

# DAVID HEPHER CONCRETE SKIES: THE VAUXHALL SERIES

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For more than forty years, British artist David Hepar has centred his work on the high-rise architecture of South London. His paintings have been described as both celebrating and mourning modernism in modes that are 'futuristic and nostalgic, utopian and entropic.'<sup>1</sup>

*Concrete Skies: The Vauxhall Series* is an exhibition of recent works responding to the city's rapidly evolving building developments. This series of paintings features a single column of concrete and an adjoining crane seen from multiple viewpoints at a site in Vauxhall, investigating the formal relationship between the two opposing structures.

Hepar's paintings depict a concrete lift shaft during the first phase of a new building's superstructure, which he describes as an 'abstract edifice.' Painted from low angles to capture the staggering scale from a human perspective, they explore the stark drama of its central core, in contrast with the delicate skeletal structure of the crane.

Hepar's canvases are overlaid with shuttered concrete, drawing the eye to the viscerally scraped, compressed and dragged surface texture of the paintings. Hepar describes the use of concrete as engaging in 'the art of the real,' where both the symbolic materiality of construction materials and the illusory effects of oil on canvas are given equal weight.

Similarly, spray paint is applied with gestural mark-making across the surface of the paintings, using playful pictographic symbols relating to nature, and graffiti-like slogans relating to the generation of 'the new'.

Hepar refers to his architecturally-themed works as landscape paintings, equating the powerful effects of the built environment on human experience to those of the natural world. He says, "*I think of myself as a landscape painter; I live in the city, so I paint the urban landscape.*"

For further exhibition information and images please contact Hannah Hughes: [press@flowersgallery.com](mailto:press@flowersgallery.com)



1. Ben Lewis, *Grain of Concrete: Utopia and Entropy*, published by Flowers Gallery, London, 2017.



## ABOUT DAVID HEPHER

Born in Surrey, England in 1935, David Hepher studied at Camberwell School of Art and then the Slade School of Art, London, where he later became Professor and Head of Painting. His work is featured in national collections including Tate, Victoria and Albert Museum, Arts Council England and the Contemporary Arts Society. His work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions at London's Serpentine, Whitechapel and Hayward Gallery and was included in *Unpopular Culture: Grayson Perry Selects from the Arts Council Collection*, Hayward Touring; British Council Collection: *My Yard*, Whitechapel Gallery; *Out of Britain*, National Museum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and *Reality: Modern & Contemporary British Painting* at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Cambridge and the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK. An extensive monograph written by art critic, author and documentary filmmaker Ben Lewis, *David Hepher: Grain of Concrete, Utopia and Entropy* was published by Flowers Gallery in 2017.



## NOTES TO EDITORS

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday  
11am - 6pm

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Portrait of David Hepher by Antonio  
Parente

