



ECO*feminism*
f e s t i v a l



Exhibition Utopia Artworks
7th - 17th October 2021

**Celebrating Women, Nature & their
Empowering Connetion.**



The Art Pavilion, London
Mile End Park, Clinton Road, E3 4QY



Introduction

A Festival to Celebrate Nature, Women & their Empowering Connection

ART from HEART proudly presents the Exhibition *Utopia* exploring the nature-women connection in line with today's concerns about climate change, women empowerment, and gender inequality. The Exhibition is inspired by the Ecofeminism movement from the 70s, which has continuing relevance in a time of ecological crisis. Hence the importance to raise awareness, stimulate debate, inspire and educate on gender inequalities and climate change issues.

The Exhibition ***Utopia*** explores the theme through the work of 61 UK and International exhibiting artists working across multiple disciplines including painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography, embroidery, collage, drawing, installation and digital arts. The exhibition has been curated by Artist Judit Prieto, in four distinctive themes: Icons & Goddesses, ECOFemme, Femme and Ecology.

Icons & Goddesses explore the female empowering connection with the Goddesses that have inspired female icons throughout history until today. They embody primary ideas of fertility, motherhood, and protection of the Earth's life-giving properties.

ECOFemme explores the infinite ways in which women and nature interlink. **Femme** celebrates the beauty of the female body in all its parts, challenging the belief that the whole is greater than the parts. **Ecology** is a well-deserve tribute to nature and to our environment. As a whole, the exhibition creates a Utopian world where women and nature are equally celebrated.

We hope you will find the Exhibition *Utopia* inspiring, nurturing & thought provoking!

Exhibiting Artists

Icons & Goddesses

Gisella Stapleton
Julia De Luca
Julia Karl
Liz Purkis
Rosalind Whitman
Lynda McDonald
Xanthe Horner
Annarita Mazzilli
Tara Smith
Jose Gomez

ECOFemme

Jael de la Luz
Caroline Hands
Grace Green
Kay Kante
Latifah A. Stranack
Luisa-Maria MacCormack
Rosy Coleman
Irene Lafferty
Lucile Montague
Kun Fang
Mariem Zahra-Chaouch
Domenico Mazzilli
Kaye-Anne Smith
Blandine Martin

Femme

Siusan Patterson
Jeannean Howe
Sisetta Zappone
Yuliya Krylova
Beatriz Perez
Evdokia Georgiou
Elisabet Lopez
Judit Prieto
Michaela Chan
Priya Odedra
Sarah Cook

Ecology

Margaret Jennings
Helen Sandi-Edwards
Karina McKenzie
Valerie Grove
Valerie Large
Bernie Clarkson
Milou Stella
Gillian Harding
Gilli Salvat
Eider Ezama
Dodi Wexler
Jeanne Peylet-Frisch
Barbara Thwaites
Julie Bellemann
Kathryn Wakeman
Polly Bennett
Claire Mont-Smith
Annaig Hélène Catesson
Renata Kudlacek
Laura Puig
Leonie Flower
Yula Kim
Catherine Hall
Lorraine Botbol
Uta Tiggesmeier
William Stok

Gisella Stapleton

2021

Nina Gualinga
Acrylic on canvas

gisellastapleton.com

Gisella uses various media and artistic materials to bring the richness of Andean folklore, symbolism and art from Latin America to the world in a method that fuses tradition with modernity. Elements of folk art, fauvism, and sacred art blend with realism and abstraction to produce the unique style in which Gisella displays South American icons, nature scenes, indigenous folkloric, and ordinary women. The growing awareness of subjugated peoples, including women and indigenous groups, is a central theme in Gisella's artwork, aware of the importance of art as a tool for social change.

This painting was inspired by Nina Gualinga, an environmental and indigenous rights activist, member of the Kichwa community located in Ecuador's Amazon rainforest. Nina is one of the prominent voices in the fight against oil extraction, logging and mining companies that destroy the Amazon rainforest. Nina has spent most of her life advocating for better environmental protection of the Amazon, the wildlife and for the people whose livelihood depends on this environment.



Julia De Luca
2019
Jovem, mãe, anciã
Gouache on canson paper

Ig: @juliadeluca.art

Julia's artwork speaks about the women cycle: young woman, mother and old woman. Nowadays, not all women wish to be mothers, but we are all mothers of our projects and our creations. This work was inspired by the knowledge of ancient shamanic tribes about feminine cyclic nature. Shamanic culture is deeply based on nature and respect of every single being in nature.



Julia Karl

2019

Aretha Franklin

Watercolours & ink on paper

julia-karl.com

Julia's art has two reoccurring themes – nature and femininity. In her art, she brings these two elements together to reflect on the world as well as the culture we are currently living in. For many years, flowers and plants are used to convey secret messages (see Floriography) and deeper meaning. We bring flowers to birthdays, to special events but also to funerals. To celebrate, to acknowledge, to apologise, to show love and to mourn.

Thanks to the digital age and its counterculture 'nature', we hear more and more appeals to go back to the roots and live eco-friendly. Hashtag UrbanJungle. Hashtag IloveNature. But what is it really about? Alternative lifestyles? Nature-friendly life choices? Or did nature become just an object of aspiration and fulfilment? A boastful display of achievement, a new kind of luxury.

In Julia's artworks one can find different aspects of the thoughts above. Sometimes she uses nature as a way to express emotions and sometimes it's just a colourful luxurious eye candy.



Liz Purkis

2020

Goddess I

Monoprint, ink on fine
handmade paper

Ig: @giz2058

Below Earth's surfaces, in layers of deep time, lies evidence of nature and humanity at one. But on the surface of the Earth we see evidence of loss and destruction everywhere. These ancient Goddess symbols, represented here in Liz's work, come from many ancient cultures. The Goddess embodies primary ideas of fertility, motherhood, and protection of the Earth's life-giving properties. These objects call her to action: to listen to the Earth, to look at the Universe, and to strive to understand that we are *equal* partners with all of Nature. The Goddess is within and all around.



