

COLLECT

N U D E
A R T

S P E C I A L E D I T I O N

VOLUME 27 | JUNE 2023



TBILISI, GEORGIA

ART



On the Cover: Detail from the Photograph 'Abandoned' by Shavit Vos

notes from editors:

Welcome to a remarkable chapter in our art magazine's journey—the eagerly anticipated special edition, Volume 27. In this extraordinary release, we delve deep into the captivating world of Nude Art, presenting a curated collection of stunning works that showcase the beauty, vulnerability, and artistic power of the human form.

Throughout history, the portrayal of the nude figure has been a subject of immense fascination for artists and viewers alike. It is a subject that ignites the senses, challenges perceptions, and elicits a range of emotions. In this special edition, we pay homage to the rich tradition and contemporary interpretations of Nude Art through an array of captivating mediums, including photography, painting, drawing, and mixed media.

Within these pages, you will find a masterfully curated selection of works from acclaimed artists and emerging talents alike. Each piece of art tells a unique story, capturing the raw essence of the human body in its various forms, from moments of vulnerability to displays of strength and beauty. Through brushstrokes, camera lenses, and skilled hands, these artists have created powerful narratives that celebrate the complex interplay of light, shadow, and emotion. In Volume 27, we embrace the diversity of artistic expression, presenting a broad spectrum of approaches to Nude Art. Photographers skillfully freeze intimate moments, revealing the nuances of the human body. Painters blend colors to evoke mood and atmosphere, transforming the canvas into a testament of human beauty. Drawing artists meticulously render the contours and textures of the body, while mixed media creators push the boundaries of traditional techniques to craft unique and thought-provoking compositions.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the enchanting visual journey that awaits within these pages. Explore the striking juxtapositions, the evocative imagery, and the delicate balance between vulnerability and strength. Each artwork featured in this special edition showcases the boundless creativity and the profound connection between the artist and their subject.

Join us as we celebrate the immense talent of the artists who have fearlessly explored the complexities of Nude Art. Let their creations captivate your senses, provoke your thoughts, and ignite your own appreciation for the power of the human body as a muse.

Welcome to this extraordinary special edition of our art magazine—Volume 27. Prepare to be mesmerized by the alluring world of Nude Art, where beauty, vulnerability, and artistic expression intertwine.

Enjoy the journey!

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NUDE ART | SPECIAL EDITION | VOL 27 | JUNE 2023

Yunchu Green Chang

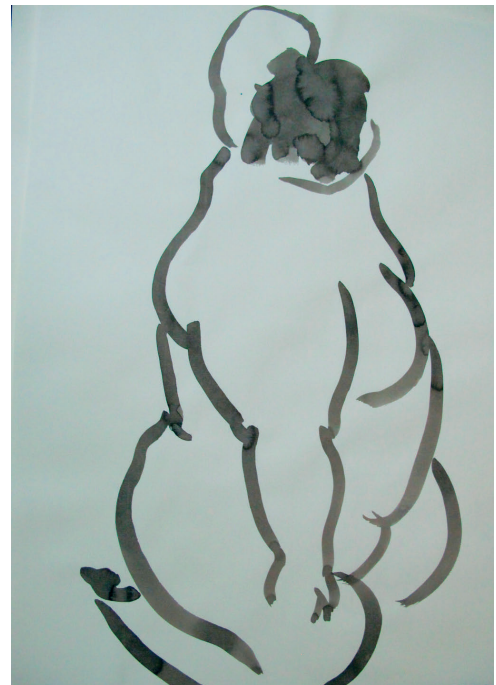


Yunchu Chang, known by her English name Green, is an accomplished artist and scholar who recently achieved a significant milestone in her career. In February 2023, she organized a graduation solo exhibition in Lancaster, UK, showcasing the culmination of her artistic journey and earning her a doctorate in fine art practice. This remarkable achievement marked the completion of a ten-year-long art research project that began back in 2013.

Green's unique approach to art research revolves around the methodology of anthropological ethnography, specifically employing the fieldwork method. During her artistic process, she immerses herself in the living environment of her subjects, armed with a canvas and a suitcase filled with paints. As the individuals she portrays go about their daily lives, she captures their essence and movements on the canvas. This reciprocal interaction between Green and her subjects creates a dance-like synergy, encapsulating a specific moment in the form of artwork. Her doctoral dissertation delved into exploring the intricate relationship between human beings and the world through this artistic process. Furthermore, Green plans to continue her research and intend to publish journal papers on related topics.

Over the years, Green's artwork has gained recognition and has been exhibited in various museums across the United Kingdom. Additionally, she has collaborated with sociology departments in several British universities, contributing lectures that focus on the broader theme of decolonization in higher education.

Green's dedication to her craft, combined with her scholarly contributions, has solidified her position as an accomplished artist and an insightful advocate for social change and awareness. As she continues to explore the depths of art and society, she remains committed to shedding light on important issues and inspiring meaningful conversations through her artistic endeavors.



Congratulations on completing your doctorate in fine art practice! Can you tell us more about your graduation solo exhibition in Lancaster and the focus of your research project?

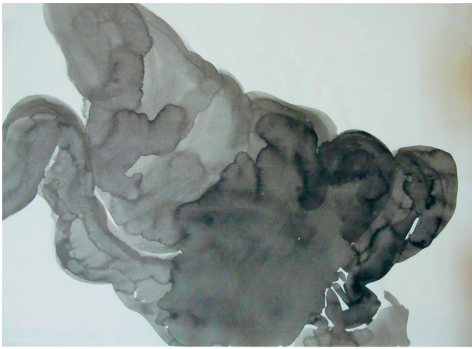
In February 2022 the beautiful Storey Gallery in Lancaster, UK played host to my graduation solo exhibition, the culmination of my 5 year '100 Rooms' PhD project. The number of visitors and feedback from the audience far surpassed my expectations, with people feeling a real resonance with my work and I hope to have more opportunities to show my works around the world in the future.



My project consisted of two main parts: oil paintings, produced by taking my canvases directly into stranger's rooms, conducting interviews, recording audio and finally painting on the spot, and theoretical analysis exploring the issue of human existence using the theories of Heidegger and Laozi. The questions that my creation has always revolved around are: how does a 'human' exist? What is a person? After tearing off all labels, what is left of a person? And how do we perceive others?

How does the fieldwork method of anthropological ethnography influence your approach to creating oil paintings? Could you share some insights into the process of capturing the subjects' existence on canvas while they go about their daily lives?

The application of anthropological methods in contemporary art is the result of reflection after post-colonialism, with globalization allowing the decentralization of artistic practices and opportunities for cross-cultural art scholars to contribute towards the ultimate goal of cultural equality. I believe that the process of artistic creation is more important than the artwork itself, because the sitters and I truly 'see' each other, and exchange fragments of our souls throughout our interaction. I want the sitters to move freely while I'm painting so that I am able to 'truly' present them as they are in their living space. Additionally, I never move their room furnishings or direct them into specific movements or poses. When I'm painting, we move and cooperate with each other, jointly contributing to the composition and interpretation of the work. Through this, I am able to make the characters in my portraits look more like themselves than the people they were or will be – to find their truth.



Girl9 - Ink on paper, 42x59.4cm, 2023



Girl10 - Ink on paper, 42x59.4cm, 2023



Girl1 - Ink on paper, 59.4x42cm, 2023

Your doctoral dissertation explores the relationship between human beings and the world in the artistic process. Could you elaborate on the key findings or insights you have gained through this research? Are there any specific moments or experiences that have had a significant impact on your understanding?

Heidegger believed that to know means to have seen, in the widest sense of seeing (1971, p.57) and it is also mentioned in Taoist thought that 'seeing' and 'knowing' have a sense of what is present, a state of awareness. I feel this is also the state that I occupy when making my oil paintings, a kind of 'seeing' and 'knowing' that goes beyond a theoretical visualization. It is about how we judge others and ourselves and understanding how people are driven implicitly by their own principles and thought processes. This heightened sense of understanding and awareness, that is often submerged in the repetitiveness of daily life, is revealed by this artistic process. This phenomenon was clearly demonstrated during a recent project for which I produced a series of paintings of disadvantaged members of society back in Taipei. Despite only providing a depiction of their daily lives, many sitters wept as I painted and expressed the the fact that they felt it was the first time they felt properly seen, reinforcing my belief that my artworks can bring spiritual dignity and comfort to those living on the fringes of society.



Girl11 - Charcoal on paper, 59.4x42cm, 2023

It's fascinating that you have observed and visited people from over 20 countries as part of your research project. How has this multicultural exposure influenced your artwork and your perspective on the world?

Entering the personal space of so many people from different backgrounds and hearing stories and experiences from a variety of cultural viewpoints was a magical experience that I'm truly grateful for. It taught me that race and skin colour are vague and artificial constructs and by focussing solely upon getting to know each individual deeply, I started to become oblivious to their skin colour and title. I learned to accept different, sometimes even mutually exclusive, concepts, and listened honestly and

Artwork:



attentively without relying on stereotypes. Art provides a refuge where we can understand who we need to be and why we exist in this world. Through my artwork, I construct an image that reflects the inseparable relationship between philosophical consciousness and daily reality.

Your works have been exhibited in British museums, and you have collaborated with sociology departments in British universities. Could you share some highlights or key themes from these exhibitions and lectures? How do you use art to engage in discussions on decolonization, skin color, racial stereotypes, and cultural labels?

In my exhibitions, people tell me they see themselves in my paintings. I paint portraits of sitters in their private spaces, a form of communication that transcends words and breaks down stereotypes. I observe their movements, expressions, and surroundings to create a unique painting that captures the essence of their story. My work is inspired by people from around the world, ensuring that each painting has a timeless quality. My thesis explores the relationship between body, space, and time in my artistic process,



Girl4 - Charcoal on paper, 42x59.4cm, 2023

and how art and philosophy can help us understand our existence. By questioning our understanding of the world and the essence of technology, we can gain a deeper understanding of who we are. The central issue is that we are all interconnected, and if we can realize this, discrimination can be eliminated.

In guiding doctoral students from other fields, how do you bridge the gap between art and social sciences? What unique insights or perspectives can art offer in discussions on prejudice, discrimination, and cultural identity?

Contributing to the course 'Decolonising Higher Education - What can art do?', alongside Dr. Abraham and Dr. Budd from Lancaster University's Department of Sociology, was a richly rewarding experience that allowed me to share how, through my own artistic practice, I have gained insight into issues surrounding skin colour, discrimination, and cultural identity.

At the beginning of each class, I asked everyone to draw what they imagine an Asian person looks like using coloured pens. The doctoral students taking the class often found that their lack of familiarity with drawing combined with their high sensitivity towards racial discrimination, left them feeling uneasy about how to approach a task forcing them to confront their own unconscious stereotypes. I would then ask everyone to share their own works and the discomforts they experienced during the process of creating them, before explaining that the source and evolution of these discomforts and perceptions of skin colour throughout history heavily influenced the art of the time. This process allowed everyone to openly share their own

experiences related to skin colour and race issues from their own countries or from their time in the UK and I found myself learning something new from my students in every session.

What are your plans for future journal papers related to your research project? Are there any specific topics or aspects you would like to delve into further?

I plan to continue to explore the three central themes of my dissertation: Body, Space and Time, since the exploration of existence through artistic activities begins with the body in daily life and ends with time. In particular, I would like to use my artworks to write an analysis of the meaning of skin colour from the perspective of decolonization, and my personal perspective as a so called 'yellow' Asian woman. Following this, I plan to further analyze the relationship between the body in everyday life and the 'reality' in the work of art, and explore how our bodies perceive and are disciplined by the world around us. In terms of art practice, I hope continue to cooperate with charities in Taiwan and my new home in Bristol, UK, on artworks and exhibitions for disadvantaged groups in society.

Girl6 - Charcoal on paper, 42x59.4cm, 2023



As an artist and researcher, what are your long-term goals or aspirations?

I think I will continue to pay attention to issues related to human existence, especially focusing on the issues of human dignity and the atypical dwellings occupied by disadvantaged groups, motivated by my previous experience working with charities in Taipei. I use art as a tool to understand each person in the particular time and space where we meet. These artworks can be described as 'aimless', as I do not start with a pre-conceived idea of the final product; I paint that moment, at the moment. I hope to continue to use this kind of aimless artistic activity to depict the depths of human life and existence and bridge the gap between the romantic idea that a person can exist without any specific reason and the reality of modern life where we are constantly placing a value on individuals. If we can learn something about the world through another individual, no matter how negative or discouraging they may be, this establishes our basic harmonious relationship with the world.

How do you balance your artistic practice with your academic pursuits?

I'm personally an artist driven by body (incarnate) consciousness, I love to paint and can never stop! Painting is as natural to me as breathing, in the sense that it is a necessity and there is no need to judge whether breathing is good or bad, because breathing is simply life. I use philosophy and anthropology to explain my artwork, in the same way that the mouth requires the tongue to express itself. However, art's true meaning cannot be fully conveyed by language description. The more you try to describe it, the further away it drifts, but this

indescribability simultaneously becomes the motivation to continue describing. Ultimately, the ineffability of art is the true meaning of art practice.

Is there anything else you would like to share about your artistic journey?

"The only thing I do know is that we have to be kind. Please, be kind, especially when we don't know what's going on." (Everything everywhere all at once, 2022)

As an artist, my main motivation is to use art to help us forget about labels and to use canvas and paint to allow the audience to see the world through the sitter's eyes, seeing each other sincerely and equally. My artistic journey has taught me that seeing the light that shines even from those in the midst of suffering proves that the light of humanity is present even in the darkest forgotten corners.



Vanessa Onuk

Vanessa is an artist born and living in Frankfurt am Main. Her works mostly deal with abstract depictions of landscapes or forms that flow into one another and have arisen from the imagination. For her, art is the perfect way to express feelings and to get back to the childlike joy in simple things like craftsmanship, colors, and the mere process of creating, which should also remain with us adults for a lifetime. The process of painting is defined by heavily layered and mostly transparent acrylic techniques on canvas, mostly on pure linen. Particular attention is paid to the blurring of silhouettes and forms, which is intended to reflect the subjective view of a landscape representation. The technique consists of a mixture of sharp lines and color gradients that flow into one another, partly accompanied by freely flowing colors in the wet-on-wet technique. The same technique is featured in her figurative work, where she draws the illusion of shadows on a human body in abstract patterns. Her paintings are heavenly influenced by her former work as a general doctor and her studies of the human body.



Figurative series1 - Acrylic on paper, 50x64cm, 2023

Can you tell us more about your inspiration behind creating abstract depictions of landscapes and forms that flow into one another? How does your imagination play a role in shaping these works?

Before I start painting, the only thing I determine is the rough structure of the environment and the color scheme, which personally attracts me. I let myself be guided by my mood, which alternately leads to very colorful or almost monochromatic end results. I try to capture the moment that triggers an emotion when looking at nature. This can be breathtaking colors, smooth color transitions or the arrangement of silhouettes within the images that stand out from the overall picture.

How does art allow you to express your feelings and reconnect with the childlike joy of simple things? How do you incorporate craftsmanship, colors, and the process of creating into your artistic practice?

When painting abstract landscapes, the main transport of emotions takes place through the colors, which determine the mood for the viewer even before closer inspection. I find it very attractive to see that colors and motifs can often trigger very different feelings, mostly guided by personal experiences, which makes the pictures individual for each viewer. In the everyday life of us adults, this joy in the moment has often been lost. With my works I try to tie in the moment of the joy of discovery and the resulting emotion.

Could you share some insights into your heavily layered and mostly transparent acrylic technique on canvas, particularly the blurring of silhouettes and forms? What effect do you aim to achieve with this technique in reflecting a subjective view of landscape representation?

I usually start with a subtle background color or simple light layers, which are then gradually complemented with darker aspects to create contrast. In figurative painting and landscape design, the optical illusion of a silhouette is created, which, on closer inspection, consists only of abstract, mostly sharp-edged lines. The power of our imagination is limitless, and while looking at my pictures, the overall picture only emerges from the interplay of seemingly randomly chosen shapes and shadows.



Figurative series 1.0 - Acrylic on raw linen, 60x180cm, 2023

How does your background as a general doctor and your studies of the human body influence your figurative work? How do you draw the illusion of shadows on the human body in abstract patterns?

I have seen bodies of all shapes, colors and ages all my life. I see the human body as an architectural marvel that, in addition to its functionality, has an unusual beauty in all its facets. The two focal points of my figurative work are on the silhouette and the shadow play of our muscles. On closer inspection, the shadows set often have no relation to reality, consisting of wild shapes and short brushstrokes. The illusion of a human being is created in our mind and this is perhaps the most exciting part of my work.

If there is further interest, I will link one of my Instagram posts, in which I also took up the topic.



What role does pure linen play in your artistic process? How does it contribute to the overall effect and texture of your paintings?

When I first started painting I was often frustrated because the colors were laying on the surface instead of blending with it. On unprimed fabric, the bleeding of the colors is intense and creates effects that I find incredibly attractive. In addition, the structure of linen is ideal for achieving an aging effect, which is unique. By applying water-based colors over a large area, the colors become one with the substrate and a unique color absorption is created.

