



Caesar Florence-Howard

“New facts emerge”

12 October – 9 November 2024

Minerva Gallery

There is a musicality to the work of Florence-Howard, but he is not bedridden to it. Equally weighted in his impression-making — the legato and the score — is a more scientific practice of identifying place, pitch and rhythm. This is stripped down, pure form of thought, revealing essential components — the mechanics. A mechanical reproduction, literally staving off the facade.

In a way these could be viewed as blueprints — certainly total works of art, because these arrangements are at once effective conditions and reveal to us the total machine. Almost alchemical — except that he pulls himself back at the last moment by working with the sculptured space, the reconstructed space.

Various substructures and layers in variously articulated topographies. And for the reader, there is also dissolution — perhaps for him in practice, or for both certainly, everything is provisional. And while certain events, or truths, are given — the painting dissolves, and the spaces are possibilities and unknowns. Perhaps these are paintings with infinite endings or infinite pasts.

In occasional motifs, indeterminate but not incidental painterly daubs, he avoids *shapes become shapes, forms become form* — in the sense that there is this opportunity for them to be something, become something, be something to me and something else to you.

Nature here is metamorphic as sculpture or canvas — here from nature to plastic. These are not oil paintings, they are acrylic and glue, so there is a plasticky quality that offsets the purity of nature found in so much of art history, and here. And like ‘All Thought emits a Throw of the Dice’¹ for the artist, also true for those who look within themselves while contemplating the natural world sublime. These leaves and rocks anchor the work over a background of vacancy, blankness and scores. In some works, the impression is the rubbing of the frame stretcher bars through to the canvas. He is interested in rubbing back to what is under the painting itself, which is the painting frame itself.

Here is a pitch, and here is a blankness. And it is the viewer who fills in the gaps, their illusions and truths. This is the criterion, to have the true knowledge is the truth, to see this truth. The points are clear, but the projected self is pending in judgment, to reject or accept, or suspend judgment in them. And so, the painting is constantly in a changing state. It is not set, and it cannot be known.

Alchemically, the painting — acrylic, sand, glue, liquid latex — changes daily, in different light and environmental conditions. So every day is changing.

He is not an irreverent artist really, he is extending, pushing to find the tenets, experimenting. What do we know, and how can we know.

~Rebecca Holborn