Rosalind Whitman

2019

*Parthenogenesis -
Demeter & Persephone*
Etching

rosalindwhitman.com

Rosalind Whitman's prints engage with archetypal images of the feminine. In the Greek myth of the mother and daughter goddesses, Demeter and Persephone, the maiden is abducted by the God Hades and taken to the Underworld – a story many interpret as illustrating a changeover from matriarchal to patriarchal worship. Because the land is temporarily laid to waste by the enraged Demeter, searching for her daughter, some believe the story explains the seasonal changes on our planet.



A/P

Parthenogenesis

Rosalind Whitman

Lynda McDonald

2018

Eve's Garden

Hand embroidery on vintage
linen

lynda.a.mcdonald@btinternet.com

Lynda McDonald's embroidered women are an attempt to challenge negative stereotypes by portraying their images in threads and fabrics, their historical materials of labour but also their means of expression through the ages.

Eve's Garden was inspired by ideas of the 'original garden', and the faceless Eve. Eve's brazen pose is in contrast to the biblical story of the shamed Eve.





Xanthe Horner

2020

Heaven's Gates - A Time Prior
Digital Collage Print

vixeno9.com

The series *A Time Prior* explores the relationship between sacred and profane times, articulated through the body of the artist engaging with the symbols of the mythic. In this image, the artist's hand obscures the gaze of the Pharaoh, a gesture that aims at disrupting the inherited systems of meaning towards a new semiotic order.

The image hangs in a void space, evoking a tension between the knower and known through the juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane, indeed, articulating the mythic within the mundane. She presents a utopian reordering of the past, which finds its presence within the contemporary, through her own body and the objects of her life.



Annarita Mazzilli

2019

Greta

Felt Tip pen

mazzilliart.com

Annarita Mazzilli's visual art stylises natural and human forms to reflect her connection to nature, movement and fascination with facial expressions and aspects of humanity as a means to express individuality as well as shared universality among different people, cultures and nature. She is particularly interested in portraying strong female figures.



Tara Smith

2019

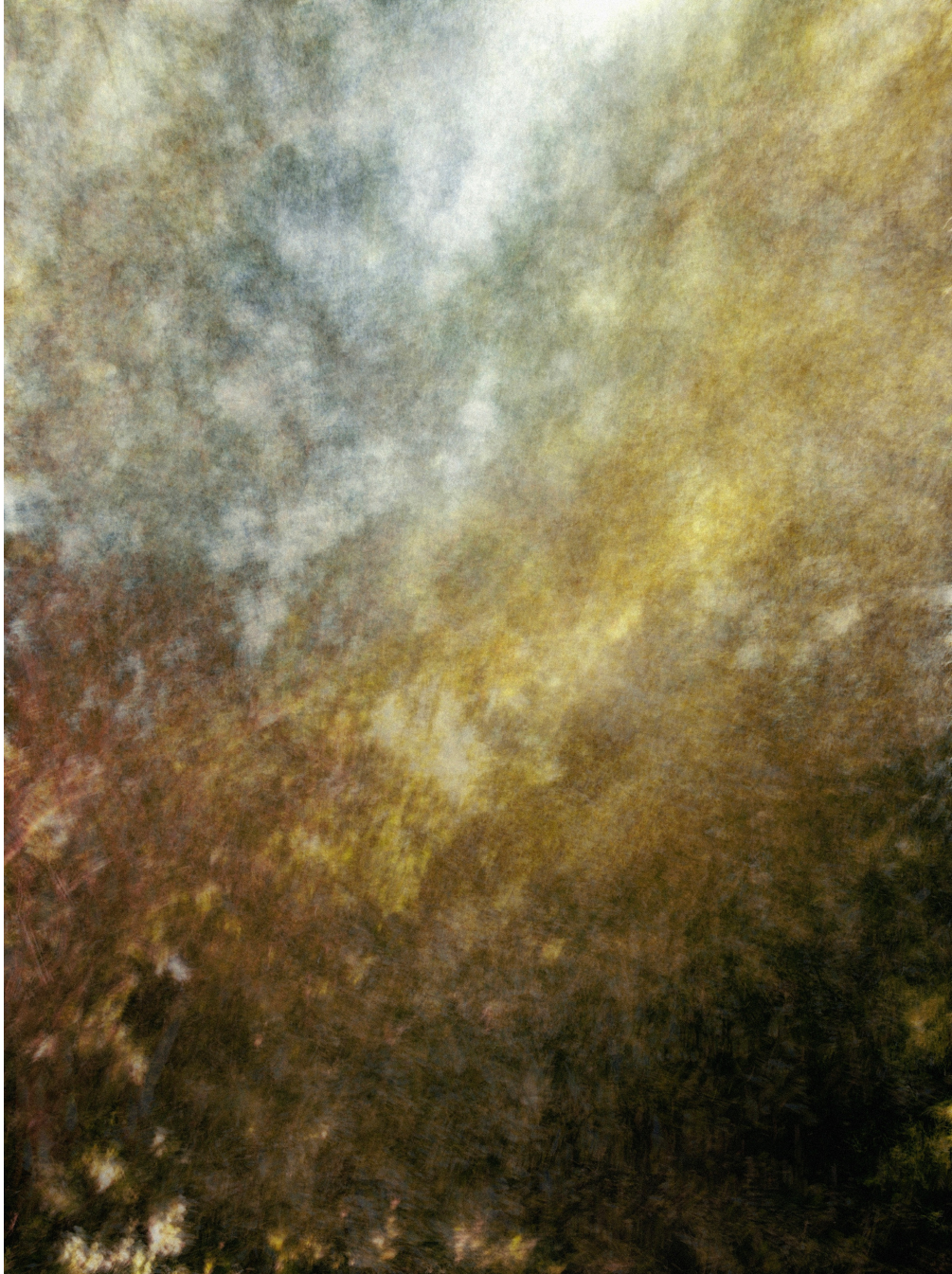
Ode from a Nemophilist, CMYK

No X

Photo printed on Archival Paper

re-topia.co.uk

Tara Li-An works with digital/analogue photography; hazy boundaries, aberrations of fantasies, esoteric themes and flexible memory. In the series 'Ode from a Nemophilist', she is processing tree abstractions and the energy they exude. Tara creates an energy loop between the camera, her body and the tree. Once a vibrational equilibrium is reached, a slow exposure photograph is taken. She has begun photographing them at the locations of the earth's seven planetary chakras, as well as ley lines in between. From each print sale made, she donates 30% to The Tree Council, which will be enough to plant and care for a tree until it is big enough to survive on its own.



