

ALISON WATT

Watt's work first came to public attention in 1987 when she won the National Portrait Gallery's coveted annual award and in the late 1980s and early 90s she became well known for her paintings of figures, often female nudes, in dryly painted, light-filled interiors. Watt's exhibition *Fold* in 1997 at Edinburgh's Fruitmarket Gallery marked a turning point by introducing fabric alongside these figures, simultaneously suggesting a debt to the 19th century painter Ingres as well as pointing to the possibilities of abstraction. *Shift*, her exhibition at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art at the end of 2000, took these ideas a stage further still with 12 large works, each depicting swathes of fabric alone. Her exquisitely painted canvases continue to edge further towards abstraction yet suggest a human presence and an interest in the allure of negative space.

In 2008 Alison Watt had a solo show, *Phantom*, at The National Gallery, London presenting work produced during her time there as Associate Artist (2006-8) and was awarded an OBE in the same year. In 2014, as part of the Nationwide *GENERATION* programme of exhibitions celebrating 25 Years of Contemporary Art in Scotland, a retrospective exhibition of Watt's paintings was held at Perth Museum and Art Gallery, and a solo display at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. Watt was commissioned to design a major tapestry - *Butterfly* - in collaboration with Dovecot studios and Scottish Opera 2015, and commissioned in 2018 to make a large scale painting for the permanent collection of the new American Embassy in London.

Biography

1965	Born, Greenock, Scotland, UK
1983-7	Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, UK
1987-88	Glasgow School of Art Postgraduate Studies, Glasgow, UK
2006-2008	Associate Artist at The National Gallery, London, UK
2008	Awarded the OBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List

Lives and works in Edinburgh

Solo Exhibitions

2020	The Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, UK (forthcoming)
2019	<i>Alison Watt: A Shadow on the Blind</i> , Parafin, London, UK
2018	<i>Alison Watt: A Shadow on the Blind</i> , Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendall, UK
2016	<i>The Sun Never Knew How Wonderful It Was</i> , Parafin, London, UK
2014	GENERATION, <i>Alison Watt: Paintings 1986 –2014</i> , Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Perth, UK
2011	<i>Hiding in Full View</i> , Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
2008	<i>Phantom</i> , The Sunley Rooms, The National Gallery, London, UK
2007	<i>Dark Light</i> , Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK <i>Dark Light</i> , Pier Arts Centre, Orkney, UK
2004	<i>Alison Watt</i> , Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK <i>Still</i> , Memorial Chapel, Old Saint Paul's Church, Edinburgh, UK (now permanently installed)

- 2002 *New Paintings*, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, UK
- 2000 *Shift*, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, UK
- 1998 *Fold*, Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum, Aberdeen, UK
Leeds Metropolitan University Gallery, Leeds, UK
- 1997 *Monotypes*, Flowers East, London, UK
Fold, The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
- 1996 *New Paintings*, Flowers East, London, UK
- 1990 *Contemporary Art Season*, Glasgow Art Gallery & Museum, Glasgow, UK
The Scottish Gallery, London, UK

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2018 *TWENTY*, Ingleby, Edinburgh, UK
- 2015 *Northern Lights*: Aberdeen Art Gallery at the Fleming Collection, London, UK
Defining Beauty, The British Museum, London, UK
Collecting Now, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
Reality: Modern & Contemporary British Painting, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK
- 2014 *GENERATION: 25 Years of Contemporary Art in Scotland*, Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
Reality: Modern & Contemporary British Painting, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich, UK
- 2013 *Once upon a time and a very good time it was...*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
The Vasari Corridor, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy
40/40, Glasgow Print Studio, Glasgow, UK
- 2011 *Reflecting Glenfiddich*, The Flemming Collection, London, UK
- 2010 *Autoritratto*, Sala delle Reali Poste, Uffizi, Florence, Italy
Commission: An exhibition of contemporary art in British churches, Wallspace, London, UK
Standing Room Only, Flowers Galleries, London, UK
- 2007 *A North Light – Cynosure*, Pier Arts Centre, Orkney, UK
The Naked Portrait, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, and touring to Compton Verney, Warwickshire, UK
- 2006 *Strands*, City Art Centre, Edinburgh, UK
Divided Selves: The Scottish Self-Portrait, Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh & The Fleming Collection, London, UK
- 2004 *Picturing Women*, Bryn Mawr College, Philadelphia, USA
- 2003 *White: Callum Innes, Alison Watt, Winston Roeth, James Hugonin*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
- 2002 *New*, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, UK
Fold, The City Gallery, Leicester, UK
- 2001 *Here + Now*, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, UK
Narcissus, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
- 2001 *Can You Judge a Book by it's Cover*, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, UK
- 2000 *Expressions*, Dundee Contemporary Art, Dundee, UK