Can you describe the interplay between sharp lines and color gradients in your work? How do they interact and create a visual narrative within your paintings?

I think that the best way to compare the desired effect is with the background sharpness of a camera: the subject itself is shown in clearly recognizable lines, but the mood and atmosphere of the picture mostly depends on the surroundings. The clear lines give the viewer a focus and a clue to what it is about, the image begins to form in his head. The emotions begin with colors and illusions of color gradients. The mixture of different techniques is always based on the effect I want to achieve when viewing.

Are there specific themes or emotions that you often explore through your artwork? How do you convey these themes and emotions through your abstract landscapes and figurative pieces?

The figurative part lives from my love for the human body and its infinite possibilities and power. I want to give my characters power and expression, which is done in particular through the depiction of muscles and sometimes unfeminine poses. With abstract drawing, the feelings are more fluid, depending on the change in the picture, the mood changes, sometimes intentionally, sometimes as a product of one's own emotions on different days.

Could you discuss any particular challenges or rewards you've encountered in using the wet- on-wet technique and freely flowing colors in your paintings?

My technique currently gives me the opportunity to present the images in my

head in a way that corresponds to my aesthetics, which I consider very important. Although we as artists depend on our pictures being liked, my first intention is always that they have to please ME. Without the love for what I do, it would be interchangeable. The downside is the high amount of patience due to drying times and the higher cost of materials. In addition, it is always a little thrill, because the watery technique is not always predictable, which is sometimes quite demanding, but also accounts for a large part of the appeal of this technique.

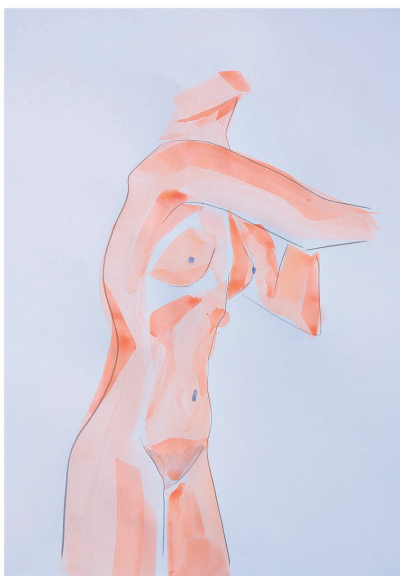
How do you approach the balance between abstraction and representation?

I make most of my decisions spontaneously. After each layer I try to take a step back and look at my picture with a fresh eye. Usually it becomes clear where structure and clarity are missing. The more differences I find in the order of the colors, the more interesting the picture makes for me. Due to the focus on silhouette and musculature, my depiction of people will always contain a high proportion of reality in order to be able to express what is close to my heart. However, the abstract proportion is higher than initially suspected when looking at it in detail: After a short look, the initial idea of a realistic drawing gives way to the abstract elements of my physical representation and you see the interaction as reality and abstraction.

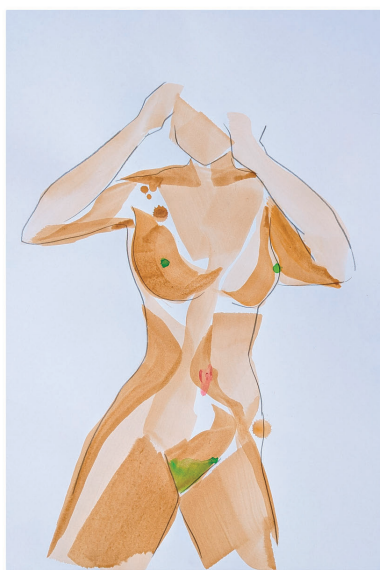
Looking forward, do you have any upcoming exhibitions or projects that you're excited about? Are there any artistic goals or aspirations you're currently pursuing?

I'm an emerging, self-taught artist at the beginning of my little journey. For this reason, I am already very positively surprised by all the positive feedback and hope for further development in this direction. I currently have two galleries that would like to work with me in the coming year, an abstract and a figurative exhibition are planned for each. I recently started figurative commissions based on customer photos and am very excited and excited to be able to continue down this path.

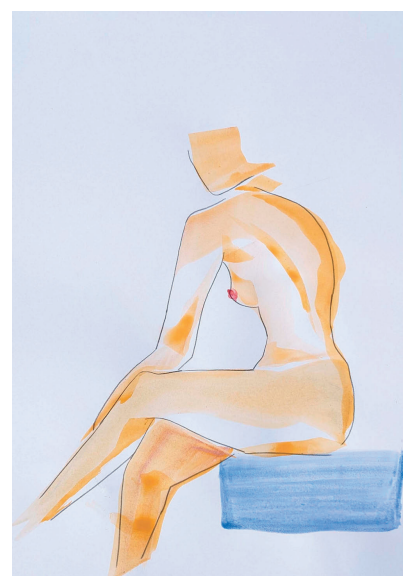
Figurative series3
Acrylic on paper, 64x50cm, 2023



Figurative series 2
Acrylic on paper, 64x50cm, 2023



Figurative series 4
Acrylic on paper, 64x50cm, 2023



Oleksandra Kulikovska

Oleksandra Kulikovska was born in 2002 in Odesa, Ukraine. In 2022 she had to emigrate to Dresden (Germany) because of war. Oleksandra studied psychology at the university for a year and in 2022 started to study fine arts at HfBK Dresden. In her interdisciplinary art, Oleksandra actively explores the themes of fear, mental disorders, death, war, and violence.

Complex topics are often avoided but she is sure it hinders the honest view of reality. If one looks at reality honestly, they can change something and make this world a better place. Oleksandra's main goal is to ask the right questions through her works and help people see reality and believe that it can be changed. Her collage works have been exhibited at personal and group exhibitions in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, USA, China, Canada, Slovenia, and Ukraine.

Origins
Paper collage,
15x15cm



How has your personal experience of emigrating from Ukraine due to the war influenced your artistic exploration of fear, violence, and complex topics?

My emigration from Ukraine influenced my art really much and helped me to understand, that I chose the right field to research.

Artists always research the topics that are connected in some way with them and their experience, and problems.

The experience of war, PTSD, and depression diagnoses help to understand the problem from inside, deeply.

Can you discuss how your interdisciplinary approach allows you to address and convey the themes of mental disorders, death, and war in your artwork?

Life around us is collage. Our memories, and our problems are collage. Reality can't be flat and I want to construct reality that I see with all the mediums, that could help me (to do it so, that viewer can feel it with his body and mind, to drown in this experience.

Why do you believe it is important to confront and explore complex topics rather than avoid them in art? How do you think this contributes to a more honest view of reality?

When we speak about complex topics with people and share our feelings, it's easier to solve problems together /or to find at least little steps, that can make the life and the reality better.

When we don't avoid complex topics, it's easier to find understanding, support, help, solidarity. When we are open and tell to people our struggles, we could be the example for other people and show them, how much freedom hides behind honesty.



How do you navigate the balance between creating artwork that challenges and engages viewers while also ensuring it is accessible and relatable?

For me the only way to do it - is to be honest and open-minded. Talk with people about your art and topics that you take out. In the end, everybody will understand your art in their own unique way. And you just need to be there, listen, discuss. And keep names and descriptions simple.

In what ways do you aim to change the world and make it a better place through your art? How do you see art as a vehicle for transformation and social change?

I have several ways, how I use my art as a vehicle for social changes:

1) I make my art, I write descriptions to it, I exhibit it, I speak about it on artist talks.

2) I make project for institutions, that are working in social field (for example: project for Holodomor-Genocide Museum in Kyiv; Project "Whose war" about russian full-scale war in Ukraine with Deutsches Hygiene Museum Dresden; Medialabor of Remembrance with topic of war and culture of remembrance for Reporters UA.

3) I am selling my paintings, the purchase amount of which includes a charitable contribution for Ukraine.

I think, that the best way to transform something is to transform yourself, be an example for other people.

Can you share some examples of the questions you aim to ask through your artwork? How do you hope these questions will resonate with viewers and prompt them to see reality differently?

For example I have series of artworks called "Have there ever been good times?", which reflect our romanticised view on the past.

It can be also question "How war in your country influences your mental health?".

Most of the questions are really simple and corny, but sometimes people are too busy and tired in this fast paced world, that they usually close their eyes on this topics, until it will touch them directly. And I think, that art is a perfect tool to ask this questions softly, gently, step by step.

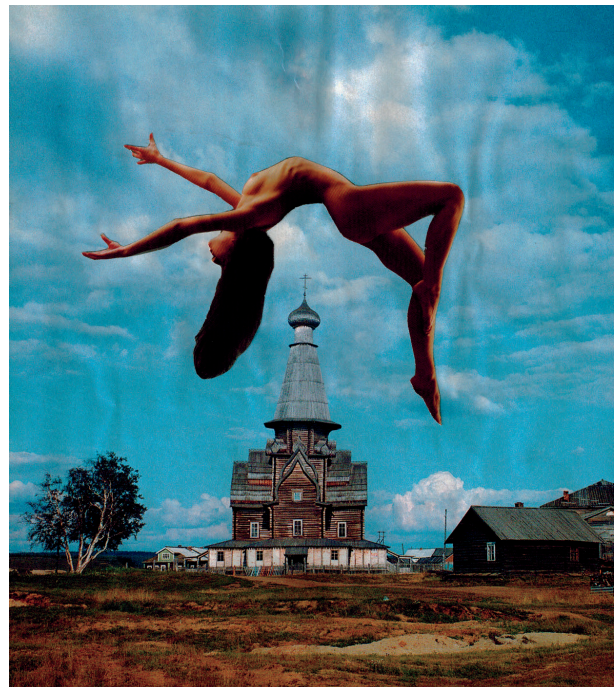
Soaring - Paper collage, 29,7x21cm

Could you discuss some of the reactions or responses you have received from viewers of your collage works?

On my first exhibition in 2021, I met a successful Odesa artist, who bought my work "Shame". It was first sold image ever. And after it he told me to continue to be honest in my art and not to loose this freedom over time. I think that's why honesty is the main important characteristic, that I value in art.

How do you select the exhibition venues for your artwork, and what impact do you hope to have on audiences from different countries and cultures?

I choose exhibition venues with the help of a scheme I have created for my art. with it, I can look at the topics I'm working on and mix a few topics if necessary. When I convince myself that the topic resonates with me, I take part in a project or competition. But I am also always open to experiments,



Exit from the body - Paper collage, 29.7x21cm, 2020



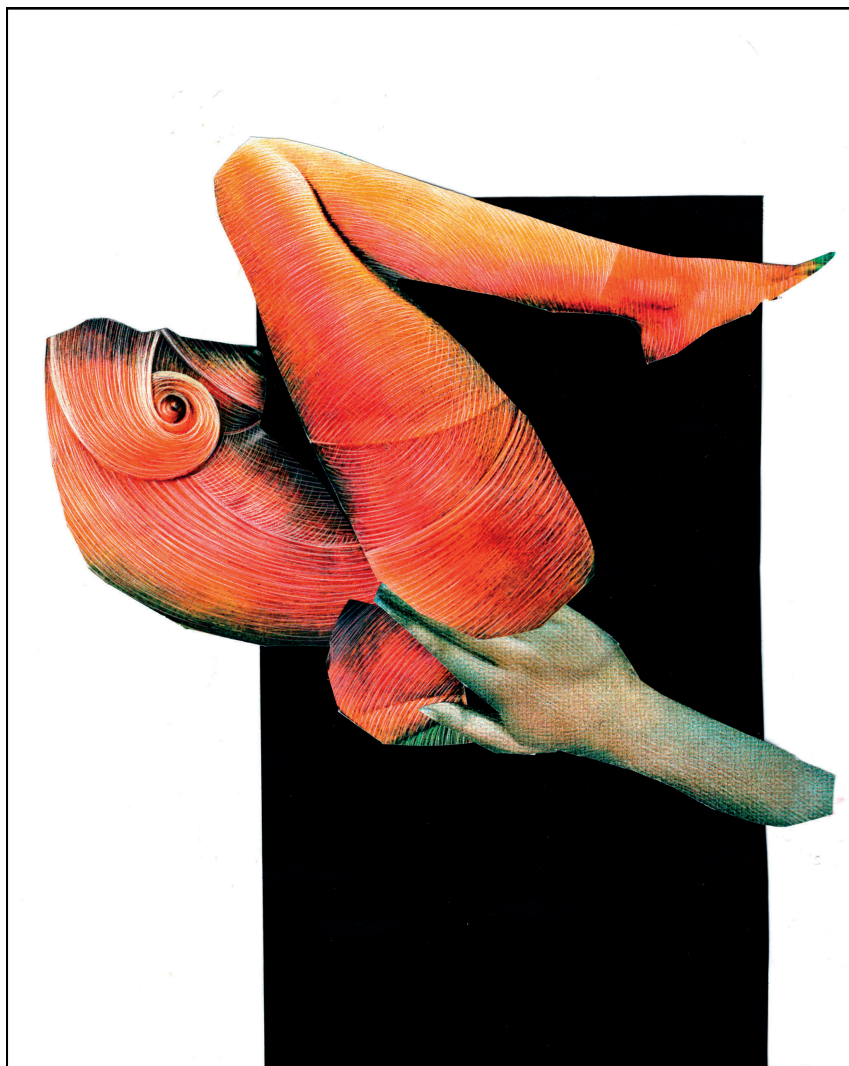
What future projects or directions do you envision for your art? Are there any specific themes or concepts you plan to explore further?

Now I'm focusing on the topic of mental health, death, and suicide. Because art is also my tool to reorganize my inner world and speak about my experience. This project is called "How to survive death" and it is reflecting suicide of my sister last year, my reaction, my feelings, my thoughts about it, my depression.

It's really personal project, but I can imagine, that it will be also social in some way.

As an artist, how do you reconcile the personal and emotional aspects of your work with your broader goal of helping people see reality and fostering social change?

I think that there is no social without the personal. And if you know how to help yourself see reality and do something for social change, then you can share it with the audience and participants in your work.



Nude
Paper collage,
26.5x21cm, 2020

Craig Scoffone



Craig Scoffone is a fine art photographer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. He has been shooting for 30 years, and has had his works published and exhibited both domestically and internationally. In addition to his artistic pursuits of both the local and regional landscape, Craig has also amassed an extensive collection of compelling works of the figure. For the duration of Craig's career as a photographer, he has also been an accomplished portrait and commercial photographer, having provided his skills to many ' Silicon Valley ' clients. But Craig's true and longest lasting interest in photography, has most certainly been his pursuit of fine art compositions. There is a wide ranging approach, in both technique and style, of the various themes, Craig chooses to photograph. This has resulted in a body of work, that has profound diversity, not normally associated to the works of a single artist.



You have been actively shooting for 30 years. How has your photography style evolved over time, and what are some of the key influences or experiences that have shaped your artistic journey?

The biggest transition in my work has been the change from film to digital. And I have to say, I do not miss the hours and hours I had spent in the darkroom. Once in digital, it has been so much more pleasant for me to be able to just sit at my computer and adjust and manipulate images electronically.

Your body of work showcases a diverse range of themes and styles. Could you talk about your approach to choosing subjects and the creative process behind capturing these different compositions?

Well I do enjoy hiking in the great outdoors. So pursuing landscape compositions seemed to be a natural fit. But you still need variety, in both what you photograph, and how you do it. If the process becomes too repetitive, you would easily lose interest in it.



