

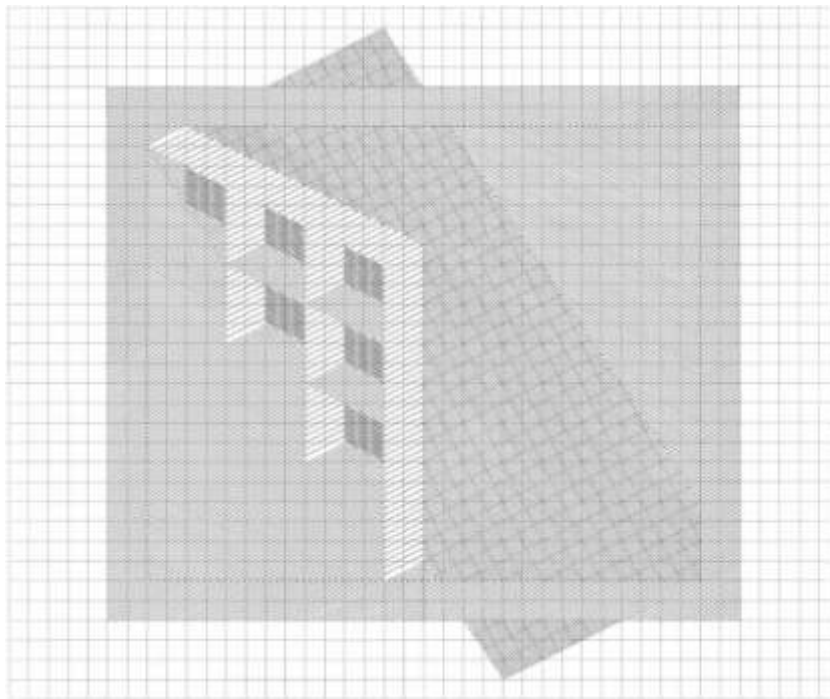
PRESS RELEASE

WENDY SMITH

Touching the Surface

4 December – 15 January 2016

[View Exhibition Catalogue on-line](#)



Torri, pen & ink drawing on board, 72 x 82cm

Wendy Smith's work is about *line*: an accumulation of single, straight, hand drawn lines that are forged through a process of repetition and refinement into various relationships until a final image emerges from the surface as an object suspended in space like a fragile structure. The initial impact of each finished work is one of astonishment that such objects can be handmade.

Deanna Petherbridge writes in the exhibition catalogue that:

Wendy Smith's drawings engross and fascinate precisely because the unplanned effects ...appear to embody a mysterious charge. This 'electrical' charge that constitutes more than the sum of the parts of her austere beautiful linear constructions, serves to activate each work into something breathlessly unexpected for the spectator.

For Smith the hand drawn line is the fundamental act. Each new drawing starts with the construction of a simple grid that plots the area to be explored. Then, with straightedge and pen, regular and accurate lines are drawn between two chosen points; no line longer than can be reached from start to finish in one continuous movement. As the work progresses pictorial possibilities are revealed and explored often with new grids added and overlaid that give rise to the illusion of myriad surfaces receding in space. There is no preconception, from the outset each drawing starts its journey as a voyage of discovery, the image emerging from the process as if coaxed from the surface.

Wendy Smith studied at Nottingham College of Art (1968), Slade School of Fine Art (1970) and was awarded a D.Phil at the University of York (1996), Leverhulme Research Fellowship (1998) and the Graham Robertson Travelling Scholarship (1969). Teaching posts include Head of Painting at Camberwell School of Art and she has exhibited regularly since 1978 including Kettle's Yard and ICA.