

LION X LAMB
Est. 2011

Lion and Lamb Gallery
46 Finsbury Street, Hoxton
London N1 6LG
www.lionandlambgallery.com

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APAINTING EXHIBITION
TREVOR BURGESS
AIDA RUBIO GONZALEZ
LEO MAELZER
MARK CROFTON BELL
MARGUERITE HORNER
JOCK MACFADYEN
STEPHEN CARTER
MATTHEW KRISHANU
TANMOY SAMANTA

IN
THE
CITY

19 September to 11 October 2014

Lion and Lamb Gallery

46 Fanshaw Street, Hoxton

London N1 6LG

www.lionandlambgallery.com

A painting exhibition

More than half the world's population now lives in cities. This exhibition brings together a selection of artists whose painting practice explores the experience of living in a city.

The exhibition asserts the continuing resourcefulness of painting as a medium through which subjective and social experiences can be precariously bound into complex representations of the contemporary world. It takes an international perspective, drawing upon images of cities in the UK, Latin America, the United States, Canada and the Indian subcontinent. With its expansive notion of representation, it includes images that transcend specifics of place: images of urban spaces recuperated or assembled from memories, photography, the media and the mind of the artist.

Trevor Burgess Curator

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Introduction

by **Robert Harbison**

In the eighteenth century panoramic views of cities came very easily. Canaletto could do Venice of course, but he was also undaunted by London. At some time in the next century the largest cities appeared to escape this kind of comprehension. Now they could be understood only in bits. They were flying apart and the best one could do was to compile an encyclopaedia of fragments, like Henry Mayhew's, or Walter Benjamin's in the following century. By the time we reach the present, it comes naturally to experience the city as disconnected moments positively defined by ragged edges and incompleteness.

The nine artists in the present exhibition are tremendously diverse but they all see urban space as fractured. This is least evident in Trevor Burgess' houses in comfortable squarish formats, like random glimpses of London life, which become more disconcerting the more of them you have. It helps to know their source in estate agents' ads from local newspapers. That's where the slightly odd tilt or strange cropping came from in the first place, now masked by the elevation into paint. The crude surface of the source has been replaced; the flat composition survives, but means something else, now more aware of itself.

Stephen Carter's 'word' paintings have a similar source, their words collected from magazine covers on station newsstands,

taken home and transferred to canvas as if on a venerable, more permanent wall somewhere. Here the richness of surface suggests other messages seeping through from underneath or laid on top, one cannot always tell which. Carter's is not the only work in the show based on something like monochrome, finding a whole universe of tones in a limited palette. Perhaps there's a parallel in all the filmmakers drawn to make colour films which suppress obvious variety of hue (Melville's *Army of Shadows*, Ceylan's *Once upon a time in Anatolia*), as if black and white were purer and truer, even in colour.

Marguerite Horner sometimes does this in a pale palette like an overexposure. More than once she sees her slice of urban space through an obstruction, like a window that throws light fixtures onto the sky where they become astral bodies. Or an out of focus pillar and awkward cables somewhere in the suburbs. Trevor Burgess's houses had slices of cars caught near the edge of the picture. Horner makes a row of SUVs into diverse individuals, as close as we'll get to personality. It's disturbing that the most interesting, intricate paint devotes itself to describing these dumb beasts abandoned in a parking lot.

A monstrous pink Cadillac of the 60s is the hero of Aída Rubio González's night-view in the raunchiest of

all the cities shown. She's the only real colourist in the usual meaning of the word in the group; here it's pink turning purple, sea green and orange. This painting is probably nearest to a complicated narrative of any in the show, but it is only scattered fragments of people collaged, not into a recognisable situation, but pieces of different ones. The street feels like a swimming pool but supports the car and the guy talking on his mobile phone. Everything swims in and out of focus, and the nondescript space feels both empty and full.

A different fascination with cars and with car parks is present in Jock McFadyen's relief which is like a model or maybe two models on different scales mounted vertically on the wall. This begins with a found object, a battered board that picked up some of its surface features before McFadyen found it. It is the only work in the show where we can wonder which decay is actual, and which contrived by the artist. There are two clear parts: a soggy marsh in gloomy colours, and a level platform ruled off in neat parking spaces dotted with tiny models of the same car in different colours as if you were looking down from two thousand feet. So it's a parking lot improbably placed up against a marsh, or a diagram of tame versus wild.

