



View through a Window, Ta Cenc, Gozo, 2015. Acrylic on Linen, 80 x 100 cm



FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURES

These paintings are located firmly in the tradition of classical western art; they are based on notions of structure and harmony that have been developed in an almost unbroken discourse started by the Pre-Socratic philosophers of ancient Greece. However, since the late nineteenth century, artists both within and outside this tradition have become interested in testing and questioning given relationships, sometimes to the extent of threatening the existence of any coherent structure within a given work. This exploration is particularly clear in music, where compositions and performances alternatively fulfil and frustrate our expectations. In Irish traditional music, for example,

Virtuoso performers will frequently appear to compress or elongate phrases in a tune beyond what the ear expects, to the extent that the listener may feel that the tune is brought almost to the brink of collapse. The addition, subtraction and repositioning of the basic melodic and rhythmical structure is exploited to its limit only to be given a last second reprieve giving the whole musical experience all the more impact.

This stretching of structure to its limits can also be seen in literature, as in James Joyce's great novel *Ulysses*, where narrative and language often seem about to break down, only to be reaffirmed at a deeper level.

In his Gozo paintings, Philip Flanagan has engaged in a parallel quest. The paintings display surface forms that point towards harmonious relationships of shape and colour, but present us with breaks in structure that frustrate any easy synthesis. They deny a final resolution, but constantly intrigue us with its possibility. The relationships set up within each composition are constantly unfolding, and it is this which gives the works their initial impact and ongoing fascination.

Arnold Schopenhauer 'On the metaphysics of music'
Robbie Hannan, personal comment

James Wray & Co

presents

PHILIP FLANAGAN

Ta Cenc, Gozo

PREVIEW

Thursday 5 November 2015

6 to 8pm

continuing to 19 November 2015

14 - 16 James Street South
Belfast BT2 7GA

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Cover Image: *Field of Fennel, Ta Cenc, Gozo, 2015*. Acrylic on Linen, 96 x 122 cm.