

PAUL STOLPER

SUSIE HAMILTON

Unbound

Private View 5 May 6 – 8pm

Exhibition 6 May – 11 June

Paul Stolper is pleased to announce 'Unbound' by Susie Hamilton, a solo exhibition of painting, prints and works on paper.

"Literature is a constant influence on my work and the new paintings, drawings and prints all have poems or plays as a source. They are also connected by the image of The Rider.

I have painted The Rider as an ecstatic or combative figure or as a solitary wanderer journeying through wilderness. And it is this last image that inspired my *Gawain* series where Sir Gawain, King Arthur's nephew and a Knight of the Round Table, embarks on a desolate winter journey and fights with fantastical creatures on his way to his appointed meeting with the Green Knight. The figure in this sequence is dwarfed, alone and surrounded by cellular forms which represent some of the uncanny aspects of his expedition.

In a second group of works I have fused images of samurai with those of horsemen from Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* and Shakespeare's histories and tragedies. Marlowe elevates his hero in gorgeous language full of reds, golds and cosmic imagery. What Ben Jonson called Marlowe's 'mighty line' enacts the aspiring visions of the conqueror. However the energy and radiance of the blank verse are imbued with extreme violence. And despite the glamour of the warriors, the horror of conflict is an obvious element of my work and is represented visually by mess and blots and smoky layers and rolls of colour which undo form and cohesion. The vitality of the horseman is also counteracted by an appearance of erosion, with areas of the paintings defaced or wiped away as if mutilated by time. The movement of combat is therefore halted and stilled.

My figures are vulnerable to nature, time and to each other but also to the materials of pencil, charcoal, pastel, water and paint. I like to paint people in challenging environments and then subject them to an 'iconoclastic' method of working which makes and unmakes them. I draw over bodies, obscure them with smears and blurs, dissolve them into fluidity or turn them into semi-abstract forms in order to pull the known towards the unknown.

These equivocal, abstracted shapes, representing figures or surrounding them as part of a landscape, suggest reality changing and expanding. The familiar is morphing into the mysterious as in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in which supernatural and everyday are interconnected. And, inspired by the stealthy, hidden forces of fate or 'wyrd' in this poem, I allow areas of painting to make themselves, since I let paint ooze, creep, flow and curdle into 'weird' shapes outside my control. These involuntary marks express for me the unseen motions of the Anglo-Saxon concept of 'wyrd', from which our modern word, 'weird' is derived.

'Unbound' refers therefore to the freedom and energy of horses and riders but also to the way in which my painting is unshackled from realism in order to transform and make strange a recognisable figure, object or landscape."

For further information, prices, and images, please contact rachel@paulstolper.com

Gallery opening times

Monday – Friday 10am – 6pm

Saturday 7 May 12 - 4pm

Saturday 21 May 12 - 4pm

Saturday 28 May 12 - 4pm

Saturday 4 June closed

Saturday 11 June 12 - 4pm