Lee Maelzer is another painter who finds infinite variety in what you might mistake for tan monochrome at a quick glance and who delights in the flotsam and jetsam left over from

human occupation of the earth. She paints complex assemblages of debris that have lain there so long their separate components are becoming indistinguishable, conditions which allow the maximum play of pure paint.

In the work of both Mark Crofton Bell and Tanmoy Samanta fleeting fragments of urban experience become delicate ghosts. Bell works this magic on photographs clipped from the newspaper of a police car in flames or a pile of snow in the street. Samanta subjects his material to a more inscrutable process. A fish-rocket that carries a big hook and three small houses is called 'my childhood home' and two cars fish-like in shape or anyway creatural are called 'ghosts', a name which fits all his hallucinatory works. Perhaps they are steeped in urban reality, but only in order to escape it.

That is also what I take from Matthew Krishanu's beautiful image of a kite leaving a rooftop and a fringe of tropical trees behind. This is not really a place but an edge of one where the city resident is at home because he can imagine breaking free of it completely.

Robert Harbison lives in London. He has written a series of books about architecture, art and literature including 'Eccentric Spaces', 'Deliberate Regression' and 'Reflections on Baroque'. His latest, 'Ruins and Fragments', will be published by Reaktion Books in spring 2015.

Trevor Burgess

Trevor Burgess lives and works in London, UK.



A Place to Live 1, 2, 3 and 21
2011, oil on plywood
40 x 45cm each

Mark Crofton Bell

Mark Crofton Bell lives and works in Toronto, Canada.



29-12-10 (Pile)
watercolour
on Bristol paper
23 x 30.5 cm

Stephen Carter

Stephen Carter lives and works in London.



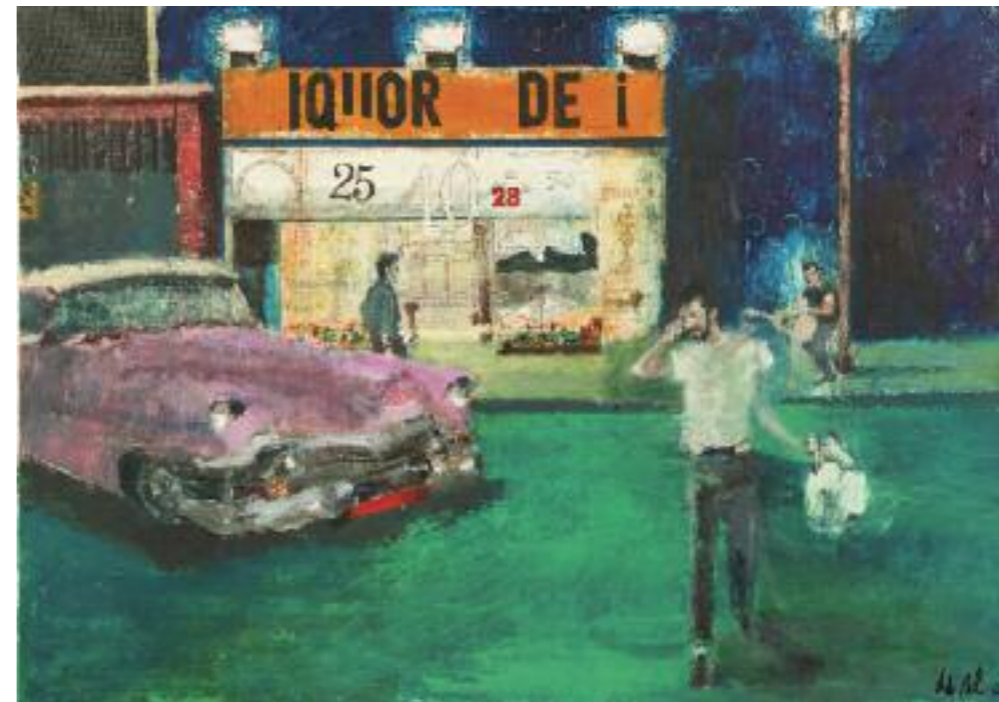
Shopper Face
2000, acrylic + oilbar on canvas
35.5 x 30.5 cm



Guitar Breasts
2001, acrylic + oilbar on canvas
35.5 x 30.5 cm

Aída Rubio González

Aída Rubio González has made paintings of Latin American and Spanish cities. She lives and works in Salamanca, Spain.



En el ocaso
2010, oil on canvas
65 x 95cm

Marguerite Horner

Marguerite Horner has made paintings of New York and of London, where she lives and works.

