

[View Exhibition Catalogue on-line](#)**ANTHONY FARRELL - *The High Street***

18 March – 15 April 2016

PRIVATE VIEW : **Thursday 17 March 6 – 8 pm***Spring 2014, oil on canvas, 4' X 4'**Summer 2014, oil on canvas, 4' X 4'**Autumn 2014, oil on canvas, 4' X 4'**Winter 2014, oil on canvas, 4' X 4'*

Many things about Anthony Farrell's paintings are immediately clear: the primacy of drawing and observation, a passion for crowded city streets, the quirkiness of human behaviour and an absorption in the question of how cities and crowded figure compositions have been painted in the past.

For this exhibition Farrell confronts us with 'The High Street': a series of predominantly large figure compositions made over three years about the same short section of his local shopping parade in Southend-on-Sea. As a subject it has the advantage of being a curved, relatively enclosed space which runs away like a funnel but opens towards us with a cornucopia of people; an exuberant throng coming and going. All is fluid. People gather, talk, rush, amble; for others it's a playground; a stage. All ages, nationalities, social groups are present and all behaving and dressed idiosyncratically.

With an acute interest in human behaviour Anthony Farrell has a sense for drama and an interest in particular objects and individual characters. He usually works with one painting on the go. All is observed from life. He visits the subject almost daily, making small fugitive drawings. There are hundreds if not thousands for this series alone. All are quick pencil sketches on paper discretely hidden in a folded newspaper that record fresh ideas for new characters, observations about the light, the weather, the grime and texture of the place. And slowly, over months, and sometimes years, this process is repeated over and over again until every character, large and tiny, has its rightful place in a painting bursting with luxuriant life.

Anthony Farrell (b. 1945) trained at Camberwell School of Art and Royal Academy Schools (1963-68). He has exhibited regularly in private and public galleries including the Serpentine and Hayward and his work is held in private and public collections throughout the UK including Art Council of Great Britain, Manchester City Art Gallery and the Minories Colchester. This is his third solo exhibition at Art Space Gallery.