

# Matt's Gallery

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## Press release **Alison Turnbull *Observatory***

15 September-31 October 2010

Wednesday-Sunday, 12-6pm

### **Alison Turnbull**

**Education** 1978-1981 Bath Academy of Art, Corsham; 1977-1978 West Surrey College of Art and Design; 1975-1977 Academia Arjona, Madrid

### **Selected Solo Exhibitions 2005**

*Black Borders* Galeria Magda Bellotti, Madrid; *World in a Chamber* University of Oxford; ArtSway, New Forest  
**2003** *Hospital* Matt's Gallery, London  
**2001** *Houses into Flats* Museum of Modern Art Oxford  
**2000** *Houses into Flats* Milton Keynes Gallery and Cube, Manchester; *Mobile Home*, London  
**1997** Gallery A, London **1989/90** Anne Berthoud Gallery, London

### **Selected Group Exhibitions 2010**

*On the Edge of the World* Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh **2009** *Pattern Recognition* The City Art Gallery, Leicester; *Between the Lines - British Contemporary Drawing* Trinity Fine Art, London **2008** *Darwin's Canopy* Natural History Museum, London  
**2006** *Responding to Rome* Estorick Collection, London; *Jerwood Drawing Prize* Jerwood Space, London and tour **2005** *Building Capacity* Storey Gallery, Lancaster **2004** *Open Secret* Imperial War Museum, London **2002** *British School at Rome* **2001** *Jerwood Drawing Prize* Prince of Wales Trust, London **1997** *Blueprint* Glasgow Print Studio, Glasgow; Norddeutsche Landesbank, International Hanover Fair, Hanover **1994** *New Voices* Centre d'Art Santa Monica, Barcelona and tour to Bilbao and Madrid **1993** *East* Norwich Art Gallery, Norfolk Institute of Art and Design; *New Voices: New Works for the British Council Collection* Centre de Conférences Albert Borschette, Brussels and tour

### **Recent Awards 2009**

Gulbenkian Galápagos Artists Programme **2005** Artist in Residence, Art Sway, New Forest **2003** Arts and Humanities Research Board; Delmas Foundation, New York **2002** Rome Scholarship in the Fine Arts

### **Recent Public Commissions and Projects 2010**

*Salon Cabinet Particulier* The Russian Club, London **2008-2010** *Time and Tide* DLR Art, Transport for London **2008** *Vitis vinifera* L. One Vine Street, The Crown Estate, London **2007** Moorfields Eye Hospital, London **2003** *360°* Clifford Chance HQ, London

*Observatory* is Alison Turnbull's second exhibition at Matt's Gallery and marks a new direction in her work. She has created a number of related paintings, originally inspired by plans of Thomas Jefferson's observatory.

Collector, researcher and observer, Turnbull works with nature, but without literal illustration. Using specialist star charts as the genesis of her new work she shows the margins and transitional spaces of a human world. Plans and charts are already at one remove from their original source and Turnbull further distances her work from the subject through the act of painting. In this way new versions emerge that could not be depicted through media such as photography. By reconsidering existing structures she questions how we define things visually.

Turnbull's approach has the quality of quiet and precise engagement. She begins her paintings with a set of internal parameters, or visual references, and as they develop she exerts pressure on these rules and the pictorial starts to take precedence.

Some paintings, such as *Moon-viewing Platform*, draw directly on the language of chart and plan; others are more abstract, but all are informed by close attention to colour and picture surface. Turnbull's control of texture and composition emphasises each work's distance and depth. The canvas is sanded smooth and Turnbull applies finely detailed layers of painted shapes and dots that vary with subtle changes in the pressure of the brush on the canvas. With considerable skill and sensitivity she adjusts each painting's structure; areas are built up by thickening the surface while others are pared right down. What emerges is a number of abstracted sites, each one a place where different dialogues might occur.

Turnbull's drawings, created on pages from her extensive personal collection of exercise books and graph papers, both bought and donated, appear as notations contained by the graphic lines of the paper. The titles refer to the locations where each paper was purchased, conferring a sense of moving through familiar places. The drawings will be shown in an elongated vitrine running across the centre of the gallery space.

A publication to support the exhibition, *Observatory*, with an essay by Ed Krčma, published by Matt's Gallery, will be available free to visitors.

### **A Large Print version of this document is available on request**

For further information or visual material please contact the Gallery

Tube: Mile End (Central, District and Hammersmith & City lines)

DLR: Limehouse. Bus: 25, 277, D4, D6, D7

Director: Robin Klassnik



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