

SHARON HALL  
SUE KENNINGTON  
CAROLINE DE LANNOY

[ eye and mind series #1]



Sharon Hall, *In Part Stacked Painting (Green, Orange, Yellow, White)* 2014

### Eye and Mind – The Embodied View

The three artists presented here are all painters who use geometry and colour. Structures are arrived at through processes that depend on reactions to formal elements as much as conceptual strategies, and though colour theory is certainly awareness, there is nothing dogmatic in its use. The exchange, between perception and conceptualization, here acknowledges the thorough connectedness between artist and environment, subject and object. In other words, to perceive the world at all, one must be part of it. To the degree that geometry, together with differing degrees of gesture in paint application combined with colour are shared, any comparisons between the artists work turns out to be productive. As for a range of precedents: Colour Field painters, in particular Kenneth Noland, Bauhaus innovations of Joseph Albers, or Latin American modernists Lygia Clark and Lygia Pape.

Sharon Hall's paintings find complexity through colour rather than form, which is to say that a deliberately transparent permutation of geometric form becomes a context for the subtle shifts in colour relationships, that can be further explored as the paintings comprise more than one interchangeable panel. The resolved state of a complete painting is in Hall's words "found", through trial and error, the initial structure an adequate, or neutral armature, on which to place colour. Optically, there are also shifts of space that reflect the positive-negative aspects of the structure where there is also a tonal contrast. Take, *In Part Sequence (Orange, Yellow, Terra Verde)* 2014, in which this constant realignment of the segments of colour is a product of the duration of viewing. The rational construction of repeated triangles connected with a partial and implied grid is counterpoint to the structuring influence of the reduced chromatic range of orange, yellow and green. In, *In Part Stacked Painting (Green, Orange, Yellow, White)*, 2014, surface incidents from making - the action of a brush as well as characteristics such as absorbency - are all incorporated rather than illuminated. The two part painting, an overall vertical, the upper part of which is horizontal, reflects a duality in its repeated doubling of two panels, and two pairs of triangles and displays a motion not unlike serial or fugue patterns in musical composition. In Hall's paintings system and unitary repetition are willingly undermined rhythmically and not relied upon to provide cohesion, they represent a necessary premise that is then exposed to reconfigurations vis-à-vis colour.



Sue Kennington, *The Addict*, 2014

Of the three artists, gesture is most apparent in Sue Kennington's paintings. It has become increasingly so in more recent paintings where the spontaneity of gesture sublimates a progressively less regular and angular composition. The overlapping planes and quality of light radiating from the chosen colours is attached to Kennington's experience of place - both in her current location and that remembered - and is a constant theme of absence and presence represented abstractly. In shapes and in line, topographies and local colour are recalled, during a process that remains open to pictorial invention and intuitive speculation. Gift, 2015, suggests geometry as a now residual frame to repeated gestures that over paint and modify previous gestures in gradations, altering colour, light and a sense of movement through space. The shifts in implicit scale propose associations of proximity and distance that summon up knowledge of real world spaces. The Addict, 2014, is a transitional work where the importance of a more improvised structuring through gesture meets a provisional geometrical construction; the consequence of this change in approach can be seen in Gift. The openness with which Kennington approaches her process means that images occur that are very different from each other, and yet a through line can be detected in the luminosities and disjunctions between shape and line that allude passages of space.



Left: Sue Kennington, centre: Caroline de Lannoy, right: Sharon Hall

Caroline de Lannoy employs small scale and restraint in painting that focus on a colour's function in the modification of form. With determinately spare geometric elements, usually turning around a diagonal, de Lannoy explores iteration and variation, concentrating colour space within the format of a square. The diagonal orientations of shape evoke physical architectural space using receding or approaching planes of colour. Tonal contrast enhances the change in appearance of the physical support, the canvas itself, by situating contrast also at the perimeter edge of the painting, sometimes dark, other times light, further skewing the given symmetry of a square. Gravitational Movement, 2015, evinces de Lannoy's core preoccupations with colour and perception. By repeating the slanting borders of each area of colour a faceted space is produced that torques this way and that, consequently turning and displacing in real time with prolonged looking, the darker upper section revealing itself to looking over a longer period than the more immediate lower section. The black shape that recedes from the steep incline of pink, appears like an after image, advancing notions of the constant fugitive nature of colour: Its axis being a crossroad of intellection, vision and physical "fact". A Light Grey Tetragon, 2014, features as might be expected, a light grey quadrilateral shape, one side of which is the painting's right side vertical edge. This locks the picture plane, illusionism and literalness into a stilled, but temporal embrace.

David Rhodes, New York, March 2015

*David Rhodes is an artist and critical writer who has contributed frequently to Artforum, ArtCritical and The Brooklyn Rail.*

Caroline de Lannoy, *Gravitational Movement*, 2015



Sue Kennington lives, works and exhibits in both London and Italy. She studied at Goldsmiths College, and Chelsea, London. Recent exhibitions include 'Sue Kennington at Magazzini dell'Arte Contemporanea, Sicily, and 'Colour and Otherness' at Grace Teshima Gallery in Paris. She recently completed a residency at VSC in Vermont, USA. From 2011 to 2013 she was Professor of Painting at the Siena Art Institute in Italy.

Caroline de Lannoy lives and works in London. She studied at Athens School of Fine Arts, Central St Martins College of Art and the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. She is a lecturer at the Slade School of Fine Art, Central St Martins College of Art and West Dean College. She has exhibited in museums and galleries throughout the world. She has recently been an artist in residence at the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation.

Sharon Hall was born in Darlington, County Durham, UK. She studied at Brighton Polytechnic, Lanchester Polytechnic and the Slade School of Fine Art, London. She has won numerous awards, including the Rome Award in Painting at the British School of Rome. She has recently exhibited in the group exhibition Colour Boundary at Gallery North, Newcastle, 2014 and also held a one person show Colour in Place, Palazzo del Podestà, Pescia, Italy in 2013.

#### [eye and mind series]

"L'oeil et l'esprit" is the title of the last essay that the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty wrote on the phenomenology of perception. In it he argues that painting is a form of thought and that the work that he does as a philosopher is closely linked to the art of painting. He sees painting as engaging the whole body and not just the eye. This is the first in a series of exhibitions at the Mercus Barn that will explore this idea.

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