



MARK FAIRNINGTON

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU

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UPSTONE



Here's Looking at You

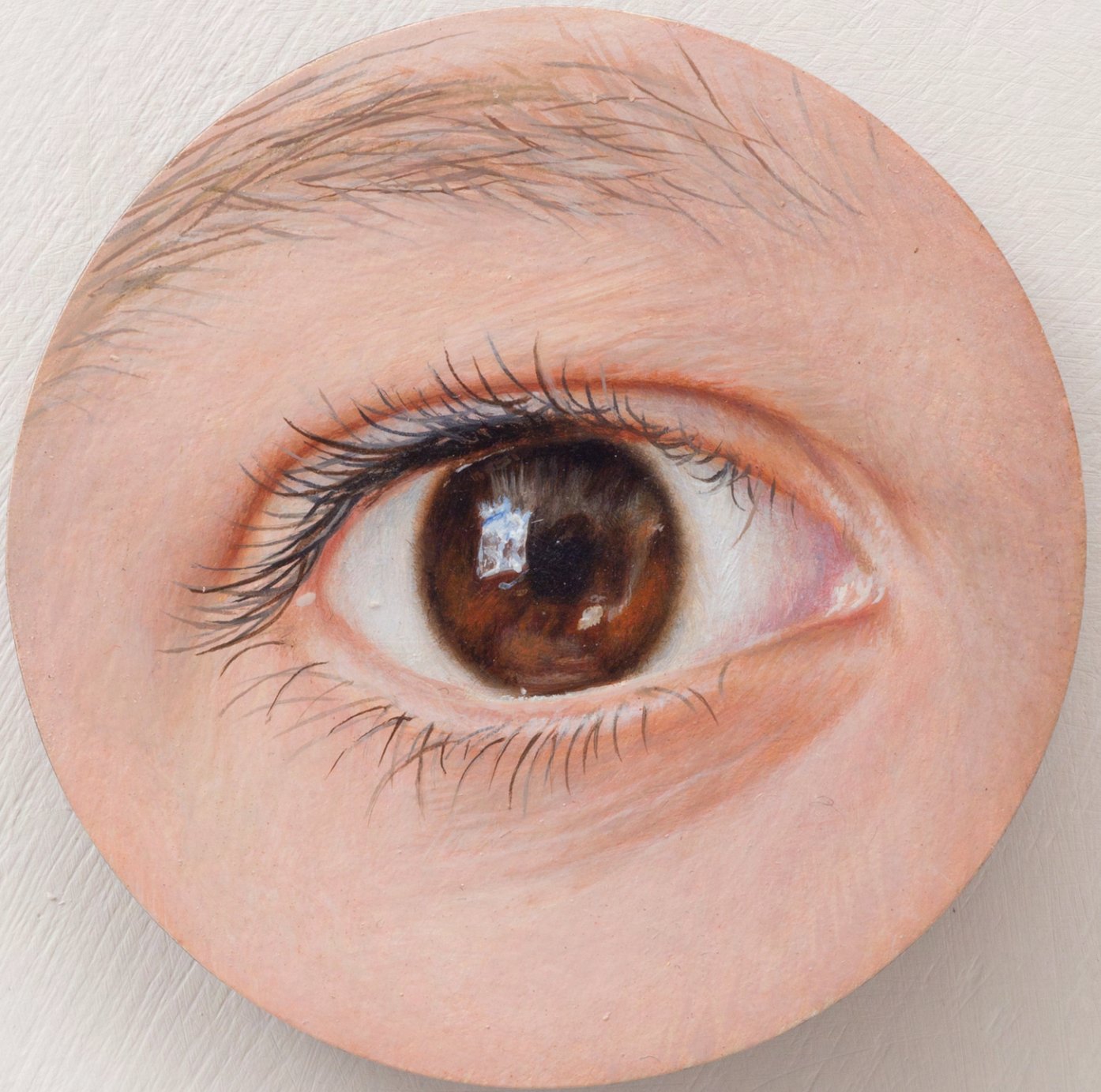
Mark Fairington's paintings are known for their intense realism and observed detail. They vary tremendously in scale from large scale paintings of mounted insects, taxidermy displays of birds, flowers, portraits of prize stud bulls to the series of miniature eye paintings. His interest is resolutely in the eccentricities the one required to stand in for all; the specimen and the subjects of his paintings are made more singular through being painted.

This exhibition examines Mark Fairington's investigation of the portrait in many different forms. The intimate paintings of his twin sons at different stages of their childhood record the different images that they embody as they grow. Our identities throughout are lives are framed by different ideas, some we cling on to and others we resist. The two children were often identified as the twins, red heads, the boys and people regularly confused one with the other.

