



WI – Stephen Loughman

When choosing the subject matter for his paintings, Stephen Loughman approaches the world obliquely. In previous exhibitions he used stills from films such as *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Shining* as a starting point. In WI, his current exhibition, he found inspiration in vintage postcards issued by the Women's Institute. Loughman recreates the original photographic images in oils, employing a highly stylised realism that has the effect of rendering them hyper-real and vaguely unsettling. The postcards' romantic views of the English countryside and its buildings are meticulously recreated, brick by brick and leaf

by leaf. Note the painstaking detail of the forest floor in *Autumn at Thetford Chase*. In Loughman's art this benign source material is transmuted into a world that seems a degree or two out of kilter. The bucolic takes on an uncanny feel. The dark maw of the *Secret Tunnel* beckons us to explore further. *Cottage at Clifton Hampden*, pictured, looks especially sinister with its sharply pointed roof weirdly suggestive of a witch's hat. These beautifully executed and imposing works cast a spell, and draw you into an enchanted world.

John P O'Sullivan

Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin, Tue-Fri
10.30am-5.30pm, Sat 11am-5pm, 01 475 9514