, from the offset, in a way that is much more restricting than working with clay and bronze.

P: Exactly. In transforming the sculpture from clay to bronze, through the lost-wax technique, the final sculpture will end up looking slightly different. I am getting used to understanding how the original clay sculpture might end up looking in bronze. So, the process is very important. Whereas with stone you're just chipping away at a lump of stone. That whole material-change from one to the other and how that affects the final piece is something I am learning about. That is quite exciting, so I'm doing some more! It's an ever-evolving thing and I feel a lot freer. It's also about breaking down the barriers of that smooth finish quality of my stone sculptures. So that's, again, questioning my practice.

D: And so where do you see yourself taking this further?

P: I will still do my stone because that's me; I am a stone carver. But I am keen to carry on and develop the bronze thing and try things out and see where I might end up. With clay, if you don't like it, you can just chuck it in the bin and start again! You can afford to take different sorts of risks with clay. So we'll see where that goes.

D: Just a quick one on your titles and their role in our engagement with your sculptures. I personally love how your titles are almost part of the artwork in that they are not purely descriptive but can sometimes clarify or confuse our interpretation of the work. How would you describe their role in your work?

P: Yeah, I know what you mean. With *The Distance in Between*, I got the title before I did the sculpture. I had a block of stone a certain size and carved out the sculpture based on that title. *Dropping In* was another example of this. Whereas other ones are titled afterwards like *Noughts and Crosses* - it really reminded me of the percentage sign, so that one came later. So sometimes the finished thing informs me of the title and sometimes the title is where it starts.

D: Any final remarks on your work and practice?

P: I guess you never know how they're going to start and you just have to go for it. I really like that momentum you get, it's all-consuming. You've just got to make a start and trust your own instinct. I've got to work to a deadline, otherwise I'll just drift.



Our Spotlight Works in our 2024 Christmas Show

All of the works here form part of Fine Art Consultancy's Christmas Show, running between the 1st - 24th December.

Liz Hough's *Arriving in Broken Hill*, 2022, oil on canvas, 100 x 100cm (framed)

This relatively large, abstract piece by Hough demonstrates her charming and multifaceted approach when it comes to representing the land. *Arriving in Broken Hill* consists of a warm colour palette, with glimmers of a cooler blue being found at various points. Typical of Hough's work, the varied brushstrokes and layering process provides the piece with a sense of movement, whilst abstracted geometrics give us the outline of natural terrain. Meanwhile, the work's title reminds us that this landscape holds a metaphysical quality for the artist, one imbued with emotion. £4650



Sir Peter Blake's *Marilyn (with Diamond Dust)*, 2010, screen print in colours with diamond dust, somerset wove paper, signed and numbered, 81/150, 95 x 75.5cm (framed)

A pioneering figure of the British Pop Art movement, Sir Peter Blake garnered international fame in the 1960s and continues to work to this day, maintaining a high and much sought after body of work. As was typical throughout the movement, Blake incorporated

elements of popular culture into fine art, often using collage and mixed media techniques to do so.



Arguably one of the most iconic emblems of popular culture of her time, Marilyn Monroe captured the attention of Pop artists both in Britain and across the Atlantic. In many ways, Blake's *Marilyn (with Diamond Dust)* can be seen as an homage to Monroe, exploring the relationship between celebrity icon and an adoring fan (Blake having grown up visiting the cinema with his mother and becoming fascinated with Hollywood

stars in the process).¹⁶ However, Blake's portrayal of the star also appears subtler, more personal, and even nostalgic when seen alongside that of his contemporaries. The resulting print captures a playful sense of affection coupled with a strain of sentimentality that runs through the work.

Blake finishes off the screen print with a layer of diamond dust, drawing attention to Monroe's iconic blonde curls which frame the star's face. The vibrancy of the red backdrop is picked up by the slightly darker, cherry-red lipstick applied to her lips, a vibrant hue that pops from the canvas and draws us into Monroe's charming allure. A highly collectable piece, *Marilyn (with Diamond Dust)* contributes an eye-catching pop of glamour and charm to our 2024 Christmas Show. £3500

¹⁶ <https://www.wengcontemporary.com/artwork/peter-blake-marilyn-with-diamond-dust-2010>

William Tillyer's *York Vases, Blue Vase*, 1982, woodcut, 110 x 90cm

William Tillyer (b. 1938) is one of Britain's most celebrated artists. With his varied and constantly evolving style, Tillyer has tackled and worked with a range of different mediums in his role as a printmaker and painter. His work is known for its reinterpretation of traditional subject matter, whilst also decentering the artist in the process. His work is currently held in major collections such as Tate and MoMA.