Jose Gomez

2018

Marie

Oil on Canvas

josegomez-art.weebly.com

Jose Gomez's paintings from the Series *Chulas and Flamencas*, symbolise femininity and feminism. The portraits show androgynous stylized women posing. In these paintings, they are free and sophisticated. The backgrounds are monochromatic with aligned patterns, making them particular, elegant and wit. The backgrounds colours are based in the colours of nature. Carmen is an Andalusian woman dressing in her distinguished dress and closer to Jose's cultural identity. Carmen has been inspired by Spanish painters who have shaped the image of the Andalusia woman in their creations.

Marie is a diva posing for photographic spotlights, "La femme fatale"; using her beauty and intelligence to achieve her desires. She has been inspired by vintage fashion magazines.

All the characters painted in the Series, they don't speak of a single meaning; it is changing according to the time and place.



Jael de la Luz
2021
Ecofeminist is for Everybody
Analogical collage

Ig: @jaeldelaluz

Jael's Series of collages is inspired by a neo-Mexicanist, decolonial, utopian, ecotheological and cross-border aesthetic. Each collage embodies the vital process of trying to break with binary visions of seeing life. Each questions human intervention in nature which has been unable to understand that the most sublime millennia-old spiritualities cannot be instrumentalized for financial purposes. There is always resistance that cries out for a New Heaven and Earth, where women have a power to bring about change that is transmitted inter-generationally.

At the top, surrounded by clouds and flowers, is an interpretation of the Aztec goddess Coatlicue, "the one in the snake skirt", mother earth and mother of the sun Huitzilopochtli. She is a deity that refers us to the ancient thought of the strength of women to create and be worshiped. From her eternal throne, she looks at the earth and the devastation they have made of it. In the centre, the Alps symbolises the climate change that little by little makes species disappear. A trans person in an astronaut suit looks at the destruction and desolation with the hope that life can be reborn, remembering that in times past animals and nature were part of a single world.



Caroline Hands


2015

Trusting the way of Human

Kindness

Oil on canvas & mix media

carolinehands.co.uk



Artist Caroline Hands finds beauty and growth all around us and she tries to show that in her work. Like the wind, directions change all the time – it is the dance of existence and vulnerability.



Grace Green

2019

"You are not Atlas carrying the world on your shoulder. It is good to remember that the planet is carrying you." -Vandana Shiva.

Acrylic on wood panel

gracegreenartist.co.uk

Grace Green's paintings focus on the fruitfulness and fecundity of life in all its forms but principally the absorption in organic growth. She wants to highlight the vulnerability of plants as a reminder of the threat our natural world is under. She makes connections between humans and nature and the pressing concern for the need to find balance for us to co-exist. Unity creates a sense of harmony and wholeness, in all senses of the word. Surreal elements create playfulness where colour is paramount both referentially and in its pure, abstract state.



Kay Kante

2020

Allotment: Bees, Barrows, Beams
Acrylics on stretched canvas

kaykante@hotmail.co.uk

Kay Kante is an East London artist who paints people and places that have meaning to her. She has an allotment which reflects forest garden principles. Trees, shrubs and perennial plants grow together in low-maintenance natural harmony, producing food in a sustainable way.

Her allotment plot is surrounded by plots which are also managed by women, each finding their own harmony with the land they work.

The allotment is lucky enough to have resident bees, and Kay has chosen to paint a scene that includes the beehives and wheelbarrows shared by all plot holders.



Latifah A. Stranack

2018

Sweet dreams and a memory
Oil on canvas

Latifah_alsaid@hotmail.com

A few years ago I was fortunate to be awarded a travel bursary to go to Zanzibar. My fathers family had roots there and I wanted to explore these lost narratives whilst visiting the Island. The wildlife of Zanzibar consists of terrestrial and marine flora and fauna, mostly small animals, birds, and butterflies. In this painting I imagine my female ancestors sitting with me and telling me stories from the past. The painting is about, memory, identity, nature, the female body and loss.



Luisa-Maria MacCormack

2019

And the Beast which I saw
Pastel on sanded paper

luisa-mariamstudio.com

And the Beast which I saw is a Series of works that takes its inspiration from a variety of apparently incongruous sources; the bacchanalian scenes of excess so ubiquitous to Baroque era art, antique 'erotica' of the C17th, Assyrian relief sculpture and our own era of extreme and catastrophic consumption.

Headless bodies lost in egotistic lust and self-obsession crush into one another, tangled limbs and copulating figures metamorphose into beasts, sprout fur, grow hooves and horns, unaware of their own creeping metamorphosis. Figures tangle, draping across ornate furniture, cushioned by luxurious trappings, lost and vulnerable in imagined landscapes and dense jungles where spectral beasts prowl, threatening to consume them unawares. Images of transparent Lions, Snakes, Bears and the she-goat stalk across the bodies, their illustrative lines juxtaposing harshly with the highly modelled flesh of the figures.

These works suggest not only a strong relationship between what we consider historically 'erotic' (read 'acceptable/artistic') and what we consider to be 'pornographic', but they also stand as a powerful allegory for the human condition. Considerations about climate change, the ravaged natural world and the fast disappearing 'ethnosphere' are questions which surely are never far from the minds of our generation. These works act as "an allegory for our current state of being- a species lost to its own hedonistic self-absorbance, sleepwalking to the edge of an irretrievable precipice, unable to touch or even witness the chaos of the natural world, close enough to touch".



Rosy Coleman

2020

Water is Life

Oil on canvas

rosymcoleman@gmail.com

Artist Rosy Coleman perceives Ecofeminism as one of the ways of seeing the world as interlinked, not as a theoretical concept which still divides what humans need from the world itself, but as a living breathing understanding of that continuity.

Water is Life is one of the arguments put forward by native Americans against the request to sell water. They said that " Water is life." Hence a different value system as to the linking of ourselves with the world.



