

FRESTONIAN GALLERY

EVERYTHING IS REAL - TIM BRADEN / SONIA DELAUNAY

Private View **Wednesday 24 January, 6-9pm**

Exhibition **25 January – 3 March 2018**

'Everything is feeling, everything is real. Colour brings me joy'. Sonia Delaunay, 1972

The exhibition *Everything Is Real* juxtaposes two artists working with abstraction in different ways and at different times, but with many of the same intentions and indeed end results: the retention or enhancement of movement and energy within the picture field and the manipulation and celebration of colour.

For Delaunay the nature of colour – of the contrasts therein – was *the* defining element of the unique voice that she developed along with her husband Robert in the early 1900s. The forms within her and Robert's paintings were initially rooted in place, taking architectural forms as the framework on which to transpose, and experiment with, planes of colour. The term that came to be most associated with her painting from this period was Orphism (a word coined as much as anything to distinguish from the rigid adherents of the Cubism movement of the same period) – but tellingly Delaunay preferred the phrase Simultanism – a word derived from writings on colour theory by Michel Eugène Chevreul that much more spoke to the primary importance of the power of colour than the distortion of form.

In the work of Tim Braden the primacy of colour is also clear. His work, like Delaunay's, abstracts reality but usually begins with literally representational 'pictures'. From a variety of sources – photographs, still-life compositions, even his own previous works – Braden pulls apart, zooms in and out of, subtly reorders and otherwise dissembles the picture plane until the forms therein best allow colour to 'take over'. In some works this process can be a subtle reframing wherein the scene and its specific knowable references remain intact, whilst in others the process of abstraction is complete, creating works of pure colour and form. The works in this exhibition are very much the latter – vibrant and pulsing planes of colour that have only their titles (*Spanish Garden, 17 Powis Terrace*) to tether them to the specific places where they 'began'.

A central notion to Delaunay, that rings true when here considering both her works and Braden's, was *Rhythm*. It is a phrase that well reflects what links the two artists' practices – a completely intuitive sense of where the discord of reduction and abstraction stops and the perfect harmony of colour and form begins. In the works of both artists on display in *Everything Is Real* it is clear this sweet spot has been found.

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NOTES ON THE ARTISTS

Tim Braden was born in 1975 in Perth, Scotland. He received his MA from Ruskin School of Fine Art at Oxford University and attended Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam. He has exhibited widely, including at Baibakov Art Projects, Moscow; Gemeente Museum, The Hague; Hamburger Bahnhof at Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin; Kunstneres Hus, Oslo; Museum Van Loon, Amsterdam; and Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

He completed site-specific projects in Iceland in 2006 and for the Goethe Institute in New York in 2009. His work is included in many public collections, including the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Nederlandse Bank, Amsterdam; Pembroke College, Oxford; Walsall Museum and Art Gallery, UK; and the Zabłudowicz Collection, London.

Sonia Delaunay was born in the Ukraine on November 14, 1885, and over an artistic career spanning some 70 years became one of the most influential and original artists of the 20th Century.

Her innovative explorations of colour and form began with a quilt she made for her son in 1911 that would spur a breakthrough in the history of abstraction. She had moved from Moscow to Paris at age 20, where she first encountered Post-Impressionism and Fauvism, inspiring her to push further toward non-objective art. Along with her husband, Robert Delaunay, she developed a bright blend of Cubism and Futurism that would be dubbed Orphism by critic Guillaume Apollinaire in 1910—though Delaunay preferred the term “Simultaneous Contrasts”.

In addition to painting, she created textiles as “exercises in colour”, under the Maison Delaunay label, even creating costumes for Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes. In 1964, Delaunay became the first living woman to be given a retrospective at the Louvre, and in 1975 was named an Officer of the French Legion of Honor. She died in Paris in 1979 at the age of 94.

For further information on the artists and exhibition please visit: www.frestoniangallery.com