

P R E S S R E L E A S E

ANTHONY FARRELL :: *PLACES*

New Paintings and Drawings

12 May – 16 June, 2023



The Passing Show 1, Autumn Morning W11; acrylic on canvas, 107 x 102 cm

A busy street corner in London W11, a crowded promenade and beach at Leigh on Sea, and the hustle and the bustle of the harbour on the island of Kos. These are the subjects for Anthony Farrell's large densely populated canvases that comprise this exhibition. All have their genesis in three places and all within a short walk of his studios in London, Leigh on Sea where he has lived and painted for over 40 years, and Kos where he spends time each year.

Farrell has exhibited at Art Space Gallery since 1993, accruing over the years a body of work that wholly reinterprets notions of the *crowd* in contemporary painting. What fascinates him is not so much the location but the crowd itself, the sense of multitude and the whole spectacle of life going on before him. He draws in streets and public places enthralled by the variety, the continuous changes. And once he has settled on a subject he will visit the same spot each day, early in the morning, to observe and draw and then in the isolation of his studio to set down and perfect images of largely nameless people engaged in routine activities and amusements.

The unknown passer-by fascinates him and he's obsessive about trying to represent what he sees. He draws with lightening swiftness and for each painting he will complete over a hundred drawings of vast spaces, complex views and the intricacy of a street market. And he has a sense of drama, a love of story-telling, an interest in particular objects and individual characters and over a period, often as long as 3 months, he will add, remove and alter his cast of characters

until he is finally satisfied that everything and everybody has its place. Nothing can be changed. The picture is resolved.

The figures are painted with a certain rudimentary force but in spite of this he conveys, through the disposition of forms and masterly use of illusionistic space: a quite compelling sense of reality and originality of vision. Timothy Hyman has written that ‘...we might pick up affinities to early Balthus for example, or Bonnard; to Poussin or to Tintoretto. Like any true Painter of Modern Life Farrell brings to bear all the resources of a lifetime upon a subject that could so easily have been banal but has turned out to be, as he says “limitlessly rich” ‘.



Kos Harbour, Morning, The Delivery, acrylic on canvas on board, 92 x 138 cm

Anthony Farrell (b. 1945) trained at Camberwell Schools and the Royal Academy Schools (1963-68). He has exhibited regularly in private and public galleries including the Serpentine and Hayward and has work in private and public collections including Art Council, Manchester City Art Gallery and the Minories, Colchester.

To obtain a hardcopy of the 46 p. catalogue which includes an interview with John Lessore please contact the Gallery.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11 am – 6 pm
