

South Parade

Ned Armstrong | *Wake* | 1 December 2022 - 21 January 2023

The title for the exhibition, '*Wake*', is a word that points in different directions. On one hand it may be a call to us to wake, to open our eyes. An act relevant to painting; the art of seeing.

In this body of work a variety of images are depicted: a drinking head twisting in intoxication, a pair of dogs camouflaged against floorboards, a clamour of gamblers at the races, figures talking beneath skeletal trees in the park. Drawing drags these forms back to the studio for further regurgitation. People and place shift between reality and imagination, photographs shift into short hand and recognisable forms disintegrate into abstraction. Disparate places/people/objects are cajoled together, creating a vision of the world between fantasy, memory and reality. Throughout this process lines shift and meanings change, such is the atmosphere of discovery and pursuit that is at heart of what it is to make images.

'*Wake*' may also refer to a funeral. I am reminded of my Grandmother's funeral in Ireland. In the day the extended community visited her. Her face was made up by my aunts, in her hands her mobile phone, she a great lover of people and conversation, but also so she might call us should she feel better. As evening came, friends, and extended family departed and close family remained, staying with her throughout the night. There is a tradition of staying up with the dead the night before burial, and so we sat round in peace remembering her, as day became night.

The intimacy of moments such as this is something that art in its most general sense strives to communicate.

There is a stark quality to our day to day lives, we technologically advanced, detached and protected from certain natural rhythms. We extend the day with artificial lighting, we extend the territory with cars, trains and airplanes, we extend the community with our phones. *The Long and Winding Road* is a depiction of such an optimisation, a tube entrance bathed in artificial light entered each day on the journey to work, the title though suggesting something more personal, shared and romantic.

It would perhaps be easy to parcel these things out, these parts of ourselves, parts of the world. But these places exist outside, inside and all around us, each as much of a lie and as much of a truth as each other. See them here shown together.

Ned Armstrong

Ned Armstrong (b. 1992, London) lives and works in London and graduated from the Turps Banana Painting Programme (2021) and Edinburgh College of Art (2016). Recent solo exhibitions include Eyeful, Mouthful, Peaceful, A.P.T Gallery (London, 2022) and All Over, Middlesex Presents (London, 2018). Recent select group exhibitions include Hand in Glove, A.P.T Gallery (London, 2022), Bloomberg New Contemporaries, South London Gallery (London, 2021), Turps Banana, Thameside Gallery (London, 2021), Glass Houses, Mcbeans Orchid Nursery (East Sussex, 2020) East Sussex, 2020.

Left to Right:

1. *Queen of the Slipstream*, 2022. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 110 x 150 cm
2. *Waiting for the Dog*, 2022. Oil on canvas, 90 x 72 cm
3. *The Long and Winding Road*, 2022. Oil on canvas, 133 x 130 cm
4. *Jesse*, 2022. Oil on canvas, 57 x 37 cm
5. *Plumpton Races*, 2022. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 120 x 190 cm