

# Patchwork:

new large-scale paintings by

**Nikki Gardham**

**7th - 17th December 2017**

**Private View: Thursday 7th December, 7-10pm**

**Mercer Chance** is proud to present an exhibition of new paintings by Nikki Gardham.

Buoyed by a renewed freedom in her painting, Nikki has produced an exciting and exuberant collection of large works on paper, elevating autobiographical vignettes into grand monuments to everyday life.

Nikki's work is informed by her upbringing in Essex; her interest in picture-making stems from the idea that the individual experience, the modest observations of an 'ordinary' person, perhaps even those of an 'Essex girl', can be transformed into something worthy of deep consideration when drawn and painted.

Sketchbooks provide the springboard for paintings; they form a library, thumbed through regularly until an idea jumps out. The drawings are made mostly in situ, sometimes *en plein-air* and often in the houses of friends and family. Strangers and strange places appear too, as drawings are made from imagination to explore an idea further.

The process of making a painting is not simply a case of 'scaling-up' a drawing; it must be more open-ended, for whilst the drawing provides the initial catalyst, "there must be room for the paint to act as if the part has never been played before".

While painting, she noticed that - between working from drawings and remembering the sensation of being in a specific place - her feelings and memories of locations were becoming conflated with one another, and joining up with other important locations and moments in her life.

In *Pink and Green Hills* for instance, a painting of a lush south Indian landscape (based on a sketch made during a recent trip) began to take on the colours and forms of the artists home in the 'fresh-air suburbs' of South London. Exoticism gives way to grounded familiarity, closeness.

It seems that Nikki is compelled to paint what is intimately and warmly known to her, and yet, there is a boldness in the execution and scale of these paintings that suggests a greater ambition; they are both glimpsed insights into a private world, and formal, public statements of artistic intent.

Open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 11am-6pm or by appointment

**Mercer Chance Gallery,**

253 Hoxton St,  
London,  
N15LG

info@mercchance.co.uk  
www.mercchance.co.uk  
0207 033 6559