

'Sea View' by David Rayson.



'Yes! I am a Long Way from Home'

Nunnery *East End*

The title of this show of landscapes suggests Richard Long-style ramblings to distant, even dangerous places. I'd hazard a guess, though, that most of these artists haven't been near a mountain or field in years. Judging by their dystopic little paintings, the *plein air* experience holds no appeal. Mostly gleaned from secondary sources such as photographs or postcards, the images are flat in all senses. No feeling of exhilaration enlivens airless views in which the light never changes, the wind doesn't blow and there is no sense of the earth underfoot. No longer a place of awesome magnitude, splendour or danger, nature has been downgraded in the artistic imagination to a meagre spectacle or a desolate parody.

In 'East End Zen Garden', a Zen garden created in a nasty urban park, Geraint Evans mimics the texture of gravel, pebbles and rock with an obsessive hyper-realism that is as ersatz as the garden it

portrays. David Rayson's 'Sea View' makes the seaside experience similarly suburban – as close to nature as a putting green is to the savannah. A featureless grey sky fills the space above a flat strip of water visible over the sea wall the other side of the tarmac. Only yesterday's litter feels palpably present.

Loosely painted with listless brushmarks in bland beiges and greys, Masakatsu Kondo's 'Ship Rock' is like a melancholy dream – a landscape seen through a haze of memory. Kaye Donachie shows a group of adolescents perched on rocks around a stream; seen dimly in putrid green light, this murky scene also seems to inhabit the space of memory. In 'Dear Lucy', Dan Heyes reduces a grid of postcards to postage-stamp size so that the heightened blue of the Mediterranean seems like a surreal fantasy. Andrew Grassie's exquisite temporary copy of Robert Smithson's photograph of 'Asphalt Rundown' is the ultimate in wistful irony. The city-bound practitioner pays nostalgic homage to an artist who claimed the outback as his studio. *Sarah Kent*