

Town and Country

David Hepher

Flowers gallery, Kingsland Rd, London
21 February – 29 March, 2014



David Hepher, *Le Champ Grand with Sun and Sunflowers*, 2012, Oil on Canvas, 198 x 427 cm / 78 x 168 1/4 in

LONDON, 4th February 2014. Artist David Hepher, well-known for his architecturally-inspired works depicting residential inner city tower blocks, recently stated that he actually considered himself to be a landscape painter. However this was not in the traditional sense of the word, but in the way that he sets out to capture the scene around him, whether it is a raw cityscape, or in the depths of the French countryside.

To showcase these parallels, captured in full scale works, often as huge diptychs and triptychs, Flowers gallery will offer a fascinating insight into both, in a special exhibition entitled: *Town & Country* at their Kingsland Road gallery from 21st February – 29th March, 2014.

What makes the works so absorbing is that Hepher treats his rural depictions in the same way as he encapsulates the city, incorporating materials from the surroundings into his work, such as concrete in his urban works and earth in his rural pieces, which alongside graffiti motifs, allows the viewer to experience differing levels of reality and in turn have unique encounters with his works.

In a hint to Brutalism, Hepher chooses residential tower blocks as his subjects, as these buildings have a 'pulse' - they are filled with people who live there and as their lives progress, so does the building - it begins decaying, and becomes run down and weathered by its utilitarian function. The buildings that feature in his urban works lead the viewer to investigate, to question the lives of the people within the buildings, as well as the context of the building and its position.

Juxtaposed with the realism within his works, pattern and form are elaborated, rows of squares, raw edges and blanked out or non-painted windows lead us to suspend disbelief and appreciate the work in its entirety and away from any subject matter, or any social comment. There is a sense of being within or directly outside the subject of the work, due to the textural aspect of the concrete mixed with paint and the flashes of



David Hepher, *Gordon House (Diptych)*, 2013, Concrete, acrylic, oil & spray paint on canvas, 268.5 x 220 cm (each panel), 105 3/4 x 86 5/8 in

matt colour, emulating decay and movement of time. Standing in the midst of the work one appreciates a sense of beauty amongst function, a sense of survival and endurance – all themes that Hepher presents purely for the onlooker's visual experience, rather than as social commentary or opinion.

Hepher's landscapes created from his time spent in the South West of France, are far from the simple landscapes that one would imagine. As with Hepher's urban works, these paintings capture the essence of the location, the earth mixed with paint offers the same textural experience as the tower blocks, but instigates a calm, natural aspect to this very different location.

The narrative is almost the same, the subtext instigating a heightened awareness of passing time and history and of endurance and resistance; seen in the weathered fields, hills and trees. The choice of colours emits a sense of a tranquil rhythm, against the movement seen and felt in his urban works. This, combined with the offsetting of realism, demonstrated in the graffiti at the edges of such picturesque works, creates the multiple layers of reality we experience in his urban works. While Hepher's works are a purely visual experience, they fully engage the viewer, as his unique insights open up personal observances and questions on how we live and what reality is for us.

Referring to David Hepher and his works, the Architect Jim Tanner said: "In years to come no social study of life in South London, in the late 20th and early 21st century will be complete without reference to the work of this remarkable, talented painter."

For press information on specific works in the exhibition, please contact Sandie Maylor, Press Director, Flowers gallery: sandie@flowersgallery.com



David Hepher, *Gordon House, East Face*, 2013
Concrete, acrylic, oil & spray paint on canvas
299 x 209.5 cm / 117 3/4 x 82 1/2 in

Notes to Editors

David Hepher has been interviewed by Jonathan Meades for his forthcoming 2 part documentary "Bunkers, Brutalism, Bloodymindedness: Concrete Poetry" which will be broadcast on BBC 4 next month.

The Private View for David Hepher's exhibition will take place on February 20th, 2014 from 6pm and we would be delighted for you to attend. Please do not publish the Private View dates as they are invitation only.

About David Hepher

David Hepher was born in Surrey in 1935. He studied at Camberwell School of Art and the Slade. In the 70s he exhibited in solo exhibitions at the Serpentine and the Whitechapel and in important group exhibitions internationally. Flowers Gallery has been associated with his work since Angela Flowers opened her first gallery in 1970 and has exhibited his work at home and abroad ever since. Hepher was a senior lecturer in painting at Chelsea School of Art from 1981 - 1990 and subsequently became professor and head of Undergraduate Painting at the Slade. His work is to be found in a number of important Public Collections including, Tate Gallery, London, Museum of London, The Arts Council, British Council, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

About Flowers

Flowers is a contemporary art and photography gallery representing more than forty artists, both high profile and long-standing. Firmly established in the art industry, Flowers has been presenting artists for more than forty years. It was founded by Angela Flowers in 1970 and has grown to include two London galleries in Mayfair and Shoreditch and one in New York, whilst still remaining in the family. Its' MD is Matthew Flowers, son of Angela and his wife Emily Flowers, is Head of the gallery's US operations.

Flowers runs an on-going calendar of arresting exhibitions throughout the year, as well as exhibiting at leading international fairs. Its' artists' works also form part of important museum collections around the world, as well as significant public installations, such as Nicola Hicks' sculpture entitled: 'Sorry Sorry Sarajevo' in St. Paul's Cathedral.

The programme in both the UK and US comprises a range of media by established and emerging artists. The gallery is an active publisher of prints and multiples and has developed a successful contemporary international photography department, which represents some of the finest talent in this sphere, such as Nadav Kander.

Amongst the gallery's leading artists is Patrick Hughes, whose 3-dimensional works intrigue and enthrall and David Hepher, whose architectural, urban depictions and textures fascinate the onlooker. Hepher's works can be seen in the Tate Gallery and The Museum of London amongst others.

The diversity and quality of works on offer at Flowers affords the gallery its enduring appeal, whilst its progressive ethos ensures that it is always current.