Irene Lafferty

2020

York House Gardens Sea-Nymph

Oil on panel

irenelafferty.com

York House Gardens were created in the 19th century and feature 'The Oceanides', an extraordinary group of sea-nymphs sculpted in marble in the classical style. In Ancient Greek culture, nymphs are nature goddesses, however in the modern era nymphs become increasingly associated with sexuality and the femme fatale.

The York House nymphs are known locally as 'The naked ladies of Twickenham', emphasizing the taboo spectacle of being unclothed in public. It is a nickname that could only have been invented by a man. The nickname removes the artistic and sacred associations, so the sculptures and by extension the gardens are completely mediated by the male gaze. Whilst it is true that the symbol of the nymph is problematic as it symbolizes nature as a woman (a patriarchal symbol), I think ecofeminism provides a way to refresh and reclaim the symbol.

This painting shows the reflection of one of the nymphs in the pool below. She appears to be descending into the pool, and another nymph pools her downward. When the image of the nymph is inverted, the calm, classical poise and femme fatale representation is disrupted. The sacred, wild and unknowable aspect of the nymph comes to the fore, minimizing the titillating, male gaze interpretation that is so embedded in modern and contemporary culture.



Lucile Montague

2019-2020

Taking Flight

Pastel on paper

lucilemontague.co.uk

Lucile Montague's work in recent years has often incorporated nature. A woman flying a paper bird in the park. Drawing leaves with a view of trees outside the window. Sailing away on a choppy sea. Lucile's artworks are created from her particular point of view as a woman artist.


Lucile is an artist who loves nature but is worried about and influenced by a changing world and its future. Her work is often about being a woman and recognisable as such.

The interpretation of her work is down to the viewer whatever their gender.



Kun Fang
2019
The World
Acrylic on canvas

kunfang.artstudio@gmail.com



"Our world is full of overlooked emotions.
There is no place for earth.
We are not good for the world we are living in.
Show love to our earth.
Love our world.
There is femininity hiding in every picture I make".



Mariem Zahra-Chaouch

2013

*The original sin (le pêché
originel)*

Photomontage

myriammaryzahra.jimdo.com

Since 2009, Artist Mariem Zahra-Chaouch has engaged in the creation of photomontages. Painter of training, she tries to incorporate pictorial elements using technological tools. In her collages fruits and women's bodies intertwine in a plastic space.

In her surreal photomontages, Mariem makes any object a symbolic sign relating to the feminine world. Introspection of fruit through the sensory and the sensual define the plastic experience.

Across her photomontages, we are faced with a feminine body composed of fruits and / or its textures inside and outside. Woman and fruit, symbol of fruitfulness and fertility, make up a plastic space making visible the invisible interior of a fruit compared to that of a body.

At the exhibition, the sensorial side of the receiver is awakened by bringing to mind fruits that they taste, when they contemplate the work.



Myriam ZAHRA

Domenico Mazzilli

2019

Liberty

Collage

domenicomazzilli.com

Domenico Mazzilli's works celebrate the female body and their role in society. All materials used have been recycled and or found in nature, including the two local Murgian stones from the countryside in the south of Italy.

Domenico is an eclectic and complete artist. His work ranges from sculpture and painting, and uses several material and textures. In his hands any material is a potential tool to mould and shape and to become a work of art.

His paintings inspired by Picasso, Matisse and Chagal, present a variety of styles- from religious representations to semi-realistic and more abstract and experimental pieces



Kaye-Anne Smith

2019

Everyone (Y.A.N.T.O.O)

Wool & textured acrylic paint
(inc. sand)

Ig: @R3TIMES

Kaye-Anne Smith or R3times as she is creatively known, has an original and accessible art form. Her approach to her work is defined by her dichotomous eclectic yet focused pieces.

A main stay in her works is her appropriation of wool combined with textured paint with primary sourced sand from her Heritage & Ancestral Home. Referencing her Duality by captivating and thought provoking a nuance to an era where textiles and craft were a staple for the Caribbean diaspora.

She fits into no one school of thought, and no singular paradigm can encapsulate her creative endeavours which transcend Fine Art, Fashion and Contemporary Culture. Her works maintains an innate concept of identity also accountability from a millennial's perspective.

The artwork selected encompassed subject is emotional Intelligence with pragmatic use of Sub text Black Feminism, Sustainability by use of mediums. Female form as her works are self-portraits.



Blandine Martin

2014 – 2019

The Blue Jacaranda Tree – Trees
of India
Recycled wood and mixed
media.

blandinemartin.com

Blandine Martin's *Trees of India* is an ongoing installation inspired by a village in India called Piplantri, in Rajasthan which has turned tradition on its head by planting 111 trees for every baby girl born in the village since 2006. The lives of these girls have been transformed. The families have to sign a contract to look after their girls and make sure they follow an education as well as they have to look after the trees.

The ecosystem of the region have also been affected in a very positive way. It has created an oasis in what used to be a very dry environment. Blandine's has since been in contact with the village and done an installation of 111 sculptures as an art tribute to this wonderful initiative.



Siusan Patterson

2019

Grace, Grace, Grace

Acrylic, pastel & thread on
canvas

siusanpatterson.com

Taking inspiration from Greek Mythology and Renaissance paintings Siusan Patterson's work engages with the historical tropes of the classical female form found in traditional western paintings and seeks to update these conventions. Classical paintings of the female form are typically by the male gaze for the male gaze. Her work attempts to reclaim the female body image by depicting it through a different lens.

The naked females -except for various hats and shoes, items that women utilise to individualise themselves- are now in free abandon and have a humorous "don't give a dam' attitude. In a society obsessed with body image and youthfulness, my work reflects the joyful euphoria some women experience by rejecting the unrealistic and somewhat unattainable expectations placed on them, unachievable Utopias.



Jeannean Howe

2019

Gender #1

C-type print on paper

jeanneanhowe.com

Jeannean Howe's investigates the transient nature of our life, perceptions, gender beliefs and desires. Manipulating organic, natural objects, chosen for their association with domesticity, consumption and femininity, she aims to produce ambiguous, uncanny and metaphysical imagery that highlight dualities such as strength and fragility, the sensual and the repellent.

Howe's art is created through an intuitive reflection of personal experience and feelings. The surreal, autobiographical context traditionally sits within the domain of the female, domestic environment. She endeavours to explore the corporeal and psychological multiplicities of feminism by simply presenting ordinary reality in an extraordinary way.



