



Exhibition Guide

**Painted Space
Remembering Gilbert's Lake**

by Arlene Sharp

HAC
HARROW
ARTS CENTRE

3rd – 10th September 2022

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake

The exhibition is inspired by the local area of Grimsdyke Woods at Old Redding, Harrow Weald, home at the turn of the century to dramatist, librettist and poet W.S. Gilbert.

The work, comprising paintings and photographs, takes inspiration from the woodland, particularly the ornamental lake - Gilbert's Lake - and by the writing of French philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962).



Working from direct observation as well as indirect sources such as photographs and quick paintings and sketches from memory, the project evolved over 18 months.

Unprimed canvases, marked with inks, were left for several weeks in the swampy water at the edges of the lake to absorb the elements.

'When I finally retrieved them, they were satisfyingly mucky; stained with lake water and woodland debris.'

*'Everything, even size, is a human value ... miniature can accumulate size, it is **vast** in its way.'* (Gaston Bachelard)

Painted Space

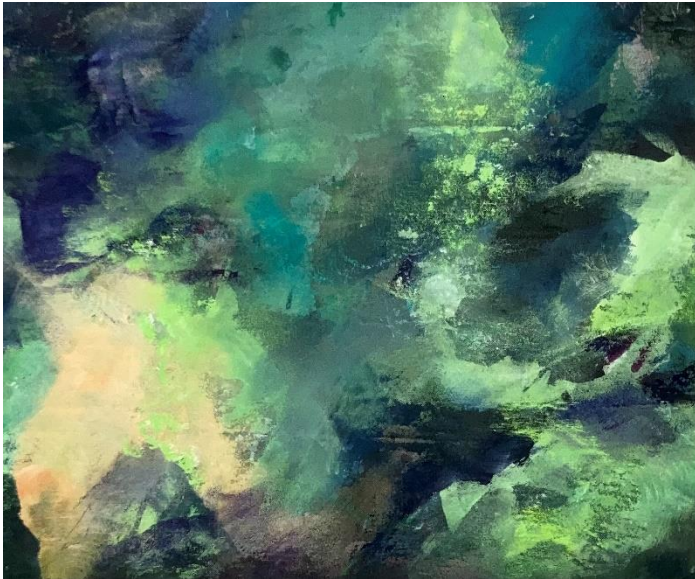
Remembering Gilbert's Lake



Memory painting
Acrylic on paper



In situ sketch
Chalk, charcoal & crayon on paper



Algae
Acrylic on unprimed canvas, 2021

Painted Space

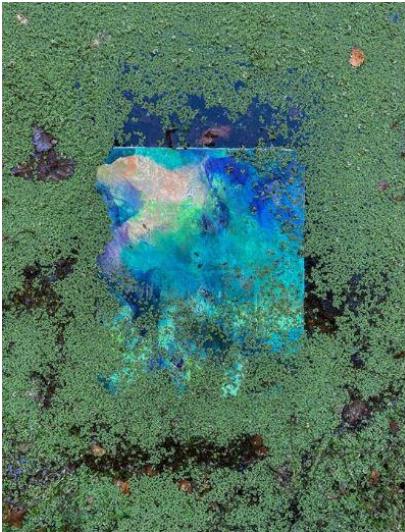
Remembering Gilbert's Lake



Paintings on the water-stained canvases were inspired, particularly, by the patterns on the surface of the lake.

Paint seeped through the unprimed canvas surface creating interesting marks on the reverse, whilst the lake water stains added to the sense of bringing the lake and the woodland into the work.

Completed paintings were hung in and around the lake with focus on how they could be positioned to integrate into their surroundings.



Painted Space Remembering Gilbert's Lake



Lake Edge (front and reverse)
Acrylic on unprimed canvas, 2021

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake



Photographing the canvases in situ started off as a method of documentation but grew to become a project in itself as the photos became increasingly more creative.

These photos were used as inspiration for further paintings.



Memory painting
Acrylic ink & paint on paper



'...the forest is a before-me before-us
...forests reign in the past.'

