

Artist

Catherine O'Donnell



Yates Court, 2017, pencil on paper, 46 x 65cm

Information about Catherine O'Donnell

*My art practice focuses on the urban landscape, representing the commonly overlooked dwellings of suburbia in an abstracted form. Recently, during a residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, I extended my research into Parisian and London housing estates alongside mid-century dwellings. In the mid 1900's, when buildings such as 'Yates Court' were developed, they embraced contemporary aesthetics and were full of promise for a better tomorrow. These structures now stand quietly making connections to the past and the people who called them home, exhibiting the signs and marks of past lives etched into the walls. In this straightforward pencil drawing, I aim to portray both the **formal aesthetics** of this structure as well as capture a sense of the humanity present in these homes.*

Studying

O'Donnell investigates the social history of buildings and relationship between architecture and people. Research Brutalist architecture such as the Sirius building in Sydney, Unité d'Habitation in Marseilles and Robin Hood Gardens in London. Has this architecture been successful in balancing individual and collective needs?

Making

Produce a measured tonal drawing in pencil of an urban landscape such as the suburban home you grew up in. Begin by documenting the building exterior façade with a camera, looking for symmetry and pattern. To create a balanced composition crop and isolate sections from their surroundings. Reference the photograph for line and tonal values. Use graph paper (or lightly draw a grid on white paper) to assist the accuracy of the line drawing. Apply cross hatching gradually to build tonal values.