

Lines That Open

Responses to
*Through the
Lattice*

Dale Tracy

surrey
art gallery

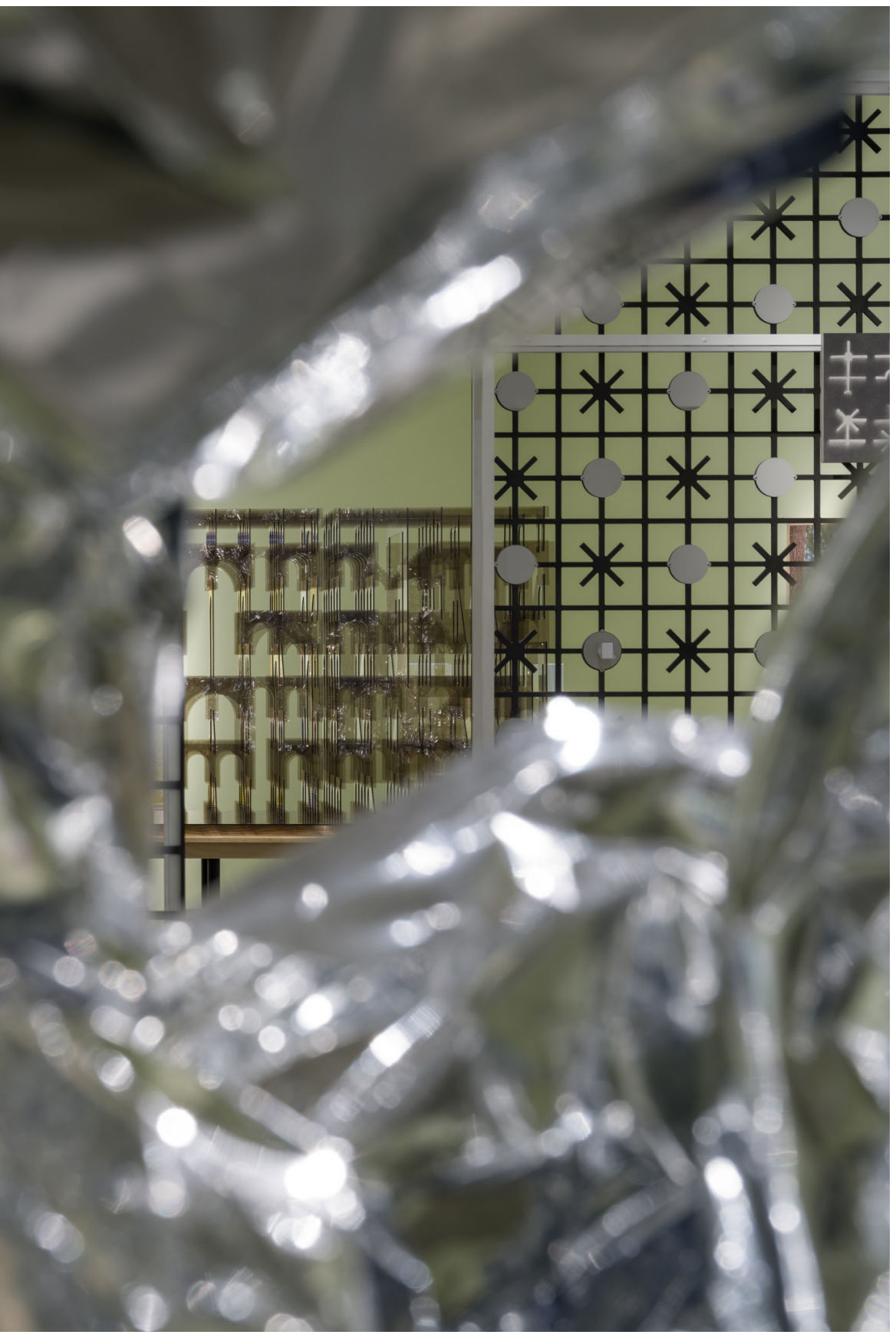


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Introduction

Surrey Art Gallery's winter 2023 exhibition *Through the Lattice* is a response to the lived environment during a period of economic precarity, political uncertainty, and pandemic insecurity. Each of the artists in the exhibition (Alex Morrison, Parvin Peivandi, Tiffany Shaw, Edra Soto, Lyla Rye, David Umemoto, and Robert Young) reflect upon the idea of place and its related aesthetics of style, ornament, design, pattern, and architecture. Though diverse in their methods, the artists share a concern with the deeper meanings of space, as well as its material construction.

As curator, my arrangement of the works in this exhibition was inspired in part by a reading of the philosopher Gaston Bachelard's *Poetics of Space*. Rather than attempt to broach the vast body of architectural theory, I instead thought it more appropriate to think of architecture in the same way Bachelard did—as a metaphorical structure that furnishes consciousness and imagination. To this end, architecture blends with art to generate poetry. Visitors to the space may be able to identify certain patterns and motifs that reverberate across all of the works: grids, symmetries, and of course, lattices.

