



NORTHART
Knapik Local Board THE LION FOUNDATION BLT

Ruth Cleland *Terrazzo*

25 January - 6 March 2022

Ruth Cleland's photorealist paintings and abstractions encourage us to slow down and notice details in our daily surroundings. Throughout her career Cleland has depicted her locale – from timber-clad Victorian-era Ōtepoti flats, to suburban streets and roundabouts in Kirikiriroa, to generic shopping malls, supermarkets and parking buildings in Tāmaki Makaurau. While each space is recognisable and familiar, Cleland bares few clues as to precisely where each scene derives. Instead, she takes the viewer through a series of intimate observations which have consumed her attention: the bright illumination of a fluorescent lamp on a polished terrazzo floor, the absorbent glow of daylight on an oil-drenched tarmac car park, and so on. The almost forensic fidelity with which she reproduces these fleeting interplays of light and materials probes the threshold between pictorial space and abstraction.

Cleland is interested in how such close observations of everyday scenes can locate a strangeness that is far from ordinary. Her recording of such details takes on an almost anthropological role, which reveals aspects of who we are and how we live in the world today. While her studio is far removed from these spaces, the art materials are an important feature of Cleland's work. The physical characteristics in these scenes are not simply captured photographically but reconstructed through Cleland's own 'aggregates' of acrylic and graphite. Likewise the grids, which feature prominently in Cleland's work, both reveal her precise methods of producing the illusionistic spaces and function as abstractions unto themselves, allowing us to experience the slippage between illusory and actual planes in space.

Ruth Cleland is originally from the Waikato and is currently based in Tāmaki Makaurau. She graduated from the Dunedin School of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1998 and Master of Fine Arts (with distinction) in 2002, specialising in printmaking. Ruth has won several awards, including the NZ Painting and Printmaking Award in 2003, and the Park Lane Wallace Trust Development Award in 2008, which included a three-month artist residency at the Vermont Studio Centre in the USA.

Cover images: *Floor 4*, (detail); *Floor 3* (detail), photo: Sam Hartnett

Gallery 1

Silver, Floor, Grid, 2018
acrylic on aluminium (3 panels), 821 x 1560mm

Floor 6, 2022
acrylic on linen, 840 x 630mm

Grid 43, 2021
acrylic on aluminium, 695 x 520mm

Gallery 2

Floor, 2019
graphite on Bristol board, 383 x 285mm

Floor 3, 2020
acrylic on Bristol board, 383 x 285mm

Grid 42, 2021
acrylic on board, 385 x 290mm

Floor 5, 2022
lithograph on paper, 438 x 328mm, edition of 10
Auckland Print Studio

Gallery 3

Ceiling, Floor, Grid, 2018
acrylic on aluminium (3 panels), 1005 x 1835mm

Floor 4, 2021
acrylic on board, 325 x 435mm