Sisetta Zappone

2016

El soplo de la vida

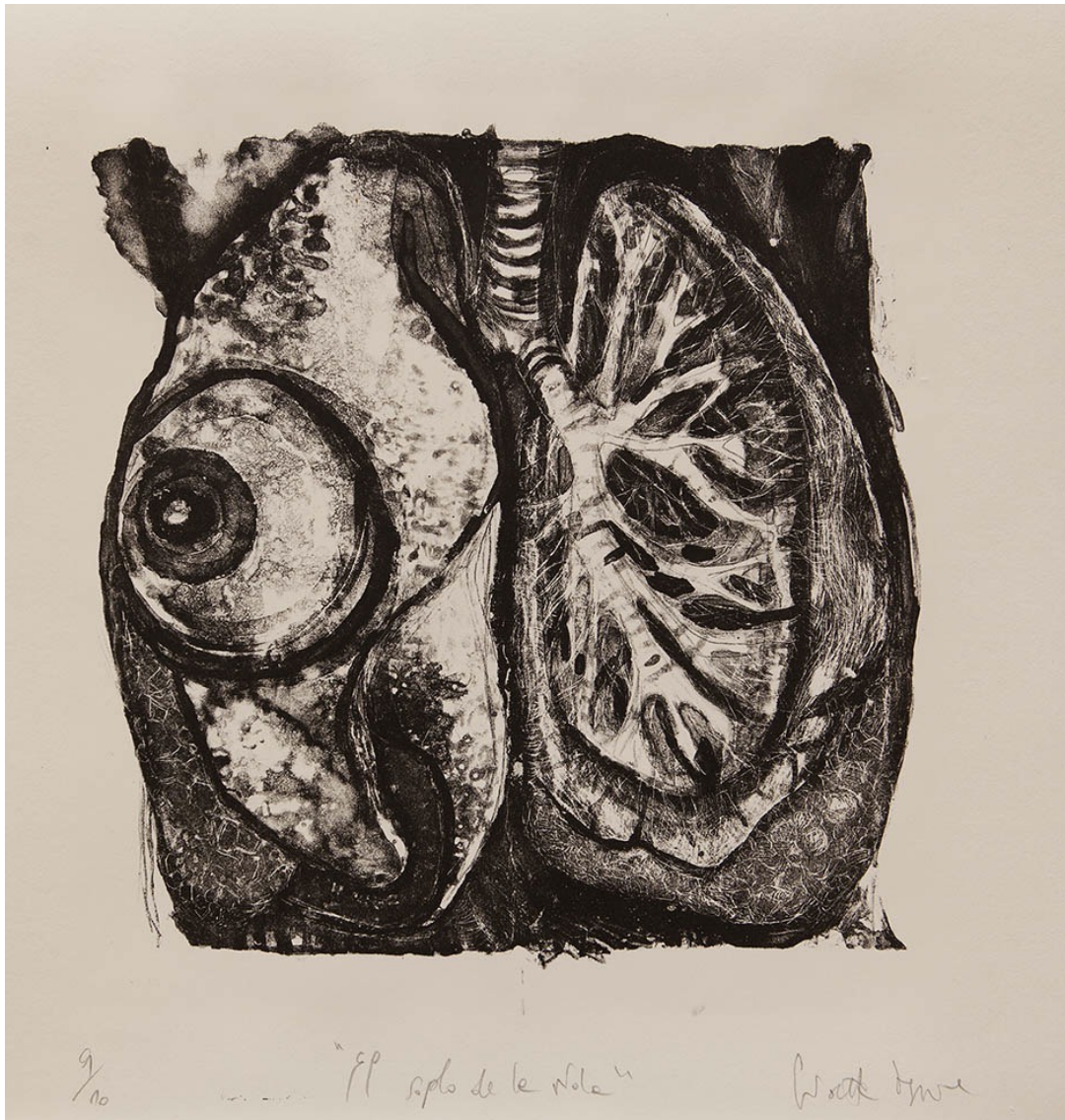
Series Mis Milagros

Stone lithography, printed on
paper

sisettazappone.weebly.com

"El soplo de la vida"/ Breath of life from the Series "Mis Milagros" is a celebration of coming to life as humans, and the need for the first air and nourishment. "Milagro" in Spanish means "miracle", but also "vow" or "talisman".

Each drawing in the Series represents a body part in connection with its main symbols within different cultures and traditions. Each body part is based on Siesta Zappone's own body proportions. The traditional drawing style recalls ancient anatomy atlas, but it is also an inner self-portrait. The project was created during her art residency at La Ceiba Grafica, Veracruz, Mexico.



Yuliya Krylova

2019

The birth of Zen
Mix media on paper

yuliyavkrylova.com

Most of Yuliya Krylova's artwork is about women and the world they create through physical, mental and spiritual states of being. She believes in the possibility to transfer and inspire creative energy through making art and experiencing it. She paints dreams as well as memory landscapes which she walks and creates daily.



