**Press Release Draft**

**Aleph Contemporary at The In & Out Club presents**

**Henry Ward and Mark Wright: Lost in Abstraction 1, 2, 3**

**Curated by Alistair Hicks**

**19 October - 30 November 2021**

The In & Out Club, 4 St James's Square, St. James's, London SW1Y 4JU

*“One’s eye goes down one line, one’s mind may be going down a different one, but the picture keeps on moving us, till we have found that spot inside us that we were looking for.”* Alistair Hicks

On behalf of Aleph Contemporary, Alistair Hicks, author and former curator of Deutsche Bank, curates an exhibition by two leading British artists in ‘Henry Ward and Mark Wright: Lost in Abstraction 1, 2, 3’. Audiences are encouraged to join Hicks’ exploration of the pleasure of disorientation when caught adrift in a seemingly anti-referential abstract space of mere artistic gesture. The exhibition inspires child-like play in resisting to decode the abstracted languages Ward and Wright have respectively built. While Ward’s artistic process is made clear through the sum of its melding parts, Wright’s use of material and media influences the various moods of his pieces; left open for you to dive into. With both artists’ works, the onus is on the viewer to react.

In the exhibition foreword, Jonathan Watkins, Ikon Gallery Director sums up the particular pleasure of experiencing the work of these two contemporary artists in the current socio-political climate: *“Henry Ward and Mark Wright are, aesthetically, at the abstract end of the spectrum. We get their references but, most of all, enjoy the here and now – the ‘I was here’ – quality of their paintings. How refreshing, given the academic, research-based nature of much art work being made these days … Simply, let’s have more of this unpretentious, unportentous creativity. Given the privations visited upon us since the advent of the pandemic, it is just what the doctor ordered.”*

**Notes to Editors**

**Henry Ward**

Henry Ward is an artist, writer, curator, and educator living in South London. He primarily works as a painter, but also makes drawings and small sculptures. Ward is the Creative Director for Freelands Foundation and was the Head of Education at the Southbank Centre. His other work in education includes roles at the Welling school, a visual art specialist collage, and lecturing across various universities. Ward also established the alTURNERtive Prize, an annual award celebrating outstanding student practice. His work has been widely exhibited and shortlisted for the Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize in 2018 and 2019.

**Video**

Henry Ward is interviewed by Jonathan Watkins, Director of Ikon Gallery. Introduced by Aleph Contemporary Founder and Artist Director Vivienne Roberts. [WATCH IT HERE.](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qe1fDVN3Y6A)

**Mark Wright**

Mark Wright holds his BFA from Central Saint Martin’s College of Art and Design, London, and his MFA from the Royal College of Art, London. Select solo exhibits include The D’Arcy Thompson Museum, University of Dundee, 2013; Seven Seven Gallery, London, 2008; Carter Presents, London, 2008; Metropole Galleries, The Leas, Folkestone, Kent, 2005; I-Level Gallery, London, 2003; Rhodes + Mann Gallery, London, 2000; Jason and Rhodes Gallery, London, 1996; Lannon Gallery, New York, 1994; Galeria Alda Cortez, Lisbon, 1993; Anderson O’ Day Gallery, London, 1992; Winchester Gallery, Hampshire, 1991. Select group shows include Edinburgh College of Art, 2019; Coombs Contemporary: Watson Farley & Williams, London, 2019; University of Brighton, 2018; University of Northampton, 2017; Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, 2016;  D’Arcy Thompson Art Collection, Edinburgh City Art Centre, Edinburgh, 2016; Mall Galleries, London, 2016; James Freeman Gallery, London, 2016; Darbyshire Gallery, London, 2016; James Freeman Gallery, 2015 and 2014; Usher Gallery, Lincoln, UK, 2015; The D’Arcy Thompson Museum, University of Dundee, 2014; Transition Gallery, London, UK, 2014; H Project Space, Bangkok, Thailand, 2014; Collyer Bristow Gallery, London, 2013; Lion and Lamb Gallery, London, 2013; & Model Gallery, Leeds, 2013-2014; Pippy Holdsworth Gallery, London, 2012; Galeria Cadaques, Spain, 2012; Carter Presents, London, 2012; Gallery Stock Berlin, Berlin, 2012; Wimbledon College of Art, London, Phoenix Gallery, Exeter; Charlie Smith Gallery, London, 2012; Newlyn Art Gallery, Cornwall, 2012.

Wright’s work is found in various private collections as well as several prominent corporate and public collections including British Airways, Deutsche Bank; Dundee Museums Collection; Merrill Lynch; Montpellier Chapter Art Collection; Pfizer’s Art Collection; Royal College of Art; Slade School of Art; Sony International; TI Group Collection and the Wellcome Trust Collection. The artist has served as a lecturer at numerous universities and art schools over the last twenty years including the University of Brighton; Loughborough University School of the Arts, English and Drama; The Glasgow School of Art; Parsons Paris School of Art and Design; Ruskin School of Fine Art, Oxford University; University College for Creative Arts, Canterbury, Kent; University of Northumbria and the Wimbledon School of Art, among others.

Wright is the recipient of various awards and honours including The Montpellier Chapter Art Collection Commission, 2010; Research Awards, Loughborough University School of the Arts, 2000,2003 and 2008; and Research Sabbatical, Loughborough University,  2007-2008; Wellcome Trust Commission, 2001; Research Fellow in Fine Art Painting, Kent Institute of Art & Design, 1998-2001; British Council Awards, 1994 and 1995; Visiting Fellow in Painting, Winchester School of Art, 1990-1991 and the Boise Travel Award, New York, 1990.  Selected collections: British Airways, David Roberts Collection, Deutsche Bank.

**Aleph Contemporary**

Aleph Contemporary is a London based contemporary art gallery with an international roster of emerging and mid-career artists and a forward-looking programme of curated collections, publications, virtual exhibitions, and pop-up events. The name Aleph is inspired by Jorge Luis Borges' story of the same name and expresses a commitment to the importance of dialogue, invention, and the value of experiencing and understanding art today.

Aleph Contemporary at The In & Out Club, 4 St James's Square, St. James's, London SW1Y 4JU

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Instagram: @alephcontemporary Twitter: AlephContempor1

Facebook: @alephcontemporary

Admission Free. Booking Essential: [events@theinandoutclub.co.uk](mailto:events@theinandoutclub.co.uk)

**The In & Out Club**

The Naval and Military Club – otherwise known as the In and Out, a nickname that originated from the carriage gates at the old clubhouse at 94 Piccadilly and which they have carried forward to their magnificent clubhouse at No 4 St James's Square.

Though the club has an Armed Forces heritage, membership is drawn not just from the armed services but increasingly from a wide range of other professions and backgrounds.

Positioned in the impressive Mayfair surroundings, the clubhouse acts as a refuge for members; whether seeking a peaceful oasis in central London to recuperate from the everyday rush, to socialise, or to entertain friends, family, colleagues, and clients.

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