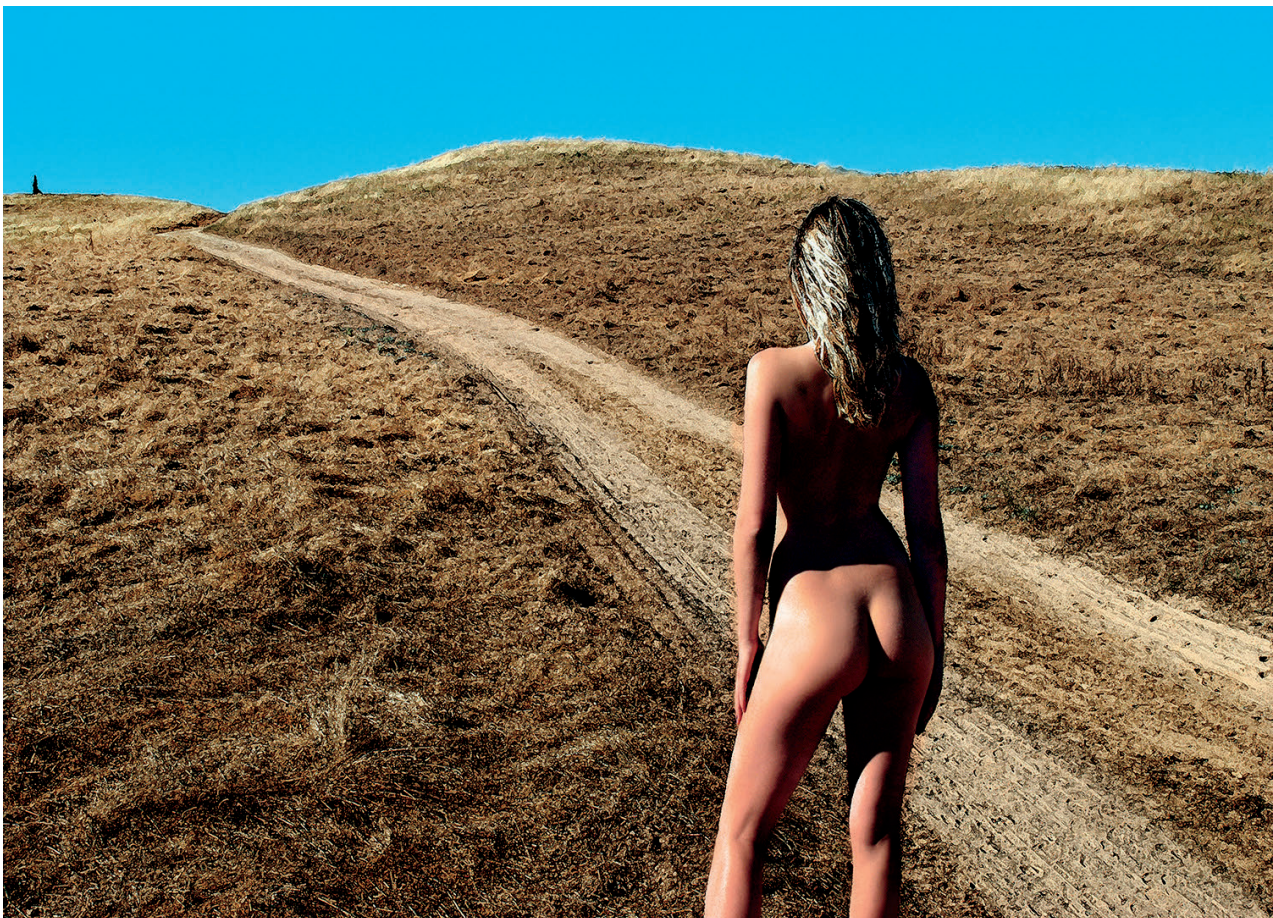
As both a fine art photographer and a commercial photographer, how do you navigate the different requirements and expectations of these two realms? How do you balance artistic expression with client demands in your commercial work?

It's not too difficult to separate the two. In a paid assignment, you are simply creating images that you are asked to create. As far as adding my own artistic touch, I always offer to try some variation on the process, but only after I got what has already been asked for, and only then, if I think some other approach would actually look better. But if the client asks for another approach, I'll do it unless it calls for parameters beyond what the job was bid on, and at which case, additional budgeting would be required if it's a significant addition to time required.

Your collection of works encompasses landscapes, figures, portraits, and more. Is there a particular subject or theme that resonates with you the most, and if so, why?

All these themes have their separate appeals. I liked to hike in rural places, so, again, landscape themes are a natural fit. I've found that the female nude is not only a an excellent template to try different photographic techniques, but also has a strong bond and interest with the viewers.

Urban abstracts are just a fun act of seeing, and encountering interesting images when you are not in a rural location or working with a figurative model.



What role does technique play in your creative process?

It has a huge roll. Often times, it is not just the subject matter itself that results in an image worth sharing, but the techniques of image manipulation that ends up making that image unique in the first place. As for as what technqie I choose to employ, often, I'll do a few things regarding image manipulatio of the exact image, just to create variety, and then to see, what effect(s) end up working the best after post production.

Diversity seems to be a central element of your artistic practice. How do you keep yourself inspired and motivated to explore new techniques and styles, and what do you hope to achieve by continuously pushing the boundaries of your own artistic expression?

The biggest motivator in wanting to continue to explore new ways of image manipulation is the desire not to get stuck in a rut. It would simply be tiresome for me to do the exact same thing, over and over. I always at least try to do something different, each time I shoot, although, the more work I create, the more of a challenge that does become.

Can you share a memorable experience or project that has had a significant impact on your development as a fine art photographer? How did it influence your perspective and approach to photography?

There are lots of memorable moments and behind-the-scenes stories, but as far as anything in particular that could be credited as key to my development or how it might have influenced my overall approach to photography, I'd have to say, ' all of it ', as

opposed to any particular moment. For me, its been about trial and error, some ideas worked, others have not. But that is just the process I would think any one goes through after sticking with any particular journey over a length of time.

In reviewing your work, the quality and composition of each individual photograph stand out. Could you discuss your creative decision-making process when it comes to capturing and presenting a visually compelling image?

Well, thank you for that, first of all. But the creatiive decision making process for me, simply is the result of trying out a few things, and just seeing what ends up looking the most interesting.



How do you approach the presentation and exhibition of your work? Are there specific considerations or techniques you use to enhance the viewer's experience and convey your artistic vision effectively?

I've always liked using black matting and frames when presenting my work. To me, it draws the viewer in and it does not clash with any of the colors and tones of the image. But one art advisor said it looked 'dated', so now, I ask for a preference, to anyone buying or representing the sale of the work, if I'm the one doing the framing. Also, always use non-glare glass.

Looking ahead, what are your future plans and aspirations as a fine art photographer? Are there any specific projects or collaborations that you are excited about?

Going forward, I'd have to say what my plans are, is to simply pursue more exhibition, publishing, and sales opportunities for my work. In such an insanely crowded world, with so much work to choose from, I never, ever take it for granted when someone steps up to be my patron. As far as any future collaborations, I'd say I'd like to do some figurative and landscape compositions further out, from my home base in the San Francisco Bay Area.





Iceberg

Shavit Vos



Shavit Vos is a photographer and a mum to 3 boys. She was born in Kibbutz Zikim. Today lives in the City of Ramat Gan, Israel. Photography is her great passion and love in the last couple of years and it's her everyday activity. This is the way for her to express her art and creativity. Shavit creates images to make emotional clay impressions of the things she sees. Her ambition is to be originality, unique and to have cleanliness and accuracy in her works. Shavit took part in photography exhibitions around the world in galleries in the USA, Greece, Vietnam, France, England & Israel.



"Photography is my greatest passion and love in the last couple of years. My art is a journey of self-discovery and self-expression. It is the process by which I choose to explore the people, things and world around me. Photography for me is a way of capturing unique moments in time that will never be repeated. It is the greatest reward when a viewer connects with an image emotionally. My work, whether it be portraits, landscapes, animals or still life, is most successful when it speaks to celebrating the richness of life. I create images to make emotional clay impressions of the things I see and use different techniques to generate my images: such as light and shadows, guiding lines, movement, texture, colors, form & shape. I think of My photographs as creations, I want to capture a moment and add my own vision to My creation. This is My way of creating My own imagery world and I'm always looking to be original & unique."



Branched

Abandoned



How did you discover your passion for photography, and how has it evolved over the years?

I discovered my passion for photography at a young age and it has continued to evolve over the years. In 2018 I participated in a two-day creative photography workshop & I was immediately captivated by the world of photography and decided to invest in a professional camera. Since then, my passion has grown as I have attended numerous diverse workshops and embarked on photography trips that have expanded my skills and artistic vision. Photography has become an integral part of my life, allowing me to express my creativity and capture the beauty of the world around me.

Can you share some insights into your artistic process? How do you translate your emotions and creativity into visual images?

My artistic process is a blend of careful planning and intuitive exploration. I begin by envisioning the ideal location, considering the landscape, background, and elements that will enhance the visual narrative. I also think about the characters and props that will help bring my vision to life. However, during the actual photo shoot, I allow room for spontaneity and creative instincts to guide me, capturing the raw emotions and translating them into visual images. This interplay between planning and intuition enables me to express my emotions and channel my creativity effectively.

What is the significance of creating emotional clay impressions through your photography? How do you aim to evoke emotions in your viewers?

The significance of creating emotional clay

impressions through my photography lie in the ability to convey meaningful messages and leave a lasting impact. By using elements such as movement, flow, touch, look, color, light, and shadow I strive to evoke emotions in my viewers. Through these visual techniques, I aim to create a sensory experience that resonates with the audience, allowing them to connect with the subject matter on a deeper level and elicit a range of emotions. Ultimately, my goal is to create a lasting impression that sparks introspection and provokes thought in those who engage with my work.

As an artist, what do you consider to be your unique qualities or style? How do you strive for originality and uniqueness in your photographic works?

As an artist, my unique qualities and style revolve around conveying ease, naturalness, and a preference for creations with maximum cleanliness. In my photographic works, I strive for originality and uniqueness by exploring different angles and perspectives. I constantly challenge myself to see a situation from multiple viewpoints, allowing me to capture moments in a distinct and fresh manner. This approach enables me to infuse my photographs with a sense of novelty and individuality that sets them apart.



Combine



The Ship

Serenity



How has participating in photography exhibitions around the world impacted your artistic journey? Can you share any memorable experiences or moments from these exhibitions?

Participating in photography exhibitions around the world has had a profound impact on my artistic journey. The opportunity to showcase my work to exhibition curators, collectors, and visitors has provided valuable feedback and positive reactions. Their encouragement has motivated me to keep creating, constantly seek renewal, and reinvent myself as an artist. One particularly memorable experience was when one of my photos was selected for an exhibition commemorating the international day of violence against women. It was an honor to see my printed artwork displayed at the President's residence in Jerusalem and to have the privilege of presenting it and engaging in a conversation with the President of Israel and his wife.

Are there any specific themes, subjects, or techniques that you frequently explore in your photography? What draws you to these particular areas of focus?

In my photography, I frequently explore a variety of themes, subjects, and techniques. What draws me to these areas of focus is my desire to constantly be in motion and engage in an ongoing investigation. Lately, I have been particularly drawn to photographing landscapes around the world and capturing people in nature & in the studio. I enjoy incorporating natural or artificial light, such as using flashes, to enhance the visual impact of my photographs. To me, photography is akin to sculpting or painting with light, and I derive great pleasure from witnessing the diverse

and unique results that can be achieved through this medium.

How do you balance cleanliness and accuracy in your works while maintaining a sense of artistic expression? How do you approach the technical aspects of photography in relation to your creative vision?

In my artistic process, I strive to strike a harmonious balance between cleanliness and accuracy in my works. Prior to capturing the photographs, I carefully consider the desired outcome and envision the results I aim to achieve. This creative vision guides me throughout the entire process, from the conceptualization stage to the actual photography. During the photo shoots, I actively explore angles and perspectives that will ultimately deliver a clean image that aligns with my artistic preferences. This delicate balance ensures that my works maintain a sense of artistic expression while upholding the standards of precision and clarity.

When it comes to the technical aspects of photography, I firmly believe in aligning them with my creative vision. Every decision I make during the photography process is a conscious one, aimed at achieving the desired outcome. This includes carefully selecting the focus point, shutter speed, aperture, and amount of light to capture the essence of my subject. Additionally, I pay close attention to the angles and direction of light to enhance the mood and atmosphere of my photographs. By harmonizing the technical elements with my creative vision, I strive to create visually impactful images.

Can you discuss any ongoing or upcoming projects that you are currently working on? What excites you about these projects and what do you hope to achieve with them?

Currently, I am engrossed in an ongoing project involving a series of photographs that I have been collaborating on with a good friend of mine who is my model. The project focuses on capturing the human body in its natural form, exploring various environments such as the wilderness and studio settings. What excites me about this project is the opportunity to present the naked and unadorned human form in a clean and artistic manner. Each session brings forth original works of art, which will eventually be showcased in a physical exhibition, aiming to garner exposure and recognition.

With this project, my ultimate goal is to challenge societal norms surrounding nudity and highlight the beauty and purity of the human body. By capturing it in different environments and occasionally incorporating accessories, I hope to evoke a sense of wonder and appreciation for the natural form. Ultimately, I aspire to create a body of work that resonates with viewers, provokes thought, and encourages dialogue about our perceptions of the human body in art.

How has being a mother to three boys influenced your photography? Do you find inspiration in your role as a mother and how does it manifest in your artistic work?

Being a mother to three boys has deeply influenced my photography in profound ways. Through motherhood, I have developed a heightened sense of observation, patience, and empathy, all of which are essential

qualities for capturing authentic and intimate moments through my lens. The role of being a mother constantly inspires me to seek beauty and to find the unique qualities in each individual. This influence manifests in my artistic work through a focus on capturing fleeting moments and preserving memories, emphasizing the importance of cherishing the present and creating lasting legacies.

Looking forward, what are your future goals and aspirations as a photographer? Are there any specific milestones or achievements you hope to reach in your artistic career?

Looking ahead, my future goals and aspirations as a photographer revolve around continuous learning and specialization in various photography techniques. I strive to constantly evolve, reinvent myself, and explore new horizons in the field. Ultimately, I aim to showcase my work globally, garner recognition and publicity, sell my Artworks, and have the opportunity to exhibit in solo shows at galleries worldwide. These milestones would not only validate my artistic growth but also provide me with a platform to share my creative vision with a broader audience & leave my stamp on this world.

Wet





Dune

Thoughts



Lydia Monfort



Lydia Monfort was born in Athens, Greece, in 1997. She graduated from the School of Architecture of the National Technical University of Athens in 2022. From September 2019 to February 2020 she lived in Porto, Portugal, due to a university exchange. During her studies in Athens, she was working as a junior Architect mainly in the field of renovation and reconstruction. However, architecture is not only about the buildings. And Monfort is not just an architect. She rethinks the way we- the contemporary human beings-cyborgs- are dealing with ourselves and are involved with each other. She wants to give birth to new ways of expression and also tries to think and act collectively. She is currently working in the field of Architecture but she also uses different forms of art, photography, drawing, sculpture, and mixed media, in order to cope with the endless horror and infinite magic of existence. Last but -totally- not least, Monfort is to be really passionate about sculpture, photography, and the cinema. She also enjoys oysters and studying Deleuze.

"Exploring oneself is not a self-centered process. Nudity most of the time feels like the ultimate climax. A climax intertwined with the contiguity of the repressed. The repressed desire, the unfathomable existence, the non-fulfillment of a belonging. Through the bodies' performativity the old springs like new. The deepest interpretation of our actions is being provoked through nudity. Photography is there as a mechanism to act in complicity with our body and capture the moment the light is on. The light that illuminates our attractive flaws. Being naked is like being free to explore an inner self, an inner child. Chasing sunsets, just like kids, playing with everything that earth provides -with the simplest, less effort involved- in an attempt to reach a collective recollection and release our burdens."







Can you tell us about your background in architecture and how it has influenced your artistic pursuits?

Since I was eleven I had a strong obsession with Architecture. I didn't even know exactly what an architect could do, but I was completely convinced that I would become one, combining my appeal to scientific subjects with my call to draw. Seeing that the expectations were really high, somebody would expect me to get disappointed after visiting my conventional classes, especially after studying so hard to enter the public university. On the contrary, I was delighted by the virtue of the plastic arts classes and the creativity that was springing from me spontaneously at any task. That was it! I was becoming an architect within plastic arts, and an artist, through the structure's philosophy. Art and Architecture were always deeply interconnected- or at least, so they are to me.

How did your time in Porto, Portugal, during your university exchange impact your artistic and creative development?

Walking in Porto -as I rarely used public transport- was my way of exploring the city, moving around, and coping with my uncoordinated inner GPS. Since finding places where I could buy materials at an affordable price for the models was a sticking point, I tried various paths in order to deconstruct the idea of the "perfect", and "fancy" maquette and use alternatives. One of those was upcycling literally garbage in terms of bricolage, which as a creative practice unquestionably provided me with imagination towards the do-it-yourself assembly and at the same time imposed me on experimenting with incorporating recordings, quick notes, rough sketches, as well as expressive photos (as a distortion of the physical models). I tend to think of those literal paths - which were confusing me- as the ones that finally showed me the way to another -then the primary- destination.

In your statement, you mention rethinking the way contemporary human beings interact and express themselves. Could you elaborate on the ideas or themes you explore in your work related to this concept?

Contemporary subjects are mostly cyborgs, which means that they use several external objects as extensions of themselves in everyday practices. Considering that the distance between the body and those objects tends toward zero on account of utility -for example when we are dressed in clothes, using accessories, etc.-both the subject and the object transform into a whole, into a mechanism, which remains as such for the time being in use. Those objects could be simplistically considered as clothing here, but by conceptualizing that it is possible to highlight the way many people confuse intercourse with nudity, or objectify the bare skin -which is an absolute paradox regarding the absence of any objects. My representations focus on a counterpoint toward those forced interrelated aspects, seeking other ways of exploring our bodies' repressed memories and desires.

How do you integrate different forms of art, such as photography, drawing, sculpture, and mixed media, into your artistic practice?

The truth is that I don't consciously decide that. During the most complicated matters, creativity knocks in many forms. I surrender to this soaking sentiment and let it breach unalloyed. The integration comes mostly unintentionally.

Could you share a specific project or artwork that exemplifies your approach to collective thinking and expression? What inspired that particular work?

“Feet-in room” is an ongoing art project since 2020 that is designed in order to encourage the exchange procedure of apparel instead of waste. It also fosters the transformation of clothing into a movement, a piece of art, or recycled material for other uses through a public inclusive platform for everybody’s items. It is inspired by and designed as a fitting room of a shop, in which everybody can leave an item for another one, following however some specific rules. In terms of hacktivism [hacker + activism], the users infiltrate the form of a shop, using it as a swap shop thus, avoiding any kind of money inside its borders. The motto of the platform is: YOU DON’T HAVE TO FIT IN, JUST PUT YOUR FEET, IN.

