

# Painted Conversations

Exhibition Two: 01/10/22 - 06/10/22

Whitespace Gallery, Edinburgh

**Sarah Longworth-West + Marcus Murison**

Lyndsey Gilmour + Peter Chalmers would like to thank Dr Jon Blackwood, Michael Agnew, Leigh Chorlton and their colleagues at Gray's School of Art and RGU.

Sarah Longworth-West would like to thank Professor Simon Wilmoth, Director of Research; and the Research Department at Norwich University of the Arts. Lyndsey + Peter + Marcus for working collaboratively on the project. Sarah Ryder her artist-friend who designed the long-text e.booklet. And her incredibly supportive family.

Marcus Murison would like to thank Lyndsey Gilmour and Peter Chalmers, for their invitation to participate in this research project. He would also like to thank Sarah Longworth-West for creating the responses she has made during these last six months.

Zoom Exhibition Talk: Mon 03/10/22, 7.30pm

Zoom Link: [tinyurl.com/painted-conversations](https://tinyurl.com/painted-conversations)

Instagram: [@paintedconversations](https://www.instagram.com/paintedconversations)

[www.sarahlongworth-west.com](https://www.sarahlongworth-west.com)  
[www.marcusmurison.co.uk](https://www.marcusmurison.co.uk)

Painted Conversations is organised and facilitated by Lyndsey Gilmour and Peter Chalmers, a collaborative partnership that has formed through their roles as Lecturers and Early Career Researchers in the Painting Department at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen.

For Gilmour and Chalmers, Painting remains elusive; it offers continued moments of revelation and breakthrough, and they share a belief that Painting can continue to offer valuable insight into our shared reality. Painted Conversations seeks to consider and test the potential of visual dialogues between practitioners in realising these breakthroughs in Painting practice.

Gilmour and Chalmers presented a pilot exhibition for this project in June 2022 with the intention that it would expand from that initial exhibition into a series, with Gilmour and Chalmers thereafter inviting participants to contribute to these visual discussions, all the while building a network for contemporary Painting within Scotland. This exhibition is the second in the series and presents the work of Sarah Longworth-West and Marcus Murison together for the first time. They have focused on a sharing of knowledge by participating in each other's research questions to test how this can contribute to the advancement and discovery of both individual and shared solutions.

Longworth-West's painting practice is focused upon creating subtle dystopian non-spaces that are hard to locate but overall give the atmosphere of a place in which people or remnants of them occasionally inhabit. She is interested in the ideas surrounding ruination, the interplay between abstraction and figuration, Painting's discourse, alongside crucial formal painting decisions, for example the use of borders as a device to be a visual weight, container, edge, colour-activator or frame. Murison's practice is concerned with overlooked objects and situations found in our everyday urban environments. As of late, he has focused his research towards the activity and spaces of building sites. He is interested in how these liminal spaces develop over time and seeing the unseen for a very brief moment in time.

In preparation for the exhibition, both artists presented each other with an existing piece of their work six months prior to the exhibition opening, which acted as a visual question or statement for the other practitioner and invited a painting to be made in response. The response and the original paintings were exchanged once more, for a further final response to be made. The opportunity here was to consider how they could use the other's work to expand and move their own work and ideas forward. The resulting visual dialogue created six pieces of work in total, three by each artist, which make up the content of the exhibition.



## Sarah Longworth-West's Painted Conversation with Marcus Murison

S. L-W.

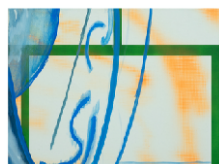
For this first blind exchange I decided to choose Endless as the most overall representative work for my practice. The vibrant vermillion base is made of pigmented hand-made gesso which to me demanded an immediate response and, like all of my prepared bases, acted as a prompt for the ongoing decisions in constructing a painting.



Endless, 2018  
Sarah Longworth-West  
Oil paint and oil pastel on  
pigmented gesso panel  
42 x 30cm

S. L-W.

Marcus' visual response to my painting Endless focused upon the variety of languages of application and marks, from the tightly structured to fluidity. I was particularly taken with the horizontal format which was emphasised by the 3 edged rectangular green outline shape. The least dominant and possibly overlooked green element from Endless had been picked up and elevated into a new form. Through our longer verbal conversation, which has been transcribed, we discuss in depth about how we have a similar approach to gathering source material and are often drawn to the overlooked and crucially for me the incidental as well.



Surface Tension, 2022  
Marcus Murison  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
30 x 40cm

S. L-W.

Focusing on the introduction of the rectangular shape it seemed to logically speak to me of screens, interface gestures, layers, flatness and collage. I am intrigued by the idea of paintings within paintings whilst becoming unified compositionally as one. Not wanting to be limited by the constructs though, the rectangle was broken and played with. Whilst the colours are responsive to our whole visual conversation; key is the motion and tremors in the painted marks.



