

Unmapped is the collaborative work of painter **Anna King** and writer **Rebecca Sharp**.

An exhibition of new poems and paintings, with website and book.

Supported by Creative Scotland.

www.unmapped-project.co.uk



Anna King, 'White'. 50 x 150cm. Oil and pencil on paper and board. © Anna King 2013

A conversation between art forms; a meditation on landscape, narrative and memory. The series reflects several points of transition: between poem and painting; absence and presence; public and private; urban landscapes and outlying, peripheral spaces. The work is a quiet celebration of that which is ephemeral and overlooked, as it finds meaning and beauty in this forgotten ground.

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All images of the work are available to view online: www.unmapped-project.co.uk

High-res images of the artists are available to download from the website (Press).

The poems are available to view online. The book contains the complete poems and images.

For a review copy of the book, email info@unmapped-project.co.uk

Exhibition Dates:

StAnza, Scotland's International Poetry Festival: 6 – 10 March 2013. www.stanza.org

Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, Kelly Gallery: 15 March – 6 April 2013. **Preview** Thursday 14 March, 6-8pm. www.royalglasgowinstitute.org

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Other Events:

StAnza – Meet the Artists: Saturday 9 March, 4.15-4.45pm. The Public Library Meeting Room, Church Square, St. Andrews. Free, no booking required.

RGI – Artists Talk: Tuesday 26 March, 2.30-3.30pm. RGI Kelly Gallery, 118 Douglas Street, Glasgow. Free, no booking required.

Biographies:

Anna King is one of Scotland's leading young, contemporary landscape painters. Her work explores the no-man's land of landscape art, the places we pass by but rarely notice – derelict factories, wastelands, empty car parks – where the natural and the man-made collide as these forgotten places slide into a state of beautiful decay. Anna graduated from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in 2005 and lives and works in the Scottish Borders. She has won several prestigious awards and exhibits widely throughout the UK.

“Never have paintings with names such as Old Joiners Shed Greenlaw... Broken Streetlights and Silage Pit seemed more appealing... a deft pencil line over oil suggesting so much with so little.” – Jan Patience, Glasgow Herald

“something of [Joan] Eardley's response to nature as an untameable force is echoed in King's bleakly attractive images of post-industrial landscapes.” – Jackie Wullschager, Financial Times

“a thoughtfully orchestrated document of modern existence... each painting exploring the delicate balance between the man-made and the natural, the permanent and the changing.” – Arlene Searle

www.anna-king.com

Rebecca Sharp is a writer and interdisciplinary artist from Glasgow, creating innovative projects in poetry, performance and prose. Having studied Theatre at the University of Glasgow (2001), she is particularly interested in exploring the intersections between ideas and artistic practice. Her plays have received several professional productions and she regularly presents work throughout the UK. Other work includes *Fathoming: setting poetry to silk* (2010, poems and silk objects, with textile artist Eva Fulinova); *The Ballad of Juniper Davy and Sonny Lumière* (Spike Press 2010, poems and original score, book/CD and performance); *The Tiger Act* (Roncadora Press 2013, artist-made books by Hugh Bryden); and *Little Forks* (Souterrain Press 2012, book and live literature performance).

“beautiful, lyrical work that raises philosophical and physical questions about the nature of reality... a vision which is perhaps nearer the truth than we know.” – Meg Bateman

“fascinatingly complex, audacious and at times brain-poppingly clever work.” – Neil Cooper, Herald Scotland

“Sharp's words take you to an other-worldly place.” – Laura Davis, Liverpool Daily Post

www.rebeccaioysharp.com

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About the Work:

Anna and Rebecca were brought together by a shared love of overlooked, peripheral places; the outskirts of cities, high-rises, wastelands and abandoned buildings. The project was started through correspondence, a sketchbook of text and images sent back and forth in the post, leading to the production of a shared body of work - paintings and poems influenced by each other's disciplines. Themes include juxtaposition of absence and presence, memories and traces of experience left within the built environment and mark-making; the lines, textures and colours of painting being echoed in text.

Anna's paintings are contemporary (urban) landscapes that depict a world where the natural and man-made collide; a feral urban wilderness that nature is slowly reclaiming, where humans have once been but are now oddly missing. The paintings are real observed places and buildings, although the specific locations are deliberately ambiguous. The paintings are made with oil paints and pencil on paper, pasted onto board. This unusual technique results in a deconstructed, sketch-like finished work; the smooth surface, fragility and fluidity of the mark-making on paper echoing the temporary and peripheral nature of the places depicted.

Rebecca's poems explore themes of narrative and concealment within the built environment; evoking the fragmented voices of people who may have inhabited these places (to contrast with the conspicuously unpeopled paintings). Disembodied narratives begin to surface, as though half-remembered on a quiet walk, or overheard in passing. The poems juxtapose imagery from contemporary urban and rural landscapes, with an eye on where notions of urban and rural coexist and contradict: city parks, wastelands, suburban neighbourhoods, outlying industrial estates. The poems complement the tone of the paintings, while at the same time existing within their own territory; quietly assured, disparate entities conversing and finding common ground.

Artists' Responses:

AK: "Collaborating across art-forms has been thought-provoking and inspiring. I have lived with the poems – had them up on my studio wall and seen them progress and become finished. It has been a pleasure for me to really focus on a body of work, thinking about how the paintings and text will read together as a complete project, an overview of landscape and place. I see these places as marks we've made on the world, the passage of time creating a unique form of beauty and bringing the temporary nature of our own existence into sharper focus. If my vision of these landscapes is a broad one, skimming over the surface of their history, Rebecca's poems provide lyrical detail, fragments of voices and stories – a human element that is unfamiliar to my solitary way of looking at these places, but that adds another layer to the dialogue between text and image. We wanted the viewer to embark on a journey of sorts as they experienced the work and I hope we've been successful in that."

RS: "On first seeing Anna's work, I was immediately drawn in by her understated, non-judgemental treatment of locations – places that have likewise always fascinated me. Cool, quiet spaces often

accented, with great emotional effect, by a clean line or contrasting colour. A sort of synaesthesia often occurs when I approach a new piece of work, and this certainly was the case with this project. I instinctively started to translate what I saw into word choice, line breaks and spacing. Sending the sketchbook in the post lent the project a secretive feel, and set a suitably measured pace for its progress. While writing the poems, I had pinned prints of some of Anna's earlier images above my desk – not seeing the new paintings until later in the process, it was exciting for me to write with liminal landscapes in mind, using her previous work as a guide. It left me free to locate the poems as I envisaged them, based on known places, while having a sense of where they would end up. It was magical to be shown each new painting and to see the poem reflected in it and I hope the viewer will share this sensation."

Critical response from Anna Crowe, poet and translator (extracts). Used with permission, credit Anna Crowe.

This rich and complex interplay of voice and landscape questions and celebrates the transitory and evanescent. Complementing Anna King's unpeopled, delicately luminous paintings, Rebecca Sharp's poems evoke buried layers of human existence [...]

The evanescent, shifting quality of these landscapes is underpinned by the poet's skilful use of line breaks, suggestive of the ambiguities of time and place. [...]

Impossible not to be moved by these restless, shifting poems with their precise yet tender observation of decay and disrepair, absence and a longing for certainty [...]

This is a beautifully balanced work, a collection that is both unnervingly strange yet also life-affirmingly human.

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