Paintings from the Wellcome Collection storage facility re-imagine human images: miniature portraits of anatomical heads, wax heads, death masks and skulls; poised between life and death. The Wellcome collection became a story of how the human body has been perceived, understood and studied in different cultures. It is a place where the histories of art and science criss-cross and intertwine. The paintings document and describe some of the objects contained in the Wellcome, situating them within the historical context of portrait and still life painting. The human figure is present here as specimen and image and in the form of objects made to fit the body, operate upon it, injure, disguise, protect, embellish and contain it. In the paintings faces and heads are re-presented as miniature portraits.

Fairington uses paintings as a way of recording information, a way of eroding the hierarchy between elements of the subject, rendering every part as if they are of equal significance. In the eye paintings, a single eye on a round wooden panel is all that is depicted, echoing Victorian keepsakes. In these Lovers' Eyes the portrait embodies the act of possession; a person captured, collected, possessed by another.

The most recent painting in the show is a portrait of an imagined figure from the landscape, a character that may in part be a self-portrait, fecund with growths and protuberances on the trunks of dead trees.





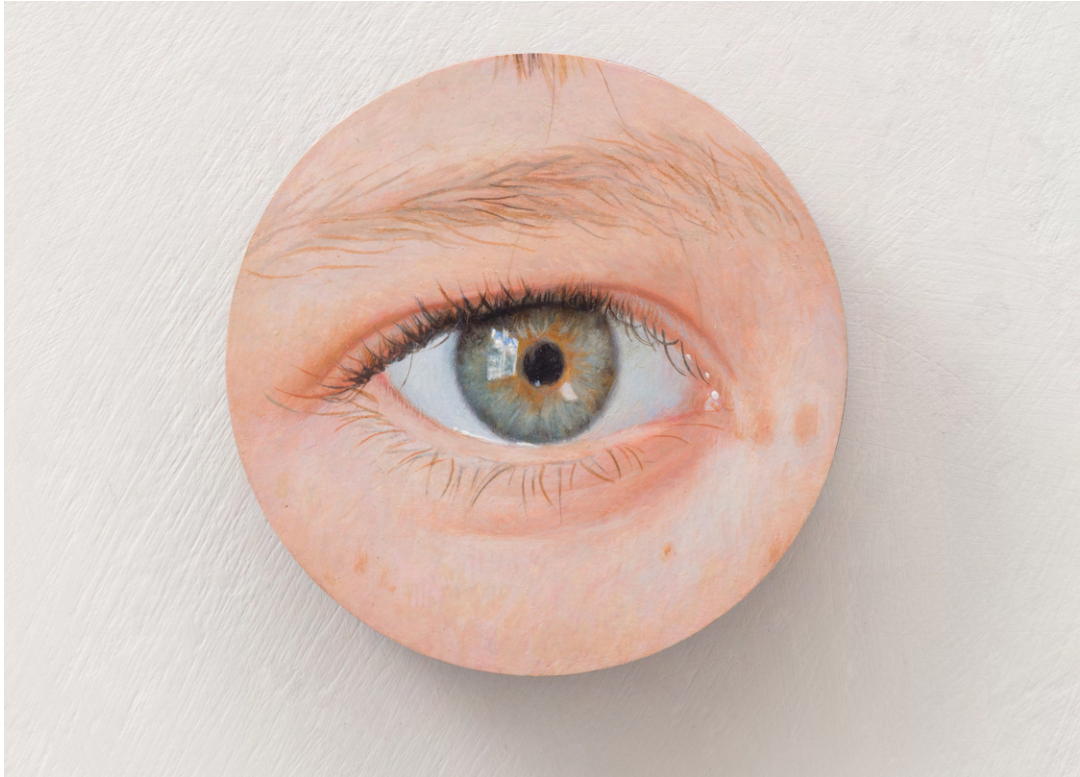
Berry 2014

Oil on panel 7 x 7 cm



Face Monkey 2012

Oil on panel 27 x 27 cm



Isolde 2014

Oil on panel 7 x 7 cm



Lee 2012

Oil on panel 75 x 30 cm



Jason 2012

Oil on panel 75 x 30 cm



Nest 2011

Oil on panel 65 x 69 cm



Jason 2012

Oil on panel 7 x 7 cm



Lee 2012

Oil on panel 7 x 7 cm



Prophet 2012

Oil on panel 9 x 14 cm



Box Room 2014

Oil on panel 13 x 42 cm



Henry the Eighth on Horseback 2014

Oil on panel 43 x 27 cm



Pillow 2014

Oil on panel 13 x 40 cm



Jason 2011