How does your passion for sculpture, photography, and cinema influence your process?

I tend to think of different art forms as body parts and senses. The sculpture is my hands. They palpate my symptoms and handcraft my cavities. Photography is my eyes. They observe, intellectualize and soften the edges of my thorns. Cinema is my taste. It adds some spice to my established rituals and classifies the incoming events from bitter to sweet.

What draws you to the study of Deleuze?

The first book of Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Anti-Oedipus [Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1972)] demonstrates the concept of reproductive desiring machines and the bodies without organs. Trying to rephrase Deleuze could lead to a disaster, but I try to recount that desire for a subject could unconsciously be associated with the desire for its own repression. Through various artistic practices, I am trying to plumb the depths of desire so as to reach the forming of a body without organs, as an artistic tool, liberated from the perpetual production and acquisition of desire. At the same time in a sense of bricolage divergent parts of the social subjects are being reallocated so as to never be forced into existence, but instead be led by a multiplicity of flows.

Can you discuss the role of architecture in your work?

The way the contemporary subjects move or choose to stand, the rhythm of their steps, their feelings in a specific place, their possible awkwardness when in the middle of a square, the desire for the shadow under the beating sun, are not irrelevant to the city, contrariwise mentioned as certainly interconnected with its facilities. Architecture taught me that residents of a city are supposed to appropriate their space according to their needs, and an accomplished architect should design -not the building, but- the way of providing those possibilities. I am personally inclined to comprehend the space as collective paths, hence public space is always involved in my research as a network. Landscape architecture seems like a sculpture on a bigger scale with anthropocentric elements, doesn’t it?

What are your future aspirations and goals as an artist?

I’m looking forward to visiting an artist residency in the foreseeable future in order to experiment with performative arts. Body and apparel would be the main aspects of my research, yet in a sustainable manner. Aiming at the development of adaptable and bottom-up approaches will lead to a critical reflection on the impact of our actions in the cultural field and renovation. Also, working in small communities always fascinates me, especially through the potential of expanding the borders of Continental Europe.

Phil Neal



'I trained in medical prosthetics and more recently engineering. I have always used this practical experience in my art, which is also often influenced by it.

I'm passionate about art education especially at the primary level, using as much recycled material as possible to inspire as well as educate.

I myself am inspired by nature and the natural form; I find wood the most naturally beautiful of materials but create & experiment in all mediums and I love to contrast these elements.

I always try to ensure that the craft and aesthetic of my work will harmonize with the environment in which it is placed."

Phil Neal is a freelance sculptor, located on the North Notts/Derbyshire border, who possesses a deep-rooted passion for photography. From his early days with a Brownie Box camera to his current Zenza Bronica S2A, he has always been captivated by the art form. Lately, he has begun incorporating photography into his sculpting work, exploring new avenues of artistic expression.

One particular image, titled "Autumn Light," caught his attention. It was a self-portrait captured using an iPhone 5s and reflected in a mirror. The composition showcased a fragmented beam of light cutting across his entire torso, courtesy of the holes in his wooden blinds. As a redhead, he typically shied away from excessive exposure to sunlight, but on that morning, the sunlight found its way to him, illuminating the scene.



Can you tell us more about your journey from being a freelance sculptor to incorporating photography into your work?

I've always been a keen photographer from my first Brownie Box aged 7 which coincidentally used the same 120 film as my latest camera, a Zenza Bronica S2. When you're a freelance artist these days, the photograph is an essential marketing tool but more and more I'm seeing the potential for low-relief sculpture solely based on my archive of real film material.

What drew you to capturing the self-portrait "Autumn Light" using an iPhone and a mirror?

I'd actually just got out of the bath and entered my bedroom to get dressed, all the rooms in my house have wooden blinds that are permanently closed to block out the sunlight which is very damaging to my collections of books & paintings. This particular morning the sun was aligned with the cord holes in the wooden slats which in turn were aligned with me and the mirror on my sideboard on which was placed my iPhone, so I just picked it up and took the shot of my reflection. I generally avoid the sun, but that morning it caught me just right!

How has your background in medical prosthetics and engineering influenced your approach to art?

My training in prosthetics gave me first-hand experience with many different materials, molding & casting techniques, soldering & brazing, and how to create an armature - probably the most important skill required in the construction of large sculptures. All of this experience allows me to work backward from the final sculpture at the design stage so I can see exactly how to approach each project.

Could you elaborate on your passion for art education, particularly at the primary level?

Since the Covid Pandemic, it has been increasingly difficult to get booked into schools but pre-pandemic I used to run all sorts of different workshops highlighting the need to reuse and recycle. We made insects, musical instruments, and huge wall-mounted flowers - all from household plastic waste. I would try to explain the whole scary concept of landfill & incineration against the positives of making something new and either beautiful or useful (or preferably both) from everyday stuff that was usually thrown away on a daily basis.

What aspects of nature and the natural form inspire your artwork?

I feel that the inspiration from the natural world is actually unconscious input, I live in a small house with a large garden and I work in a studio with 4,500 hectares of wood & parkland. I'm surrounded by flora & fauna and it gently seeps into my soul.

You mentioned your preference for working with wood as a naturally beautiful material.

How do you experiment with and contrast other mediums to create unique artistic expressions?

All natural materials have their own beauty and I consider metal to be natural. I love the weathering process of wood & stone and the oxidation of metals, which of course can be protective as well as destructive. Combining these differing qualities can lead to some beautiful results, my personal favorite was a present from a patient to a surgeon, of an artificial hip - I carved the bone from English Red Walnut, the joint was turned in Copper and the whole thing was mounted on a block of Carrera Marble!

When creating your artwork, how do you ensure that the craft and aesthetic of your pieces harmonize with their surrounding environment? Can you provide an example of a work where this harmonization was particularly important?

This is very important to me, inspiration often comes from the location where the sculpture is to be sited and occasionally the harmony is absolutely essential. This was the case with the "Clipstone Miner", all the raw material - old steel - was extracted from the Mine itself, most of it in sheet form or loose nuts & bolts. I had to cut it up into sections no bigger than an iPhone in order to transform it into a useable medium from which I could weld up a 4-metre-high figure, leaning on his shovel and holding his miner's lamp up to guide his way. He has a strong persona, he's made from solid steel and he stands at the gates to the mine. Clipstone Colliery is one of the few ex-pit sites that still has it's "headstocks" - the tallest in Europe.

How do you approach the balance between artistic expression and practical considerations in your sculptures? How do you ensure that your creations are both visually appealing and structurally sound?

In a previous life I lost my foot in a motorcycle accident and was worried that my future as a sculptor was in jeopardy, so during the healing process, before I could walk again, I taught myself CAD, first 2D and later on 3D - I still have the software and use it on almost every job to design & test the structural side of my larger pieces. Laser-cutting and water-jet cutting are a really helpful technology and rely on digital artwork, so I'm very lucky that I got an early start with this and I'm now also fully aware of it's limitations, so most jobs still start with a pencil!

Are there any specific projects or exhibitions that have had a significant impact on your artistic journey? How have these experiences shaped your artistic style or influenced your future directions?

About 12 years ago I was asked to carve the top decoration of a late 19th Century Fairground Organ, which had been destroyed 70 years earlier. It was 5 metres long, with a full-size ladies head as the centre-piece. I carved it from solid Lime/Bass wood. My only reference was a postcard sized photograph of the original, from the manufacturers catalogue. It was quite a challenge and it made me realise that with the right tools, a bit of planning and enough time, I could make anything. It opened my mind to the endless possibilities of creativity but it also confirmed what I really already knew - that I couldn't paint, wouldn't paint....and if anything I made needed painting, then I would find a painter to do it and I did!

Looking ahead, what are your goals and aspirations as a sculptor and artist? Are there any particular themes, concepts, or techniques that you plan to explore further in your future work?

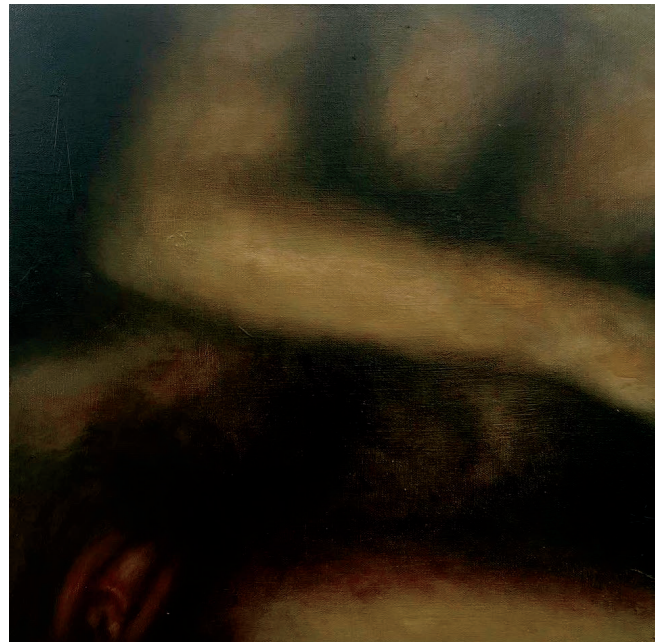
I feel that I have still a lot to learn and certainly explore in the world of stone carving. I have a passion for the human form and I would like to express that in stone, any stone really, I love the permanence of it, the textures and the colours (and the fact that it doesn't need painting!), so I just need to plan some time and find a couple of willing models ;)

Nathan Beaton



Nathan is an early-career contemporary painter based in Leeds, UK, with a first-class honours degree in Fine Art from Leeds Arts University. Nathans's practice focuses on the intimate and beautiful nature of queer, transgender male bodies in familiar and suggestively domestic settings through contemporary oil painting. His work aims to disassemble prejudice by igniting discourse between the audience and the work without visually stimulating a defensive or uncomfortable response. The paintings feel inviting, non-threatening and sensual. This engagement technique is developed through the visual complexity of Nathan's painting process, explored through tens of glazes of oil paint, affected by emotive mark-making and rubbing back with cloth. Each exposed layer is symbolic of his identity, queerness, and body. The exposure of this process is integral to how his audiences absorb his work, and you, as the viewer, are encouraged to see yourself, your vulnerability, and your identity within these paintings. How can we see ourselves in inclusive image-making? and how can this contribute towards a more progressive and accepting society?

"My practice focuses on the intimate and beautiful nature of queer, transgender male bodies in familiar and suggestively domestic settings through contemporary oil painting. My work aims to disassemble prejudice by igniting discourse between the audience and the work without visually stimulating a defensive or uncomfortable response. The paintings feel inviting, non-threatening and sensual. This engagement technique is developed through the visual complexity of my painting process. My paintings are developed through tens of glazes of oil paint, affected by emotive mark-making and rubbing back with cloth. Each exposed layer is symbolic of my identity, queerness, and body. The exposure of this process is integral to how my audience absorbs the work."



Intimate View - Oil on canvas, 40x40cm, 2023

Can you elaborate on your artistic process and the techniques you employ to create the intimate and sensual nature of your paintings?

My paintings are developed through loose, wet and gestural layers of oil paint mixed with linseed oil. I use various brush sizes to soften the edges of my figure, as well as rubbing back on the paint with cloth to expose the beneath layers. This process feels incredibly sensual in itself, which translates in the final outcome of the work.

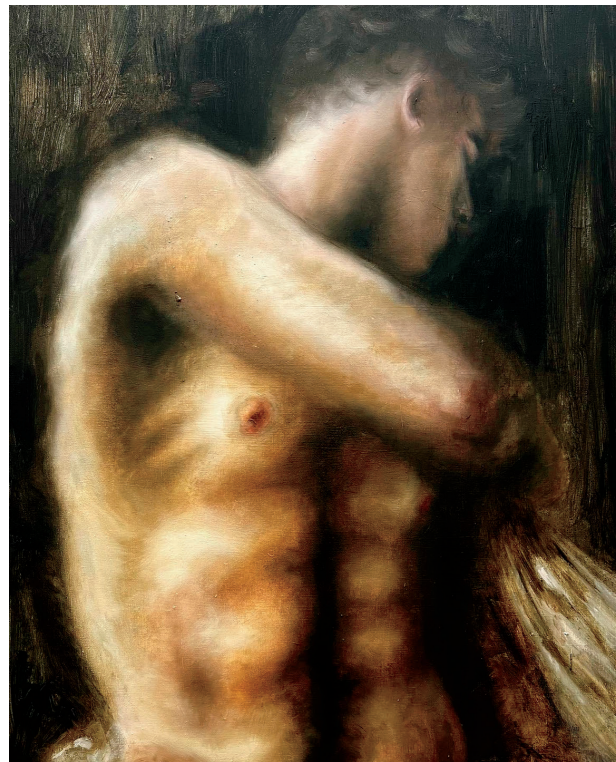
How do you navigate the balance between representing queer, transgender male bodies in familiar settings and avoiding a defensive or uncomfortable response from the audience?

I balance exploring and representing queer, transgender male bodies in a vulnerable and honest light by accepting and working with the idea some audiences may feel uncomfortable around the work. I think this level of acceptance translates in my physical painting; the anonymity of the figures allows my audiences to avoid eye contact with the men I paint. I believe this contributes to an almost voyeuristic view for my audience, allowing them breathing space to ask questions and explore the work without the feeling of being watched.

Could you discuss the significance of visual complexity and the layering process in your paintings?

Every single layer of oil paint, every brush stroke, every patch of unrefined linseed oil seeping through the canvas feels connected to my identity. My queerness, my body, my own transgender identity. Exposing these layers feels like exposing parts of myself. I have lived as a closeted trans man for most

of my life, as I transitioned from female to male as a child. When entering adulthood, I felt a lot of anxiety around the idea that people may see me as anything other than a man, so many of the people around me never knew. Recent socio-political themes regarding transgender identity, as well as the devastating murder of Brianna Ghey encouraged me to 'come out' all over again. I feel it is so important people see a happy, healthy, academic and creative individual living a fairly normal life, who just happens to be trans. Transitioning as a child saved my life. Accessing healthcare, therapy and social support saved my life. I am finally living as my authentic self, it is just a shame its at a time where my human rights are being challenged on a daily basis. This is why I started painting vulnerable, naked trans men. They are me and I am them.



How do you encourage viewers to see themselves and their own vulnerabilities within your artwork? What strategies do you employ to foster this connection?

Connecting with a potentially unknowing, unexposed audience is always tricky. I don't think any artist has ever found the 'ideal' way, but we all find ways that mostly work for us. My biggest strategy is communication. My audiences, regardless of education, background or exposure to transgender people, need to feel encouraged to communicate openly and honestly. My work is currently being exhibited in Leeds and London, in a white cube-like gallery space with little distraction (see my website for more details!). This allows my audience time and space to absorb and digest the work, uninterrupted, then hopefully feeling encouraged to ask questions, to send message, to discuss the work outside of its professional home. If they take any part of my painting home with them, inside their head, I have done my job as an artist correctly.

In what ways do you believe inclusive image-making can contribute to a more progressive and accepting society?

Inclusive image making is not only applicable for transgender people. It has been and is being done for all kinds of minority groups, including women, the lower classes, people of colour, the wider LGBTQ+ community and more. Any minority artist, typically regardless of their practice, understands why inclusive image-making is essential. Art is a form of social and cultural documentation, its the oldest form of communicate there is (take a look at cave paintings). If we see, discuss and engage with imagery generated by

artists that represents minorities, we are encouraged to feel familiar and less shocked by the work. I am a firm believer of the more we see, the more we learn, and we should never want to stop learning.

Have you encountered any challenges or obstacles in your journey to create inclusive artwork?

As mentioned in my previous answer, coming to terms with 'coming out' as an adult, all over again, took years. I began thinking of it when coming to University at 18. I had my gender-affirming top surgery (double mastectomy) on my chest only 6 weeks before moving to Leeds for University, and had been on testosterone and hormone blockers for 3+ years. I knew no one would know unless I told them, and I battled with this for a long time. It was only this year, in 2023, I came out to the staff on my course and peers in my year group, explaining why I felt the narrative of my practice needed to shift onto exploring exclusively transgender bodies (for a short while at least) after Brianna's murder. I cried, I laughed, the people around me cried and laughed too. It was hard, but it was necessary. The biggest obstacle now is seeing it through. With every exhibition, new painting, magazine column, conversation - I need to continue to commit to being out and visible for the world to see. I anticipate this will be hard and scary at times, but for the benefit of my community and myself, I know it is necessary.

