

Flâneuse – Sarah L Stewart, September 2024

This collection of paintings has been inspired by my city wanderings. Always a bit of a flâneuse (and never much of a power-walker!), I love to stroll, ambling through city streets and urban neighbourhoods. My aimless dawdling, however, is not completely purposeless as my eyes constantly scan my surroundings for textures, shapes, lines, angles that intrigue me, my ears listen for sounds, while my mind imagines goings-on behind closed doors.

I am interested in how the old and the new built environment together shape cityscapes and residential neighbourhoods, fascinated by how the crumbling treasures of century-old houses rub shoulders with shiny new apartment buildings.

A forgotten room glimpsed through a window of an abandoned house, a vibrant high street with its varied shopfronts, children's playgrounds, skateboard parks, graffitied walls, rows of parked cars and streams of moving vehicles, pocket parks, dotted here and there, nestled among edifices of concrete, bricks, and mortar, signalling a human yearning for more green spaces.

All this evidence of human habitation, commerce, and play makes its presence felt, leaves its impression on me. This exhibition captures traces of these impressions and perhaps prompts reflection on how we come to know, value, and participate in the creation of our urban environments.