Oil on panel 52 x 26 cm



Superb Bird of Paradise 2011

Oil on panel 50 x 54 cm





Lee 2011

Oil on panel 52 x 26 cm





Figure in a Landscape (3) 2023

Oil on panel 190 x 100 cm



Itself 2011

Oil on panel 50 x 50 cm



The Swimming Hole 2018

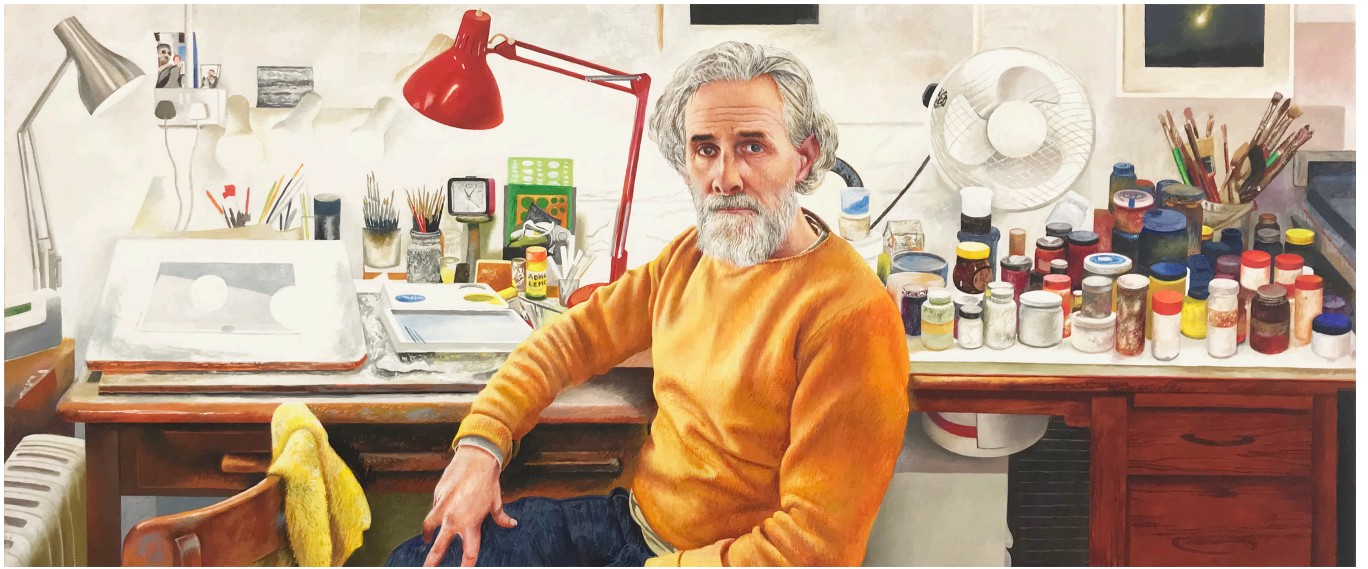
Oil on panel 17 x 15 cm



In Memory 2015

Oil on panel 12 x 19 cm





Studio I (Andrew Grassie) 2023

Oil on panel 20 x 40 cm



The Forgettory 2014

Oil on panel 16 x 12 cm



Puppetman 2014

Oil on panel 13 x 40 cm



The Aside 2014

Oil on panel 15 x 13 cm





The Passing 2016

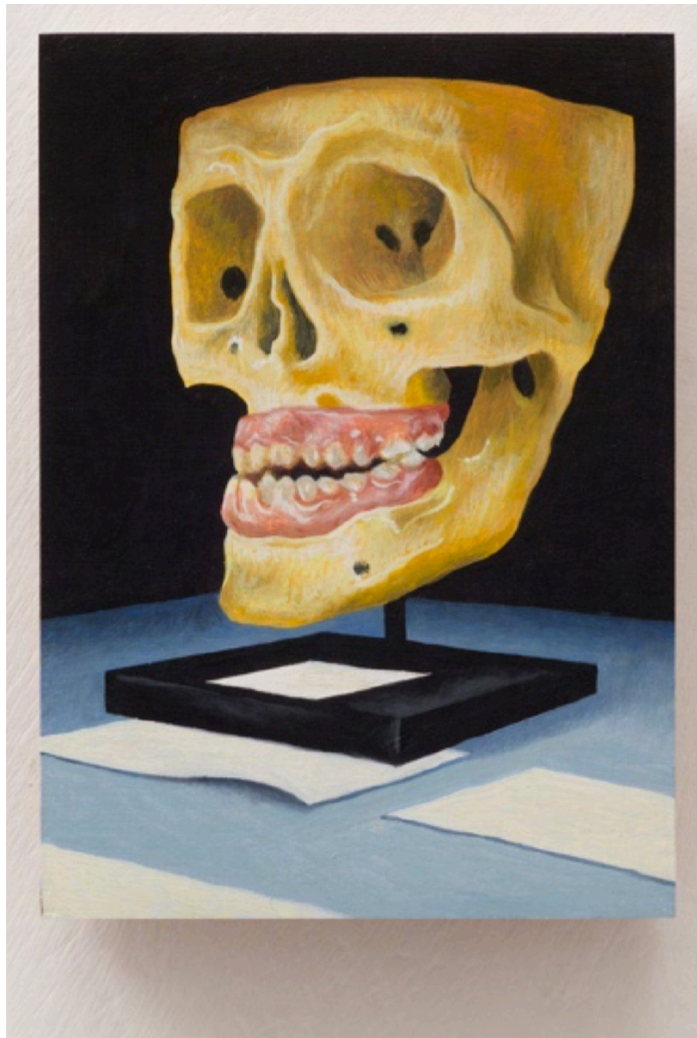
Oil on panel 18 x 52 cm





The Heavenly 2015

Oil on panel 25 x 50 cm



Skull's Teeth 2014

Oil on panel 11 x 8 cm



The Infernal 2015

Oil on panel 40 x 63 cm



Henry Eye 2014

Oil on aluminium 5.5 x 6.5 cm



Ian

Oil on panel 50 x 30 cm



Resuscitate 2015

Oil on panel 6 x 11 cm



Wide Eye 2014

Oil on panel 9 x 7 cm



Plinth 2015

Oil on panel 13 x 21 cm

Mark Fairington b.1957

'Fairington distorts scale, rearranges species, creates new and dubious random couplings. He puts the mystery back into science and reminds us that we don't know everything, that much can still not be explained. The tension between elements in his paintings is resolved pictorially, but leaves a subtle charge – a leaven of doubt – to be absorbed by the receptive viewer.'

Andrew Lambirth

Mark Fairington is Professor of Painting at the University of the Arts, London.

He has a distinguished exhibiting history with his works being shown at museums and galleries throughout the United Kingdom and abroad. Previous exhibitions include *Fabulous Beasts* at the Natural History Museum (2004), *A Duck for Mr Darwin* at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art (2009), a solo exhibition *Collected and Possessed* at the Horniman Museum, London (2015). In October 2018 his exhibition *Unheimliche Pastorage* opened at Galerie Peter Zimmermann, Mannheim, Germany. In 2018 he worked on a commissioned series of paintings for the English Heritage property Cherryburn in Northumberland, the birthplace of the artist Thomas Bewick. These were shown in the exhibition *The Landscape Room* at Handel Street Projects, London 2020.