

Fifty shades of grey in the city

"There's of course no pavement without a pigeon," says Austrian-born artist Andrea Tierney, whose exhibition 'Pigeons and Pavements' runs at the Phoenix Cinema this month.

The artist and designer shows 20 paintings in diverse media - acrylic, gouache, oil and watercolour - at the Edwardian independent movie house in East Finchley.

"My fascination with pavements began when I used the eye of my i-pad pointing downwards," she says.

"We tend to look at what's in front of us, but rarely what's right under our feet. Keeping my eyes focused to the ground, I have discovered a whole new perspective - grey pavements coming alive with unusual

Artist Andrea Tierney sees beauty in subjects many people find ugly; London's pigeons and the grey paving stones beneath our feet

colours, structures and patterns. Working with a special technique of layering textured patterns, I was able to achieve surprising effects."

As for the pigeons she says each one she paints reminds her of a place where one of the birds has crossed her path.

"To me pigeons are beautiful



birds with an amazing ability to survive in the most inhospitable of city environments. They blend so well with the grey of the pavements, yet they lend sparkle with their colourful necks of purple, blue and green."

Tierney, who studied painting at the Academy of Fine Art in Vienna and textile design at St Martins, usually exhibits in larger venues but says her local cinema is a great venue for artists to show their work.

"As a regular cinema-goer I've been impressed by the variety of

Above, Yellow Stripe Pavement and (left) Pigeon by Andrea Tierney

work shown on a monthly basis. There's hardly a gallery space that has as many viewers as the cinema. The art works are go up a stairway and are viewed by everyone going to see a film as well as by people frequenting the cinema cafe."

Tierney divides her time between teaching art in schools and working as a freelance designer. Past projects include

creating a tent in Ealing where art and performances could take place. Much of her work reflects her passion for cities and the transient state of urban architecture, from building sites to street signs and surfaces.

Bridget Galton

Pigeons and Pavements runs at the Phoenix Cinema until March 31. andreatierney@webeden.co.uk

Stitch at Daniel Raphael Gallery

Artists who create their work with a needle and thread exhibit this month at the Daniel Raphael Gallery.

Stitch is a group exhibition of embroidery which transcends the domestic associations of sewing to take the form into the realm of fine art.

Running, back, blanket and cross stitch are all used in works by Richard McVetis, Robert Dean, Julie French, Alison Holt, Lucie Feighan, Maryam Ashkanian and Ulla-Stina Wikander.

McVetis's hand-embroidered cube 50:29 explores the passage of time. The title refers to the number of hours and minutes spent on the piece, thus rendering the abstract notion of time a tactile object that is in the room with the viewer.

French's work uses stitching as a tool to provoke the imagination. Leaving threads hanging loose in and around the image she creates an impression of the erratic and unpredictable, contrasted with her uncanny ability to capture movement with one seemingly continuous line.

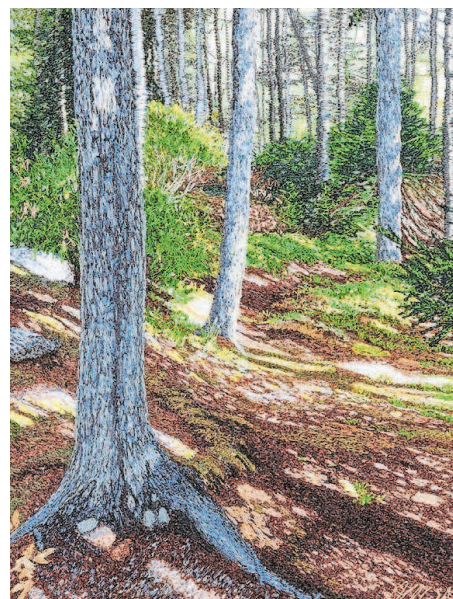
Holt specialises in freehand machine embroidery and since 1995 she has exhibited at the Chelsea



(Left) Ulla-Stina Wikander's Hold On and right Alison Holt's Moss Beneath My Feet both on show at Daniel Raphael Gallery

Flower Show. Using a basic Bernina dating back to the 1960s, she sews straight and

zig-zag stitches to create richly detailed realistic works often depicting the forest landscapes



near her home on the Welsh border. Holt's lifelike, textured flowers, gardens, landscapes and seascapes

combine this intricate stitching with silk painting.

Swedish designer Wikander collects cross stitch embroideries from flea markets and vintage stores then uses them to cover household objects from the 70s.

These recycled contemporary pieces are given a fresh existence by setting them in a new context.

Using his own facial features and characteristics - and those of his siblings - Dean studies his own relationships, notably by creating the future portrait of younger brother Alex in a series which symbolically brings his family together.

Hampstead-based Gallery owner Daniel Levy says: "This exhibition is original and we hope the works shine through, especially bearing in mind the scarcity of embroidery based exhibitions in London."

"There is a certain admiration for using traditional techniques in art and re-interpreting them in a contemporary setting, this is what Stitch fundamentally explores."

Stich runs at the Daniel Raphael Gallery, Church Street, Marylebone until March 22. Further information at danielraphael.co.uk