

Summer Invitation | 2023
18 Aug – 16 Sep



Nichola Bendall

Nichola is a mixed media artist and writer who creates poetical objects out of paper, paper clay and weathered, found objects. Her work has a dreamy, whimsical quality, yet is thought provoking and strangely haunting; often reconnecting with childhood iconography and memories, provoking a strong emotional response. Her narrative works are concerned with time, memory and loss – and her latest body of work, 'Half-ready to Believe' references the current threats to our natural world.

Dan Bilton

Dan's paintings are built-up layers of oil paint and mixed media focusing on the colours, textures and forms found in rugged landscapes. He mainly works from memories of specific places which he then gives a more abstract feel. Dan completed an Art Foundation Diploma at Salisbury College and studied Fine Art at the University of Plymouth.

Dina Bulavina

In my collage work, I explore the delicate balance of form, texture, colour and space. This exploration isn't just aesthetic – it's a quest for abstract representations of experiences and emotions. The instant, the flow, the faults and the imperfection are integral parts of the artistic journey.

I often incorporate aged paper and found objects. This isn't just for their visual appeal; it's about reintroducing the past into the present, lending depth and context to each piece. By using materials from various time periods, I initiate a subtle conversation between distinct memories and cultural touchpoints. Each artwork, in essence, becomes an intersection of past and present, layered with multifaceted meanings.

Harry Chrystall

Harry Chrystall is a multi-disciplinary artist with work encompassing both figurative and abstract themes, which he explores with a variety of materials in two and three dimensions.

His current work focuses on the relationship between artwork and spectator and how the universal and abstract principles that pervade our daily experience are mirrored in this uncertain relationship.

Inklings – Earth rotational drawings:

'Inklings' is a series of works inspired by the nineteenth century amateur physicist Leon Foucault. Foucault was able to prove for the first time the rotation of the Earth by observing the apparent changing trajectory of a pendulum. In accord with Newton's first law, that an object will not change its motion unless a force acts on it, Foucault was able to deduce that the apparently changing trajectory of the swinging pendulum could only be as a result of the ground's movement beneath, and so that of the planet itself.

By re-enacting this experiment and experiencing first-hand the arresting shift of perspective illustrated by the pendulum, I became more and more fascinated by the physical and mental sense of unfamiliarity to the conditions so intrinsic to our living experience.

By adapting my studio to house a six-metre pendulum whose 5kg weight I cast in lead and fitted with a stylus I have been able to explore these ideas and translate this ever-present yet intangible experience into a series of drawings.

Emma Cowley

Central to Emma's practice is a deep-rooted affinity with the natural world.

Emma's intuitive approach draws upon her emotional connection to the landscape in which she grew up. Subtle hues and washes convey a sense of calm and contemplation, a fleeting moment captured, a memory recalled.

Utilising mainly acrylic on raw canvas, Emma adopts a minimal approach to painting, resulting in emotionally charged abstract works.

"I approach painting in much the same way I go out walking; there's no rigid plan or direction as such – I let my instincts and curiosity guide me. The possibility of chance, the unexpected, is what drives me to keep pushing, exploring further, and this in turn feeds directly into my painting practice, the surrounding landscape becoming an extension of my studio."

Emma lives and works in Wiltshire, UK.

Fran Donovan MA

Fran Donovan is a painter and printmaker.

For Fran, the elements and forces of nature, and knowing the enormity of the landscape that stretches on forever, are a strong influence on her work. Although drawing is a reference point for the work it could become the master and so images made in-situ are left to memory. Those memories are used as a vehicle for her prints to help transform and reinvent what is seen to reflect the rich variety of the landscape.

After studying at Southampton College for the Fine Art Diploma, Fran gained a place at Winchester School of Art obtaining a BA (Hons) in Fine Art. She was selected for an Erasmus place in Barcelona and later went on to complete a Master's degree in European Fine Art in that city.

Awards include the Bibliotec Award, Winchester School of Art and the European Studies Award, Coopers and Lybrand.

Fran has produced work in a variety of media and has exhibited in London, Spain and France and widely in the south of England.

Her work is in private collections in Britain, Spain, Italy, USA and Australia and the public collections of Hampshire and Wiltshire Councils and Salisbury District Hospital.

Ruth Dresman

Ruth graduated in 1984 with a BA (Hons) degree in Three-Dimensional Design from West Surrey College of Art and Design, specialising in glass and forged iron. She then spent two years at The Glasshouse, London.

Each glass object begins with an exacting colour choice before it is blown. A protective film is then applied and hand-cut, choosing which areas to expose to erosive sand which attacks the glass in the areas unprotected by the film.

