

BUTLER ■ GALLERY

George Vaughan

March 6 – April 18, 2010

Time Place Memory

The Butler Gallery is delighted to present *TIME PLACE MEMORY*, an exhibition of paintings by Kilkenny based artist George Vaughan.

George Vaughan is a respected painter and educator who has been making paintings for over forty years. This collection of abstract expressionist paintings marks an important step forward in Vaughan's output. These works possess a spontaneity and fluidity of movement that breaks away from any kind of rigid categorisation. Vaughan continues to investigate the complexities of space that painting alone is able to conjure, drawing on the tension between organic and inorganic forms.

Vaughan's paintings are born from a particular experience, or in reaction to having spent time in a specific place. The title of the exhibition and catalogue *TIME PLACE MEMORY* is the foundation from which this trinity is born. **Time**. A contemplation of time in relation to one's own mortality, a life lived with vitality and purpose. **Place**. The county of Kilkenny, where he has lived for over forty years, inspires and fuels the work itself. **Memory**. Ideas for paintings are gathered from many sources – from walking in the woods depicted in the painting *Dark Pond*; to a quick snapshot, or a strong feeling that stays with the artist to be mulled over and worked out later in the studio. In many of the paintings, a triad is created by an internal border running down each side of the work. Vaughan thinks of these borders as a place for compositional reference, elaborating what's going on in the central plain of the painting. It's like a voyage across the work, resolved only towards the end of the painting.

Each painting is an organisation of varying speeds and intensities – a pragmatic practice of the abstract mixing and rearranging of data. At some points the paint is heavily applied and intensely visceral, at other times it is lucidly translucent, creating different temperatures and emotional qualities within a single picture plane. In *Winter Pond*, an opalescent painting of great beauty, centrifugal graphic nets radiating outwards adds to the sense of freshness and spontaneity these paintings engender. In *Embers I* and *Embers II*, the glowing colours and intricate patterns that lurk in the charcoal depths of burning embers, generated by winter bonfires, permeate the canvases.

Inherent in the work is a respect for the cycle of nature demonstrating that where there is death and decay, there is also life and growth. A committed gardener himself, Vaughan tends his plot throughout the seasons, watching it rest in winter and flourish come the spring. As a result of this, the symbolism of nature is never far from his meditations in the studio.

In *TIME PLACE MEMORY*, George Vaughan has produced a refined body of work, simpler in style, employing a visual vocabulary reflective of the mature artist making work afresh. Vaughan continues to teach part-time but has achieved much with a return to long periods in the studio. At this juncture, he is making the best paintings of his career and so we wait eagerly to see what more will be revealed over his next decade in the studio.

George Vaughan was born in Limerick in 1941 where he lived until he was twenty-seven. He studied at the Limerick School of Art, Limerick, the National College of Art, Dublin, Fischerkoesen Film Studios, Germany and the College of Music, Dublin. He has exhibited in many solo and group exhibitions throughout the country and was Course Director of Grennan Mill Craft School, Thomastown for almost thirty years. He lives in Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny. His work can be found in collections such as The Arts Council of Ireland, Office of Public Works, Butler Gallery, Limerick City Gallery and private collections in Ireland and abroad.

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