

Hayley Tompkins
surroundings
The Modern Institute, Osborne Street
12th September – 29th October 2025
Preview: Thursday 11th September 2025, 5.30 – 7.30pm

For *surroundings*, Hayley Tompkins brings together a new suite of acrylic paintings on wood panels, incorporating them into an installation with painted sticks and fabric pieces. These transfigured common objects and gestural, abstract paintings mix a dreamlike quality with a sense of the ordinary. Tompkins' exhibition title provides no specifics or location, and instead suggests an ever-changing set of circumstances, conditions and possibilities; both a position unique to each person and a shared set of coordinates for seeking commonalities and sympathies with others. In this way, the title speaks to the act of installing the works to create a temporary environment for the viewer.

The expressive paintings often feature a staccato line and sections of rhythmic colour, evocative of unrest and fracture but also the optical effects of dappled light falling on the surfaces of a room. They show a subtle but decisive shift towards figurative depictions, with areas suggestive of landscapes, plants and windows, and also biomorphic forms recalling heads or limbs. The compositions never insist upon representation, instead the florid, brightly coloured nature of their surfaces are aligned with Symbolist painting, foregrounding gesture and dreamlike forms which can act as a metaphors for ideas around interpersonal relationships, and the coexistence of love and loss.

The paintings are developed intuitively, products of imagination as well as intensive bursts of physical energy. Their starting point is often a feeling, with Tompkins recollecting and responding to associated interiors, places and artworks. They also have a complex and questioning dialogue with historical painting, specifically artists who worked at the intersection of abstraction and figuration, merging interior thoughts with external representations. There are current affinities to be found with Graham Sutherland's surrealist landscapes from the 1930s and 40s, the lyrical abstraction of Joan Mitchell's oeuvre and Henri Matisse's rich interiors and cityscapes.

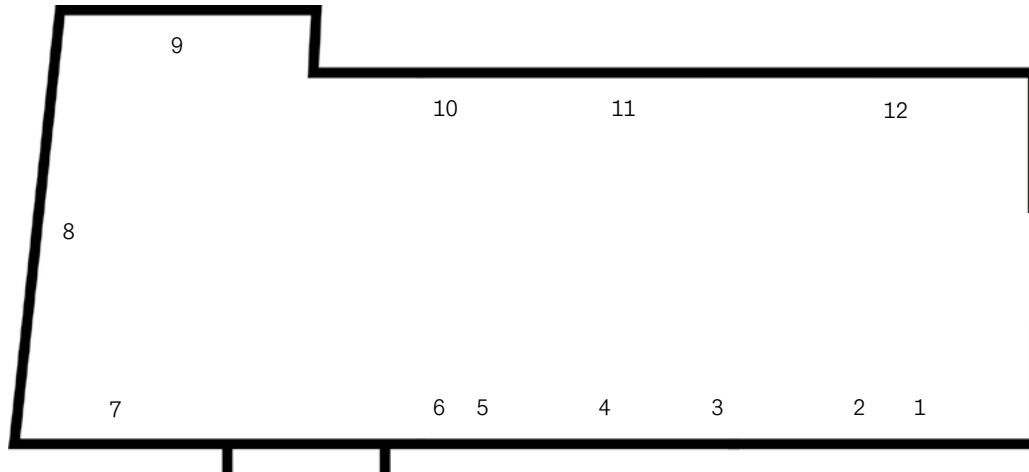
The playful sticks, transfigured fragments from a *dérive*, create a journey through the space. A touchstone for their other-worldly properties is Romanian conceptual artist André Cadere's (1934-1978) colourful *barres de bois rond* (round bars of wood), which he made hundreds of, taking them around Paris and exhibiting them. As with Cadere's use of his bars, leaning them against a wall or walking them somewhere, Tompkins' installation of the sticks draws attention to the space itself, creating a lively set of chromatic connections with their environment and neighbouring works. In turn, the shirt fragments and sections of fabric invoke an absent body. Their colouring and mark making chime with the paintings, blurring associations with punk clothing alterations and accidentally stained garments. Collectively, there is a sense of intimacy across the constellation of works – each seems to denote a small thing remembered or noticed, collected, kept, and altered. Tompkins' surfaces bring a consideration of time, touch and use to the fore – daily tasks and the mystical in repeated action.