Beatriz Perez

2013

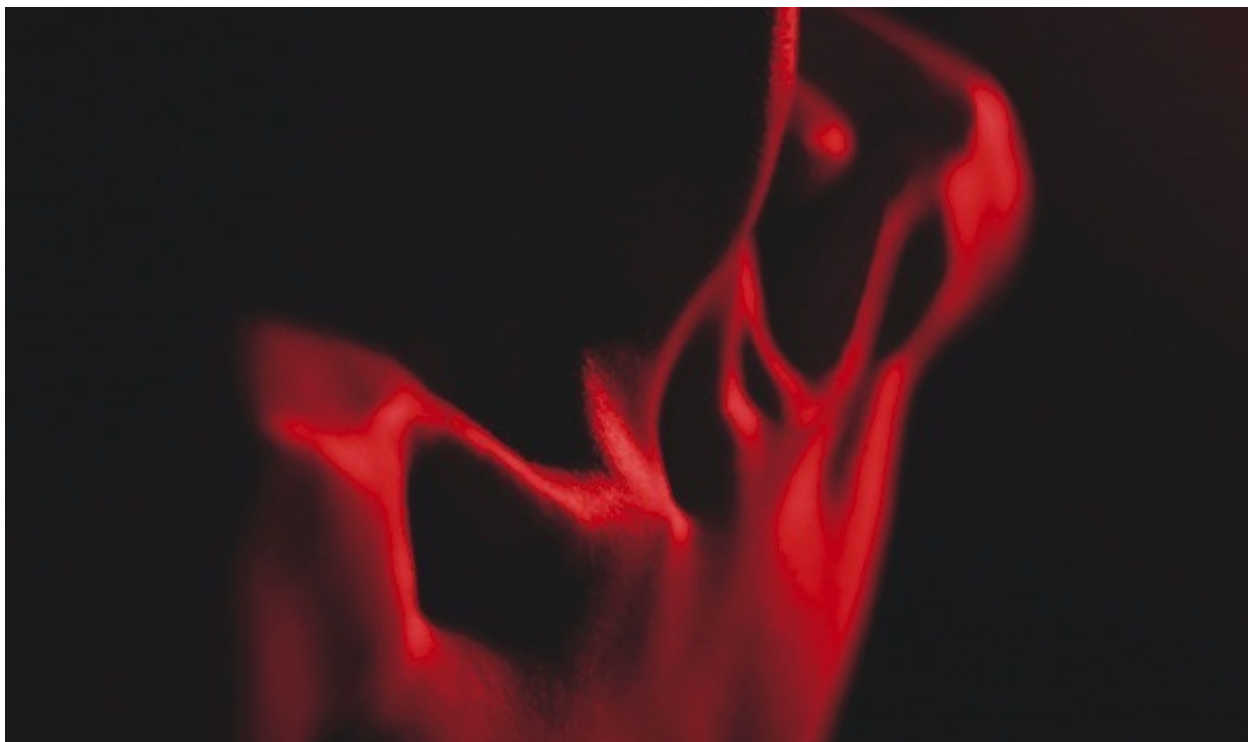
Untitled from the Series

MISShapes

C-Type Digital Photog Print

beatrizperezphotography.com

Beatriz Perez's Series *MISShapes* examines the female "social" body as a landscape of shapes and texture, using light as a sculpting tool to transform the recognisable into abstract. These deconstructions create shapes that aim to question the ideals of classical beauty while abstracting the female form into new parts.



Evdokia Georgiou

2020

Balance in Nature, Balance in
Society

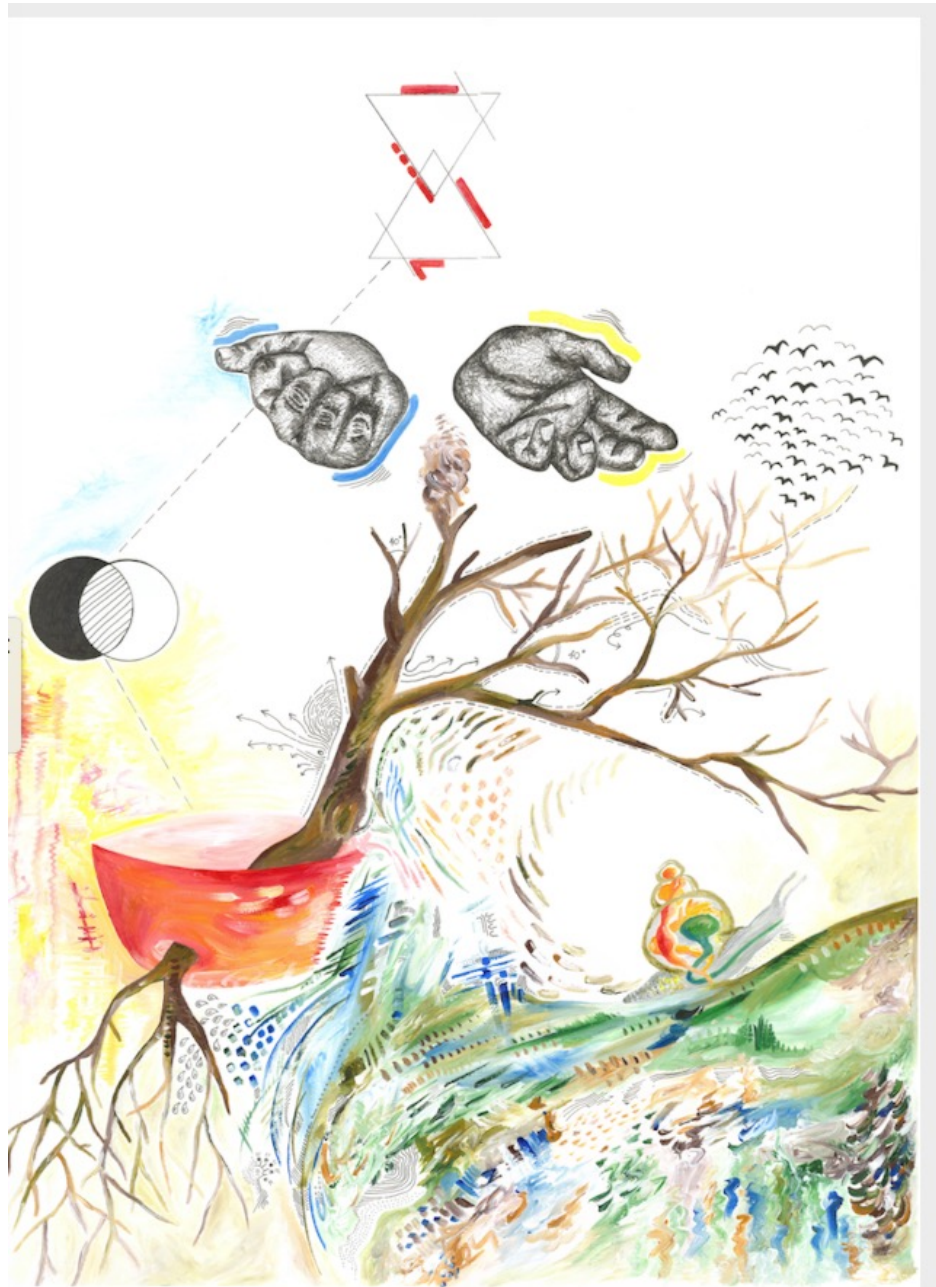
Ink & acrylic paint on paper

evdokiageorgiou.com

"It is not about superiority; it is about equity. It is not about who is the strongest; it is about everyone achieving their fullest potentials. It is not about you and me; it is about us".