(Gaston Bachelard)

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake

The latter stages of the project were spent making paintings inspired by the photography, particularly the fractured images and reflections in the lake.

Several of these paintings are mixed media works, using collage cut and torn from the memory paintings and sketches.



Reflection, acrylic on paper, 2022 (top)
Dusk, mixed media on canvas panel, 2022 (bottom)

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake

The exhibition has been curated with the space of the woodland in mind.

'It was important to replicate that sense of space, the things we experience when walking through woodland, such as the impression of things overlapping or obscuring, a vista opening up or random points of interest high up and low down on the ground.'

On entering the gallery, a group of five hanging canvases sit in the alcove space to the left. They have been arranged to partially hide and reveal the photographs positioned around them.

The far wall of the gallery is taken up by the monochromatic 'Winter Triptych' overlaid by two vibrant paintings, whilst on the right-hand wall the horizontal canvas, 'Canopy', stretches over the painting beneath it.

Elsewhere, the paintings are presented in informal groups, jostling together for space or sitting apart and separate; the arrangements alluding to the organisation of woodland space.



Winter Triptych installation view

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake

Arlene's work is inspired by the natural world, by landscape and organic form.

'My interests lie in how we see and experience this world, and how I can translate these ways of seeing into painting. Gathering visual information through walking, sketching and photography my semi-abstract paintings are built through layers of paint and collage. Juggling space, form, colour and light, these paintings may move away from observed reality, but their origins are always grounded in the truth as I see it.'

Arlene is completing the final stage of her Painting degree with the Open College of the Arts. She was recently nominated for the Freelands Foundation Painting Prize 2022, and her work has featured in several college shows and publications.



The Space Within
Mixed media on paper, 2021

'But he [the botanist] entered into a miniature world and right away images began to abound, then grow, then escape'. (Gaston Bachelard)

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake

List of works exhibited

		Painting £	Print £
1	Lake Edge Acrylic on unprimed canvas, 142 x 66 cm	NFS	150
2	Algae Acrylic on unprimed canvas, 50 x 60 cm	NFS	n/a
3	Thistle Acrylic on unprimed canvas, 69 x 32 cm	NFS	150
4	Mirror Mixed media on unprimed canvas, 60 x 30 cm	NFS	150
5	Lake Edge 3 Acrylic on unprimed canvas, 115 x 75 cm	NFS	n/a
6	Canopy Acrylic on unprimed canvas 190 x 108 cm	NFS	n/a
7	Entrance Colour photograph*, 59 x 84 cm	NFS	n/a
8	Bridge Colour photograph*, 42 x 59 cm	NFS	n/a
9	Lake Reflection 1 Colour photograph*, 42 x 59 cm	NFS	n/a
10	Lake Reflection 2 Colour photograph*, 42 x 59 cm	NFS	n/a
11	Earthbound Colour photograph*, 42 x 59 cm	NFS	n/a
12	Winter Triptych Monochrome photographs (x 3), 177 x 84 cm	NFS	n/a

Painted Space

Remembering Gilbert's Lake

List of works exhibited

		Painting £	Print £
13	Reflection Acrylic on paper mounted on board, 44 x 56 cm	250	80
14	Dusk Mixed media on canvas panel, 60 x 80 cm	Reserved	80
15	Morning Light Oil & cold wax on canvas panel, 60 x 45 cm	150	n/a
16	The Space Within Mixed media on paper mounted on board, 68 x 48 cm	220	80
17	Tree-light Acrylic on canvas panel, 66 x 46 cm	200	80
18	Lake Edge 2 Acrylic on canvas, 40 x 30 cm	180	80
19	The Space Within 2 Mixed media on canvas panel, 56 x 46 cm	200	n/a
20	Looking Up Acrylic on stretched canvas, 25 x 20 cm	80	n/a
21	Inner Space Acrylic & pastel on paper, 48 x 28 cm (inc. frame)	80	n/a
22	Copse Acrylic & pastel on paper, 43 x 35 cm (inc. frame)	Reserved	n/a
23	Space & Light at the Lake Acrylic & pastel on paper, 34 x 32 cm (inc. frame)	Sold	n/a

