



In a tightly focused exhibition that bridges the realms of painting, sculpture and performance, Robert Sherlock reintroduces us to painting's essential character. His compositions – modestly scaled pseudo-abstracts based on selected random photographs of NCAD's environs and Trinity College – exhibit cohesiveness and visual strength. In a gesture that thwarts the limitations imposed by the traditional hanging of canvases, these paintings not only project off the wall, they also pivot up and down. This lets us appreciate them as paintings and as elements of an installation inviting viewer participation.

Understatedly bold and energetic, the paintings convey an intensity that slowly discloses itself. His muted colours and mottled paint, the drag marks left by the brushes and the faithful transference of skewed perspectives from the photographs reveal and obscure. They turn our attention to the structure of images and qualities of paint, not pictorial details or guessing about the locations depicted. At the same time the rigid arrangement of the paintings contrasts with the images' random aspects. Grouped in threes following a landscape-portrait-landscape pattern of orientation, the paintings create a cadence that solidifies his production

and conveys a high degree of rigor.

Sherlock's exhibition says little about his physical condition. After years of not being able to properly view paintings in museums, he has devised a positionable mounting system for his own work. Intended, for example, to amend the experience of people confined to wheelchairs, his work reminds us that paintings also exist as independent objects. By choosing to adjust the position of his canvases, we do more than modify our viewing experience. This simple action brings us into direct contact with the materials of the work and all of the subtleties of its physical presence.

We witness the play of light across the surface of the paint and the movement of shadows across the wall. The product of a pragmatic impulse and a keen mind, Sherlock's work offers more to us than he likely realized. Its optical and sculptural aspects invite further exploration on the part of the viewer and artist. Moreover, the hinged system serves tall people as well as short ones, which also makes his work thoroughly egalitarian.