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2020 *The Landscape Room*, Handel Street Projects, London
- 2020 *Relics, Containing the figures of Saints, Martyrs, Sinners, Birds of Paradise, Beasts and Plants*, Ushaw Museum, Durham
- 2018 *Unheimliche Pastorale*, Galerie Peter Zimmermann, Mannheim, Germany
- 2018 *Walking Looking and Telling Tales*, Cherryburn, Northumberland
- 2017 *The Worm in the Bud*, Handel Street Projects, London
- 2015-16 *Collected and Possessed*, The Horniman Museum London
- 2015-16 *A London Assembly*, Delahunty, London
- 2014 *of People*, Galerie Peter Zimmermann, Mannheim, Germany
- 2012 *Unnatural History*, Mannheimer Kunstverein, Galerie Peter Zimmermann, Germany
- 2011 *Flora*, Oliver Sears Gallery, Dublin
- 2010 *Bull Market*, Bury St Edmunds Art Gallery, Suffolk
- 2009 *Private Collection*, Galerie Peter Zimmermann, Germany
- 2007 *Dynasty*, Art Agents, Hamburg
- 2006 *The Raft*, Fred, London
- 2004 *Wunderkammer II*, Wunderkammer I, Kunsthalle Mannheim and Galerie Peter Zimmermann, Germany
- 2002 *Dead or Alive*, Oxford University Museum of Natural History touring to Harewood House
- 2001 *Staying Alive*, Mobile Home, London
- 2000 *Specimen*, Gallery Axel Thieme, Germany
- 2000 *Mantidae*, Oxford University Museum & Ace Gallery, Los Angeles

- 1999 *Peepshow*, Mobile Home, London
- 1998 Gallery Axel Thieme, Germany
- 1998 *Heavier Than Air*, Imperial War Museum, London
- 1997 Todd Gallery, London
- 1996 *A Gym and Six Portraits*, Serpentine Gallery residency
- 1995 Hof en Huyser Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
- 1994 Todd Gallery, London
- 1991 Todd Gallery, London



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