

Ponystep

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# ON THE UP - KATY MORAN.

by Francesca Gavin  
ART

**Since being 'discovered' by Stuart Shave after her outstanding MA show, Katy Moran is often being touted as 'one to watch' - both at Modern Art, and on the London art scene at large. With Shave's talent for sniffing out the stars of tomorrow, we predict great things from the young painter. Francesca Gavin finds out more...**

Katy Moran is a surprisingly glamorous and groomed considering how wild her brushstroke is. Her abstract canvases are full of movement and life – though what they represent is delightfully hard to read. It feels like Moran is striving to represent something but its deliberately blurred, ruffled and turned upside. She initially studied graphic design and illustration at Leeds but soon moved into painting and later did an MA at the Royal College of Art, where gallerist Stuart Shave quickly picked her up. She was recently part of a group show at Tate Britain and there is something classic and British about what she does. There is a touch of postwar painters like Paul Nash or Graham Sutherland. But there is nothing old fashioned about her instinctual approach to art.

Francesca Gavin: How do you make your work?

KM: I always start with a point of reference but I often wonder how important those things are. Very often, as soon as I start painting I completely leave that reference or source image and I don't even use it. Its almost like I need something to ignite some kind of interest. It can be anything – magazines, pictures I see on the internet. Walking around I take pictures with my phone. It can be anything. But I think it is important that I find something that gives me an idea of a shape or a particular palette or use of line. If I don't start with anything it sort of becomes a mess on the canvas, a bit pointless.

FG: Do you think of your paintings as abstract or more figurative?

KM: I always see something in them. The point when I see something is when they're done. Its quite personal. I understand that people aren't going to see the same things as me but I can't change that. If I intentionally made something figurative it would look very dead to me. Those marks would look contrived so I can't keep them. Whatever image I want to arrive at it by accident. I set up these parameters of control – I work to a certain size, I mix certain colours, I use certain brushes but within all that I control I'm hoping something can happen. You can get a surprise.

FG: Is being a woman important to what you do?

KM: I think it's irrelevant. I've always felt that my gender doesn't have any bearing on the work and I've always liked it that way. In any other area of my life I'm very aware of my gender, but when I come in here I'm not at all and I like that.

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Katy Moran.

