

## INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED ARTIST ON SHOW IN TW

Tunbridge Wells' **Bluemoon Gallery** on Camden Road is to stage an exhibition of celebrated painter and printmaker **Brendan Neiland**. Neiland's work, which explores the enigma of modern metropolitan existence, is represented in major museums and galleries worldwide including The Tate Gallery London and The Victoria and Albert Museum. Private collectors include designers **Paul Smith** and **Charlie Allen** and **HH the Sheikh of Sharjah**.



A major figure in the contemporary art world and a key motivator behind the revitalisation of the Royal Academy School, this is one of the first times Neiland's work has been shown in a smaller gallery. Bluemoon owner and Art Consultant, **laysha Salih**, interviewed him ahead of the exhibition to give So readers an insight into the man behind the art.

### WHERE DOES YOUR INSPIRATION COME FROM?

I lived in the countryside in Lowestoft until I was 14, when we moved to Birmingham. I

was shell-shocked by the change. It was wonderful; I loved the vibrancy, the people, shops, cars and factories - the nonstop activity. This is what I attempt to capture in my work: movement, vibrancy and colour. I enjoy walking through cities, being immersed in the reflections of the buildings. To wander, to lose time. There isn't enough space in the city to step back and view a whole building; you only see fragments, sections. These fragments reflect the perpetual activity of the people that pass before them, including me - one becomes part of the urban fabric. The city is to me what the countryside is to landscape painters.

### WERE YOU THE FIRST ARTIST TO USE STENCILS TO CREATE A PAINTING?

Almost certainly. I didn't want there to be any visible brush strokes on my canvases; I saw brush strokes as interference, an imperfection. I was experimenting by using a spray gun to apply the paint; this gave a subtlety of colour and allowed me to build the richness of my palette layer upon layer, but you need to impose a hard edge in order to develop form. At first I used masking tape and scraps of paper, but it was very time consuming and voided whole areas of the canvas. Creating stencils from paper was the next logical step. It is a similar process to silkscreen printing, though I am not limited to the number of colours I can use. Using this method has helped

me to develop my understanding of colour, how it shifts in tone, how it can be built up.

### YOU SEEM TO BE GRADUALLY CHANGING WHERE YOU SHOW YOUR WORK, WHY IS THIS?

From the outset I wanted my work to be approachable and accessible. It's important to me to show in galleries where the staff and owners love and understand my work and show it in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Viewing and buying art should be exciting rather than intimidating - I want to share my vision.

**Brendan Neiland's work will be on show at the Bluemoon Gallery, Tunbridge Wells, from March 8. On March 22 he will be giving a talk about his work and the stencilling process at 2pm. To book your place [info@bluemoongallery.co.uk](mailto:info@bluemoongallery.co.uk) putting "SoTW 0314" in the subject line.**

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