

THE PIPER GALLERY

The Edge of Painting

Friday 29th November – Monday 30th December 2013

The Piper Gallery is excited to present *The Edge of Painting*, an exhibition curated by Tess Jaray.

The Edge of Painting brings together 12 artists, all of whom work at the margins of painting. A variety of mediums are explored. Painting - in the traditional sense of applying paint to a surface - has not been used in any of the exhibited works. Instead we encounter sculpture, print, film, metalwork, and digital media - an extensive array of works that show 'painting' in its contemporary forms, marking how far painting has come, and celebrating how it continues to transform.

Through the chosen work, Jaray explores the challenges facing painters today - a desire to create something relevant and consequential whilst aesthetically unique - that have been met with optimism, energy and an imaginative choice of both medium and subject.

The show highlights the transience of definitions within art. Guidelines become ever more fluid as new media becomes increasingly accessible. Jaray poses the question; what does it mean for a work to be defined as a painting? How have the boundaries moved? Are we able to identify underlying sustained values that remain at the core of painting's practice in spite of its changing aesthetics? In Jaray's words, '*But then no one ever claimed – or did they? – that the stuff of painting, the pigment itself, held more magic than stone or steel, or sound or words.*'

Through *The Edge of Painting*, we are invited to view a sample of current works that demonstrate the breadth of innovation within painting right now - considered works that are actively testing, exploring and experimenting; flexing painting's extremities – something highlighted by the diversity of approaches and methods within the show. Unknown names are shown beside others with more prominence – a dialogue of statement and challenge showing that this fertile optimism within painting today is wide reaching and across the board. It is this continued reciprocal exchange that is the crucial momentum driving the boundaries outwards.

Jaray herself works on the edge of painting, exploring the patterns of the world and the patterns of the mind and how these reflect each other. *The Edge of Painting* also takes us on a journey through patterns, from the subtly layered congruent disks of Tim Head's *Cluster (2013)* and Giulia Ricci's unruly geometrics, to the more organically scattered painterly marks and unusual medium of Cornelia Parker's *Poison and Antidote Drawing*. A number of works test painting's stretch into three dimensions - to varying degrees - from the subtle relief of Jaray's own laser-cut painting, Cathy de Monchaux's frieze-like piece and Rana Begum's *Fold No.441 Fold*, to Tom Lomax's bright sculptural print and Onya McCausland's *Support*. Nike Savvas' *Silvery* and Sophie Michael's 3 minute film *Carousel* manipulate both light and physical movement. John Stezaker's collage *Edge* raises further questions about the medium of 'painting' as Martin Creed explores the relationship between colour and shape.

What does it mean to class something as a painting? This exhibition offers no answers, but it does pose many questions. As Tess Jaray says in her foreword to the accompanying catalogue: '*The works shown here are not bound together in terms of style, but perhaps by something we may call progression, and if not progression then maybe change... Perhaps far into the future what is being made now will come to be called 'painting', and we will look back and see ourselves as primitives of the new painting age.*'