



Ralph Anderson, *Llandudno Promenade*, 2024, acrylic on linen, 136cm x 105cm. Image courtesy of Benjamin Deakin.

LONDON, 23 October, 2024 - JGM Gallery presents *Dig*, an exhibition of paintings by Glasgow-born artist, Ralph Anderson.

Anderson's use of a rotary tool to sand down layers of paint strikes a line of continuity between his early and current practice. The exhibition's title takes inspiration from this technique. The resulting scratches, inscriptions and hollows, which figuratively 'dig' through the surface of these paintings, are the artist's primary motifs in this exhibition.

Anderson refers to these works as Echo Paintings, a term used by Walter Sickert to describe a series he made late in his career, in which he would appropriate black and white illustrations from mid-Victorian journals, and then transform them into vibrant paintings. In *Dig*, Anderson takes a similar conceptual approach, copying landscapes that he produced in 2006 and 2007, the imagery and attitude of these earlier works resurfacing like echoes of the past. As this series developed, he began to incorporate photographs from everyday life, using this new technique to convey impressions of memory and time.

In archaeological terms, a 'dig' displaces layers of earth to uncover the remains of historic civilisations, and through this act, restore our cultural memory. In this sense, one digs when there is something to recover, but also when there is something to bury or dispose of. Anderson's process can be understood within this context, as a dialectic of both addition and subtraction. By excavating the strata of his paintings, as seen in the eroded finish of *Llandudno Promenade*, Anderson removes his earlier markings whilst creating a new image from their remains. His abrasive treatment distorts figures and architectural elements, perhaps suggesting an irreverence for the realist tradition. It is as though he considers this manner of representation to be a fragment from a gradually disintegrating past. Yet, by extracting figurative features from beneath the blotches and stains of paint, Anderson renews the relevance of the realist tradition, as would an archaeologist with the artefacts of an ancient civilisation.

Abstraction and more traditional genres, such as landscape, portraiture and still life, have an almost combative relationship in *Dig*, the former overlapping and disfiguring the others. As time passes, the matter of objects and bodies deteriorate, as does our memory of them. The paintings in *Dig* show Anderson to be working with an integrated understanding of this process, in which he simulates, through his abstractions, the appearance of threadbare fabric, a worn patina or other forms of natural decay. However, the reappearance of traditional genres in Anderson's paintings, uncovered through the 'digging' process, demonstrates their relevance to his artistic practice.

Jennifer Guerrini Maraldi (Director of JGM Gallery), says that "The success of these works is the reward Ralph deserves for continually pushing the boundaries of his practice. I am confident that these Echo Paintings will solidify his place as an artist of true significance."

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

Opening Reception:

Wednesday, 23 October, 6:30pm - 8:30pm

24 Howie Street,
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JGM GALLERY