

## *TIMES TIDE*

The exhibition *TIMES TIDE* emerged out of a long period of painterly and formal experimentation in subjects drawn from both the anecdotal close at hand and underfoot, as well as the more expansive arena of the mutable river landscape, privileging gesture alongside the constraints of the geometric.

Ostensibly these are pictures of silhouetted structures and ambiguous shadows juxtaposed against watery realms. A primary intent is locating the image within an emblematic phenomenal field and to invite the viewer see the world, as if in a glimpse, through my eyes. The series acknowledges Samuel Beckett's paraphrased statement "...the task of the artist is to find a form that accommodates the mess (of the world)" as each of the images isolate a fraction of that 'mess'. The momentarily stilled phenomena of the images - apparitions in effect – create a contrasting encounter with our world's usual flurry of sensory overload.

The recent *Shoegazer* series was close in their fidelity to urban subject, taking detailed cues from the weathered, incidental surfaces of pavement and hoarding. In this parallel series of paintings a deliberately more stylized and blurred painterly touch has allowed the imagery to hover obliquely. The painted borders that enclose each image act as a deliberate distancing device, in their sly nod to framing and to the photographic. In occupying some temporal yet indeterminate zone, the images point to our experience of a wider landscape as transitional and often disorientating, but also episodic.

The title *TIMES TIDE* acknowledges the passage of time and attendant mortality. But it underlines a contradiction, between the Western concept of 'times-arrow', the state of perpetual movement forward with its inevitable elegiac undertone and the cyclical nature of tides forever-return, inherent in multifarious aspects of the natural world.

As such, these new paintings should be placed within the cyclical continuum in my practice where they embrace an evident return to an earlier organic, quasi-naturalist subject, via a suturing of landscape elements and a monochromatic saturation of colour. Implicit is the acknowledgement of their engagement with space and time where fractional and fleeting sensations are often most resonant when we delve back into memory. As simply stated by the painter Alex Katz, any concept of objectivity, order or realism, is "variable".

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