

Exhibition Information

Clare Woods

Victim of Geography

Sat 24 June – Sun 10 September

DCA

Dundee Contemporary Arts

152 Nethergate
Dundee, DD1 4DY

01382 909900

Scottish Charity No. SCO26631

Open daily 10:00-18:00
Open late Thu 20:00

Admission free

www.dca.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

Victim of Geography is an exhibition of 11 raw and powerful new paintings by Clare Woods, marking the first solo presentation of work in Scotland by this renowned British artist.

These vast, oil-painted aluminium sheets fill both of our galleries here at DCA over the summer months, offering glimpses into Woods' recent exploration of certain highly-charged images circulating in the world around us in 2017.

Originally trained as a sculptor, Woods considers her paintings physical objects – they are created and developed flat in the studio, where she builds a distinct layer of paint in sections to create forms that shift deftly between figuration and abstraction.

Each work has been created from a single source image – an archive print, magazine clipping, or picture from the internet – which has been broken down using long, curved brushstrokes, forming painted surfaces that are almost beyond the grasp of recognition. There is a sense of impending danger in these paintings; many of the images she works with show people at their most vulnerable: bodies that are naked, hooded or isolated in a remote landscape. Faces, limbs, and outlines come to the fore and are distorted into apparitions that are just out of reach.

Yellows, browns, blues, reds, greens and pinks – many of the works feature a single colour that is pulled apart across the painting, with the daintiest of light hues worked through to the darkest shades. At times basking in natural light in our galleries, these colours can at once look resplendent – dazzling swathes of paint dancing across metal surfaces – and disturbing, amassing into forms that pulse with trepidation and unease.

Woods' paintings are bound together not only by these formal consistencies – colour, structure and scale – but also by the origin of their emotive subject matter. Within her studio in Herefordshire, she has amassed a huge collection of referential touchstones that inform her practice. Covering the walls are the images which she draws on to create her paintings. Grouped together, a visitor will find: art historical references to paintings, drawings and sculptures across the centuries; photographs depicting war, battlefields, injuries and broken bodies; images of natural landscapes, animals, rivers and oceans; details of skin, flesh, innards and limbs; and a disturbing variety of images gleaned from video and photographic sources online depicting contemporary trauma across the world today – from photographs taken in the moments after major terrorist attacks, to video stills depicting horrific human brutality in areas of conflict across the world.

“The source material used for my paintings acts as a catalyst to bring the unconscious or hidden to the surface. The unseen internal anxiety is transformed through the painting process into something I can deal with; it has a form and a presence. It stops being unconscious once it has been translated into paint, it’s real, it’s tangible, I can fight with it while I paint.”

Further building on this body of images exploring extremes of feeling and human endurance, Woods undertook a period of research in Dundee to explore the history of the RSS Discovery, which carried Scott, Shackleton and their crew on the British National Antarctic Expedition from 1901–04. An image from this photographic archive became the starting point for the painting *Strike* which you can see in Gallery 2. The original photograph taken by Scott captures a fleeting moment during a white-out, in which the outline of one of his crew is just discernable through the raging snow.

These paintings hint at so much but refuse to lay themselves bare, and therein lies the invitation to a viewer to ask as many questions as possible without expecting clear or straightforward answers. How does this strange title relate to these sweeping brushstrokes in front of me? Who is this solitary figure? What is beneath that blanket? Is this an expression of agony or ecstasy?

As we stand amongst these imposing works, we’re asked to look outwards but also to turn inwards and consider what it means to be human – to have seen horror, to live with pain, to contain such strength and possess such fragility.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Clare Woods lives and works on the Welsh border. Her work is held in many major international collections including the Arts Council England Collection, the Arken Museum of Modern Art in Denmark, and the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, USA. Recent exhibitions include Pallant House Gallery in Chichester, Oriel Davies Gallery in Wales, National Museum of Wales, Buchmann Galerie in Berlin, and a permanent public commission for the London 2012 Olympic Park. She is represented by Simon Lee Gallery, London.