Ruth's aim is to invite the viewer to search within the tree canopy for birds or fruit, or to study a shoal of fish in a rock pool.

She has been regularly commissioned by Buckingham Palace to make gifts for visiting dignitaries. Ruth exhibits nationally and internationally.

Sarah Foat

I have always been inspired by things that are generally overlooked, finding beauty in the everyday. For the last few years this has centred around graffiti, with the bold colours, texture and layers of previous paint.

I use acrylics to explore textures and colours reminiscent of graffiti with a continual process of applying and removing paint to reveal glimpses of previous layers. I enjoy experimenting with mark-making and investigating contrasts, not only with colour but also texture, tone, line and space.

Mirka Golden-Hann

In her current practice, Mirka Golden-Hann concentrates on the potential for ceramics to communicate concepts beyond common utility. She explores new methods of engaging the onlooker with the artwork, exploring the nuances of the performative and investigative potential of craft practices.

This latest body of work, titled 'Sisters with Sharp Elbows', uses the vessel, an anthropomorphic signifier, to communicate the expression behind striking a typical feminine pose of resilience: "hands on the hips and chin up!" Golden-Hann's fascination with historical context and insight into wider ceramics practice fuels this new body of work which is informed by her deep material knowledge.

Golden-Hann, artist, teacher and curator, was born in the former Czechoslovakia. She discovered her fascination with the ceramic process when she came to live in the UK in 1993. Golden-Hann gained a BA (Hons) from the iconic Harrow Ceramics course at the University of Westminster and an MA (Distinction) from Bath Spa University. In 2009 she became Resident Artist at Salisbury Arts Centre, a role which she held until the closure of the Visual Arts branch of Wiltshire Creative in 2022. Golden-Hann is currently the head of Messums Creative Studios, championing the preservation of skills and their application within modern practice. She is also an artist and researcher whose work can be found in several private and public collections worldwide.

The artist will donate her fee from any sales of these works towards the acquisition of a gas kiln for Messums Creative Studios to enable the reduction firing method to be undertaken by the creative community.

Patrick Hallissey

During my Fine Art painting degree course at Birmingham College of Art in the early 1970s, the American Abstract Expressionists were my heroes. Ad Reinhardt said, "Art is art and everything else is everything else." More accessible is the remark by one of my lecturers Roy Able, "You can't paint like a cowboy if you live in Birmingham."

In 1977 when exhibiting at the Richard Demarco Gallery in Edinburgh, Richard took me to a lecture by Robert Motherwell. He was not the wild Expressionist painter I expected, but more of a philosopher.

I used the expressionist style later to create a world based on the fictional 'westerns' genre popular in the 1950s and 1960s. Mexicans were never the heroes of these films. Following visits to Mexico I reimagined the narratives by painting the 'Sombrero Men and Women' centre-stage.

Drawing has always been an integral part of my practice. I'm often inspired by the styles of other painters, as in the 1970s when I used the angst-driven spiritual techniques of Abstract Expressionism without the anxiety.

Member of Bath Society of Artists.

Bethany Kohrt

My painting is a visual journey back and forth between internal and external landscapes. I am drawn to the natural landscape – not the topographical elements or 'views' in a moment of time, but rather the wider experience of belonging within that place. My artistic language and internal landscapes are derived from culturally borrowed decorative objects of my childhood in Hong Kong where Chinese antiques, Indonesian and Balinese lamps, as well as indigo-dyed textiles formed the visual world that I grew up in.

I see the natural world through the lens of these objects, which are a memorialisation of belonging and loss; a type of visual archaeology where memories are embedded in layers of paint and intuitive mark-making. I see these symbols of remembrance, personal ancestry and

collective grief in my surroundings as expressions of my own internal and external landscapes.

I work on canvas, wood and paper and handle my materials roughly and very physically, working in many thick and thin layers that are then scrubbed, sanded, scorched and scraped back to reveal an analogous history of the layers of time, experience and memories. I am currently interested in abstract, decorative forms alongside atmospheric elements of physical landscapes, creating imagery that refers simultaneously to antiquity and the contemporary.

Jonathan Loxley

Jonathan Loxley is in love with the world around him and has unconsciously found himself worshipping it. Not at an altar, but at some plain wooden table. First clay, and then stone, attempting to translate a thought or a feeling into stone, driven there by an instinct that what is truly beautiful could be truly true. His pieces may be small, large, or even monumental. They may be outwardly simple or clearly complex. Some works challenge what is geometrically possible. But what they all have in common is a deep respect for their natural idiosyncrasies, exposed in their first investigative meeting.

