

December 27, 2017 by Paul Carey-Kent



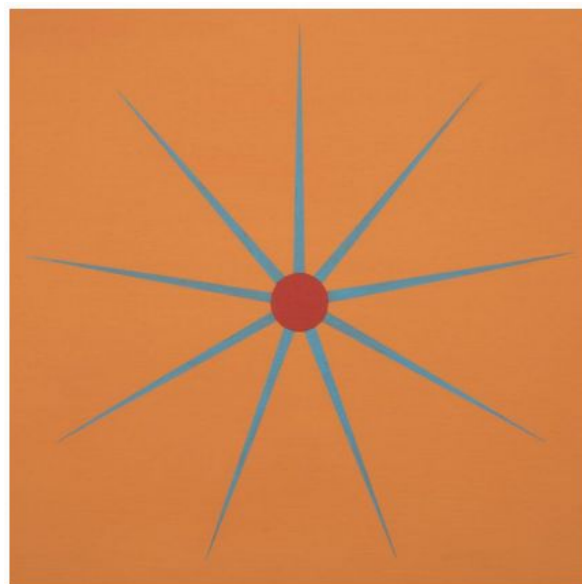
Just About the Size of It



Ishbel Myerscough: 'Boris', 2017 - oil on canvas, 13 x 10 cm

My wife is 5 foot 2, so 'Small is Beautiful' seems a fair premise to me, and the 35th of [Flowers Gallery's](#) annual series (to 6 Jan) boosts the case – though I was disappointed to find that the contribution from Jonathan Small wasn't especially beautiful. It's a logical yuletide tradition, as small also tends to be wrappable and cheap enough (£220 and up) for potential gifting. That said, I don't always understand why bigger should be pricier – after all, beyond a certain point it's harder to hang – surely it's not just an old-fashioned privileging of labour and materials over concept and effect? The number of works, on the other hand, is large: 107 in Flowers' not-huge upper gallery on Cork Street

and plenty of bonus extras illustrated online. There, of course, they might as well be big, such is the size-democratising tendency of the screen. But what works best 'live' at the typical scale of something like 15 x 20 cm? Geometric abstraction seems a good fit – such as for Sinta Tantra, John Carter, Francesca Simon and Carol Robertson (with one the few works readable as Christmas-related). Or a small figurative subject, such as a bird, like Ishbel Myerscough's budgerigar, Humphrey Ocean's African Mannikin and Emily Mayer's metal construction of an extinct flightless bird. Yet you can also be drawn in to what feels as if it should be much bigger, best illustrated by Tom Hunter's photograph of Hackney not looking especially as I've seen it.



Carol Robertson: 'Pointstar Small #13', 2017 - oil on board, 20 x 20cm