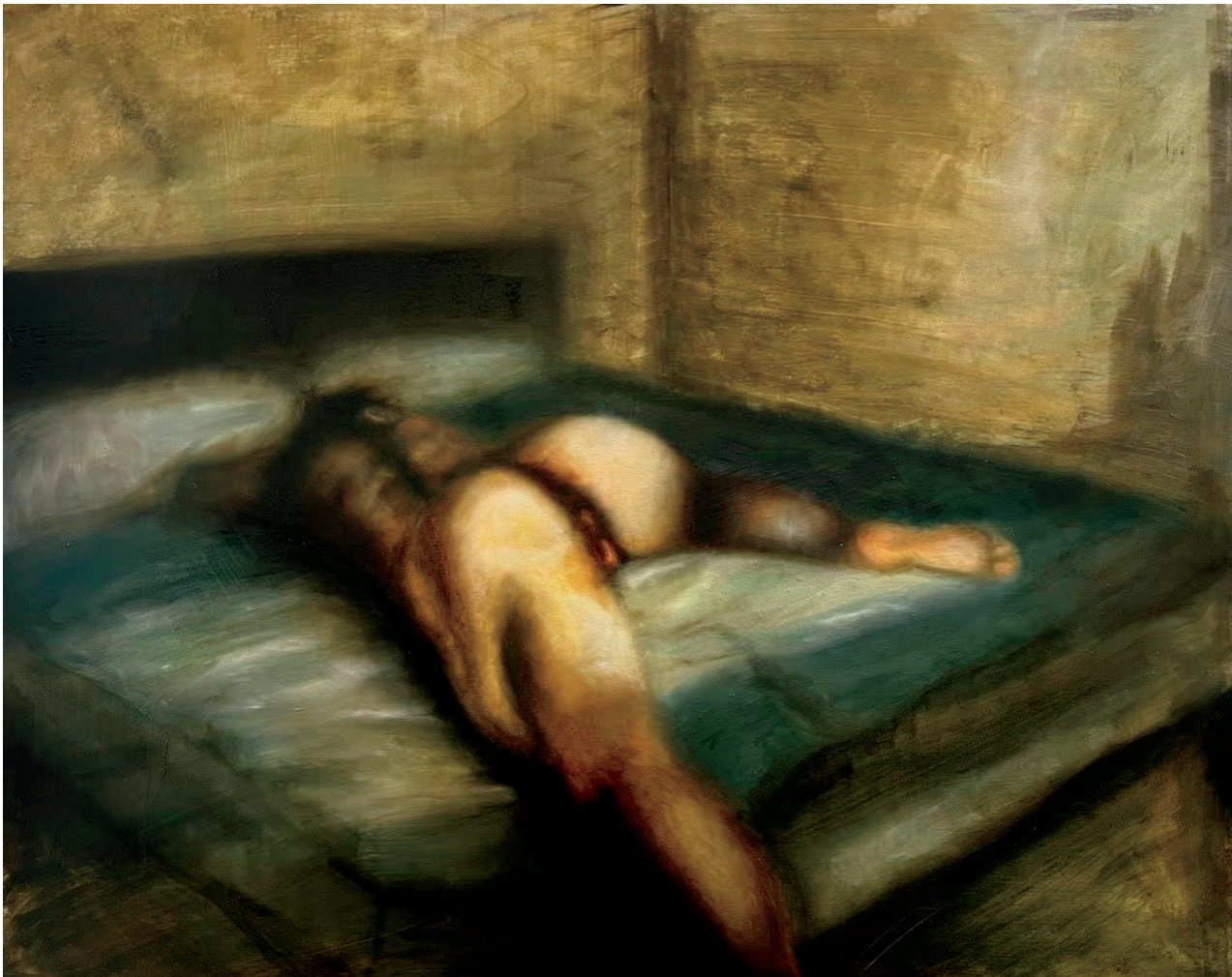
Can you provide examples of specific dialogues or discussions that have been sparked by your work?

Whilst studying at art school you experience conversations almost every single day about your work. It's probably the only thing that

truly connects all artists, considering we are all so different, its our ability to explore and engage with each others work and to bring new ideas, inspirations and contexts to each others practices. It's a privilege I didn't realise going to uni to do art would give me. A notable conversation has to be with my best friend and fellow painter, Sophie Fletcher. Sophie and I couldn't be more different in the people and topics we paint, which I think is what makes her opinion matter the most to

me. She looked at my most recent series in its early stages and was so positively encouraged by my choice to paint my figures in rooms. Sophie paints rooms a lot, and I never really have until now. This conversation lead to my paintings being set in familiar and suggestively domestic settings right through this series. She reminds me how rooms, chairs, beds, they're placeholders. Pretty much everyone has them. How can they not feel familiar?

Content, not exhausted. For once. - Oil on canvas, 120x150cm, Oil on canvas



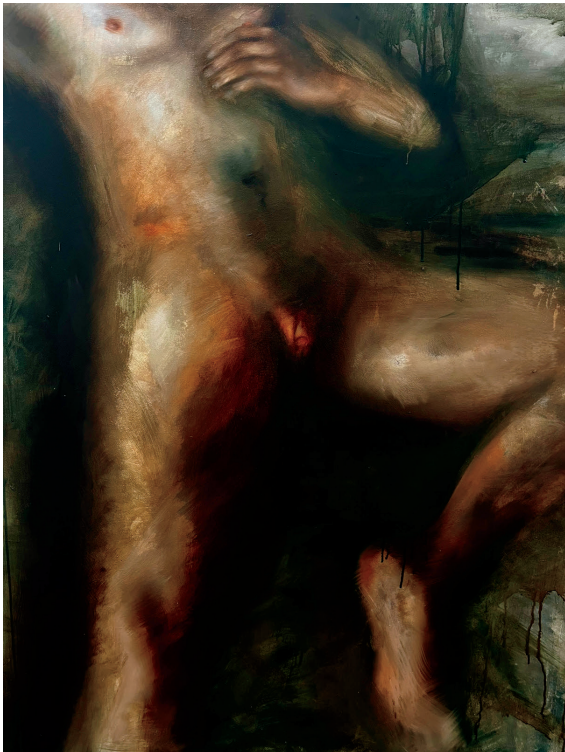
How do you approach the balance between personal expression and creating art with a broader societal impact? Do you feel a responsibility as an artist to address social issues?

It's a difficult one to answer, because I will never be the person to tell another artist they must dedicate their life to addressing social issues in their practice. For some people, it's not their path, and that's fine. But I think for me, it was always my path. I've never been able to separate my feelings towards prejudice, injustice, misinformation, classism, sexism, racism and all of the 'phobias' from my work. It's always felt a part of me. I know I'm going to be fighting this fight until the day I die, which at 21, is scary sometimes. But if I don't, who will? I'm sure someone will, but why should they have to do it alone when they're fighting for me and my rights? That's not who I am. I will continue to work towards social issues in their varieties throughout my entire life. I will only stop painting when I stop breathing, because that is just who I am.

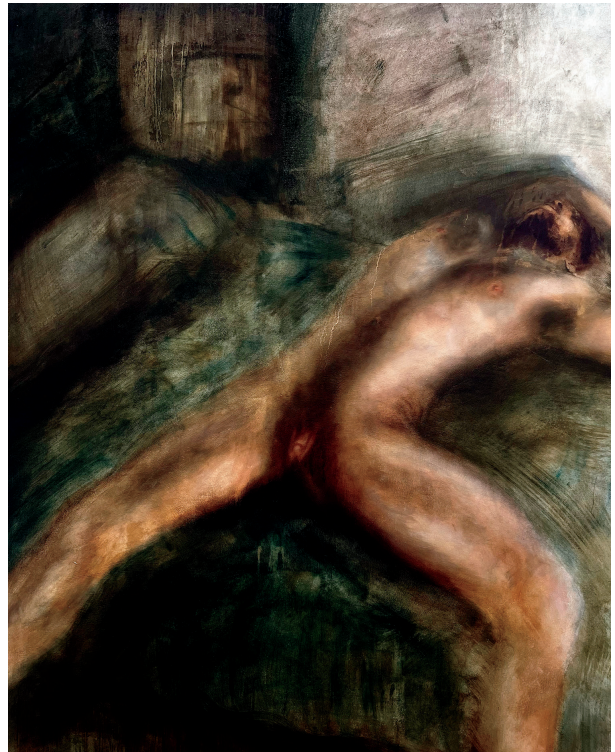
Could you share any future plans or projects that you have in mind to further explore or expand upon the themes and concepts in your artwork?

In terms of upcoming work, I plan to continue this series throughout the rest of 2023. I'm looking to get this series, with some additions, up in a solo exhibition space before the end of the year. Lots of things in the pipeline, and I'm open to the series evolving in whatever way it needs to to stay true to my artistic self and integrity.

And now rest - Oil on canvas, 120x95cm, 2023



Bliss - Oil on canvas, 120x95cm, 2023



Alana Palomo



Alana Palomo is a Scholar at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with a focus on Visual Arts and Graphic Design. She exploits a variety of different mediums in her interdisciplinary practice residing mainly on Adobe Software, Illustration, Painting, and Collage. Much of her work explores the themes of joy and warmth encapsulated in memory, alongside the pain and trauma enforced by society, in-sighting reflection, change, and self-improvement. She graduated with honors and was the 4th top graduate of Academia Britanica Cuscatleca. At SAIC she was awarded the Presidential Merit Scholarship and Study Trip Merit Grant, showcased in the Art Bash, Grand Rising exhibition, 280 S Columbus Drive, and published in the first issue of Divide One magazine as well as in Chicago Fine Arts Salon.



How did your studies influence your artistic practice and exploration of visual arts and graphic design?

At the art institute, I improved my skills and techniques immensely with the different programs used for graphic design, visual aesthetics, and contextual research. In visual arts, I was allowed to experiment with various styles and mediums, which helped me to widen my artistic practice using watercolor, paint, sculpture, collage, videos, photography, sound, performance, design, textiles, and fabric in my works. Moreover in Visual Communications, I have learned how to use all Adobe software, premier, indesign, photoshop, illustrator, final cut, and many other program software confidently. Something else that I have been able to dramatically improve is the ability to express the process and context behind the work I have produced in a way that genuinely connects with the audience.



The protest (a study) - Gouache & ink on paper, 2022

Can you tell us more about the mediums you use in your interdisciplinary practice, such as Adobe Software, illustration, painting, and collage? How do these mediums contribute to the themes and concepts you explore in your work?

In my works, I mostly explore themes regarding the connection between pain, trauma, joy, and self-improvement. The effect of global and underrepresented issues and the importance behind certain moments in our lives full of joy that we must hold onto that make us stronger and help us overcome hard and trying times. I experiment with various different mediums to awaken the viewer's senses to enhance connectivity with the work and the ideas I convey. I always try to incorporate mixed media in my works. I use collages with important information that represent the voice of the people being affected, photographs and videos to add other aspects of personal experiences, fabric and textiles to conceal meanings or dramatize deeper sentiments. Bright colors and typographic elements to catch the viewer's attention, and connect with their feeling of warmth and joy.



The protest - Gouache & ink on paper, 2022

Your work delves into the themes of joy, warmth, pain, trauma, reflection, change, and self-improvement. How do you navigate and convey these complex emotions and ideas through your art?

I draw attention to underrepresented issues, some of which are very visually hard to address, so I show them subtly or showcase the positive outcome we all hope for to lighten their effect without misrepresenting their importance. Sometimes it's challenging to find a balance between the trauma and the possible resolution I'm trying to convey, which is where my mixed media comes into play to reduce or enhance certain elements.

Can you share your experience being awarded the Presidential Merit Scholarship and Study Trip Merit Grant at SAIC?

Being awarded this scholarship allowed me to honestly believe in myself, my talent and see that I was capable of greatness by doing

what I love in art. It taught me that I was meant to get to where I am today and continue fighting for my daily success. This experience provided me with a new perspective to explore all that I am capable of in this field and all the ways it allows me to get my message across through distinct artistic processes.

Graduating with honors and being recognized as the 4th top graduate of Academia Britanica Cuscatleca is a remarkable achievement. How did this experience shape your artistic journey and approach to your work?

Achieving this recognition was an incredible honor that I worked extremely hard for. It motivated me to believe more in myself and what I could and taught me the discipline I needed to see an art project through from beginning to end. It encouraged me to challenge myself even further.



The thinker - Charcoal on paper, 2022



Compulsive thoughts - Charcoal on paper, 2022

Your work has been showcased in various exhibitions, including the Art Bash and the Grand Rising exhibition. Can you describe one memorable exhibition experience and the impact it had on your artistic development?

Being a part of both these exhibitions was a great privilege. The grand rising exhibition connected me personally with various artists and their work. It was very insightful. They all had widely different takes and points of view on the effects of trauma and healing, which is one of the main themes of my work. Artbash was also a fantastic exhibition that allowed me to see all the different mediums and techniques available. It also gave me significant recognition and allowed me to showcase my interdisciplinary work.

Being published in Divide One magazine and Chicago Fine Arts Salon is a significant accomplishment. How has this exposure helped you in terms of reaching a wider audience and connecting with the art community?

This exposure allowed me to realize that I could reach broader audiences and truly connect with some by inspiring them and allowing them to relate to my different art pieces. It has given me a broader perspective of all the other minds that form the art community and how my artwork can influence them in many ways that I had not foreseen. I realize that many people think like me and have similar ideas when it comes to art.

How do you balance the technical aspects of graphic design and digital tools with the expressive and emotional elements of your work?

I always plan my projects very thoroughly, doing tons of research regarding the context, market, audience, field, and designers, making various sketches, and carrying multiple iterations out until resolved before printing, cutting, pasting, and editing nit-picky details in each one before deciding as to which is the one that best suits the project proposal. I always involve research, context, and meaning in every visual decision, subtly balancing its implied connections with aesthetic elements to make a more dynamic feel to my designs.



Outlooker - Oil on canvas, 24"x20", 2023

Can you discuss the role of memory in your work and how it intertwines with the themes you explore? How do you capture and represent the complexity of memories in visual form?

Memories can be feeble, and it has always been imperative to me to capture those memories filled with astounding beauty or immeasurable joy, for those memories help me through the most challenging points in my life. Memories hold extreme power over people. Whether it is connected to trauma or joy, some replay in our minds for years and years. However, it is also feeble simultaneously, and we let so many precious moments slip through. I attempt to showcase this in my work, hoping to resonate empathetically with my audience.

Looking ahead, what are your aspirations and goals as an artist? Are there any upcoming projects or collaborations that you are particularly excited about?

I want to expand my practice and learn from as many great mentors and practitioners as possible. I want to expand the reach and audience my work has to spread greater awareness towards the themes I address in my career. In terms of upcoming projects, collaborations, and experiences I'm looking forward to, I have a few commissioned paintings I'm very excited to start working on them; I'm helping manage and design the social media ads for an Airbnb beach house back home called Villa Santorini and I very excited about interning with a non-profit organization in Chicago next semester called green star movement whose vision and program is very inspiring.

Sunset Daydream - Oil on canvas, 20"x24", 2023



Juliette McCullough



Juliette McCullough was born in and grew up in England on the Essex marshes of the Thames estuary, and now she lives and works in landlocked Texas USA. In between those two extremes of her existence, she received her art education in London and Germany and went on to exhibit extensively in Britain, and the U.S.A., as well as in Italy and Japan. Her Art teaching career, begun in the UK was then continued in Dallas.

At the end of her postgraduate studies at The Royal Academy of Arts London, she had the unusual experience of having one of her paintings bought by the artist Francis Bacon. She now makes her home in Dallas Texas, and she has been the recipient of the following awards: Moss Chumley Award. Meadows Museum of Art, Southern Methodist University Dallas, Tx.US., Assemblage Award, juried competition, Dallas, Tx.The USA. Prize winner, Main St. Metrocel National Fine Arts Exhibit & Competition, Tx.USA., Artist in Residence, South East Wales Arts Assoc. Wales U.K., Artist in Industry, West Midlands Arts Assoc. U.K., Purchase Award. 'Wales Exhibit' Cardiff, Wales. U.K., Welsh Arts Council Grant Wales, U.K., Edwin Landseer scholarship, Royal Academy Schools UK., Landseer Silver Medal for Life Painting Royal Academy Schools UK.

"My life and work span a double cultural life lived on both sides of the Atlantic; the tension inherent in my adaptation to two cultures both feeds and informs my imagery. My environment becomes a part of me as I travel through it.

I've always had a need to make images about people and the human condition, but representational goals alone never satisfied me. I find myself searching for a core or archetypal energy that informs the subject matter of the image below its representational surface and for which there is no prescribed or easy language. It is for this reason that I prefer to manipulate reality while incorporating intuition and memory until the image finds itself. Each work becomes a journey into the unknown; a space in which the unexpected has room to develop.

My images often are: unashamedly figurative, sometimes suggesting a narrative. The paintings are unapologetically crafted in a historically recognized painterly fashion; implementing a painterly craft. Oil paint remains my most favored medium. This greasy lustrous, sensuous, and earthy substance affords me an immediacy and intimacy of manipulation and expression that few other materials can so that the paint itself becomes my language of connection.

Known reality and our less conscious drives are two poles within our lived experience; somewhere between those opposing poles/forces, our simple human experience lies. My imagery is a distillation of my experience, I hope that on some deep level, it might resonate with the shared experience of all."

Can you tell us about your experiences growing up in England on the Essex marshes and how that environment has influenced your artistic perspective?

The atmosphere of the cool air of the Thames estuary did influence my initial palette and early experience of light and color. All my earliest influences built the foundations of my adult artist's perceptions. The intimacy of that experience of close communication with the surrounding nature affected my understanding of my world, my love of introspection, and encouraged imaginative explorations.

What motivated your decision to move from England to Texas, and how has living in a different country impacted your artistic practice?

