

ALAN WHEATLEY ART

EXHIBITION TITLE: Gary Wragg: Spontaneity of Movements
EXHIBITION DATES: 14 March – 12 April 2012
EXHIBITION VENUE: Alan Wheatley Art, 22 Mason's Yard, London SW1Y 6BU

Following a successful show of early works from 1968-1969, Alan Wheatley Art is delighted to announce a new exhibition of a selection of previously unseen oil and acrylic paintings and works on paper executed between 2006 and 2011 by renowned British abstract painter Gary Wragg

GARY WRAGG: SPONTANEITY OF MOVEMENTS

The moments of *NOW* become many moments that create their own context, building a surface of layered paint, organizing the space from **spontaneous movements**. In Gary Wragg's paintings marks, lines and colours are applied directly with little concern for anything other than the awareness of the moment of application of the paint. The essence of each work consists of **a dialogue of complimentary opposites**, between the particular nature of stillness and movement, open and closed, hard and soft and full and empty, wet and dry and thick and thin. Wragg emphasises that the marks go where the mind, [*eye, chi*], travels. The mind can go anywhere, there is no limit.

The work develops from felt sensations of playing Tai Chi Chuan. The statements are of air and light, colour and form of the paint itself. Edges are crucial and need critical balance in their relationships. Gravity is essential to the work, as is anti-gravity. The feel in the arms and body, light /heavy, springy, expansive, silky smooth, subtle and tranquil while walking, standing, sitting or reclining, are sensations that Wragg attempts to address. Painting and drawing, for him, is the most viable means.

Wragg has always worked on different groups of paintings simultaneously. The *Nice/Véncé* paintings were, for instance, worked on at the same time as the *Tangram* paintings. The *Metro* series were worked on at the same time as the *Edge* and *Box* paintings. Likewise, he has always been a *Lampus* and *Phaethon* [two horse] person, like Matisse and de Kooning, in that abstract and figurative interests develop in parallel.

In the summer of 2011 Wragg visited the Acropolis in Athens, which re-kindled his interest in 5th Century Greek Art that began at the British Museum in 1963, when he spent time drawing from the Elgin Marbles, something that he would continue to do periodically throughout his career. This connection is apparent in the present exhibition in the *Acropolis* series. Connected too, was the previous show at Alan Wheatley Art in 2010, of early watercolours and acrylic paintings Wragg made whilst at Camberwell School of Art. The interests and concerns of that time have been taken around the block, so to speak, over the past five decades, and have still continued to maintain a consistency, albeit with a transformed understanding of **spontaneity of movements**.

In his memorable visit to Willem de Kooning's studio in 1985, Wragg was impressed with the way he stood in his 'osh kosh' painting clothes, rooted, more Tai Chi than most Tai Chi practitioners. De Kooning's late paintings of 1985 also stood on the floor. For Wragg they were a great example of the reality of light heaviness exemplified rarely in contemporary painting and a quality highly revered he reflects in Taoism and Tai Chi. Seeing them again at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in early December 2011, Wragg was deeply moved and reminded that they are indeed a major part of **his own odyssey**.

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Gary Wragg (b.1946) first attended the High Wycombe School of Art before moving to London. There he studied at Camberwell School of Art, where he won Rotary Travelling Prize to Florence and Rome as well as Lord Carron Prize presented by Bryan Robertson. He continued at the Slade School of Art and won a Travelling Scholarship to USA and Mexico which he took in 1972.

Wragg's trips to America to visit Jack Tworkov, between 1971-1974, and time he spent with Willem de Kooning in 1985, were highly significant in his artistic development.

His first one man exhibition was held at Acme Gallery, London in 1976, with a subsequent successful show in 1979. He exhibited regularly at the Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London, between 1979-1989, and held a series of important solo and group exhibitions at Flowers East, London, between 1996-2010.

In his work Wragg explores from a traditional lineage of Poussin, Titian, Rubens, Goya, Delacroix, Cézanne, Bonnard, Matisse, Pollock and de Kooning.

From the early seventies Wragg's love for painting has integrated with his passion for Chinese martial art, Tai Chi Chuan.



White Edge Interior
2010



Rosy Fingered Dawn
2009/10



Secret of Faces & Edges
2006/10



Labyrinth of the Superfast
2008/9