We have worked with Woods to produce a new limited edition print and publication to accompany this exhibition. This new edition is an exquisite stone lithograph print depicting Scott on one of his many expeditions. Further to this, the design of our accompanying publication with newly commissioned texts by Anouchka Grose and R.W. Paterson specifically pays homage to *The South Polar Times*, a beautifully typed and hand-painted publication series created by Scott’s men during their journeys, which served to stave off psychological trauma among the crew in times of danger and extreme isolation.

TALKS AND EVENTS

Book your place on 01382 909 900.
For more information visit
www.dca.org.uk

Meet the Artist

Fri 23 June, 18:30 – 19:00
Galleries
Free, but please book in advance

Join Clare Woods and Beth Bate, Director of DCA, for an introduction to, and discussion of, the exhibition ahead of its official opening.

Exhibition Tours

Daily at 11:00 & 14:00
Gallery Entrance
Free, drop-in

Interested in knowing more about the work on show? Join us for one of our twice-daily introductions to the exhibition, led by our friendly Gallery Assistants.

Senior Citizen Kane Gallery Tour and Workshop

Tue 11 July, 10:30 - 12:30
Galleries and Activity Room
Free, but please book in advance

Aged 60+? Come along and explore the exhibition with one of our friendly Gallery Assistants then take part in a creative workshop inspired by the exhibition. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided.

Clare Woods in Conversation with Rebecca Morrill

Thu 20 July, 19:00 – 20:00
Galleries
Free, but please book in advance

Join us to welcome Clare Woods back to the galleries in July to discuss her practice and the exhibition *Victim of Geography* with Rebecca Morrill.

Morrill is Senior Editor for art titles at Phaidon Press. Her recent books have included *Vitamin P3: New Perspectives in Painting*; *Co-Art: Artists on Creative Collaboration*; *Body of Art* and *Painting Beyond Pollock*.

Echo + Red Note Ensemble

Thu 10 August, 19:00 - 21:00
Galleries
Free, but please book in advance

Our Echo event is an evening of multidisciplinary presentations in response to our exhibitions.

As part of this instalment of Echo, we have invited musicians from Red Note Ensemble to bring to life some of the curious instruments from St Cecilia's Hall, the home of the University of Edinburgh's musical instrument museum, to be played in the company of Woods' new paintings.

This performance, titled *Blowing Their Own Horns*, will include a piece by composer Jim Sutherland, commissioned for a concert at The Fruitmarket Gallery with support from Museums Galleries Scotland.

If you would like to get involved, please visit our website for further information.

**The Loneliest Place on Earth
Antarctica and Human Isolation
with Brian Kelly**

Thu 24 August, 19:00 – 20:00

Galleries

Free, but please book in advance

Surrounded by Woods' powerful paintings depicting figures at their most vulnerable and isolated, this talk by Brian Kelly from Dundee's Discovery Point explores how people respond to life in remote geographic locations.

For further information on this talk please visit our website.

**Fear is here, death is close
A Talk by R.W. Paterson**

Sat 9 September, 18:00 – 19:00

Galleries

Free, but please book in advance

Join us for a talk with writer R.W. Paterson who will expand on some of the ideas contained within her new text commissioned on the occasion of Woods' exhibition here at DCA. Paterson will be speaking about her approach to writing as part of this project, as well as discussing some alternative writing methodologies for visual art in 2017.

ARTIST'S CHOICE SCREENINGS

For every exhibition in our galleries, we offer the artist the chance to choose a film or films to screen alongside it. Clare Woods has chosen three films to coincide with her exhibition *Victim of Geography*.

"All the films I have chosen have a sense of isolation whether that be geographical, mental or social. This feeling of being detached from other people physically or perceptually creates an overwhelming awareness of being with yourself and having to deal with your own reality and reading of a situation."