York Vases, Blue Vase is another example of Tillyer's experimental approach, whereby the subject matter is redefined in relation to its surrounding. The presence of light is alluded to by the silhouette of the vase that appears sprayed across the wall. Like Tillyer's work more broadly, a tactile quality is brought to the forefront, providing an emphasis on texture. £2750



Yiching Chen's *Zéphyr*, 2024, Nihonga pigments on paper stretched onto board, 68.5 x 98.5cm

A recent addition to both Chen's oeuvre and the gallery's collection, *Zephyr* captures the beauty of the Wisteria plant blowing in the wind. As is typical throughout her practice, Chen uses the traditional Japanese technique, Nihon-ga, to depict this scene. One of the rare contemporary Nihon-ga artists working in Europe today, Chen previously lived in Japan where she studied under renowned Japanese masters. Moving to Paris in 2004, and drawing on the ideas of some of the late 19th century Impressionists, Chen's artistic practice combines distinct cultural traditions to create captivating landscapes that ultimately have a vividly contemporary feel.



The slightly washed quality and powerful sense of layering in *Zephyr* create a strong sense of space and depth within the canvas, allowing you to get lost in the scene. Chen captures the sensation of a breeze through her command of colour, with bursts of purples and blues used across the

canvas. A small scale reproduction of the work simply does not do it justice! You will have to come by the Gallery during our 2024 Christmas show to have a look at it, up close and in-person, in all its glory. £8000

Vanessa Pooley's *Mother with Corrugated Hair*, bronze, 2024, 39 x 23 x 36cm

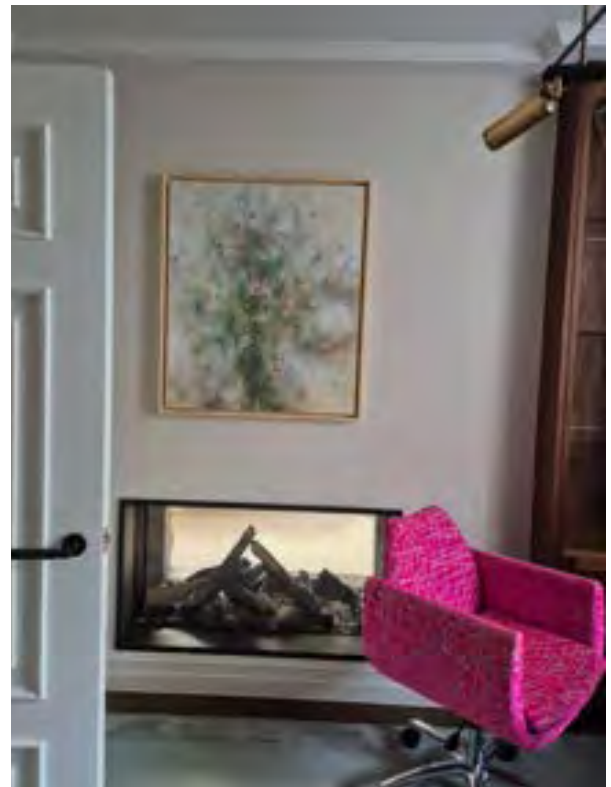
Another new addition to the gallery comes from one of our longest standing artists, Vanessa Pooley. The often tender and intimate relationship between a mother and child is central to Pooley's practice as a sculptor, a relationship that holds particular pertinence around the festive season. The blue patination of our version of the sculpture contributes a vibrant burst of colour within the gallery space. £4650



Consultancy Work

At Fine Art Consultancy, we have recently been working on new and personalised projects in collaboration with local Interior Designers for their clients. This is an important part of our work and along with the international fairs is another way that our artists reach new audiences.

Highlights from a recently completed project at a family home:



If you are interested in collaborating with us on design projects for your clients, please do not hesitate to contact us for further information!

What to look out for in early 2025..

Art Fairs:

Fresh Art Fair, Ally Pally London, 29th Jan – 3rd Feb 2025

AAF New York, 17th March – 25th March 2025

AAF Hampstead, 5th – 11th May 2025

AAF Austin TX, 12th May – 20th May 2025

Shows:

20th C Modern British

Spotlight on William Scott

5 February – 23 March

A Postcard from Japan

Yiching Chen & Yuko Moriyama

2 April – 25 May

Printmaking: A Review

Gallery Printmakers

4 June – 6 July



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