- 1999 *The Human Figure in Contemporary Art*, Galerie de Bellefeuille, Montreal, Canada
- 1998 *Londres, Glasgow, Edimbourg*, Galerie Rachlin LeMarie, Paris, France
Drawings, Glasgow Print Studio, Glasgow, UK
- 1997 *Treasures for Everyone*, National Arts Collection Fund, Christie's, London, UK
10th Anniversary Portfolio, The Freud Museum, London, UK
- 1996 *Four British Painters*, John McEnroe Gallery, New York, USA
Naked, Flowers East, London, UK
- 1995 *75 Years of Painting*, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, UK
McLellan Galleries, Glasgow, UK
Small is Beautiful, Flowers East, London, UK
- 1993 *New Figurative Painting*, Salander O'Reilly/Fred Hoffman, Los Angeles, USA
- 1992 *The Portrait Award 1980-89*, The National Portrait Gallery, London, UK
- 1990 *21 Years of Scottish Contemporary Art*, Tramway, Glasgow, UK
- 1989 *The Morrison Portrait Award*, The Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, UK
- 1987 *The National Portrait Competition*, National Portrait Gallery, London, UK

Awards

- 2008 Order of the British Empire
- 2006-8 Associate Artist at the National Gallery, London
- 2005 ACE Award for *Still*, her installation at Old St Paul's Church, Edinburgh
Awarded National Gallery Artist in Residence 2006-08
Glenfiddich Artist in Residence
- 2003 Winner of Creative Scotland Award
Shortlisted for Jerwood Painting Prize
- 1996 Scottish Arts Council: Individual Artists Award
- 1993 City of Glasgow Lord Provost Prize
- 1989 Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Award
- 1987 Winner of the John Player Portrait Award, National Portrait Gallery, London
Armour Prize for Still Life Painting, Glasgow School of Art
- 1986 British Institution Fund, First Prize for Painting, Royal Academy, London
- 1986 First Prize for Painting, Glasgow School of Art

Selected Collections

Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen, UK
Artemis, London, UK
British Broadcasting Corporation
British Council
Christie's Corporate Art Collection
Deutsche Bank
Ferens Art Gallery, Hull, UK
Robert Fleming Holdings Ltd
The Freud Museum, London, UK
Glasgow Art Gallery & Museum, Glasgow, UK
Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, UK
HBOS Art Collection
The Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK
Kirkcaldy Museum and Art Gallery, Kirkcaldy, Fife, UK
McMaster University Art Gallery, Ontario, Canada

National Westminster Bank, London, UK
National Portrait Gallery, London, UK
Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Perth, UK
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, UK
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
Scottish Opera, Glasgow, UK
The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, UK
Southampton Art Gallery, Southampton, UK
Uffizi Collection, Florence, Italy

Publications

The Sun Never Knew How Wonderful it Was, Parafin, London, UK, 2016
Hiding in Full View, Alison Watt and Don Paterson, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK, 2011
Alison Watt: Phantom, Colin Wiggins and Don Paterson, The National Gallery, London, UK, 2008
Still, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK, 2004
Alison Watt, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK, 2004
Alison Watt - Fold: New Paintings 1996-1997, John Calcutt, Momentum Publishing with the Fruitmarket Gallery, UK, 1997
Alison Watt: Shift, National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, UK, 2000