The Great White Silence

Sun 23 July, 15:30

Cinema

After great success with the Discovery expedition, Robert Falcon Scott set off on a second Antarctic voyage in 1910 aboard another Dundee-built ship, the Terra Nova. He never returned, and the epic story of the race to the South Pole and the deaths of Scott and his four companions on the return journey has since become one of the great patriotic legends of heroism and self-sacrifice. Photographer Herbert Ponting accompanied the Terra Nova expedition with a cinematograph camera and 15,000 feet of film stock. *The Great White Silence* has been beautifully restored by the British Film Institute, revealing the exceptional quality of Ponting's imagery, despite the difficulties involved in its creation.

Dir: Herbert Ponting

UK 1924 / 1h20m / U

Whistle and I'll Come to You

Sat 29 July, 13:00

Cinema

A masterpiece of economical horror that remains every bit as chilling as the day it was first broadcast, this was the first, and arguably the best,

of the M.R. James adaptations that peppered BBC schedules during the late 1960s and '70s, and an advance warning of a new tradition of Christmas ghost stories. On a winter holiday in Norfolk, a solitary, eccentric professor (Michael Hordern) finds a whistle carved from bone in a graveyard. Back in his hotel room, gloating over his find, he raises the whistle to his lips, heedless of the terror it may summon...

Dir: Johnathan Miller
UK 1968 / 42m / PG

The Wicker Man

Sun 13 Aug, 20:30
Cinema

Disregarded when it was originally released, *The Wicker Man* was recut against the director's wishes and placed on the bottom end of a double-bill with Nicolas Roeg's *Don't Look Now*. Forty years later, the film is considered to be one of the finest British horror pictures of all time. Police Sergeant Howie (Edward Woodward), a devout Christian, travels to a remote Scottish island to investigate the disappearance of a young girl. The islanders, ruled over by the mysterious Lord Summerisle (Christopher Lee), mock Howie's attempts to question them about her. He begins to fear that her fate could be linked to their belief that only a sacrifice of the highest order will save their failing crops.

Dir: Robin Hardy
UK 1973 / 1h35m / 15

FOR YOUNGER VISITORS AND FAMILIES

Art Cart Adventures

Sat 1 July, Sat 22 July, Sat 12 August,
Sat 9 September; 13.00 - 15.00

Level 4

Free, drop in activity

Fun for all ages, Art Cart offers active ways of connecting with themes in our exhibitions and methods used by the artists on show. Join our Art Cart artist and try activity sheets or creating an art badge, in response to the work on show in our galleries.

Talking Art for Teens

Thu 24 August, 18:00 – 20:00

Galleries and Activity Room

£5, please book in advance

Join our friendly Learning team to spend quality time looking at and talking about artworks, sketching, and maybe writing a guide or two. These sessions are great for those with an interest in art, but will also help those considering, or who have opted for, Nat 5 or Higher Art & Design courses.

Family Art Lab

Sat 26 August, 13:00 – 15:00

Activity Room

Free, but please book in advance

Join us to explore the exhibition, chat about what you see, create your own art together and experiment with tone, colour and shapes. The session lasts two hours but you don't have to stay the whole time.

Storytelling in the Gallery with Sylvia Troon

Sat 2 September, 14:30 – 15:30

Galleries

Suitable for ages 3+

£3 per ticket, please book in advance

Storyteller Sylvia Troon will lead a trail around various works in the main gallery, inspiring you and your wee visitors to get involved and explore the paintings with puppets, musical sounds and imaginative tales.

Activity Room

Open daily unless being used for a workshop - do phone ahead to check if you are making a special trip

Free

DCA Activity Room is a wee gem; a comfortable and imaginative space right next to the gallery designed for younger visitors and family groups to pop in and enjoy on a visit. You can have a go at DIY art activities, browse our excellent children's art library and make connections with Clare Woods' work in the exhibition. Take your artwork home, leave it on display or photograph and share it online using **#helloDCA**

JUST ASK

Our friendly Visitor Assistants are always happy to help with your questions.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Keep up to date with the very latest from DCA by visiting **www.dca.org.uk** or by following us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Tweet us your thoughts on the exhibition using **#helloDCA**.