Evdokia's recent artworks aim to form a symbiotic atmosphere and balance between her pieces. Although technology seems to enjoy rapid development, at least in some regions of the world; the ethical issues keep rising. The artist aims to illustrate the collaborative system that nature seems to successfully function, in contrast with the lack of collaboration between the socio-political systems humanity functions in.

Evdokia aims to present everyday images of people in a symbolic and twisted way in order to encourage the audience to question the visual part of the artwork and thus challenging their everyday experiences.



Elisabet Lopez

2019

Moon and Cells

Oil on canvas

elisabethlopezsaiz.com

Elisabet Lopez's artwork represents the creation of life. The light inside the women when is awaiting to give birth. The connection between both of them, and the way they are ready to walk.



Judit Prieto

2021

Sight – Lotus Flower

Oil on canvas

juditprieto.com

The painting *Sight - Lotus Flower* is part of the ongoing Series *Four Seasons*. The Spiritual Nature of this painting represents the miracle of new life. The painting invites the viewer to reflect on the Awakening of being that Spring evokes.



Michaela Chan

2019

Maria

Pastel on paper

Ig: @mchan_art

Life drawing is a celebration of natural beauty without the barriers imposed by society and the media. The bombardment of imagery depicting a narrow view of beauty is damaging. When we study the idiosyncrasies of the human form we can see how these mirror the infinite variations found in the natural world.

Michaela Chan has worked in different mediums over the years but life drawing has been her constant. The discipline has taught her to be present in the moment. With an evolving style, originally inspired by medical imagery, she uses colour to accentuate form and create a heightened sense of reality. In this Series the female models have chosen their pose. They are empowered and confident. She has tried to capture their spirit.



Priya Odedra

2017

Tridevi

C-Type photographic Print

pdotart.com

Tridevi embodies the three forms of the supreme Hindu goddess and 'Mahadevi-Mahasaraswati, the creator; Mahalaxmi, the preserver; and Mahakali, the destroyer. The entity here simultaneously has the power to create, preserve and destroy the Earth-like planet in her arms.



Sarah Cook
2020
Evolving
Aluminium & perspex
sculpture
sarahcookartist.co.uk

Sarah Cook's artworks *Honouring 1 & 2, Offering and Evolving* come from her immersive practice in local woods where she responds to the ancient and current ecologies. Combining natural materials with bronze and aluminium, these sculptural installations celebrate women's connectedness with woodlands and our deep respect for nature.

Honouring their role in the regeneration of our denuded and industrialised landscapes, Bronze torques encircle the trunks of two Birch trees. As symbols of respect torques adorned the necks of powerful women in the Bronze age honouring their skills and knowledge.

As a ceremonial offering to the sacred in nature, a bronze torque rests on a pile of bronze oak leaves. The torque symbolises the new moon, encircling but open to hope for a future in which men and women work equally and collaboratively with nature.

The feet of an older woman running through fallen leaves evokes how women's life stages relate to the life cycle of trees. As leaves drop and decay, they nourish new growth; as women age, they offer their wisdom to new generations, together evolving new ways of inter-generational living in harmony with our planet.

This work speaks of female knowledge gone before and our urgent reconnection to the earth.



Margaret Jennings

2019

Critical Environmental Y

Photographic print on fabric

Ig: @margaretkokoro

The *Critical Environmental Y* is a digital print from a hybrid tapestry. This discursive inactive print invites the viewers to reflect on their actions against the environment and nature at large, and discuss the why.



Helen Sandi-Edwards

2019

Under a wave
Paint mix media

helen@sandi-edwards.com

Helen's work is influenced by nature and cultural circumstances. She presents her work in different scales, processes and vibrant colours with the aim to produce a work that will be "thought provoking" or will give a sense of space to the viewer. She challenges herself to tease the detail from the form and where possible elevating its shape in size, colour or texture to provoke interest.

Helen's prints and paintings represent the utopian love stage in her life. As a child or woman, she had lived moments were searching for affection of a true love, as something impossible, like trying to find a needle in a stack of hay, accepting time and space as a piece of mine. One encounters new depths of understanding. Her creativity has been inspired by Jasper John's work.

The work was printed using hand cut card stencils in various sizes. The chosen colours were prime colours, to keep the image pure.



Karina McKenzie

2018

Holy Isle Prayer

Digital Print

karinamckenzie.com

Karina's art is inspired by Tibetan Buddhism. She has a belief in the power and importance of compassion in today's world. "If we had more compassion, we would care more about ourselves, others and the planet we inhabit, and our choices would be sustainable for the whole planet and not just ourselves".



Valerie Grove

2016

Rhombus

Series *I Talk to the Trees*

Acrylic & red cedar bark on
canvas

naturestrikesback.com

Rhombus is a symbol of femaleness across culture and time with related meanings including birth, fertility and protection. Its vertical and horizontal symmetry also has philosophical and spiritual interpretations like balance, completion and unity.

All pieces in this submission are from a recent Series of paintings entitled '*I Talk to the Trees*'. Each work uses raw natural materials and each forms a separate component of my response to the theme.