Fate played a big part, it was more based on personal decisions, and the opportunity to experience a larger world. I had to start all over again as a foreigner in a culture that had no understanding of my artistic background or education. It has caused me to be more



Fixed Race - Oil on canvas, 52"x50", 2023

globally conscious, which feeds into my imagery. It forced me into survival mode in which I have had only my own creative resources to fall back on.

Being a recipient of the Moss Chumley Award and other prestigious accolades, how have these recognitions shaped your artistic journey and provided opportunities for growth and exposure?

On a purely practical level, my Moss Chumley prize enabled me to have a wonderful art experience touring China and studying briefly with a Chinese artist in Tianjin. The live experience of that amazing Asian art culture threw into focus for me, what had been up till then, the unseen boundaries inherent in my Western art education. In my experience, I have not found that winning art prizes necessarily opens opportunities for exhibitions or even exposure. It is always a wonderful affirmation, but as a woman artist growing up in the 70s, we did not benefit from the opportunities and exposure that exist for women artists today.

Could you share the story behind having one of your paintings purchased by the renowned artist Francis Bacon?

That experience of being singled out by Francis Bacon who recognized me as a painter was a great compliment for a graduate student, and was so very re-affirming. At that time my need to paint the human figure was against the fashions of the day. I knew that I was following my painting intuition without knowing where that might lead. Therefore, at that time creating any image felt rather like swimming in the dark under the water! Bacon's attention and words validated my unrecognized direction, which

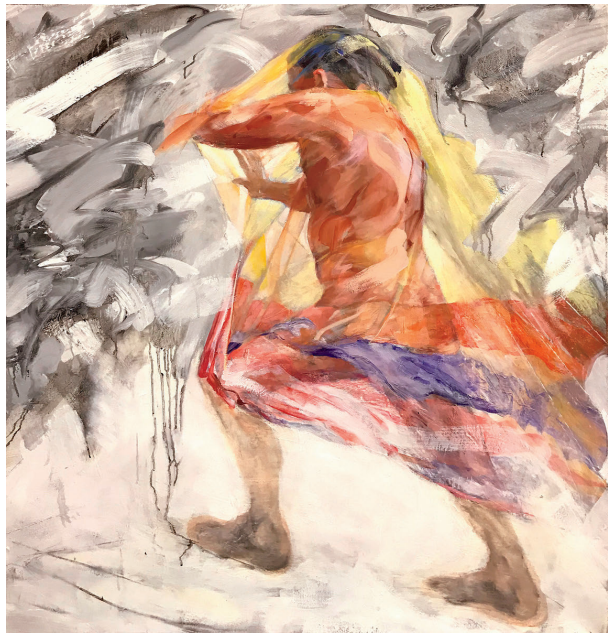
helped to give me the courage to continue. Now, I purposely swim underwater in the dark when creating my imagery, and I welcome the risk and the sense of 'unknowing' because it is the best creative adventure I can experience.

How would you describe your artistic style and the themes that drive your creative process? Are there any particular subjects or concepts that consistently appear in your work?

I have a need to make images about people and the human condition, but representational goals alone never satisfy me. I find myself searching for a core or archetypal energy that informs the subject matter below its representational surface. When working from reality the paint/material does not necessarily transcend its more superficial nature, but, when I manipulate reality through the lens of my own intuition, then the struggle in the materials produces its own flesh and bones, much deeper for me than a 'descriptive reality.' My accumulated marks are a minute-by-minute diary of what it is for me to be alive and in this consciousness at each moment. It is a way of living my relationship to my own world of experience. I am most attracted to creating imagery that has chthonic power and metaphorical meaning, and I sometimes find that animal forms appear to describe our human instinctual energy and drive better than that of humans.

As an art teacher, how does your experience in education inform your own artistic practice?

Teaching means sharing my enthusiasm and excitement about my craft. I love learning, so sharing that love seems a natural



Veil 2 - Oil on canvas, 58"x52", 2018

Veil 1 - Oil on canvas, 48"x36", 2016



consequence. The creative drive is inherent in our human nature, and as a teacher I can be privileged to observe the evolution of that creative process, and sometimes even act as midwife to that emerging life as it comes through others. I learn from my students too, it is a two way process. I have found that whatever art process I am teaching, on a fundamental level I am always teaching about "relationship." Whether the relationships of graphic marks on a paper, colors, forms, structures in space, the relationship between all of the arts, or the arts and the sciences, the relationship between knowing and unknowing, the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness, they are all fundamentally linked. In my practice one energy feeds another. Maintaining a balance between the time required for creating and that of teaching requires much discipline.

Having exhibited in various countries such as the UK, USA, Italy, and Japan, what have been some memorable moments or experiences during your international exhibitions? How do different audiences and cultural contexts respond to your work?

Exhibiting near Florence in Italy was a special experience because of the Italian's intrinsic knowledge about and support of the visual arts. Also, exhibiting at the Cheltenham Literature Festival in the UK was a wonderful opportunity to collaborate and work with writers. So often, as in Japan, the work is sent and I am unable to attend and get feedback. My painting practice is very much rooted in the history of European painting, and I sometimes think that it is more easily accepted there.

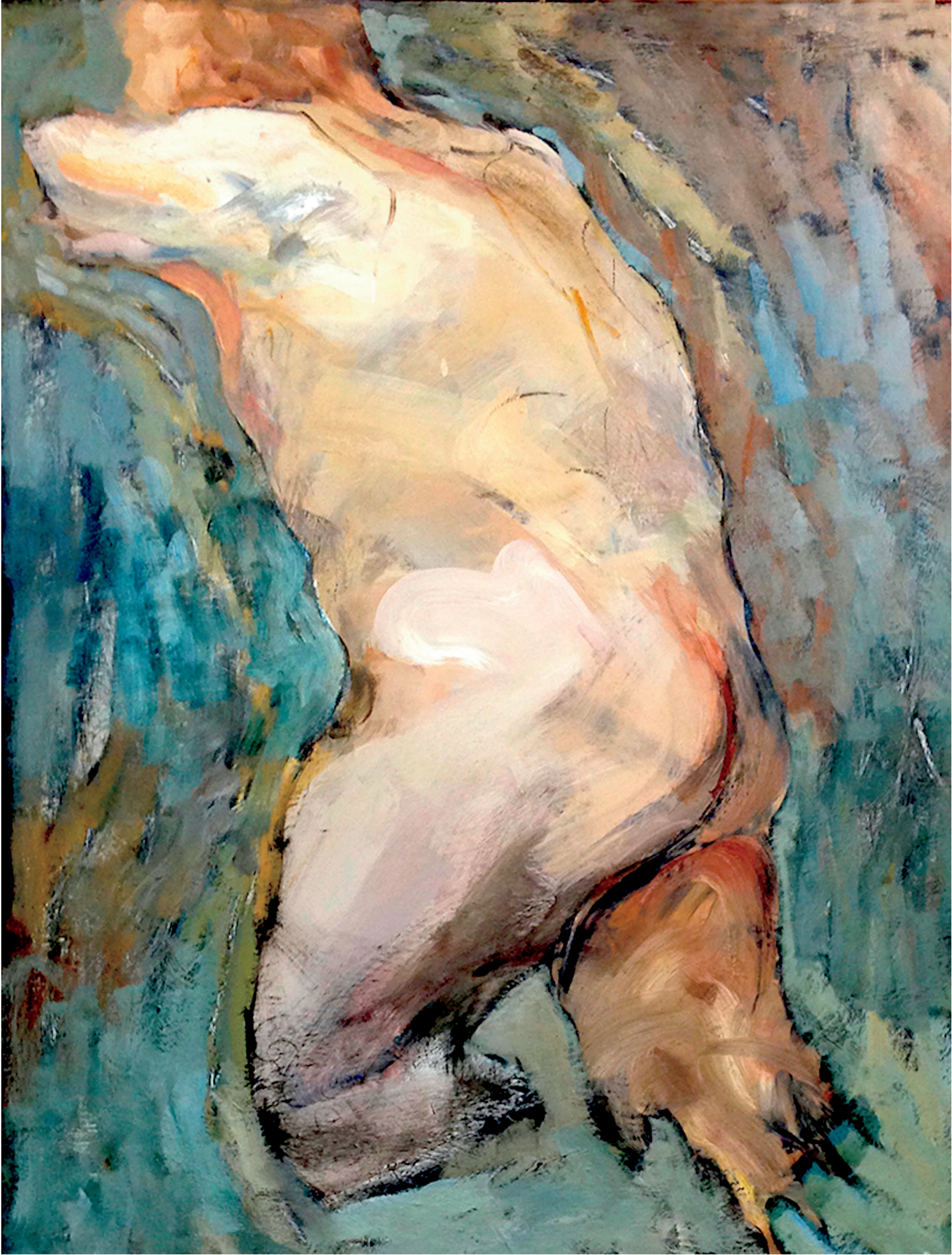


Cat's Cradle - Oil on canvas, 50"x38", 2023

Indra's Web - Oil on canvas, 64"x52", 2023



Man Moving - Oil on canvas, 47"x36", 2018



The Landseer Silver Medal for Life Painting is a notable achievement. Could you elaborate on your approach to life painting and its significance in your body of work?

Before I reached the Royal Academy Schools I was very lucky in being able to study with Maurice de Sauzmarez at the Byam Shaw School where I received intense optical training modeled on Bauhaus ideas. This then gave me a solid foundation for my studies at the RA, and I knew that the human figure was my greatest interest, in spite of it not being fashionable at that time. My real task then was to find my own authentic artistic voice in relation to the human form, and I did this by working from the live model continuously. I am grateful that the RA allowed me the freedom, time, and support to work at developing that voice, and supplying all the models I could use! Winning the medal was an unexpected and much-valued result of my efforts.

How has the transition from your postgraduate studies at The Royal Academy of Arts in London to your current artistic pursuits in Dallas, Texas shaped your artistic growth and influenced the themes you explore?

Once I graduated I no longer had live models, and I couldn't afford to hire my own. Through pure necessity I found that my previous intense studies of the human body enabled me to pull images out of my memory, or imagination, almost as if the model was in front of me, which opened up a whole new world; creating was like dreaming while awake! Not unlike the novelist's ability to invent characters. It was a painful transition, but revealed to me that I was not limited to an outer reality only, but that I also had a powerful inner reality to explore. Opening up to the unconscious, the creation of each image becomes a journey of discovery with no preconceived end product.

Working now in my studio in Dallas I can and sometimes do use photographic reference, but the excitement of allowing the imagery to emerge of its own volition remains my driving force. Now, looking back, I think my artist self was born out of the dusty, dark, womb-like, shadowy old corridors behind the Royal Academy of Arts that we used to call the vaults. (now modernized and sanitized.) I grew out of that place like some strange life form which could touch on, and live between the worlds of fantasy and reality.

Looking ahead, what are your future aspirations and goals as an artist?

To continue to survive creatively. My work is 'process', not 'product' oriented. There is a huge divide between the intense journey of internalization that occurs in the isolation of the studio, and the product-oriented commercial art world of galleries. My life is a balance between these two, but without the former, the latter wouldn't exist. Even so, every image I make is a form of communication that longs to reach out to others, and toward this end, I will continue to pursue exhibition opportunities and exposure.



Keisuke Takeda



Keisuke Takeda was born in Yokohama, Japan, 1984. He graduated with MA Fine Art in at Chelsea College of Arts. His painting work has been selected as Special Prize Winners for Global Talent Art Prize 3rd Edition in 2023, Winner in CREATE(Art) for London International Creative Competition 2021 in 2022, Finalist for London International Creative Competition 2020 in 2021, Shortlisted for Wales Contemporary Art Prize 2020, Shortlisted for The Sunday Times Watercolour Competition 2020, Shortlisted for Art Prize 'London International Creative Competition', 2019.

Keisuke believes dialogue is the most important for aesthetic works. Physical thinking by hand is significant for his artwork. His hands are coincidentally sensing perception and creation when he was drawing. His senses have the dialogue between his hands and artwork(that is comprised of materials, phenomena, and time streams). Aesthetic senses could never be represented without physical thinking. White clouds wafted in the blue breezy sky. Water movements were silently recurring on the lake. Stars were slightly twinkling in the pale night city. The earth has ever been moving. We are standing there. There is no same day. Human beings have been discovering new senses and values in these resonant dialogues. Therefore, Keisuke has been pursuing Resonance through the physical thinking of painting. His painting works are shown with blowing in the nature wind, sunlight, and shadows. He realizes, all of us have ever been moving also never stopped in an unredeemable time stream. There is no same day. Therefore, we could feel Resonance in our mortal life.



Can you tell us about your artistic journey and how your background and experiences in Yokohama, Japan have influenced your artistic style and themes?

Yokohama is a port city that has been influenced by Western cultures. It could feel winds that come from all over the world, there. In my childhood, I used to envisage other worlds and people over the ocean on the seashore. That is the origin of my aesthetics.

How did your education at Chelsea College of Arts contribute to your development as a painter?

Beholding is the most important for aesthetics and creativity. The college gave me this notion. Besides, I found Muse as my inspiration. These significances were unseen to me without education.

Congratulations on your achievements and recognition, such as being selected as a Special Prize Winner for the Global Talent Art Prize and winning the CREATE(Art) category for the London International Creative Competition. How have these accolades influenced your artistic career and provided opportunities for growth?

That were just encouragements for me. Getting practical chances to be a professional artist that' so difficult.

In your statement, you mention the importance of dialogue and physical thinking in your artwork. Can you elaborate on how these elements shape your creative process and the final outcome of your paintings?

Dialogues and physical thinking are practical experiences. These experiences have been bringing me inspirational envisions, and I shape it that is my painting.

Sensation
Acrylic on Cotton, 1.35x90cm, 2022



A twinkling shadow
Acrylic on Cotton, 1.35x90cm, 2023



A floating petal
Acrylic on Cotton, 1.50x90cm, 2023



Snow flake
Acrylic on Cotton, 1.35x90cm, 2023



Nature seems to play a significant role in your work, with references to elements such as wind, sunlight, and shadows. What draws you to these natural elements, and how do you incorporate them into your paintings?

The purpose of my painting that is a crystallization of abstract existences. I wish, my painting could get along with them.

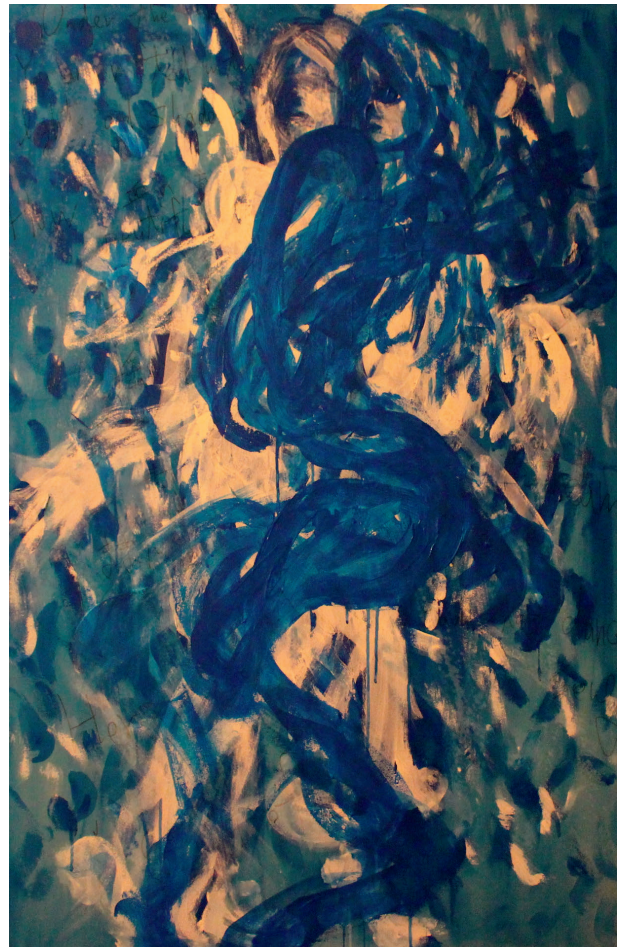
Can you share an example of a specific painting or series that embodies the idea of resonance and the dialogue between your hands and the artwork? What inspired that particular work?

My recent serial work that is called 'Lullaby'. It's inspired by a specific person of Dancer. In my opinion, her dance is physical poetry without words. I tried to catch up drawing lines of her movements. My hands and her body that must have the same tracks, then. It's never stopped like your pulse. That's why my painting would be on blowing in the wind. Particularly, my latest painting 'A floating petal' which could be not square for resonating to nature breathing. Because, nature has no shape of square.

Frame out
(inspired by a dancer Megan Castro)
Acrylic on Cotton, 135x90cm, 2022



My favourite dancer's song
(inspired by a dancer Megan Castro)
Acrylic on Cotton, 135x90cm, 2022



How do you approach the concept of resonance in your paintings?

It's simple of that beholding the living life.

How do you perceive the role of the viewer in experiencing and interpreting your paintings? Are there specific emotions or responses that you hope to evoke in your audience?

I'm so happy if people enjoyed to see my painting.

As an artist, what are your goals and aspirations for the future? Are there any upcoming projects or exhibitions that you are excited about?

Just carry on painting works. It's my purpose of life.

