

Night Café is thrilled to announce *In chests, nests and shells*, presenting new works by George Richardson, Lavinia Harrington, and Steffen Kern. Taking a poetic reading of spaces, the exhibition considers them not as a site of function or utility, but as a place loaded by emotion, memory, and imagination.

A sentence in poetry and a sentence in prose both consist of letters forming words, and we recognise them as such. Yet they operate differently. Prose is functional: it communicates directly, describes, or explains. Poetry is not. It works indirectly, through emotion, rhythm, and symbolism rather than literal meaning. It asks not simply to be understood rationally, but to be felt.

The difference between prose and poetry might help us to understand how a rational analysis falls short to fully grasp certain spaces. You can focus on the geometrical objects of planes and right angles or the structures or the structural engineering that keeps it all in place. And yes, all of that is correct. But the inhabited space transcends all of it.

French philosopher Gaston Louis Pierre Bachelard spent decades working within the philosophy of science, influencing thinkers such as Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. When he later turned his attention to poetry, writing *The Poetics of Space* (1958) he chose the house and its intimate spaces as a site through which to consider the poetic image. For Bachelard, attics, corners, stairways, and cupboards are not merely physical structures. They are containers of lived experience, memory, and reverie, spaces where imagination unfolds.

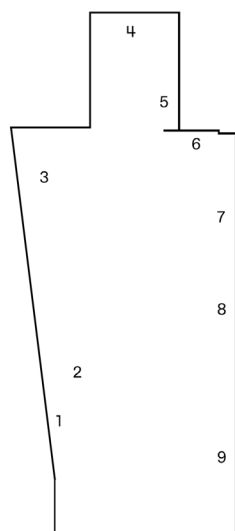
In this way, the domestic interior becomes the place where time, memory, and sensation intersect. The objects and architectural structures carry emotional and imaginative weight beyond their material presence. They do more than just hold physical form; they hold time. Recollections, sensations, and dreams are automatically activated, so that even the present moment becomes layered with what has been lived and what remains imagined. A crack in a door, an overfilled drawer, or a nick in a shelf can prompt a fleeting association or emotional response. One you can feel with your whole body.

Working with sculptural interventions to re-contextualise the everyday, George Richardson's practice is a continual attempt to make sense of encounters between oneself and objects we meet and form connections to. Believing there are no neutral decisions in sculpture, he often recreates domestic spaces in different materials, where familiar everyday objects and structures become uncanny. By doing so, he opens up a space for an emotional understanding of these objects and structures that surround us in our private settings.

Lavinia is moved by how soft, vulnerable materials can hold and emanate deeply charged emotions. Through making, she is searching for ways to materialise sensation. The works that grow from this are not representations but embodiments. For this reason, questions of care and empathy are at the heart of her practice. Her works open up a space for imagination where sensations and associations can drift without resolving it into fixed meaning.

Steffen Kern uses pencil and charcoal to recreate distinctive atmospheres. Through the shadows of his work, we glimpse fragments of domestic spaces, highlighted by vivid neon colours. The mastery of his technique evokes a strange sense of familiarity, as if each scene were lifted from a film still or a faded photograph. The viewer is left waiting for a presence to emerge: a silhouette descending the stairs, someone turning off the television, a door quietly closing.

Altogether, *In chests, nests and shells* tries to prove how domestic spaces are felt most fully, not as something to be rationally understood, but better understand that on an emotional level, that space can be poetry. The exhibition takes place from February 4 until March 6, 2026, at 162 New Cavendish Street.



1 Steffen Kern, *Window, Table and Chair*, 2026. Black pastel and colour pencil on paper. 20 × 20 cm.

2 George Richardson, *It's just a bit of sea mist I; It's just a bit of sea mist II*, 2026. Bronze. 36 × 6 × 5.5 cm; Teak parquet, plywood. 67 × 99 × 85 cm.

3 Lavinia Harrington, *Con tutto il cuore*, 2025. Pastel, handmade paper. 19 × 14 cm each.

4 Steffen Kern, *Sofa*, 2026. Black pastel and colour pencil on paper. 20 × 40 cm.

5 Steffen Kern, *Mirror*, 2024. Black pastel and colour pencil on paper. 25 × 20 cm (framed).

6 Lavinia Harrington, *Across Time*, 2024. Pastel, ink, water, handmade paper. 165 × 114.5 cm.

7 Lavinia Harrington, *Ti porto sempre*, 2025. Pastel, handmade paper. 102 × 70 cm.

8 George Richardson, *The Big Light II (Off)*, 2026. Concrete. 8.5 × 8.5 × 2 cm.