

BQ

Andrew Kerr "Much in the way of June"

Opening 29.11.2025, 6–9 pm

Exhibition 2.12.–31.1.2026

Andrew Kerr's practice has generally been understood as one rooted in the hermetic space of the studio, with the artist returning to a modest set of painterly materials – ready to be tried and tested again. Paintings on paper have been a focus over recent years, in size and theme related to the tradition of easel painting – from Georges Braque to Prunella Clough and Raoul de Keyser. These lyrical works depict relationships between shapes and colours organised in relatively shallow pictorial space. Their enigmatic final forms can resemble vessels, emblems, still lifes or landscapes.

While sculpture has played a part in his work, a new approach appears to have unfolded across the spaces of BQ. Andrew was in discussion about the exhibition with the gallery for several months and stayed in Berlin for the majority of November to develop the installation. His method is site-specific, with the gallery gradually becoming a kind of stage set, its character altered, adorned and rearranged like shapes on a picture plane. In this sense, appearances are deceiving, and strong connections can be made with his studio work.

Drawing is a foundational activity for Andrew and he begins his days at the studio with it. Choosing a single word, he repeatedly outlines its letterforms, pulling at their legibility, submerging their meaning in compositional play on the page. The abstraction of type becomes a conduit for pictorial ideas and figurative associations. Andrew's interventions in BQ – the vocabulary of images, cut-outs and sculptures – are the direct result of this routine, transferred from page, to painting, to architecture. He offers a clue in his title, letting us in on the secret that the word *June* is the constituting element of recent drawings, and by extension the paintings and sculptures that compose the exhibition.

Andrew prompts connections between these different media through his considered installation. He has been working on a sketchbook of speculative set designs, casually noted as they occurred to him. As with the letterform drawings, he never had any intention to let these see the light of day. Ideas spawned from these designs take shape across BQ and help to choreograph visitors' movement through its spaces.

There is a tension in the paintings and sculptural additions to the gallery, with both including shapes which nearly touch or which meet boundaries at oblique angles. Entrances and portals – pictorial and spatial – are recurring motifs. In one zone, an entrance is blocked by a slanted door-like object which is too large to fit correctly in the aperture. This uncanny interruption gives the space a kind of provisional character and guides the viewer through BQ in a new way. The gradated tones of its plywood sections echo the sedimentary construction of space in a nearby painting, moving from ground, to landscape, and up to the sky.

In contrast, a doorway elsewhere welcomes visitors with a miniature MDF pillar and awning formed from a triangle and quadrilateral. In the same room, an eight-sided card wheel rotates in the opening to another corridor, its symmetry broken by a series of small papier-mâché discs. These resemble dinner plates replete with cranberry-coloured scraps or morsels. In another space, a large wallmounted papier-mâché arch resembles the reversed loop of a letter 'J' or the sheltered alcove of an 'N', reminding us of the installation's linguistic origins. It is echoed by a ghostly off-white area in an adjacent painting.

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With its strong connections between two-dimensional and three-dimensional work, the exhibition recalls Kurt Schwitters' *Merzbau*, the architectural extension of the German artist's collages, referred to by Schwitters as *Merzbild*. *Merzbau* was his studio and home in Hanover between 1923-1937, and it consisted of an everchanging set of adornments, architectural grottos and interrelated sculptural forms. By working in BQ for a month and making a studio of the gallery Andrew creates a comparably dynamic situation with pieces on paper, paintings and other interventions working together. His attitudes in painting find a correlative in architectural space, and two largely hidden aspects of his studio work – letterform drawings and stage set design – are central to these developments.

A catalogue featuring the letterform drawings accompanies the exhibition.

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