Forward
2013, oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm



Void
2012, oil on linen
50 x 50 cm



The insubstantial man
2006, oil on canvas
50 x 50 cm

Matthew Krishanu

Matthew Krishanu was brought up in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He lives and works in London.



Bird
2014, oil and acrylic on board
30 x 40cm

Lee Maelzer

Lee Maelzer lives and works in London.

Scavengers
2014, oil on canvas
30 x 50cm

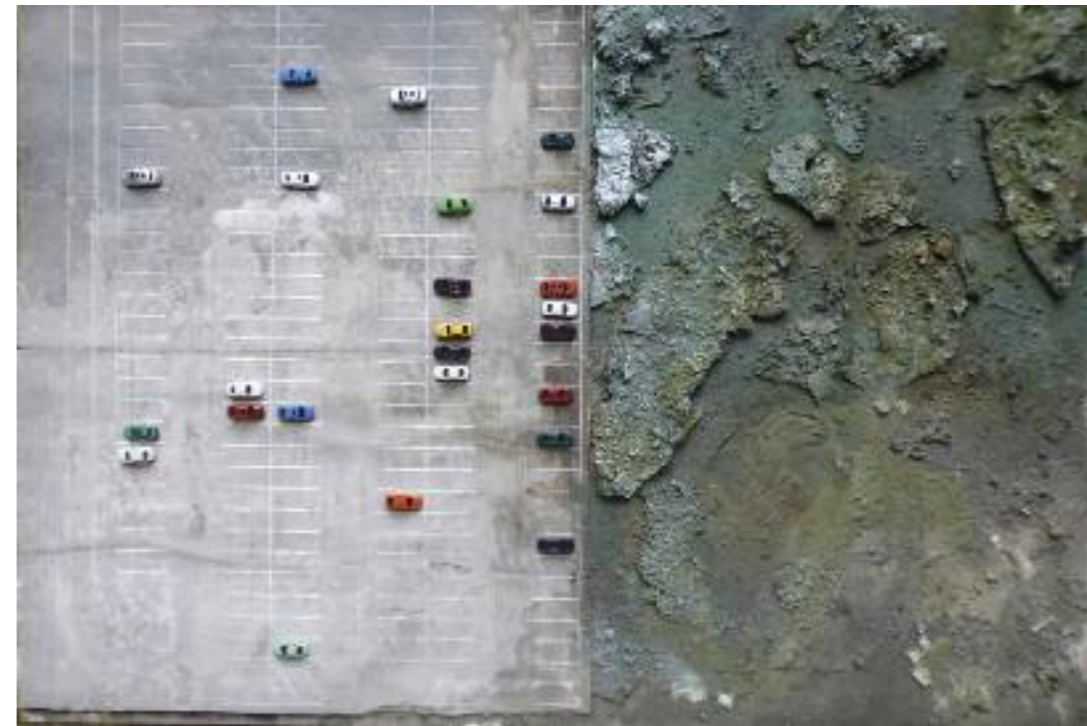


Core
2014, oil & oil pastel
on linen
51 x 40 cm

Jock McFadyen

Jock McFadyen lives and works in London and Edinburgh.

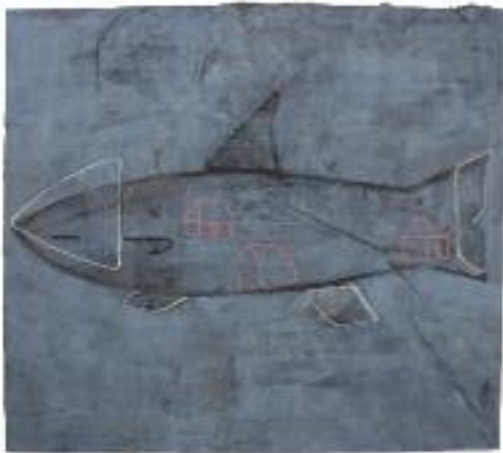
Car Park 10
2014, mixed media
on found object
52 x 80cm



Tanmoy Samanta

Tanmoy Samanta lives and works between New Delhi and Santiniketan, India.

My childhood home
2014, gouache
on rice paper
24 x 30cm



The globe
2014, gouache
on rice paper
24 x 30cm



Ghosts
2014, gouache
on rice paper
24 x 30cm

Mark Crofton Bell is represented by
General Hardware Contemporary, Toronto.

Stephen Carter is represented by
Beardsmore Gallery, London.

Aída Rubio González is represented by
Rosenfeld Porcini Gallery, London.

Tanmoy Samanta is represented by
Gallery Espace, New Delhi.

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