



AN EXHIBITION OF CERAMICS, PAINTINGS & WORKS ON PAPER BY TOM NORRIS

Also Rises

31 May to 1 July 2023

An exhibition of ceramics, paintings & works on paper by Tom Norris.



Tom Norris in his East London studio, 2023. Image courtesy of Julius Killerby.

LONDON, 31 May, 2023 - For his first solo exhibition, Tom Norris borrows, in part, the title of Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), an epigraph which the author himself borrowed from The Old Testament. There are comparisons to be drawn between the writer's prose and the artist's aesthetic; Hemingway's directness and clarity corresponds with Norris' muscular brushwork and emphasis on the essential elements of his subject. The title, however, is primarily a catalyst for the artist's visual interrogations.

It would be a mistake, then, to compare the two too literally. Rather, we are encouraged to consider how the conceptual opposites and equivalents implied by the phrase "... also rises..." might be expressed in visual terms. As Norris states in a recent conversation with Julius Killerby (Manager of JGM Gallery), "There's an idea about bringing more than one perspective together and then layering these ideas as image."

Interspersed between gestural markings of trees and foliage are hard edged blocks of colour and right angled lines, visual motifs that suggest borders and a separation of spaces. That is, we are variably positioned outside of nature and within it. Indeed, the depiction of one thing by Norris often suggests its opposite: exteriors imply interiors, mass suggests void and, on a more material level, concave vessels produce convex surfaces. In other words, when the sun sets, we know that it will also rise.

In the paintings specifically, the borders also suggest an interest in the artificial nature of representation. They tighten the cropping and remind the viewer that the picture - or any picture for that matter - is only a limited version of a broader reality.

That Norris would find novelistic inspiration for an exhibition of ceramic vessels is also quite revealing. Unlike his canvases which, in an instant, reveal all their compositional elements, the ceramics disclose their contents gradually as the viewer walks around them. They thus produce a sense of dynamism and we digest the imagery in much the same way that we would the plot of a book or the scenes of a film.

There is also an autobiographical element to the work. Norris spent much of his youth meandering through the forests, mountains and waters of the Lake District in Cumbria and, more recently, Epping Forest in London. It is perhaps because of this that a fondness for the natural world permeates his work. The style of abstraction is thus more recollective than impressionistic, conveying the artist's sense of a place, rather than accurately representing it.

Jennifer Guerrini Maraldi (Director of JGM Gallery) states that "Tom Norris' work exemplifies the enduring qualities of ceramic as a surface and paint as a medium. This is an artist whose conception of his surroundings is as timeless as the materials he represents them with."

For further information and press enquiries, please contact the gallery at info@jgmgallery.com or + 44 (0) 207 228 6027.

Opening Reception:

Wednesday, 31 May, 6:00pm - 8:00pm
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JGM GALLERY

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