

Looking...then seeing

When reading the title of this exhibition, you are asked to consider the idea that *there are no things only relationships*.

The works on show are not just a reflection on this theme, and you are not a passive observer. You are participating as well, by looking and seeing and becoming aware of your thoughts, your feelings and how these form your worldview.

To 'see' that *there are no things only relationships*, is not just a concept, it is a perspective - a worldview the curators want to discuss in relation to artists and

viewers. You can either observe a world as broken down into an infinite number of things, or you can see how everything is intertwined and in relationship.

It is a conscious choice, and a creative act, to question and reconsider your perception in this way.

We are living at a time when we are all deeply affected by a worldview with a long history that predominately sees the world and everything in it as a thing, or collection of things, to be manipulated and used. But that is being challenged. This is a growing

type of conscience – a position we can adopt that includes the awareness of relationship as fundamental.

An awareness of the interconnected nature of everything, including ourselves, is not a given and is still a radical stance to adopt. But it can provide a deeper sense of meaning that a materialistic relationship to life has eroded.

We hope you enjoy the exhibition and welcome and encourage conversations around the theme of the show.

The Exhibition

When considering the concept of this art exhibition it is important to understand that this concept is not one of merely examining the physical world, but rather the examination of the relationships between all the objects, living and non-living, that exist in the world.

This exhibition seeks to explore the idea that the world is composed of a complex network of relationships between all entities, and that these relationships are continuously evolving in an interconnected system.

The paintings in this exhibition draw from a variety of approaches. Common to the artists is the willingness to take risks, and to be less concerned about the finished piece, focussing on the process or journey of discovery along the way.

Choosing to work in this purely intuitive fashion can allow access to a more holistic sense of self, in harmony with universal forces and patterns that a more rational or known approach tends to inhibit.

We encourage you to explore the idea that all things in the world, from the smallest particles to the largest celestial bodies, including ourselves, are connected and interact in complex and ever-changing ways.

*“We cannot understand reality by disassembling it and examining its parts. The whole is more than the sum of the parts”¹ Iain McGilchrist - author of *The Matter with Things* on why the world is made of relationships, not things.*

The exhibition is an opportunity to explore relationship in the fullest sense of the word in a creative and engaging way and asks the viewer to be involved in bringing the artwork to life as much as the artist is in making it.

There is a shift in contemporary art away from the traditional notions of abstraction towards a new form of realism that takes into account the societal classifications being questioned in contemporary times.

This change is linked to a New Materialist² thinking that challenges the modernist tradition and emphasizes the agency³ of the finished piece itself.

This is a response to a moral and ethical discussion concerning humanity and existentialism in a post-humanist world⁴ (placing humanity back as one of many natural species), in which not just the author, but also the artist are secondary.

The dialogue around the artwork now involves the reader and the object itself - the ability of the

object to exist and communicate independently, of its own will.

As curators, we want to highlight that the exhibited piece is a communicating object that has agency. Most artists are in a deep creative relationship while engaged with their work. The 'to-and-fro' with the work informs and connects them through inner non-verbal languages.

Once complete and in view, the artwork enters into a subjunctive discourse that is open to interpretation from the reader's perspective to see and shape according to their interest and cognisance.

¹ <https://iai.tv/video/why-the-world-is-in-constant-flux-iain-mcgilchrist>

² <https://philosophyofmovementblog.com/2019/11/19/what-is-new-materialism/>

³ For the discussion on agency, see p57, in pp49-57, in *Thinking Through Painting*, Isabelle Graw, et.al. Sternberg Press, 2012

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-humanism>