

Emergence & Transformation

“Nobody told me there’d be days like these.
Strange days indeed...” **John Lennon**



In curating this exhibition – that will evolve and be added to throughout its duration – we have selected works that we hope reflect, with both humour and seriousness, our collective human experience during the global pandemic and lockdown. The exhibition touches on both the physical and psychological impact of isolation; it bears witness to our tentative emergence into a changed world, and also looks at how we too have been transformed.

As the world emerges from lockdown into changed streets, populated by people trying to remember how to interact with one another, we cannot help but look at ourselves in the mirror, both metaphorically and literally. What do we see? Yes, we see people bereaved, starved of human contact, putting on a brave face for the world, while uncertainty occupies their thoughts. We also see people who have rediscovered relationships, seen themselves in a new light, who have achieved a clarity and a vision for the future, which they did not have before. We have found comfort, solace and inspiration in places that once may have surprised us. For better or for worse, all of us have emerged with a better understanding of ourselves.

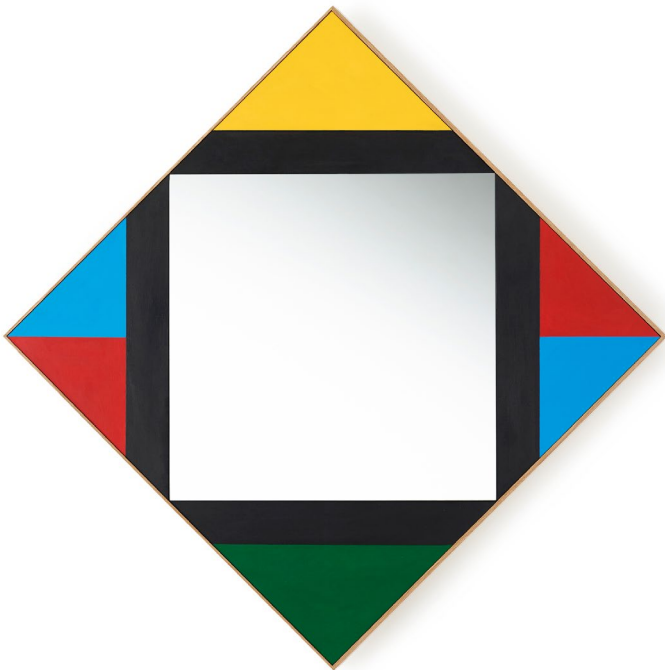
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IAP Fine Art has also emerged transformed. Reflecting on what we do best, *Emergence & Transformation* is a carefully curated mixed exhibition of modern and contemporary British painting, prints and art-related design. Works by Chris Gollon, Sir Terry Frost RA, Maxwell Doig, Julian Penberthy, Paul Hatton and Possible Mirror, reflect the human stories, the tragedies and comedies that have played out during the pandemic. From Chris Gollon's *Still Life with Checked Tablecloth*, a reminder of conspicuous absence – to his newly self-professed *Connoisseur and the Woman with a Curious Hairdo* – characters and situations that may now be familiar to many of us.

Terry Frost's *Claro De Reloj (Pause of the Clock)* has the numerals on a clockface falling away, evoking a curious timeless limbo that many of us have experienced during lockdown, as days and weeks lost meaning. Maxwell Doig's *Sunbather* is an image of contented aloneness – social distancing at its best. Running through the exhibition, however, Gollon's hugely empathetic paintings emphasise hope, which has kept humanity going through this crisis. In the history of still life painting, the candle traditionally symbolises hope, hence we include Paul Hatton's stunning solid silver candelabra with its candles all lit.

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As we emerge, we must not forget that the crisis is not over yet. Chris Gollon's *Orpheus and Eurydice* is a reminder that although the world is returning to some normality and it is tempting to stop, turn around and embrace those whom we love, we must keep our eyes fixed on the path ahead and keep moving forward in order to protect the future.

Fine art and design continue to play an important role in our everyday lives, and although often seen as extravagant luxuries in times of crisis, history has proven that in these exceptional times art is at its most vital, whether to help us gauge what we are feeling, or to put things into perspective, by holding up a mirror to human emotions; or, simply to provide beauty, equanimity and pleasure. We are very pleased to be working with Julian Penberthy, an artist working in digital media, whose work prior to the pandemic might have been perceived as unpeopled, dreamlike scenes, strewn with familiar human ephemera; yet now, his imagery seems so prescient. They are transformed into images of lockdown: the empty halls, deserted streets, strewn with objects belonging to an absent humanity. Possible Mirror also offers us transformation, blurring boundaries, merging fine art and design to create something new. These beautiful art-related mirrors literally reflect our own transformation, be it our curious new hair styles, or the way we see ourselves, within the reassuring certainty of their meticulously thought-out and uplifting colour fields. Adding new talents to our list of established names in British art, IAP Fine Art looks forward to emerging into an exciting future, beginning with this new *online only* exhibition.