Welcome Swallow Gallery

47th exhibition

R O O M S: Places of Consequence

Artist's Brief

Inevitably, throughout history, the subject of rooms has attracted the attention of all the major artists. During the Dutch 'golden period' Vermeer portrayed detailed designs, architecture and artifacts as the backcloth to figurative and social studies. The *Milkmaid* (1658) and *The Music Lesson* (1665) are just two of the many pieces of work that combined represent a substantial body of Vermeer's work. Earlier, Judith Leyster's *Unequal Love* (1631) used the room as the context for important human discourse. A place of consequence.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the portrayal of rooms shifted towards studies of mood and state of mind, thus moving from showing what happens in rooms to insights around internal feelings and emotions that a room might represent. Perhaps most famous of all is Vincent Van Gogh's, *The Bedroom* (1889) at his residence in Arles with its unpretentious loneliness seen as the prelude to the taking of his own life a year later. In contrast American artist Mary Cassatt joined the impressionist movement (having been rejected by the Paris Salon in 1877) with room scenes of family settings, with children at play in happy repose. Such is her composition, *Girl in a Blue Armchair* (1878).

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Matisse's 1911 *Red Studio* and Kandinsky's *Interior* (1909) signalled the full assault on representative art, with cacophonies of colour and disorder pacing the growing interest in post impressionism as well as expressionist experimentation. Painting a room was an exercise in giving free rein to emotions and multiple perspectives.

A return to strict geometry and clear lines can be seen in Edward Hopper's *Sun in an Empty Room* (1965) and Roy Lichtenstein's 1991 contemporary rendition

of *Interior with Restful Paintings.* This maintains the focus on a room's ability to capture emotions, from fear and angst to joy and coolness.

With the aforementioned (far from complete) art history in mind, the aim of this exhibition is to continue using rooms as a platform to present insight and commentary on the following:

- Room design and decor, local-NZ themed / international
- Artistic style as a preference to highlight and explore the subject matter
- Personal / social narrative, emotional atmospheric depth
- Context for figurative studies
- Dialogue with established pastiche

Rooms should not be restricted to a domestic setting. Bars, cafes, hotels and restaurants – essentially, any internal structure can be the subject matter. *In the online world, have rooms lost their intimate cache? Or do they still transmit meaning?* Conversations with the gallery Curator are welcome and encouraged.

The group exhibition is expected to run from early February into mid-March 2027. If you wish to make a submission, please contact the gallery before 21st December at:

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Call: 07 858 3964

References:



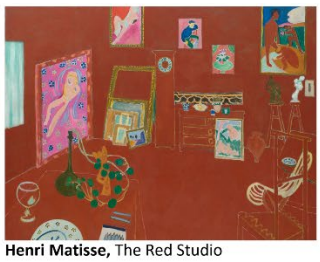
Judith Leyster, Unequal Love



Johannes Vermeer, The Milkmaid



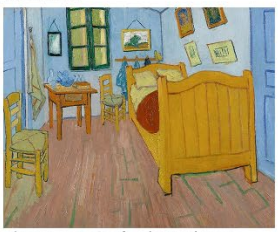
Mary Cassatt, Little Girl in a Blue Armchair



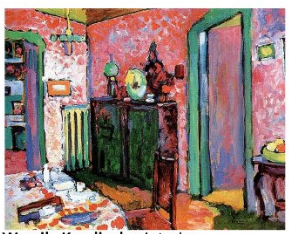
Henri Matisse, The Red Studio



Johannes Vermeer, The Music Lesson



Vincent van Gogh, The Bedroom



Wassily Kandinsky, Interior



Roy Lichtenstein, Interior with Restful Paintings



Edward Hopper, Sun in an Empty Room