



Letting String Fall

Stewart Geddes

Exhibition: 19th October - 30th November

Private View: Saturday 19th October 5-8pm

Venue: CLOSE Ltd, Close House, Hatch Beauchamp, Somerset TA3 6AE

CLOSE Gallery is proud to present *Letting String Fall*, a series of recent improvised paintings embedded in the experience of the City by artist Stewart Geddes. The title of the exhibition alludes to the condition of apparent arbitrariness that improvisation embraces, and draws in ideas connected to poetry and the irrationality and absurdity associated with Dadaism.

Geddes characterises a fascination with varying views of learning that weave into a visual poetry combined with a straightforward celebration of making. The pieces spin and rotate, revolve and layer in front of our eyes and there is movement within the restriction of the canvas. The question of where tension happens between colour and mark? How does the paint dance and twist with gesture or the physicality of the brush stroke? Like the city of Bristol in which they were created, they evolve through a practical building out of necessity to act, in this case painting.

'My attraction to abstraction emerged from a transition from perspective to Cubist spatial frameworks. In this form one 'negotiates' with a painting, making decisions about its organisation as much as its representations. Now, the organisation is at the fore.'

Despite their intended autonomy, for Geddes the paintings link to broader concerns and the histories of Landscape Painting. He has maintained his studio in Bristol across his career and for him the city plays a pivotal role in the work. He cites early career experiences of visiting Patrick Heron at his house 'Eagles Nest' and a private collection of Peter Lanyon's work as formative to his own practice.

'Bristol is a city of demarcations- between urban and pastoral, city and sea. The penetration of nature into its urban centre is one of its chief characteristics, and I think, in turn, permeates my work.'

Geddes begins with a palette and through this, activates the surface of the canvas using a meandering, linear gesture placed in relation to amorphous drops of paint. After this initial foray there follows a pause, a period of reflection when the painting is set to one side before the next move is decided. The painting evolves until a (hesitant) resolution comes into view.

'Although I think of my paintings as self-generated and independent of reference, I acknowledge they possess a sort of reversed relationship with content. That is, they're not motivated by an underpinning reference, but I recognise things beyond the studio are drawn into the work - most typically some form of relationship with land, or sometimes, a denser room space.'

Geddes works in clusters of paintings, allowing ideas to overlap and move between works. The tactic enables surprising and inventive ideas to emerge. 'Letting String Fall' showcases a group of works from the last 24 months.

Visits throughout the exhibition are welcome at these times or by appointment, please book online at www.closeitd.com

Thursday	10am - 3pm
Friday	10am - 3pm
Saturday	10.30am - 1.30pm

Notes to Editors

CLOSE Ltd develops visual art projects and represents a dedicated line-up of artists.. They give a wide and supportive platform with projects to enrich both the artists' and audiences' lives. A leading rural venue for the Visual Arts, CLOSE Ltd is also an agency that creates outstanding aerial international shows. Running a unique, sustainable model responding and adapting to the climate crisis, the gallery team considers the environment as well as the inclusivity of all communities in every aspect of their activities.

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Stewart Geddes (b. 1961) is a painter, colourist and abstract artist. He is Past President of the Royal West of England Academy, Bristol (RWA) and an Honorary Royal Scottish Academician. He curated 'Albert Irvin and Abstract Expressionism' in conjunction with the Albert Irvin Estate and Tate Gallery, at the RWA in 2019. He gained an MPhil from the Royal College of Art in 2007 for his research project 'The Unstable Sign' supervised by artist John Stezaker and academic Martina Margetts.

Geddes has taught Fine Art at a number of institutions including Cardiff School of Art and Design, Kingston University, Wimbledon College of Art, Bournemouth Arts University and the University of Gloucestershire.

His work has featured in many prominent exhibitions and collections both nationally and internationally including the Stowells Trophy Exhibition at Royal Academy of Arts; the RWA Open, the Gloucester City Museum; as well as The Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions. He has shown at Rooksmoor Gallery, Bath; Cadogan Contemporary, London; and Tin Man Art in Cornwall.

Stewart Geddes is based in Bristol where he continues to work and live.