

Brett Colquhoun

Kindle

30th April – 30 May 2009



Sutton Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by Brett Colquhoun. In this series Colquhoun utilizes an idiosyncratic selection of potent natural forms to explore primal human energies and emotions. Magnetic fields, root systems, shields and flames are motifs which have been a focus of investigation throughout the artist's career, continually drawing him back to mine their symbolic potential.

In work such as *Current* a subtle sense of tension is conveyed. Here the form of a small vessel or shield is silhouetted against a series of radiating, wavering lines which appear to merge into oceanic currents. The vessel might be a source of radiation, and yet also seem to deflect the implied energy, allowing the image to rest in a state of visual limbo. Furthering this sense of ambiguity is the way in which the image might also be seen as a fingerprint or piercing bird's eye.

Both *Engulf 2* and *In-flame* represent a flame being consumed by itself or a replica of itself. The kindling or arousal of emotion and ideas to the moment of epiphany.

With their ability to illustrate disparate moods and sensations, the images exhibited in *Kindle* offer a series of potent images that investigate the narrative power of visual association. In *Fear*, *Charge* and *Fuse* a state of fear or anxiety is captured by the repeated motif of the lightning bolt and root system, the instantaneous force of the lightning bolt from above with the buried root system below. Together they manifest the juxtaposition of light and dark of the natural unknown. The lightning bolt blasts the roots and electrifies the dark. A sensory charge to the nervous system. A passionate awakening, innervation as opposed to enervation.

In *Fracture I & II* the lightning bolt has become a crack in its negative form, splitting the image apart to create a sense of upheaval and fragmentation. The bolt has become permanent image. It also conveys the temporiness of lightning to the cracks permanent after-effect.

Drawing in this way upon multiple levels of visual association, Colquhoun's new series of works are both seductive and unsettling, offering a highly sophisticated extension of the artist's continuing concerns.

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