

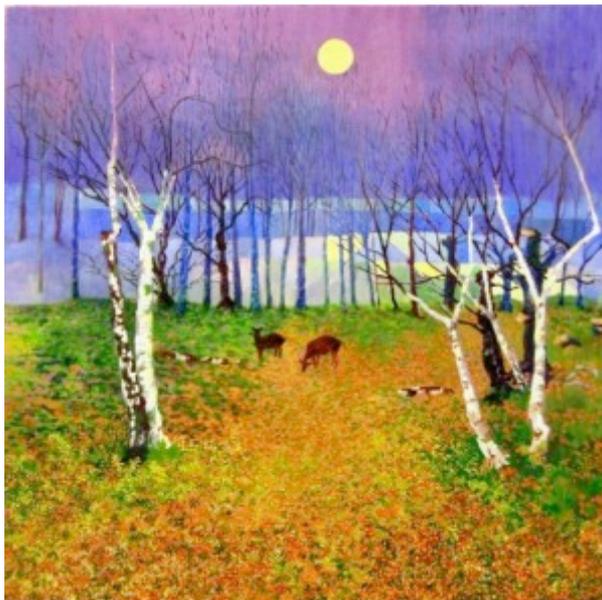
## Landscape painting to the fore: Angela Summerfield adds layers of meaning to elevate the genre

By James Brewer

Amid the outpouring of new art forms, the day of the landscape painting might seem to have been done. Is it time to relegate the landscape to... mere landscape? Angela Summerfield, one of many artists of abundant styles exhibiting at the Palace Art and Craft Fair, Fulham, has firm views on this.

She asks rhetorically: “Is landscape painting a relevant contemporary art genre? The answer is an emphatic ‘yes’, because it is through our early contact with our surroundings that we form a sense of self and our individuality: the essence of things is also the essence of ourselves.”

About her work, she says: “My **Landscapes of Wonder** are not mimetic portrayals, but ‘re-compositions’ which offer symbolic, metaphoric, or associative meanings. Key aspects of my practice are associative theories of time and memory; colour and luminosity; and an exploration of Western and non-Western spatial geometry. My compositions seek to offer a profound aesthetic engagement; this is a process akin to meditation, the inner world of the icon-viewer dialogue, the indefinable, spiritual and the mesmeric.”



‘The Life of the Forest (the Forest’s Music)’, Oil on canvas, By Angela Summerfield

In her oil painting *The Life of the Forest (the Forest's Music)*, the deer and trees become one in the autumnal forest as dusk falls. These creatures symbolise a universal sense of goodness, beauty and grace. The complex symphony of colours enhances the sense of serenity and contemplation, while the repetition of triangular geometry draws the viewer into the composition. Compositional motifs recall the Sacra Conversazione of Renaissance painting, as the trees (silver birch and oak) are emblematic of humankind. In such context, TS Eliot had in an essay in *The Sacred Wood* a phrase for it: "a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and the temporal together."

Angela's canvas entitled *Stages of Life: Spring: The Avenue of Cherry Trees* is part of a series and explores her interest in trees in relation to the seasons, and how the expressive "anatomy of trees" can be analogous to our own. She recalls that van Gogh wrote that "in nature, for instance in trees, I see expressions which resemble the human soul." The use of geometry and subtle patterns evoke the experience of reverie and the passing of time, while the complex spatial dynamics relate to early Italian, Indian and Japanese painting.



'Stages of Life: Spring: The Avenue of Cherry Trees', Oil on canvas, By Angela Summerfield

In all, 60 fine artists and 60 designers and craft workers are showing their work at Fulham Palace, the historic home of the Bishops of London, close by the Thames and by Putney Bridge station, from May 17-19 2013.

Angela meanwhile will have two of her limited edition silk screen prints among items to be sold at an evening art auction In aid of the charity Fight for Sight on May 22 at the Menier Gallery, 51 Southwark Street, London SE1. Tickets are £35 each from Elie Kelpie on 020 7264 3909 or [elie@fightforsight.org.uk](mailto:elie@fightforsight.org.uk)

The exhibition Eye for Art runs from May 21 to 25. It features 70 contemporary artists including Damien Hirst, Patrick Hughes, Julian Opie, Boyd & Evans, and John Keane, and cartoonist Kipper Williams. All the artists have donated works to be auctioned in aid of research to prevent sight loss and to treat eye disease.

Works and artists' profiles can be viewed at [www.eyeforart.org.uk](http://www.eyeforart.org.uk), where an online auction will run from May 13-21.