

Peter Burns at nag

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Downstairs at the Cross, in Nag, Peter Burns shows paintings under the title *The Wayfarer*. A recent MA graduate from NCAD, Burns makes clotted, densely worked little compositions, stocked with references that are for the most part self explanatory. If memory serves, his student work inclined towards inventively re-stating iconic images and figures. Here too he revisits subjects including “myths, Biblical stories, art historical, literary and musical themes”. The show’s title comes from Hieronymous Bosch, evoking the idea of a traveler in search of something undefined.

While the paintings are almost sculptural in the rugged density of their textures, Burns has a light touch. His *Young tiger hunting wildfowl* is a case in point, a radiant fantasy that has a touch of magic about it. While the admission of doubt in *Little bird* (probably more like a duck) is very likeable. He simplifies images in a cartoonish way, but not at all awkwardly. There’s real elegance to what he does, just as his inclination towards heightened colour doesn’t contradict the fact that he has really good colour sense.

The Wayfarer: Paintings by Peter Burns. The Cross Gallery, 59 Francis Street Until March 3

AIDAN DUNNE