

# TORN BETWEEN THE LIGHT AND DARK

## A SELECTION OF ARTWORK BY PAUL BOWRING

For this exhibition Paul has gathered together a selection of his paintings completed within the past 10 years. As a body of work it can be seen that although figurative in nature, it bears little reference to reality as we know it. The figures that appear in Paul's work seem absorbed in their own personal quests and are found in shadowy domains, often traversing areas that have been thrown into stark relief by a flood of light. There are hints of an underlying narrative, a series of events taking place, but only glimpses have been offered, compelling the viewer to derive their own meaning. Paul's paintings are likely to raise more questions than they could possibly answer.

Paul's inspiration comes from a mental repository of imagery that he has built up over the years from a variety of sources. These include his love of bizarre films, curious books, extreme music, strange art and weird architecture. Paul plunders this Gormenghast-esque complex of stored memento mori and souvenirs of fictional worlds to create his paintings.

Rather than pre-planning a painting Paul prefers to work straight onto canvas or board. He uses a palette knife with acrylic paints to create 'veils' of colour to emulate the effects of light and shadow, which tend to evolve and become more solid as the painting progresses. A painting often starts with the creation of a structure, an arch or doorway, through which strong light pours and throws shadows. The tricky bit in each painting is getting the balance right between the subtle and the more concrete imagery. The aim is to allow the final piece to be open to interpretation by the viewer. Because some paintings take longer to resolve than others, Paul often works on more than one painting at a time. This can give some paintings a serial quality, with ideas moving from canvas to canvas.

Paul sees the painting process as an exploration, which is possibly why the figures that appear in his work seem to be searching for something. He allows each painting to take him on a journey and it is only by looking back at his body of artwork that the common themes that run through it become more apparent.