

## **Opening speech notes: Cross Art Projects**

Rachel Kent September 2018

**Jacqueline Rose's** works on paper cross a threshold between abstract and representational modes, their line-work and punctuations suggesting optical movement, poetry, and music.

It is no surprise then that poet Johanna Featherstone has written a meditative text in response to the images – a counterpart, or parallel reading, if you like – that expands their meaning, and opens different ways of seeing through the abstract. She writes: 'Jacqueline's work shows me what gazing can do. Her images may seem conceptual and minimalist but the surprise from watching them is that suddenly they are loaded with physical and mental tingles.'

There are 13 works in this exhibition at Cross Arts Projects – each under 1 metre square, and each delicately rendered in pencil, ink and collage. This time-consuming and deliberate build-up of layers, lines, and imagery creates a palimpsest of meaning that is embodied by touch, sight, repetition and the physical passage of time. Interspersed between the works are extracts from Joanna's text, creating an interleaving between visual and written forms.

Rose's new works on paper build on previous bodies of work which explored the line in all of its potential – draw large, across multiple sheets to form a whole; looped like cursive script; rendered in charcoal and rubbed away to create a vanishing effect. The new works vary in their scale and form – they are smaller and denser, more physically present. In her earlier works, deeply drawn lines (like scars) were countered by the physical act of erasure. In the new works, the lines dance and bounce off the page; they are very much there.

Rose's works on paper have also taken graphic form, as she worked with printmaker John Loane to translate graphite and charcoal into etchings inspired by the writings of Kafka.

Literature and music form a constant in Rose's works on paper, from their initial inspiration to their visual form. Textile prints are a further reference – think the graphic textiles of Sonia Delaunay, for example – as are the woven, looped, suspended, latex constructions of Eva Hesse. The monochrome and colour co-mingle in Rose's new works, one offset by the appearance of the other – often, as small, found coloured fragments that are collaged into the wider composition of the work. Equally, there is a sense of tension between the planned and the spontaneous in these works; and the slow work of the hand with the swift application of unexpected additions.

Key to the works is the act of translation itself – of taking something simple, even mundane (a line, a thread, a narrative fragment, a snippet of sound or music) and translating it into something meaningful. She says, 'I'm trying to get a minimal amount of things to sing, and have rhythm'. "I make it more present by spending time on it", she adds, "in order to give it presence, or resonance, through effort and time spent."

Words and visual associations abound in Rose's works, and are given form through Featherstone's text – as 'mysterious gardens with complex mazes', as 'a deep blue river' and 'a black shadow'. Stillness is revealed by 'what isn't there', which, in turn, is 'where the centre sits.'

Returning to the gaze – and the act of gazing in Featherstone's text – these works reward their viewer by time spent looking, quietly, intently, by passing time. They reveal more with each moment passed, and the abstract transforms into ideas, materials, and images that come and go for each one of us, differently, like our dreams.