In the spirit of poetic resonance, I invited Dr. Dale Tracy to reflect further upon the exhibition through her own poetry. Her previous interests in the meanings of ornamentation, and the domestic realm, made her an ideal candidate for this challenging job. I am indebted to her for her tremendously careful observation of *Through the Lattice* and its latent themes. Her poignant, eloquent language traces the contours of the exhibition, latching on to its motifs and then re-expressing them to produce totally new ways of reading the work. *Lines That Open* bridges the void between objecthood, place, and the lived experience.

Rhys Edwards
Assistant Curator
Surrey Art Gallery



Alex Morrison

Function

Did you sculpt roots

before placing the plant
in the pot

before placing the pot
on the structure?

Perspective

You raise a perspective
catch, copying
your own model
against a wall
that falls apart
near the top,
interrupted by the real
replica. I remember
the one, the other.

Wallpaper

Motifs repeat

inside us, but

we move.



Parvin Peivandi

Home

From a rug's tassels,
bees collect pollen.

From their bodies,
wax collects.

With pollen,
bees soil

home's soft walls
soft yellow.

Non-existent, a pure domestic
would be clear,

no substance,
all window.

Steel

Steel is an alloy,
its strength made through work.

I can't see its makeup,
the molecular lattice,

or the bloomery, the hive
sending its own smoke.

Tension

steel
wool



Lyla Rye

Acting

Life barely holds chaos in:
any certain outcome
a careful construction,
a collection of screens
for a single scene,
an interior design
where the film hits the mind,
hits the room,
where I am a contraption
playing house in a comedy.

Build

I know where to stand:
I am a table too,
arranged to be here,
holding the pieces.

Post-Production

Every line
can be cut
again



Tiffany Shaw

Atmosphere

Our bodies' heat moves as light
to the right eyes. You wrap a seam
down the heart of the room
to alter the mood, to reflect
temperatures of sight. Knitting
won't keep all energy in. We're open-
work, whether we see it or not.

To Entice

Lace's outlined
open spaces:
the line hunts
back and forth.

Face / Front

This cabin
looks back at me.

Only you know
what it sees.

I arrive.
It turns its façade,

whichever way I am.



Edra Soto

Viewfinder

I look in the mirror.
I lean closer
and look in the eyes
of a stranger.

I look over a wall.
I touch a switch,
not knocking down
those known objects

hanging as openings
the wall allows.

Sun-breaker

Your memory
shines in my eye.

Idiom

A chair knows
how a body sits.

It shows
how to sit.

You mark it
in a towel

because you know
how to show too,

how to move
and how to rest.



David Umemoto

Puzzle

Symmetry casts its shadow.
A shadow symmetrical
to its object is latent.
Symmetry is likeness
in elaborate bond.

The room casts its mood,
and all sameness alters,
keeping all partners paired.
Ornament is pattern
befalling attention.

Concrete

A dream model,

your mind's grotto,

an underworld unearthed

unknown to real ground.

A Circle Always Recalls

The hand touches
to make
what the foot
can't use
to remember.



Robert Young

Meeting

Self-portrait is a mirror
only you can look through,
an opening.

The rest of us catch on
the paint strips
fastening you.

Reading

A closed book's title
is a window.

The outside gets in.
All grids end.

A mind's world's vines
twine me to all I see

through a screen of sky.
I see you sitting there.

But I am in your memory
in these rooms, remembering.

Wild

You place yourself in a jar.
You place the jar in a room.
You break the jar to pieces.
You break the room to open-
work. You want the rules broken,
but you want them there,
those that put people on a hill,
but put the hill in a house,
but bloom the house in the sky,
but put the sky in a window,
but make the window a closed
book that opens, a pied cover
that shows something in light,
outside the frame.





About the author

Dale Tracy is the author of *Derelict Bicycles* (Anvil, 2022), her first full-length poetry collection. She also wrote the chapbooks *The Mystery of Ornament* (above/ground, 2020) and *Celebration Machine* (Proper Tales, 2018), the chappoem *What It Satisfies* (Puddles of Sky, 2016), and the monograph *With the Witnesses: Poetry, Compassion, and Claimed Experience* (McGill-Queen's, 2017). Her poetry has appeared in *filling Station*, *Touch the Donkey*, and *The Goose: A Journal of Arts, Environment, and Culture in Canada*, among others. She is a faculty member in the English Department at Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

Selected artworks:

Alex Morrison, *Prototype for Lucent Signals And The Comfortable Warmth Of The Orangerie*, 2023, MDF, latex paint, chavant clay, mixed media.

Parvin Peivandi, *Allegories of an Iranian rug* (detail), 2023, installation with Iranian tribal rugs, steel, beeswax, thread, pigment.

Lyla Rye, *Bungle House* (detail), 2014, installation with single-channel video.

Tiffany Shaw, *my children, my mother, her mother and their mother, and their mother, and their mother, and their mother..... nitawasimisak, nikawiy, okawiyiwa ekwa okawiwawa, okawiyiwa, ekwa okawiyiwa ekwa okawiyiwa.....* (detail), 2021, woven reflective mylar.

Edra Soto, *Graft* (detail), 2022, sintra, mirrors, aluminum, inkjet prints, viewfinders.

David Umemoto, *Digital Architecture* (detail), 2021, acrylic.

Robert Young, *Booth Portal*, 2014, egg tempera, acrylic, and oil on linen.

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