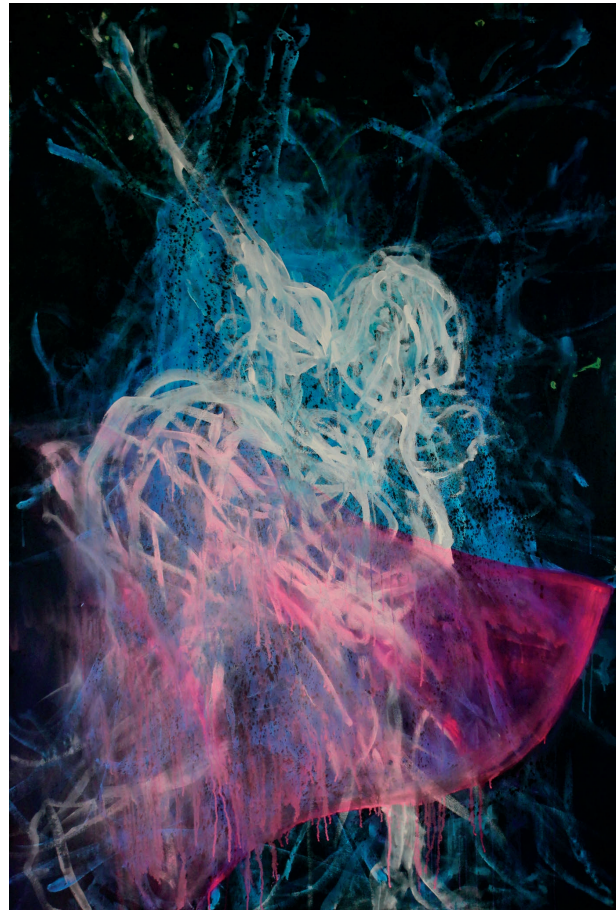
Is there a particular message or concept that you aim to communicate through your artwork? What do you hope viewers take away from your paintings and the dialogue you create between your art and the world around us?

My painting work has been bringing to me the meeting with so many unknown persons, so far. So, I would like to see you in person, oneday.

Breathing in the Wind
(inspired by a dancer Megan Castro)
Acrylic on Cotton, 135x90cm, 2021



Lullaby
(inspired by a dancer Megan Castro)
Acrylic on Cotton, 135x90cm, 2022



Sue Burley



Sue is a multidisciplinary artist working mainly in textile-inspired art. She is a studio holder at Exchange Works, part of Yorkshire Artspace in Sheffield. Sue studied art after leaving school but had to take on paid work. After being made redundant in 2011, Sue became self-employed, setting up an Etsy shop to sell handmade craft items. This rekindled her love of art and after attending a weekly art group, Sue was accepted at Sheffield College to study for a Diploma in Art and Design. After this, Sue went on to graduate from Sheffield Hallam University in 2017 with a BA Honours degree in Creative Art Practice.



How did your journey as a multidisciplinary artist in textile-inspired art begin?

To start with I used textile art because it felt like the best medium to illustrate a particular message. The Decadent Bodies figures represent body issues and textiles made it more tactile and hopefully more relatable. Now I use textiles inspired art predominately to provide a different viewpoint, to challenge the viewer to think about the message in a different way to normal.

Could you tell us more about your experience as a studio holder at Exchange Works Yorkshire Artspace?

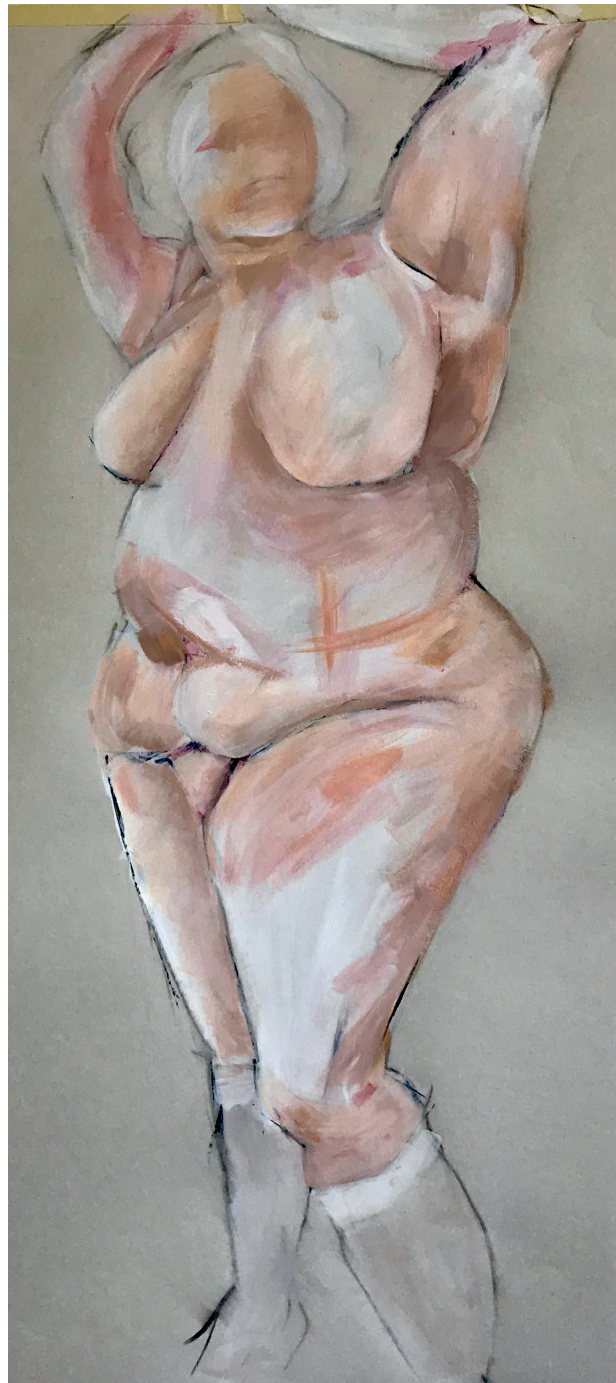
I was thrilled to be successful in my application to be a studio holder at Exchange Works. It is a supportive environment with fellow artists to get advice from or just chat to. Most of all it gives me a space to experiment and create in and also to engage with the wider community through Open Studio events.

After being made redundant in 2011 you rekindled your love for art and pursued it further. How did this shift impact your artistic practice and motivation?

Although, I was creative when in full-time employment, it was mostly crafting projects, which could be picked up when time allowed. Being made redundant was scary but it meant that I had time to research an idea and made the decision to go back into education much easier.

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How has your education influenced you?

My time at college and university gave me a basis for my practice today. I had the opportunity to build portfolios, try out different techniques and media. Producing work for and curating exhibitions and gave me a valuable insight into the commercial world of art.

Can you share some information about the themes and concepts?

I get so much inspiration from what is going on around us. Current news stories are on social media, newspapers etc and illustrating or commenting through art on these issues hopefully encourages people think about them with a different viewpoint or provokes a reaction.

How does the study of the human form influence your creative process?

I find the human form and all the issues surrounding it fascinating. Life drawing classes are important for any artist interested in using the human form in their art. The human form is incredibly complex and challenging, drawing from life is a hard skill to acquire but totally addictive and oddly relaxing. Drawing from life gives you an understanding of how the body works, the chance to study different poses, different bodies...

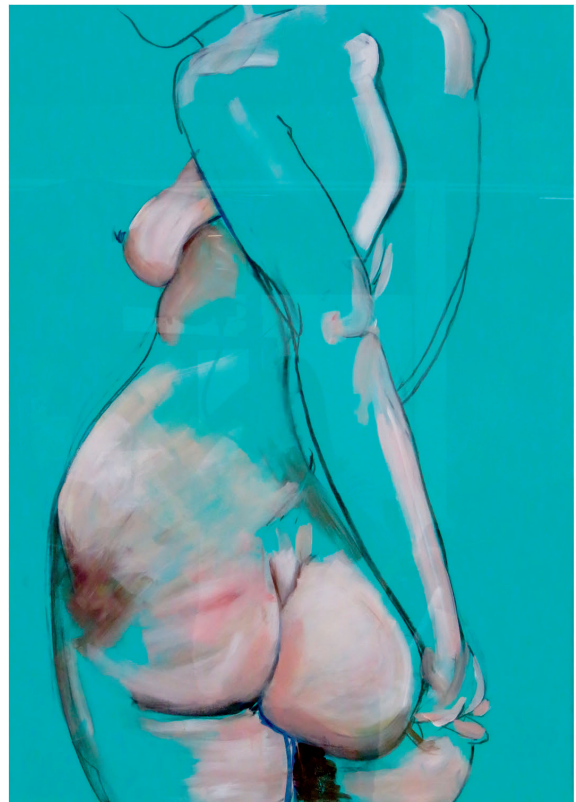
How does being part of a creative community impact your artistic journey?

I was truly honored to be accepted as part of the Prism Textile Group. There are annual exhibitions that members can apply to be part of and I find it motivating to develop pieces in response to a title that can be interpreted in many ways. The other members are supportive and we all promote the work of fellow members.

Layered figure - Digital art, 2016



Susanna - Acrylic on paper, 100x75cm, 2017



Three Graces - Acrylic on paper, 100x75cm, 2017



Could you discuss any recent or upcoming exhibitions you have participated in or are planning to participate in? What excites you about this opportunity?

I recently exhibited Distorted Image along with other pieces in the Prism exhibition at Mile End Pavilion. I have been lucky enough to exhibit with Frontier Gallery in Sheffield on a few occasions. I have a piece called Relic in the Beneath the Earth exhibition in June. It isn't a textile but uses small architectural figures made to represent human bones displayed like a religious relic.

How do you approach the balance between expressing your artistic vision and connecting with viewers through your work? How do you aim to create a meaningful dialogue or emotional response through your art?

I think that thinking of what the correct medium is to portray or represent an idea hopefully means that viewers will connect with my work. As current issues inspire my work, I think it is easier to create a dialogue with the viewer. The textile-inspired pieces can be very tactile and different from some viewers' expectations of art, which creates an emotional response.

Looking ahead, what are your future aspirations and goals as an artist? Are there any specific projects or milestones you hope to achieve in your artistic career?

Going forward I would like to continue to inspire people to think about issues in a different way in response to what they see in my work. I would like to create larger textile figures to illustrate social issues around female and male models. Many people still look down on textile-inspired art. It is now always included in exhibitions as an art form. I would like my work to play a part in changing that view.



Highlighted Figure
Textile
21x30cm, 2021

Quiro



Alexandra Perez Quiroga, the artist behind Quiro. A Spanish illustrator, she has been residing in Lyon, France since 2015. Having pursued her studies in Fine Arts at the University of Vigo in Spain, she has honed her skills and developed a unique artistic style. Through her artwork, she employs various techniques such as watercolor, ink, and acrylic, blending them harmoniously to create captivating pieces.

"In my work as in real life, I like to keep it nice and warm. I am inspired by my Spanish roots, nature, and the folklore culture, with a little symbolism and I like to show a fun side of things. My goal's to create playful images with a certain meaning that everyone can relate to. My work includes digital art, editorial illustration, marketing campaigns, branding, and retail concepts. I have done a few collective expositions in different cities and recently I've been a finalist in the 2022 International Biennale poster design Terras Gauda - Francisco Mantecon."

How has living in Lyon, France influenced your artistic style and creative process since moving there in 2015?

Lyon is a city with a very developed artistic and cultural activity, many events and festivals of painting, music, gastronomy, ceramic... etc. are held there. When I moved to Lyon I was able to soak up all this active culture that surrounds the city and I try, in a way, to reflect it in my artistic work, either by theme, colour or by the experiences lived during my stay in this city.

Can you describe the different techniques you employ, such as watercolour, ink, and acrylic, in your artwork? How do these techniques enhance the themes and messages you wish to convey?

I use watercolour when the project requires a lot of details or to give a delicate sense of the compositions. When I want the compositions

to be more vibrant and with more vivid colors or give a vintage look I use ink. I use acrylic to give a more cartoonish and warm look with bright colors and a more jovial and fun character. I often mix two or three techniques in the same work.

Your work is often described as nice, warm, and inspired by your Spanish roots, nature, and folklore culture. How do these influences shape your artistic vision, and how do you incorporate them into your illustrations?

I was born and raised in Galicia, a small region in the northwest of Spain, where there is a very particular folk culture related to Celtic mythology and legends of witches and goblins. This imagination of folklore and culture as expressions and popular stories is part of my identity as a person and I try to reflect it as an artist.

Playful imagery with a deeper meaning is a goal you strive for in your artwork. Can you give an example of a piece that represents this concept and explain the meaning behind it?

I try to create playful images from complex concepts to invite to think for those who want to see them. In this series of Nude art «The Muses», the figure of the woman represents the object, like the Greek vases, and the subject at the same time from the feminine vision of the author. A way of vindicating feminine art in all fields.

In addition to illustration, you have experience in digital art, editorial illustration, marketing campaigns, branding, and retail concepts. How do these different fields inform and enrich your artistic practice??

There is a very strong exchange of influences between illustration and the other fields in the graphic design and marketing world in which I work. Being able to use creativity and my illustrations as a medium to create new projects is a privilege that helps me to step out of my comfort zone and continue to experiment, learn and evolve every day as a professional.

Participating in collective exhibitions can be a rewarding experience. Could you share a memorable moment or a significant exhibition in which you took part, and how did it impact your artistic journey??

Maybe it's a bit silly, but I have a memory that marked me in the first group exhibition of my final year work, I remember that the public would stare at my work and openly comment on their opinions in a quite relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. I liked being present

anonymously, as if incognito, it's something that motivated me to continue creating new projects.

How do you approach incorporating symbolism into your illustrations?

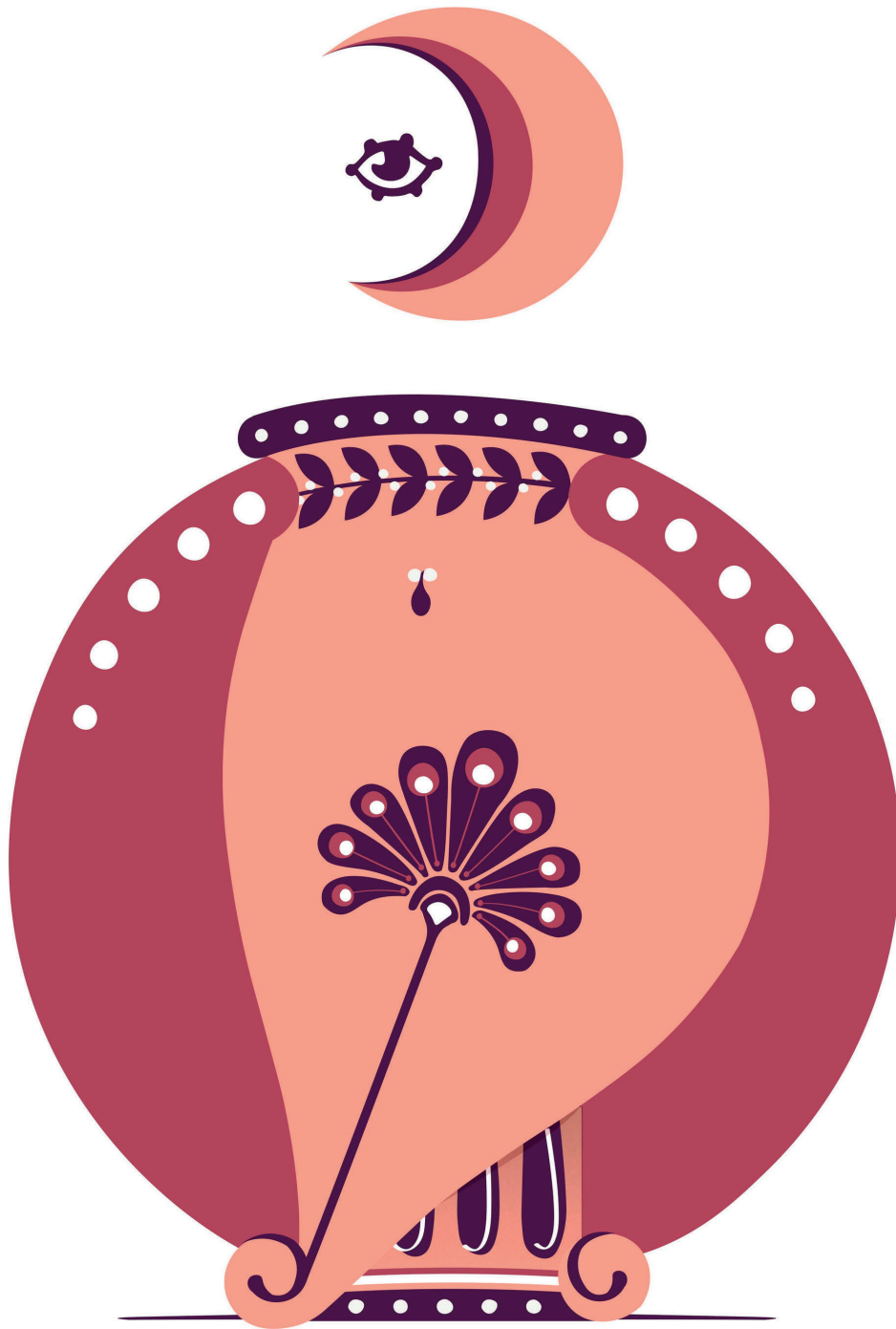
I use symbolism in different ways. My approach usually takes the form of small drawings within the composition itself, the most recurrent of them is the eye, as a form of reflection of the spiritual side, as a search for truth. It is a symbol used in many religions and civilizations throughout history and is even used in popular expressions: «The eyes are the eyes of the soul».

