



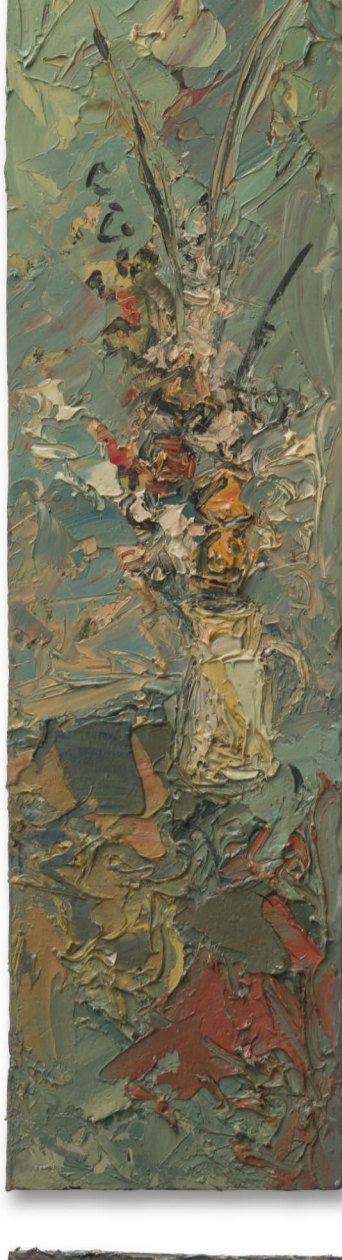
ABOVE **Temporality Still Life Triptych**, 2024, oil on paper and panel, 65 x 60 cm

Helen de Sybel

Still Life~The Emerging Form

5th June – 26th July, 2025

BENJAMIN RHODES ARTS



Still Life~The Emerging Form

The smaller paintings were begun in the spring of 2024. The size restriction allows me to compress their dynamic, making their energy or 'charge' more concentrated.

It is the very direct nature of still life which excites me, through repetition of subject matter I am able to focus on the aspect which most engages me: the relationship between the form and its surrounding space. Through animating that space it is possible to pull the form out of the void which constitutes a positive act of creation.

This process sounds simple but I destroy many paintings on the way—my intentions often elude me and it can take months of adjustments to achieve my goal.

The six oil paintings are painted directly from life and not confined to a symmetrical format. Painted on heavy, sized watercolour paper I am able to tear or cut the surface and prevent them from becoming 'fixed'. Working fast with a palette knife and fine brush I keep up a momentum while I paint which allows me to capture the subject as a whole. Colour and light are of equal importance to me.

As the paintings progress, I feel a sense of bringing the forms out of darkness and into light.

The six acrylic and gouache paintings are different in mood. These paintings are made from images taken in artificial light at night. The result is more dramatic and theatrical. The objects are set on a stage-like structure and as the medium is closer to drawing the flowers and jugs are painted with more definition. The water-based medium has helped the energy of the mark making flow through the paintings.

Still Life triptych. Painted loosely in oil, this work has a different emphasis from the smaller still life paintings. The elongated format allowed me to 'stretch' the space. This means the paintings have no fixed focal point and the eye must travel over the whole surface—a longer and more intimate process.

HdeS

Flowers in a Tin Jug, 2024, oil on paper and panel, 65 x 15 cm



Flowers in a Yellow Jug, 2024-5
oil on paper, 15.5 x 17 cm



Still Life Studies 6, 2024-5
acrylic and gouache on paper, 17 x 15 cm



Red Jug, 2024-5
oil on paper, 19.5 x 100.5 cm



Still Life Studies 4, 2024-5
acrylic and gouache on paper, 17 x 15 cm



Roses in a Ginger Jar, 2024-5
oil on paper, 22 x 22 cm



Still Life Studies 1, 2024-5
acrylic and gouache on paper, 17.5 x 15 cm



Shoreditch Flowers, 2024
oil on board, 91 x 100 cm

Her 2018 **Crucifixion at the Border** will feature in this exhibition, marking World Refugee Day, 20th June 2025

Helen de Sybel

1974-84 Attended Harrow and Camberwell Art Schools following art history studies in Italy. Helen is a long-standing member of Southgate Studios, London N1 and also works at her studio in Buckinghamshire.

Previous exhibitions include:

1994 Solo exhibition, Benjamin Rhodes Gallery, London

2015 and onwards *Old Testament Polyptych*, Exhibited: St Peter's de Beauvoir, N1; St Paul's Bow Common, E3; and St Martin's Gospel Oak, NW5

2021 *Borders*, Highgate Gallery, London N6

In response to the displacement of refugees

Catalogue essay by Richard Cork

2023 and current *Borders*, Ben Uri Gallery, London NW8

virtual exhibition and film

Photography: readreads



BENJAMIN RHODES ARTS

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