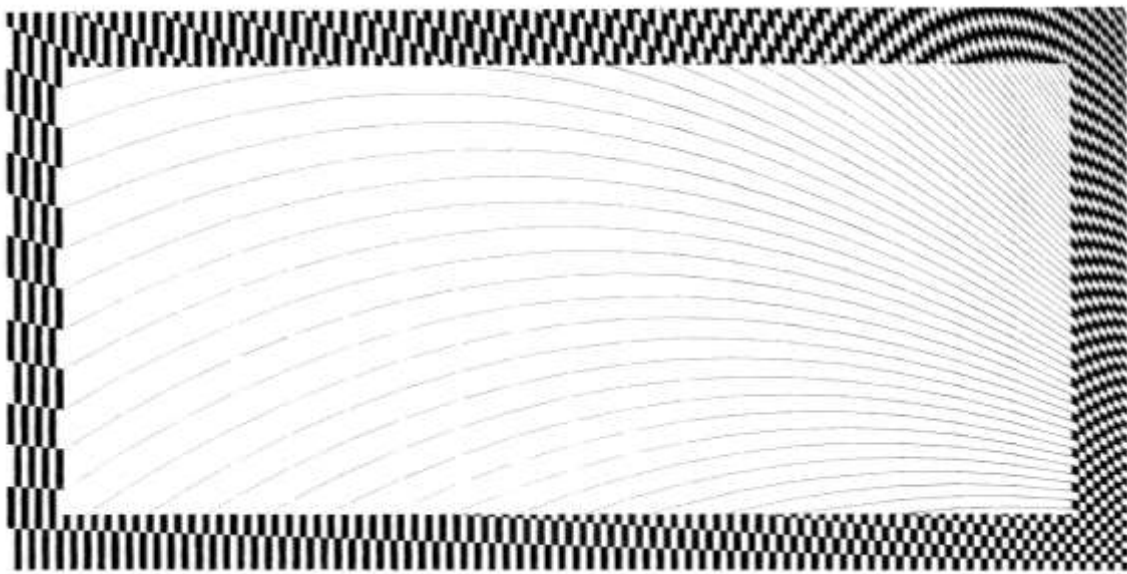


PRESS RELEASE

WENDY SMITH – *Forms of Life*

14 February – 13 March 2020

Private View 13 February 6 to 8pm

[View Exhibition Catalogue on-line](#)

Peripheral Vision, gouache, pen & ink drawing on board, 40 x 65.5cm

A line drawn by hand is a fundamental act for Wendy Smith; an act of such significance that it has underpinned her practice for over forty years and Art Space Gallery is delighted to be presenting her second solo exhibition since joining the Gallery. With a selection of new and previously unseen work stretching back to the late 90s the exhibition will highlight the rich and seemingly endless possibilities that emerge as she explores the mysteries inherent in drawn lines on a flat surface.

Using only pen, pencil and a straightedge images of quite startling spatial illusions are coaxed into existence through the slow accumulation of straight lines; images so meticulous and exacting in execution that the initial impact is one of disbelief that they are entirely handmade. And each work grows directly out of the process of their making. There is no preconceived idea of a likely outcome. Never an image in the mind's eye. Indeed, to try and anticipate an ending would render the making of the work irrelevant. Each must be a voyage of discovery towards an unknown destination.

Of her last exhibition in 2015 Deanna Petherbridge wrote:

Wendy Smith's drawings engross and fascinate precisely because the unplanned effects ... appear to embody a mysterious charge. This 'electrical' charge that constitutes more than the sum of the parts of her austere beautiful linear constructions, serves to activate each work into something breathlessly unexpected for the spectator.

Starting with a grid that is measured out and drawn by hand, regular and accurate lines joining selected points are then superimposed; no line being longer than can be reached from start to finish in one continuous movement. And as the work progresses the relationship of points, lines, planes and the juxtaposition of light and dark planes to create the illusion of different depths is explored. A new grid could be overlaid. It might be the same grid in a new alignment or a totally different grid but as the process progresses and layers are added remarkable things happen: sensations of cosmic light might appear, optical illusions occur that bend space and fragile, complex floating structures materialise out of a flat surface. And with each revelation a new opportunity for development is suggested so that each work is a continuous probing into the unknown.



Wendy Smith studied at Nottingham College of Art (1968), Slade School of Fine Art (1970) and was awarded a D. Phil at the University of York (1996), Leverhulme Research Fellowship (1998) and the Graham Robertson Travelling Scholarship (1969). Teaching posts include Head of Painting at Camberwell School of Art & Crafts, and she has exhibited regularly since 1978 including Kettle's Yard and the ICA.

Process and State 2, gouache on board, 103 x 78cm

A 30 page catalogue with 30 plates and text by Brendan Prendeville is available. View on line at: www.artspacegallery.co.uk

Gallery hours 11am to 6pm, Tuesday - Saturday

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