NEXT EXHIBITION

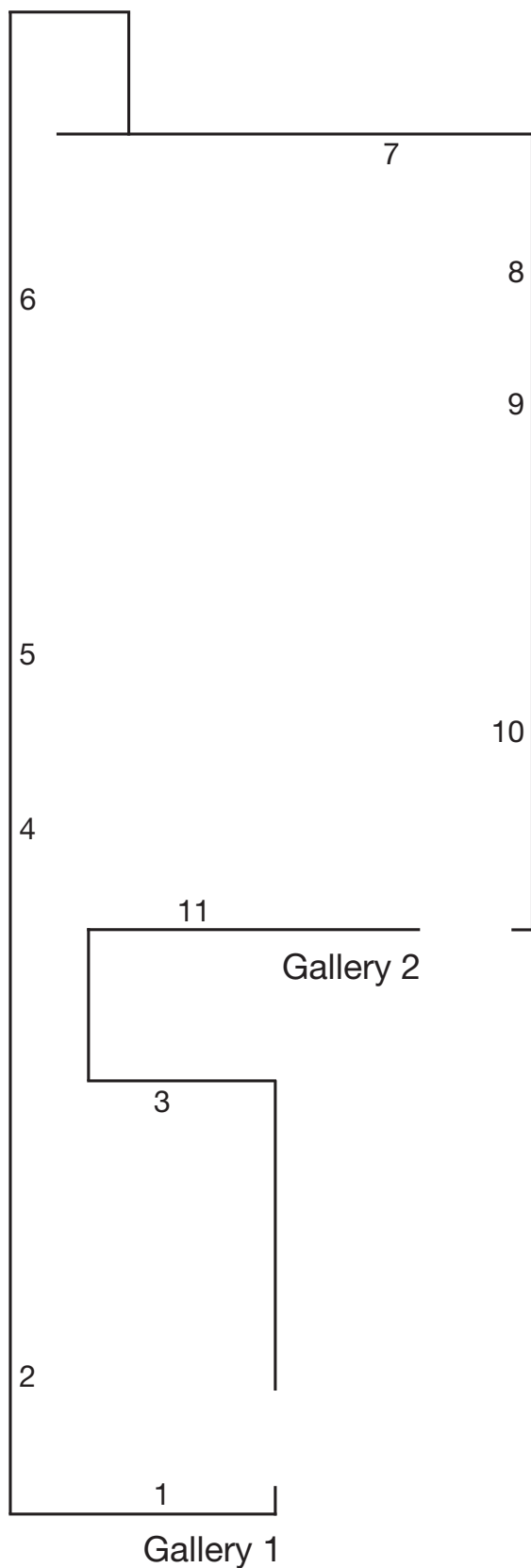
Kelly Richardson

Sat 23 September - Sun 26 November

Canadian artist Kelly Richardson creates hyper-real digital films of rich and complex landscapes that have been manipulated using CGI, animation and sound. Drawing on landscape painting, wildlife cinematography, science fiction and apocalyptic cinema, Richardson's huge immersive installations feature futuristic dystopian worlds, empty of human presence.

For further information on this exhibition, which is part of our annual Discovery Film Festival, please pick up one of our Exhibition brochures available at Box Office or on our website.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION



1. *Our Local Hero*, 2017
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

2. *She Town*, 2016
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

3. *Lady Midnight*, 2016
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

4. *Uncle Denver*, 2016
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

5. *English Murder*, 2017
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

6. *The Volunteer*, 2016
oil on aluminium, 2m x 1.5m

7. *The Last Word*, 2017
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

8. *The Emergency Chair*, 2017
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

9. *An Arctic Breakfast*, 2017
oil on aluminium, 2m x 2m

10. *Strike*, 2017
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

11. *Comfort Monitor*, 2016
oil on aluminium, 3m x 2m

All works courtesy the artist
and Simon Lee Gallery