

DUNCAN WESTON

I WAS HERE

5th SEPTEMBER - 20th OCTOBER, 2024

For the 3rd Anniversary of the gallery we are very pleased to present *I WAS HERE*, an exhibition of new work by UK based artist Duncan Weston. Weston is a renowned underground artist who has exhibited worldwide both inside galleries as well as the outdoors. Most recently he constructed a large scale installation at the Saatchi gallery in London for the exhibition *Beyond The Streets*.

I WAS HERE draws us into Weston's world growing up in the 80's and 90's in the UK: through a prolific series of paintings and objects Weston documents his situations, influences and desires - the result is a landscape of almost 100 art objects that give us a polyvalent look at Weston's life. To accompany the exhibition Professor Richard Brook has written an essay that expands on Weston's life and work, here he writes:

"DUNCAN's work draws expressly on his life as a writer of graffiti but is complicated by its internal contradiction – it is accessible and unintelligible, crude and sophisticated, humorous and serious, retrospective and contemporary. To grapple with these opposites necessitates an understanding of DUNCAN's multiple identities, their genesis in graffiti culture, and his manifold divergent paths leading from a discipline, unencumbered by art history, but bound by its own traditions and idiosyncrasies."

I WAS HERE is consistent with Weston's reflection on his own life and environment as the source for his practice. The largest of the paintings in the show are renderings of the front and back cover of the seminal book *Subway Art*: in the graffiti community this book is referred to as The Bible and as Weston says it literally changed the way the world looks in the proliferation of graffiti culture worldwide.

On the opposing walls of the gallery there are grids of paintings, these groups build up a picture of stories, places and objects from Weston's formative era. The paintings occupy the wall in the same way memory occupies the brain: with a lack of linear chronology. We see seat patterns from public transport, text pieces that are segments of slang or particular situations as well as the tools for life, obsolete technology: cameras, maps, mobile phones. Both the technology and situations represent that era uniquely in that most of their functions have been surpassed by the mobile phone.

To accompany the paintings Weston has made a series of discreet clay works, their raw form signals these as archaeological objects: Fossils. There is a distortion from the original effected in his handling of the material, the nature of raw clay obscures a literal conveyance of what these objects are and like the paintings operate in the same manner as memory, they are fuzzy, partially accurate and evoke the object.

The video work in *I WAS HERE* is a time capsule of advertising, news and the media representation of sub-culture's of the era. Their format is based around the VHS taping of live broadcast television culture of the time, a visceral window into the past. The work has been made in collaboration with Nathan Clear.

I WAS HERE is open until October 20th.

Founded in 2021 The Horse is an artist run contemporary art gallery in Dublin 1 that seeks to provide a platform for emerging, experimental and underrepresented art practitioners. For sales, viewings and programming in general, please email Matthew Wilkinson – mw@thehosedublin.xyz