Kieran Marsh

These photographs are taken from my 'New York City, 2023' project, which aims to capture my first impressions of American culture as well as everyday details which are often overlooked. As with the rest of my work, this project utilises 35mm film to capture the moods and textures within the photographs, as well as a sense of closeness to the subject.

Simone Moolman

Simone Moolman comes from a diverse background that traverses continents, shaping her artistic perspective. Raised in South Africa, her early exposure to a rich tapestry of culture kindled an innate curiosity about the human condition and its intricacies. Simone studied at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. She lived in London between 2000 and 2015 before returning to South Africa.

Her works are inspired by the transient nature of being, how our existence within societal systems moulds and changes us, the unique way in which we navigate experiences and the dialogue of our own inner knowing.

Upon completing her studies, Moolman's artistic journey took her to various corners of the world and some of the most rural parts of Africa, seeking inspiration in the interplay between societal structures and human existence. Her return to South Africa sparked a renewed sense of belonging and a profound connection to her roots.

Steve Neville

We are showing in this exhibition one of several bronzes by Steve developed on the theme of Touch, presenting the deconstructed figure as a landscape. Not as familiar as Steve's ceramics, this piece harks back to previous 3D work looking at the effect of chiaroscuro on the human form.

Lois Oakes

In my recent practice I work with light, line and colour to find a jewel, an easy elemental textural image. I use pens or water-based paint to start adventures on paper, balancing my intent with an open mind and respect for process and creation. Optimism and the power of growth are present as is a lushness and love of the land. Bold colours are overlaid and become muted; these suggest landscape as they expand across the paper surface.

Many things inform my creative practice but often I begin with photographs I have taken. I use these to recreate an impression of space and from there, light and dark balance play a role in my progression.

In my '50 Landscapes' series I find narrative. Each view an anchor, a moment, then on to the next. As in our movement through a space, many pathways are found. The eye follows one and then another as it is taken on a journey. With these works each comprising sixty 'windows', I invite the viewer to question their interpretation of what a landscape actually is.

Tim Scrace

Scrace's practice is based on three core values: art, architecture and community. This interdisciplinary background and approach offers him a unique perspective. Adopting a mantra of "seeing space differently" he is not constrained by scale, form or medium. Exploring phenomenological themes of experience and memory of place he moves seamlessly between two-dimensional, three-dimensional and even four-dimensional space, a philosophy that is reflected both in his flowing conceptual watercolours and the poetry of his soft linear abstracted acrylics.

Passionately driven, Scrace believes that art can be a powerful tool for communicating complex ideas and inspiring meaningful change. He seeks to employ his art as a vehicle for addressing current social, political and economic issues and the pressing climate emergency. His latest paintings in the 'Greenwash' series highlight this emergent thinking and are a fresh addition to a catalogue of insightful works.

His direct experience of engaging the observer in his public art demonstrates that interactivity holds the power to kickstart conversations and reach a broader audience. Scrace holds a burning desire to see effective change in the world and looks to every opportunity to push boundaries to address these and other contemporary issues. He is currently looking at the pollution of chalk streams and is exploring concerns relating to privilege.

Debra Sweeney

Debra studied at Bournemouth College of Art and Design and completed her Fine Art degree at Ravensbourne College of Art and Design in the 1980s. Her paintings are collage-based mixed media.

Debra works in situ and draws from the landscape or model, seeking a direct interaction with the subject in front of her. An often-humbling act, she searches to capture a line, a form, a colour, a composition, stripped of unnecessary detail – extracting these attributes forms the basis of the work which is then completed in her studio. Charcoal or pencil, paint and collage are central to Debra's unique technique. Collage used in block form is assembled as shadow to describe the form and emphasize its physicality. Often using collage material from previous work, its cutting and re-cutting can produce the unexpected, a serendipity and a memory of her own work.

Based in Salisbury, Debra's discipline to draw from a life model each week, with a nurturing and like-minded art group has proved invaluable to her development. Early influences for Debra have been the work of Richard Long for its sublime connection and interaction to the landscape, the paintings of Agnes Martin for their innate quietness and understated complexity, and the photographs of one of the early pioneers of photography, Edward Steichen for their composition and tonal simplicity.

Louise Tunnard

I am an image maker and have spent much of my creative life exploring pinhole photography and camera-less imagery as a means of interrogating what I see and can't see. Discovering the Belgian artist, Pierre Cordier and his chimigrammes many years ago has fundamentally shaped my creative practice. The chimigramme is a way of capturing a camera-less image, combining "the physics of painting and the chemistry of photography". Over the years, I have experimented and played to find new ways of 'printing' with light, with the intention of capturing the essence of – in this case leaves – and trying to tempt the viewer to reconsider the familiar.

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