

BRIDGET MACDONALD

TIME AND PLACE

30 April - 21 May 2009

Macdonald Writes: "The works in this exhibition are about time, place and the role of imagination in our relationship with the landscape. My childhood landscape of St Catherine's Point on the Isle of Wight is one place which recurs in the paintings. The other is the country around the Malvern Hills where I now live. Its farms, orchards, rivers and Elgar soundtrack exactly conform to the pastoral ideal. The paintings of the Severn in flood reflect the fleeting magical transformation that happens when the river floods, especially in the summer, which is a rarer occurrence.

The crucial point of pastoral is the idea of contrast between yearned for tranquillity as represented by the countryside, and the noise, stresses and strains of city life. It requires this counterpoint to give it depth and meaning. It is about the harsh realities of getting and spending, and our desire to get away from it all or to regain an imagined idyllic age of the past.

The drawings are less specifically located than the paintings. *The May Bull* is a reworking of a tiny photograph taken in the 1930's by my mother with her box Brownie. Here the bull verges on the mythical, more obviously a fertility symbol. The young men in the *Eclogue* drawings relate back to Giorgione's dreamers. I have been enthralled by the great paintings of Titian, and I love Giorgione and Bellini's paintings of poetic young men, the enigmatic atmosphere they conjure up, the shadows and glimpses of golden distances."

In her catalogue essay, Katharine Eustace writes: "The word 'distilled', the poet's phrase 'emotion recollected in tranquillity', describe these fixed images."

Bridget Macdonald trained at the School of Art and Design, Wolverhampton and her work is in the collections of the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Wolverhampton and Worcester City Art Galleries.

For more information please contact the gallery at: info@artfirst.co.uk, or call on +44 (0) 207 7340386