VDU, 2022  
Sarah Longworth-West  
Oil paint, oil pastel and silver leaf on  
pigmented gesso panel  
118 x 84 cm

M.M.

When first unpicking the work, I was immediately struck by the intense colour, but also by the juxtaposing elements of the unnatural, man-made, coalescing with the suggestion of natural forms of foliage. There is a suggestion of an object being wrapped, clothed in some sort of fabric.



M.M.

I wanted to play with that combination of hardedge and 'painterly' mark making in this piece, to reference back to the concept of contrasting elements of the unnatural and natural within 'Endless'. Initially this response was portrait in format, but I felt it was a more successful as a landscape; I felt that the idea of wrapping or motion was more evident. My paintings normally follow a strict portrait format.

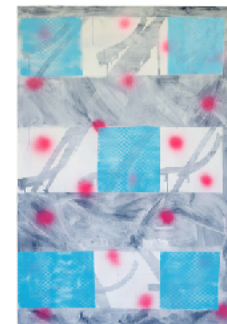
M.M.

With Sarah's last response you can really tell that she has embraced the flatness that is present in my work. The rectangular patchwork forms have a sense of the digital to them, as if they were multiple windows open within a computer screen. VDU has a continuity of our whole 'conversation' that we have had over the last six months, there is consideration of edges, mark making and colour that has interwoven our work. Coincidence has even occurred too, where we have both simultaneously used metallic within our last works.

## Marcus Murison's Painted Conversation with Sarah Longworth-West

M.M.

The first painting given to Sarah was a painting that had been in the works for a few years as it was a surface in the studio for a long time. I returned to it during my residency, when I explored the use of specific stencils to create patterns. This piece was intuitive, responding to what I had done previously. This was unusual for me as most of my work is planned in advance.



Relative Progression, 2019-22  
Marcus Murison  
Acrylic and spray paint on canvas  
153 x 107cm

M.M.

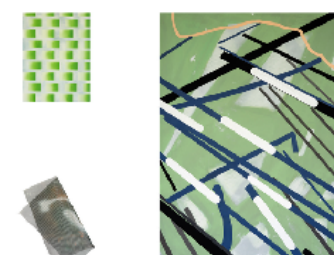
Swell got me thinking of Surface and surfaces. There is a real sense of effort being applied, pushing back into the support. It also highlighted the idea of selection, as we have a couple of differing elements conversing with one and other to create a sense of harmony.



Swell, 2022  
Sarah Longworth-West  
Oil paint and pastel on pigmented gesso  
panel with pigmented gesso remnant  
118 x 84 cm - plus remnant

M.M.

For my last response, I wanted to create a series. I mused about doing this in our last conversation and felt it was appropriate, as there were elements that I felt needed their own space for me to emphasise them. I wanted to emphasise the multiplication of the linear marks and also respond to the 'Green Gingham Swirl', giving my response its own space. I also made a direct response to Sarah's 'Remnant'. I wanted to explore this by showing one of the stencils I used in the act of making the piece and present it as its own artefact.



Response 3, 2022  
Marcus Murison  
Oil, acrylic, spray paint on canvas  
and mesh  
Various dimensions

S. L-W.

When receiving Marcus' first painting I was struck by a similar visual language that I could immediately see we overlapped in. Most importantly to me is how we deal with edges and as I term them small 'breaths' before the edge or equally pushing the image off the perimeters.

This work to me poses questions about structure and control, balanced with a much looser approach of more gestural elements (in grey) which I read to me as loops.



S. L-W.

Particularly drawn to the check or gingham in Relative Progression I knew I wanted to work with the interplay of a patchwork of blue tones from a source I had previously stored. The colours chosen for the pigmented layered base are a direct response to Marcus', which has been distilled and quietened in its layering process. The 'remnant', which is made from the excess of the gesso-making process, is a nod to gathering all of the pink dots into a cluster of one, placing it atop of the panel. This is visually balanced by the green shape in which the negative space inside it is an echo of the loop shape I understood in Relative Progression.

S. L-W.

Marcus' third work I received towards the very end of this fascinating project felt truly investigative in both format and pictorially. It holds hallmarks or indicators to prior work and his practice in general such as the grid or mesh bases. Yet here he has also reflected and dissected the methods of practice (that we have discussed) which have come to the surface whilst also responding genuinely and energetically to my painting Swell. The subtleties and connections are present whilst the work is also fresh and dynamic in itself. It is intriguing to see what has been focused upon and made anew: flatness is again key.