

DILLWYN SMITH

I Was So Much Older Then - I'm Much Younger Than That Now

10-19 October 2025

10 Belmont Street, London, NW1 8HH

I Was So Much Older Then - I'm Much Younger Than That Now brings together six large scale paintings from the late 1990s and early 2000s that are being exhibited together - and mostly, seen - for the first time. The site of the exhibition is at a former Piano Factory in Camden, London. This specific environment allows for the verso of the paintings to be visible; this specific installation retrospectively echoes the transparent fabric works that Smith has been producing over the past 20 years.

These abstracts were created by use of varied - and notably, accessible - means. Smith utilised brushes and sprayers to apply diluted acrylic paint. The sprays he uses are the rudimentary kind designed for treating houseplants. They have a tendency to spit, clog and run dry, and these imperfections themselves become a part of the character of the painting. Embedded in his process is a commitment to a 'truth' of the medium. In this way Smith elevates the mundane - water, air, canvas and pigment - into works of astonishing elegance.

'No matter how awkward, ungainly, crude or casual he allows his marks to be, Dillwyn Smith seems incapable of making an ugly or inappropriate gesture. The natural delicacy of his touch and the precisely-judged colour, together with the poignancy created by the 'imperfect' realisation of a visual idea, makes for consistently engaging and elegant results. Like Roger Hilton and Philip Guston before him, he can appear to challenge his own habitual refinement as a painter not only because he knows intuitively that this will win out in the end, but also because the admission of flaws and changes of mood or purpose all act as powerful signs of his own humanity.'

- Marco Livingstone

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