

DAVID HEPHER
PAVEMENT HORIZONS:
WHERE THE WALLS MEET THE GROUND

7 JANUARY - 7 FEBRUARY, 2015

PRIVATE VIEW
TUESDAY 6 JANUARY 6 - 8PM

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One of the fundamental jobs of the artist is to open people's eyes to finding beauty where they don't think it resides. – David Hepher

This January, Flowers Gallery is pleased to present a new series of works by renowned painter of the contemporary urban landscape, David Hepher.

For more than fifty years, Hepher has painted domestic buildings, from suburban houses to modern tower blocks, capturing the formal beauty of their grid-like structures as well as the physical and emotional residues left by their human inhabitants. *Pavement Horizons* marks a distinct shift in viewpoint and scale. Honing in on the juncture at which the buildings rise from the ground, Hepher's latest works present an intimate record of an ordinarily overlooked aspect of the landscape.

Each painting portrays a life-size frontal view of a section of concrete wall and the right angle it forms with the pavement. Returning to the same London street over several months to draw and take photographs, Hepher has documented the detailed shifts in tonality and figuration present on the architectural facades and the weathering of the surface over time.

Described by the artist as "simply recording what is there", Hepher's process incorporates chance encounters and found materials. Literally appropriating the formal substance of his subjects, each canvas is prepared with a brutally rendered concrete ground. Referencing works by artists such as the Boyle Family, whose three-dimensional casts formed physical imprints of the earth, Hepher's surfaces are smeared and perforated to replicate the builder's application of architectural textures.

On the one hand the paintings appear wholly abstract, the opaque tangibility of the concrete holding the eye on the surface; on the other they evoke the vastness of nature and seemingly eternal horizon of the sublime landscape.



Shock and Awe, 2014, Concrete & acrylic on canvas, 72.5 x 48 cm, 28 1/2 x 18 7/8 in



Northern Lights, 2014, Concrete & acrylic on canvas, 71 x 51 cm, 28 x 20 1/8 in

The titles of works in the exhibition suggest devastatingly powerful natural phenomena such as storms, cyclones and tsunamis; while, in a reference to human displays of force, the painting *Shock and Awe* calls to mind the media images released during the American military bombing of Iraq in 2003. Other titles have art historical sources, such as *The Monk by the Sea*, named after the Caspar David Friedrich painting in which an isolated figure contemplates an unending expanse of ocean.

Despite the reduction in size from his monumental tower block paintings, the human scale of the new works places the viewer in close physical proximity to the subject. In contrast to the "austere beauty" presented by the tower blocks, Hepher's new works invite intimate reflection on the quiet aesthetic qualities of these frequently bypassed details of modern life.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

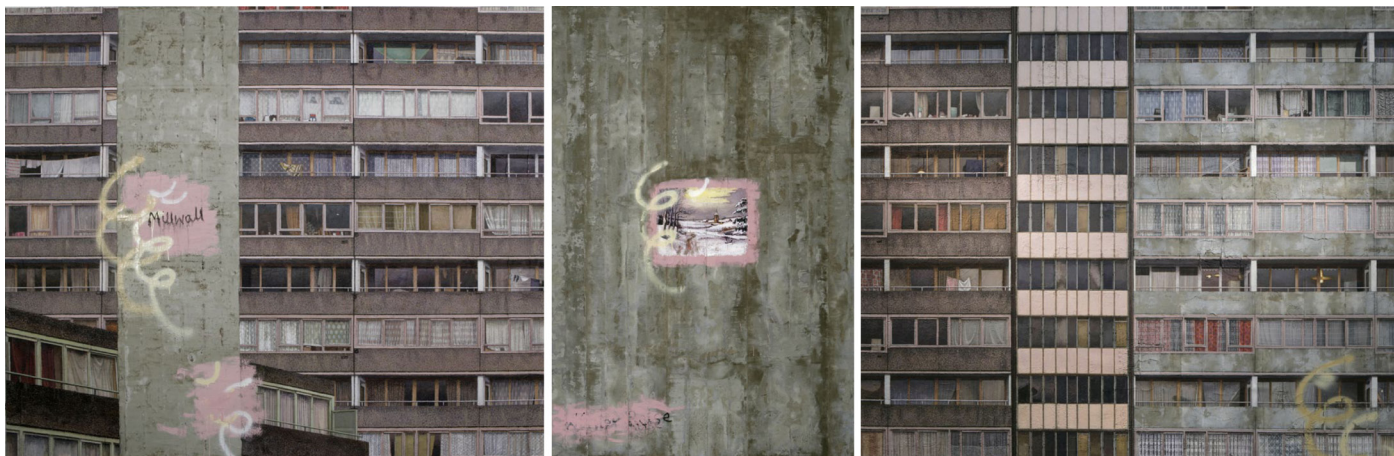
Born in Surrey in 1935, David Hepher studied at Camberwell School of Art and then the Slade School of Art where he later became Professor and Head of Painting. He had solo exhibitions at London's Serpentine, Whitechapel and Hayward Gallery during the 1970's which marked the beginning of his sustained exploration of the monolithic and sculptural forms of South London's twentieth century skyline. His work is featured in national collections including Tate, Victoria and Albert Museum, Arts Council England and the Contemporary Arts Society. Recent solo shows have included *The Song of the Earth and the Cry of Concrete*, Kings Place, London; *Cityscapes*, Flowers Gallery, New York; *Town and Country*, Flowers Gallery, London. His work has been 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; *The Artist's Folio as a Site of Inquiry* at Cartwright Hall, Bradford Museums and currently *Reality: Modern & Contemporary British Painting* at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Cambridge, continuing to the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool in 2015.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Opening Hours: Monday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

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For further information and images please contact Hannah Hughes - Hannah@flowersgallery.com / 0207 920 7777



Winterreise, 2009 -10, Concrete, acrylic, oil & spray paint on canvas, 228 x 705 cm, 90 x 277 3/4 in

This piece is an example of Hepher's large-scale work, exhibited in *Lace, Concrete and Glass, an Elegy for the Aylesbury Estate* at Flowers Gallery, Kingsland Road in 2012.