Your artwork has been involved in marketing campaigns and branding. How do you ensure that your illustrations effectively convey the desired message and enhance the overall brand image?

Collaborating on marketing campaigns and the creation of new projects, I try to communicate as transparently as possible with my partners so that I have a clear brief from the start. From there, I searched for references and inspirations to find specific elements that can inspire me to have a starting point to relate to the brand and start shaping the project.

Looking forward, what are your aspirations and future goals as an illustrator? Are there any specific projects or collaborations you are excited about or would like to pursue?

Looking to the future, I would like to evolve professionally and artistically. To continue creating and working on diverse projects that I am passionate about and that people can enjoy. In the short term I will be in a very interesting collective exhibition in Spain called «Metamorphosis». I would like to carry out a mural project.



Muse II: Psykter | 50x70 cm | Print - Acrylic on paper



Muse I: Amphore | 50x70 cm | Print - Acrylic on paper

Andrea Shearing

Andrea Shearing was born in Manchester, UK before moving to Switzerland where she lived between the age of seven to sixteen. On returning to the UK she lived and did her first year at Art School in East Sussex before completing four more years of training in Fine Art at Edinburgh College of Art 50 years later she returned to East Sussex and lives in a small feudal village, nestled in the South Downs by the coast.

Finding the meaning and the link between the inner and the outer world is key to everything which inspires her. Without this there is nothing to communicate that will touch other people's spirit. Andrea has found that interpreting nature is the best vehicle for me to achieve this. Her mission explores the emotional symbolism of her subject matter. She wants her work to help people find an inner sense of peace and connection with nature's energy. My deep ambition and hope is that my work can ease the wounds of living, through inducing calm and peaceful reflection.

Andrea works in acrylic which is more suitable for laying flat areas of paint and as she prefers the challenge of composing in irregular shapes so works on MDF. She also has a passion for drawing and uses a complete range of graphite pencils and graphite powder.



The Three Graces
Water Colour on paper,
29x35cm



How has your upbringing in Switzerland and later returning to the UK influenced your artistic journey and the themes you explore in your work?

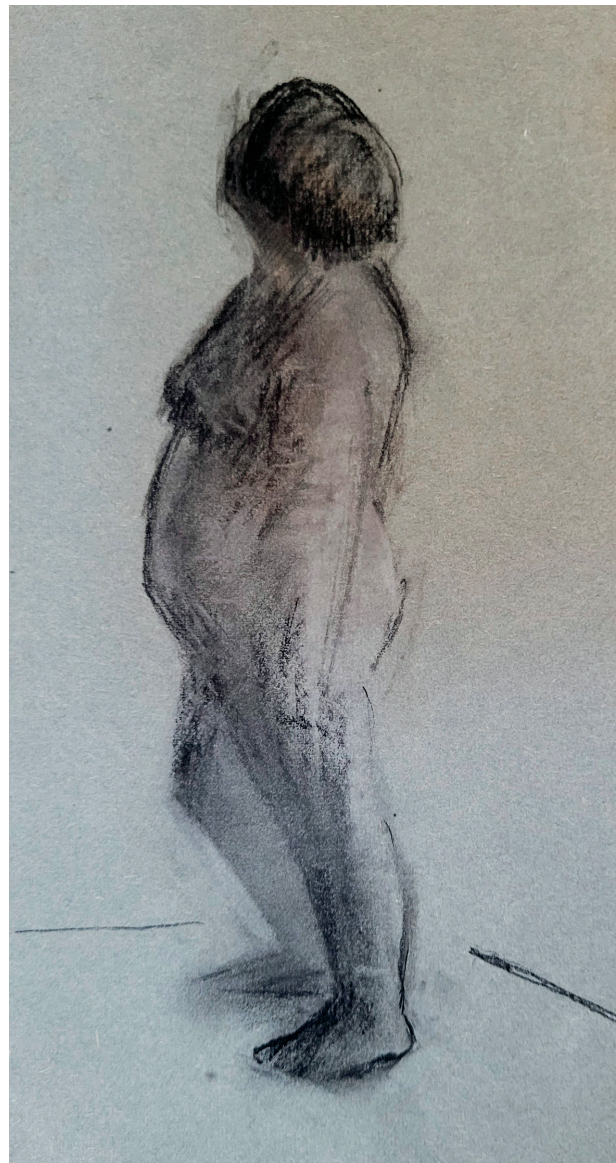
At the age of seven, I moved from UK to Switzerland where I lived until the age of sixteen, and in the first six months, I experienced a major trauma. There is no doubt that the psychological impact of this has not only effected me for the whole of my subsequent life but has been at the root of my creative drive. I intended to study medicine at Edinburgh University but at sixteen discovered sculpture evening classes at Edinburgh College of Art and realised that this was the most meaningful journey could follow. There I found my passion for life drawing, figure sculpture and working from nature an interest that had developed during my time in Switzerland.

Can you elaborate on the connection you seek to establish between the inner and outer world in your art? How do you translate this into your artistic process and the messages you aim to convey?

The training I had in observational drawing was exceptional. As a student, I realized that this was a very privileged and short term opportunity for me to benefit from the teaching of top quality tutors. At the same time my inner world desperately needed a spiritual and emotional outlet. It was a natural development that this immediately made the link at a very deep level between the inner and the outer world in a totally unconscious way. Overtime, I found that my subconscious chose themes which are a symbolic expression of my psyche and also discovered that creating significant images was a healing experience. I have also inherited the healing

gene from generations of medics so combined with my own experience of healing I hope my work provides a healing platform for my audience to engage in their own healing. A lady bought one of my still French lake paintings for her seriously ill daughter as she thought it would help her heal which meant more to me than I can express.

Nicola - Conte pencil on paper, 21x12cm



Nature appears to be a significant inspiration for you. How do you interpret nature in your work, and what emotional symbolism do you explore through your subject matter?

In selecting to work from a specific natural image bathed in natural light, as opposed to a manmade item in artificial light, my choice is governed by whether it touches something inside me and makes inner music. At this point I don't analyse why this is as I don't set out with a preconceived of what is going to be meaningful. It is a very intuitive process and it can be a long while after the piece is completed before I understand the inner meaning of the image. For example, I found myself drawn to paint caves with lakes, looking from inside to outside. I remembered later I had a significant dream about finding a jewel in a lake in a deep underground cave. The jewel represented the spiritual part of me that was not damaged by my traumatic experiences and the calm still lake reflects how healing creates peace.

Your mission is to help people find inner peace and connection with nature's energy through your art. How do you strive to achieve this in your artistic process and the final presentation of your work?

The body of work I have developed over the past ten years or so has been produced almost in a meditative state giving people to the chance to engage and contemplate in order to heal and find their own inner peace. I now work very slowly and seek to simplify the composition, the forms, the palette and lighting. However, there are also times when connecting with the nature's energy, I will add small amounts of energetic splashes and brush strokes on top of the calm structure. However, calm a painting is there needs to be a dynamic energy in it for it to communicate with the viewer otherwise it can be a very dull negative experience so getting the balance of these elements right is key.



Could you discuss your choice of materials, specifically using acrylic for laying flat areas of paint and working on MDF for irregular shapes? How do these choices contribute to the overall aesthetic and impact of your pieces?

I chose to work on MDF as I wanted to be able to shape the support so that the shapes in the image I envisage within the picture shape will interact with the outer shape in a new dynamic way. After years of composing in rectangles and squares habits develop in the way you set about composing a picture as the right-angled corners dominate and for me restrict the final compositional structure. The choice of paints suitable for painting on MDF was either oil or acrylic so fast-drying acrylic is the ideal medium for painting defined edges and can be easily diluted to the right consistency to paint either a flat area or achieve gradated lines I love to do. I developed the sections of flat stripes to allow me to focus on my passion for creating color and tonal interactions forming a key element in my aesthetic visual language.

Drawing seems to be an essential part of your artistic practice. How do you utilize graphite pencils and graphite powder to enhance your work and express your creative vision?

Interestingly, the inspiration to explore how versatile graphite can be came from attending a lecture by the American photographer Ansel Adams. He demonstrated the importance of understanding the tonal scale from deep rich blacks, through hundreds of shades of greys through to bright white which he orchestrated in his dark room. I thought he is doing with a camera what I want to do in my drawing. I went out and bought every grade, every thinness and thickness of a pencil, graphite sticks, and a bottle of graphite powder and got a collection of paper with different surfaces and set to explore tonality through shading, grading, rubbing, polishing, scratching and using rubbers as drawing tools. And so I discovered how a graphite palette works! Recently when producing shaped paintings, I had the challenge of working out how to draw with graphite on MDF. This has opened up an inspiring new journey as the marks made on MDF simply cannot be made on paper.



Could you share your experience of exhibiting your art in various locations, including the UK, Europe, and the USA? How do these exhibitions contribute to your artistic growth and exposure?

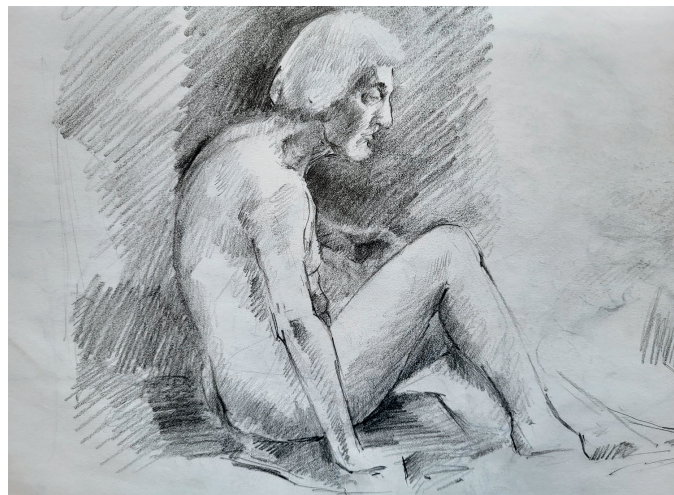
The key reason for me for exhibiting my work as a professional artist, be it in UK, Europe, or USA, comes out of the basic need we all have to communicate and to do this artists need brick or digital galleries and magazines to get the maximum exposure to my audience. The second reason is the value in developing a theme and concept for the exhibition by questioning why and what you want to communicate and how best to do this. The process of planning, budgeting, organizing, publicizing, hanging, and exhibiting followed by assessing the outcomes of the exhibition all contribute to being able to stand back and question one's role as an artist. For me exhibiting is essential as in order to grow and mature, I need the framework of an exhibition as an opportunity to question how to discover and achieve my full potential.

Winning a solo exhibition on the theme of H2O in London must have been a significant achievement. Can you provide insights into the concept behind that exhibition and how it was received by viewers?

The paid solo exhibition I won was an Open Call to choose a theme and outline the reason for the theme and proposed content thus presenting me with very challenging questions. My first and only thought was Water - H2O, something I had had a passion for since a young child when my father went to visit leper colonies in India and returned upset to discover how many were dying from water diseases. It made me realize how this essential this compound is for all living creatures to survive and how we should value it more and not take it for granted. The 75 water paintings, accompanied by information labels about climate change and scientific facts, showed the wide variety of ways water formations change and behave. The gallery said it was the best exhibition they had had as both children and adults told them they had gained a new appreciation and understanding of what an amazing thing water is.

What can we expect from your upcoming summer exhibitions on the coast between Newhaven and Beachy Head and later on the Downlands and the Sea?

Both these exhibitions allow me to continue to explore my theme of water further and its relationship with the land and how contrasting elements of solid land and fluid water interact. For me the inner symbolism of waves crashing onto rocks is about the tension between the solid secure core of my psyche with the ever flowing insecurities resulting from my trauma. Trying to express the energy of the waves has resulted in finding new ways to make energetic marks in contrast to the simple flat areas of paint thus



echoing the physical contrasts. I have also been exploring light and how the position of the sun, the moon and transparent shafts and beams of light from our three lighthouses affect the colours and atmosphere of the paintings.

As an artist with a rich artistic journey, what are your long-term goals or aspirations? Are there any specific projects or themes you would like to explore in the future?

I have never been interested in fame or fortune as my artistic journey is about finding what is really meaningful and my main aim is to try and fulfil my potential, whatever that is before I die.

I love Matsuo Basho's haiku as the strict discipline of the structure results in getting to the essence of nature's energy and symbolism so I am now exploring how to translate the 5/7/5 syllable structure and the 6 traditional ingredients of haikus into visual images. I am also trying to express the sounds of the sea by listening to music inspired by our Sussex coast and again how to translate these into the visual language. I find the idea of translating and weaving threads of other forms of language fascinating as I think it has the potential to create different layers of expressions for the viewer to find and experience.

The challenge of producing 75 paintings on the water was hugely beneficial and so I would like to work towards another large solo exhibition that will evolve out of my new and exciting interest in interwoven translation language structures. Although my theme will remain the natural world I sense it will also have an esoteric content that I feel is emerging on this last chapter of my colorful journey.



Helen
Graphite on paper,
33x21cm

Claire-louise Pitman



Claire-louise Pitman was born in Somerset where she had her first major operation at just a few months old. As a child, she enjoyed forest school. Now she is closer to nature because of it.

College is where Claire-louise found photography in GCSE art. At college, she studied fine art for 4 years which led her to being a photography graduate at Plymouth University. Her work has been exhibited as a group in; Somerset, Plymouth, Romania, and New York. Currently, the artist is taking a gap year but being open-minded as to who knows what is to come.

Can you tell us more about your early experiences with forest school and how it influenced your connection to nature and your artistic journey?

My mum signed me up for forest school where we would put bananas and chocolate on the fire and have hot chocolate. I guess unconsciously it gave me the opportunity to use the senses I have left; hearing and touch. I didn't know I could smell it at this point. I then did camping in the primary and secondary school an interesting experience let's say.

How did your discovery of photography during your GCSE art studies shape your artistic path? What drew you to this medium specifically?

In secondary I thought I was a fine art person till I took on my iPhone whilst I was in a convertible with the roof down. My art teacher was impressed, really I thought. I then started to think maybe this was something to proceed with.

Studying fine art for four years in college and graduating as a photography major from Plymouth University is an impressive achievement. How did this education contribute to your development as an artist?

Over the years I've learned where to gather information and where not to. I've learned I'm a visual and listening learner.

You have exhibited your work in various locations, including Somerset, Plymouth, Romania, and New York. Could you share one memorable exhibition experience and how it impacted your artistic career?

The piece from 'my version of Space' sold in New York honestly, I was surprised somebody actually wanted to buy it. The word got around the photography year group leading to people speaking to me who wouldn't. It was strange.

Currently, you are taking a gap year. How has this period of exploration and openness influenced your artistic practice? Have you encountered any new inspirations or ideas during this time?

I would say this is what I imagine a self-employed artist would be going through. My curiosity for fungi has been sparked randomly again. I've been trying out bioplastics recently whether it's going to go anywhere is another story. I don't like uncertainty specifically if there is no goal ahead.

As an eco-conscious artist, you focus on sustainable photographic light processes like chlorophyll printing, cyanotype printing, and scanography. How did you become interested in these techniques, and how do they align with your values of minimizing harm to the environment?

I remember getting into cyanotypes as no one was teaching me how to do indoor studio photography. After that I discovered The Sustainable Darkroom and the artist Almudena Romero. It seems to me if photography can be used in a way that is less harmful to are planet then why not do it.

When I see someone using a material whwere most of it ends up in the bin I squish my eyes shut.
Could you describe the process of working with these sustainable photographic light processes? What are some of the unique challenges and rewards you have encountered in your cameraless art practice?

Being patient is key. If something goes wrong and you can't work out why sometimes you'll never know why. The challenge of knowing how long to leave it outside in the sun is annoying. Personally I feel rewarded when people pause to look at my work.

Your commitment to avoiding the purchase of new materials or equipment for your projects is commendable. How do you source and repurpose materials to create your artwork, and how does this resourcefulness contribute to the conceptual aspects of your work?

If I have to buy something I'll get it from a charit shop or Vinted. My neighbour is there for all things carpentry. I think practicalness of a project is crucial at the early stages occasionally more than it should be.

How do you express your experiences as a disabled artist through your cameraless art? In what ways does your disability inform or influence your artistic process and the messages you convey?

I guess as visually impaired person I've learnt ALT text is necessary for things like Instagram posts. I try to show that flat images contained in a frame isn't always the best answer.

Looking ahead, what are your aspirations and goals as an artist? Are there any specific projects or themes you are excited to explore in the future?

My aspirations education wise is to do a masters in photography or fine art. Definitely sell another piece of art. I have a residency in November with Mayes Creative to prepare for. The themes of sand and fungi might be explored this year.

Unknown lady - Charcoal on paper, 86x60cm, 2019





Unknown lady - Pastels on paper, 86x60cm, 2019

