

## PRESS RELEASE

**Peter Thomson Light Box New and Recent Paintings**  
**6 - 28 April 2017**  
**Compass Gallery**  
**178 West Regent Street, Glasgow G2 4RL**



Peter Thomson Hermes oil on panel 55 x 80 cms

Compass Gallery is proud to be presenting a new exhibition by one of Scotland's most dedicated and talented painters, Peter Thomson. He has had numerous solo exhibitions with us since his first major show in 1995 after graduating from Glasgow School of Art.

The many admirers and collectors familiar with the subject and style of Peter's paintings will have a startling surprise. In his newest work, he seems to challenge himself and his viewers to change direction and their expectations of his more familiar style and subject matter.

Thomson is a serious minded and responsible artist, constantly observing, thinking and responding to the world around him, but his underlying success as a painter is deeply rooted in his inner passions and constant exploration and admiration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Masters. The Post Impressionist style of painting continues to be a major influence; Vuillard, Bonnard, Seurat, Sickert are amongst the artists whose painting he believes remain unsurpassed. He says "The importance to me is that I consider these painters to have regarded their subject matter as being equally crucial as exploring the inherent qualities and possibilities of the materials they used." Examining the technique and handling of the images inspires him. Studying images of Degas and Rembrandt are now vehicles for developing and exploring his own skills in creating some of his newest paintings. ("Combing the hair, after Degas") and ("Hendricke Bathing, after Rembrandt").

So why does Peter paint these subjects? Thomson acknowledges that certain ideas and passions deep within himself certainly resonate subconsciously, for example, his enjoyment in Greek mythology and his sporting interests. They are formed and developed over many years and intuitively permeate his thoughts and working methods. Peter paints what he is passionate about. Painting in the wake of artists like of Edward Hopper, and Vilhelm Hammershoi interests him and they are, he feels, closest to the spirit or sensibility of his own paintings. ("Junction") and ("Briggait Wash Area"). Inspired by their handling of paint he is also influenced by their daring subject matter, themes and concerns of the day. Thomson is enthused by the subdued portraits and interiors of these Post Impressionist artists and their muted tones continue to display much influence.

Thomson feels that painting should always be organic in its nature and for it to be more subjective in meaning and he feels that, how paintings are read is influenced by an individual's personal life experiences. He is not concerned about creating something that has a particular meaning or purpose yet, observing this new body of painting, they clearly do.

These paintings are his "observations of the unremarkable and unspectacular" – to him everything is endlessly interesting. However, the paintings reflect his daily journey through life. They are often bustling and intriguing, they shout quietly about his own personal thoughts and experiences. ("Hermes") and ("Workshop"). Accidental discoveries throw up endlessly interesting visual inspiration behind which lies deeply personal thoughtfulness and explanation. A recent trigger of inspiration was during an afternoon in his studio attic, when Peter stood on an old television set by accident; the broken item, its wires and inner workings inadvertently interested him.

The stark, empty abandoned phone boxes offering shelter ("Phone Box, Aikenhead Road") and ("Phone Box, Cathcart") perhaps are a reflection on the experience and challenges a serious and committed artist such as Thomson must endure. There is still an abiding interest in landscape, but his sharp observation of the disintegration of industrial, statuesque objects such as the rusting carcass of an abandoned helicopter ("Abandoned Helicopter, Thornhill") and the acid burned car batteries, we wonder are perhaps metaphors for a variety of contemporary issues and his commitment to his own conscience and political ideologies. Other paintings in the show are gentle and poignant, always deeply personal and thought provoking ("Tiagh Liath an Gleann Feshie").

This is a strong and unique exhibition not to be missed and we look forward to opening the gallery doors on the opening evening of 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

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