Hayley Tompkins (b. 1971, Leighton Buzzard) lives and works in Glasgow. In 2022, Tompkins presented a solo exhibition of works made since 2007 at Fruitmarket, Edinburgh. Tompkins represented Scotland at The 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. Selected solo exhibitions include: 'Tell Gonzo How', Matthew Brown, Los Angeles (2023); 'Far', Fruitmarket, Edinburgh (2022); 'After a Long Sleep, It Woke Up', The Modern Institute, Osborne Street, Glasgow (2020); 'Bag of rainbow', Recent Activity, Birmingham (2020); 'Stick crystals to paintings', Bonner Kunstverein (2018); 'Myth Cart', Jupiter Artland (2016); Lulu, Mexico City (2016); 'Electric Magnetic Installation', The Modern Institute, Aird's Lane, Glasgow (2015); The Common Guild, Glasgow (2014); 'Space Kitchen', Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (2013); 'Currents', Studio Voltaire, London (2011). Selected group shows include: 'Solar Solar', Shoot the Lobster, Florence Street, Glasgow (2025); 'Particularities', X Museum, Beijing (2021); 'Breaking the Mould: Sculpture by Women since 1945', Arts Council Collection Touring Exhibition (2021); 'I Know Where I'm Going - Who Can I Be Now', The Modern Institute, Osborne Street, Glasgow (2021); 'Drawing Biennial 2019', Drawing Room, London (2019); 'Jahresgaben 2018', Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn (2018); 'Portrait (for a Screenplay) of Beth Harmon', Tenderpixel, London (2017); British Art Show 8 (2015-2016); 'The Persistence of Objects', Lismore Castle Arts curated by the Common Guild (2015); 'Painting in Time', The Tetley, Leeds (2015), 'Every Day', Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow (2013); 'The Imminence of Poetics', Sao Paulo Biennale, Sao Paulo (2012); 'Watercolour', Tate Britain, London (2011).

Hayley Tompkins
surroundings

The Modern Institute, Osborne Street
12th September – 29th October 2025

Preview: Thursday 11th September 2025, 5:30 – 7:30pm



- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | <i>A Choice of Sky</i> , 2025
Acrylic on gesso panel
147 x 161 x 4.2 cm
57 7/8 x 63 3/8 x 1 5/8 in | 2 | <i>Stick XXIII</i> , 2025
Acrylic on found object
21.5 x 1.5 x 1.5 cm
8 1/2 x 5/8 x 5/8 in | 3 | <i>Stick XXVI, XXVIII</i> , 2025
Acrylic on found objects
Dimensions variable |
| 4 | <i>Stick XXX, XXI, XXIV</i> , 2025
Acrylic on found objects
Dimensions variable | | <i>Tie</i> , 2025 | | <i>Stick XXIX</i> , 2025 |
| | | 5 | Acrylic on found object
69 x 9 x 4 cm
27 1/8 x 3 1/2 x 1 5/8 in | 6 | Acrylic on found object
14 x 3 x 3 cm
5 1/2 x 1 1/8 x 1 1/8 in |
| 7 | <i>Stick XXVII, XXII, XXXI</i> , 2025
Acrylic on found objects
Dimensions variable | | <i>Surroundings</i> , 2025
Acrylic on gesso panel | | <i>Transceivers</i> , 2025
Acrylic on gesso panel |
| | | 8 | 147 x 161 x 4.2 cm
57 7/8 x 63 3/8 x 1 5/8 in | 9 | 147 x 161 x 4.2 cm
57 7/8 x 63 3/8 x 1 5/8 in |
| 10 | <i>Proximity to Love, Cuff VII</i> , 2025
Acrylic on gesso panel and found object
Painting: 30.5 x 25.5 x 3 cm, 12 x 10 x 1 1/8 in
Cuff: 11 x 15 x 7 cm, 4 3/8 x 5 7/8 x 2 3/4 in | 11 | <i>Renewal, Cuff VIII</i> , 2025
Acrylic on gesso panel and found object
Painting: 36.5 x 30.5 x 3 cm, 14 3/8 x 12 x 1 1/8 in
Cuff: 16 x 11 x 8.5 cm, 6 1/4 x 4 3/8 x 3 3/8 in | 12 | <i>Replica of the Day</i> , 2025
Acrylic on gesso panel
36 x 30.5 x 3 cm
14 1/8 x 12 x 1 1/8 in |