

**Stephen Newton – Life in the Abstract**

4 – 16 September, 11am – 6pm

Vyner Street Gallery,  
London, E2 9DG  
07970 484316

First Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 6 -9 pm

Abbey Walk Gallery a Northern contemporary gallery with a growing reputation is travelling South to London's *Gallery One – Vyner Street Gallery* exhibiting their internationally renown artist Professor Stephen James Newton and his latest body of work *Life in the Abstract*.

Stephen has exhibited extensively throughout Europe, America and the UK, and as well as being a national and international acclaimed artist is also a highly commended author with a distinguished academic career. As a person Stephen is unassuming, yet combines an insightful intelligence with a sparkling bonhomie; his dedication to his chosen profession is palpable.

Stephen's paintings deal in unconscious form, portraying compelling elemental images- odd objects and parts of buildings, walls, staircases, chairs and windows, images that are raw and uncompromising, a reminder to the viewer of how buildings encapsulate our hopes and fears on many levels.

Stephen uses thick layers of oil paint on his canvasses. He buys his paint by the litre, opens the tins so the evaporative effect causes premature thickening and thus he is able to lay down those remarkably thick layers of texture. In fact, you are immediately struck by this assertion of surface and its materiality which come from the artist's exploration of the processes of painting and his subconscious; he allows his art to say nothing outside its own intrinsic form,

His paintings are a combination of figuration and abstraction, creating a subtle provocative tension between the bold formal qualities and the often intimate figurative content that emerge through their abstract layers. Stephen subverts the recognizable and allows the familiar to become strange through



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odd juxtapositions and details. As viewers we become aware of the unending space beyond the walls and above the roof, the spaces of our earliest imaginings, flowing between our primal unconsciousness and the gradual differentiating consciousness: spaces at once external and internal.

It has taken him a lot of searching and development to achieve his distinct style. By his own admission art is an act of defiance in which painting might be described as a technique of learning how not to control something. Ultimately however his paintings leave the viewer to develop their own meanings out of layered images and illogical compositions.