

Artist, Brendan Stuart Burns, Cardiff based and twice Gold Medal winner of the National Eisteddfod is exhibiting his most recent work at the West Wales Arts Centre, Fishguard. For sheer enjoyment of the tactile sensuousness of oil paint they are worth viewing for this alone. 'Paint in fact, is a major concern in itself' *Brendan Burns*. That he allows the full range of possibilities with oil paint is most apparent. But this collection offers much more besides - in the intensity of their presence as works of art, which goes beyond the picturesque landscape.

Burns has a deep preoccupation with the shoreline of the Pembrokeshire coast, particularly the rock pool, viewed from directly above as when walking on the beach. Frequently really close up. You will see no horizons or conventional pictorial devices. You will see what is there, perhaps unnoticed. He paints, indeed reconstructs, his experiences of this most fascinating feature of the changing shore - a surge from the sea and the rock pool is momentarily obliterated, becomes foam, sea-weed, shells and sand, at once exposed and hidden. All is in a state of flux, fragmenting and combining, half seen images, teetering on the edge of recognition and abstraction. This takes one into the realm of 'stream of consciousness', indeed one can recognise the symbol of the shore-line as a state of transition and transformation. The permutations of his chosen subject matter are limitless. Then there is the weather, 'Misty Wet With Rain' and 'Summer Haze' when, as with all his works, the subtle use of palette is to be admired. Sometimes blistering white light, other moments veiled in subtle grey / greens, punctuated with rich sienna or a plummy violet. All is fluid, rhythmic, very Celtic.

Fundamental to Burn's works is his use of layered Perspex and encaustic (wax) strategically placed to entrap the moment, fix the gesture, and heighten ones awareness of the quality of reflection. This is not to say that the use of Perspex is divisive; more and illusive paradox. These are small-scale compact works, making formal use of the diptych and triptych as closely juxtaposed panels. With their rectangular and modular inference to the sequential frames of a film, this beautifully balances the fluidity of paint. With a backdrop of opaque white Perspex, the whole is encased in a clear transparent Perspex box frame. This enclosure gives each work a vulnerability, which can be likened to studying an ancient and precious manuscript, or fragment of land / shore - the implication is exquisitely tantalising.

What I particularly admire in Burns work is the honest and unselfconscious way in which he sensitively allows the paint to speak for itself, and the inventive skill and confidence with which he conveys the transitory as matter: in the object. That is Art.

The exhibition is jointly with painter *Martin Griffiths* and sculptor *Darren Yeadon* and runs until 18th May.