Valerie Large

2019

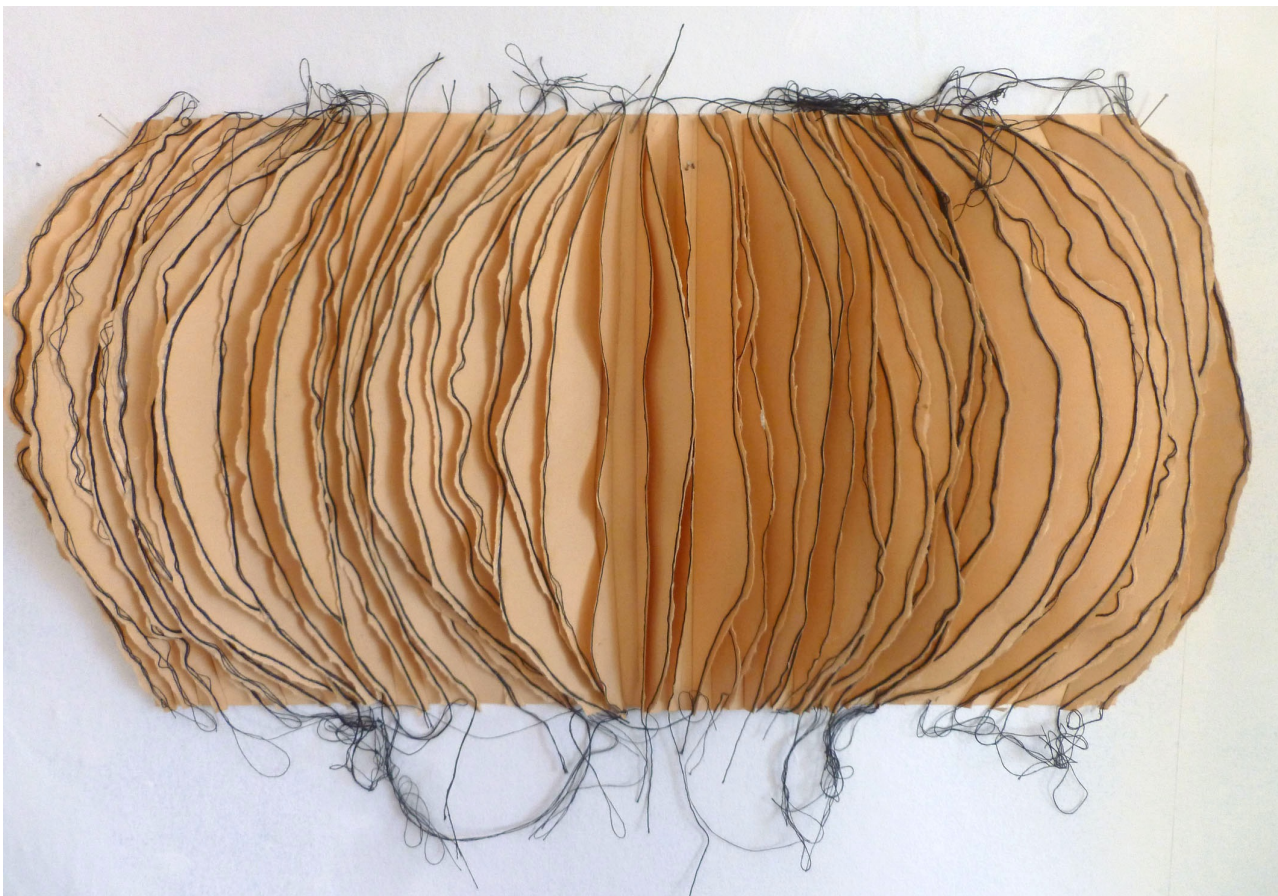
Layers 2

Paper, thread

valfgraz@gmail.com

Valerie Large's shapes are organic and represent growth – in layers or circular forms, radiating outwards from a centre point - ranging in size and direction -with threads or lines defining the edges.

Stitching can be seen as a process of repetition and also of growth – the whole work growing gradually in length or width or with colour changing as the threads become closer. Materials are fragile and shapes strong.



Bernie Clarkson

2020

Pink Sand, Purple Shadow

Oil on hand stretched canvas

bernieclarkson.co.uk

Bernie Clarkson's recent work is a continuation of her relationship with the sea. She feels a strong connection to the sea and the coastline having spent most of her life near to it. She misses it, especially the wilder beaches of the north east where nature's elements are very much in evidence.

Bernie's work is an expressive interpretation of her response to looking at the sea and to what it offers, it's colours and movement, it's ability to calm even on the wildest weather days. Both experiences of walking and painting the sea strengthen her and take her into new and wonderful places. As in her past work notions of home are always evident in her paintings. Lighthouses, cottages, boats all offer us some protection from the elements both real and imagined and can be seen either from the land or the sea.

Our sense of ourselves communing with nature is a shared experience and offers a variety of utopian panoramas allowing me to invent, copy, utilize, research and enjoy.



Milou Stella

2020

Mythological Nesting Woman
Watercolour pencils on paper

miloustella.com

Fertility seems like the most natural thing of this planet, yet both our land and our bodies are going through huge catastrophic changes with fertility rates in humans decreasing year after year. Is it our diet? Pollution? The stress of urban life? No one really knows why.

Through this drawing artist Milou Stella shares a painful personal reality and one she knows many women like her are going through: the dream of starting a family, but the reality is a monthly inexplicable struggle.

Stella's drawings develop from small sketchbooks she carries with her at all times. They are like visual poems, metaphors for certain feelings and hopes communicated through light mythological references and bright dreamy colours. She tries to be playful with the titles to cope with her personal struggle. She doesn't want her imagery to be realistic as the reality is failing her. In the world of symbols and ideas, she finds space for wishful thinking against otherwise uncontrollable conditions and negative emotions.



Gillian Harding

2018

Return to Nature

Etching

gillianharding@hotmail.co.uk

'Return to Nature' shows we should leave the planet happily intact when we expire. We are born , we die , then nourish the earth.




Gilli Salvat

2019

Antipodean

Acrylic on paper

harway.salvat@gmail.com



Artist Gilli Salvat has been a feminist for the last 40 years and has been painting principally the natural world and an imaginative world. As an Anglo Indian woman, her work is influenced by many different sources including Buddhism and many of her travels around the world.



Eider Ezama

2020

Pain?

Acrylic on wood

eiderezama@gmail.com

Organic shapes and vibrant colours remind us of what masculinity lacks; peace and synchronization with nature so integral to human survival. Youth concern for an unknown environmental future, when allowed to fall artistically within the classical tradition, produces familiar yet adventurous designs.

These works have been made using acrylic paint on recycled boards.



Dodi Wexler

2017

Bans Bans

Mixed media

dodiwexler.com

Artist Dodi Wexler uses materials that seduce her. Paper, ink, fabric, beads, holes, photographs, stamps, gold, pearls, etc. dictate how and whether she cuts, pastes, stitches, burns, paints, draws, to make each individual artwork. She is proud to continue a tradition, yet elaborate upon what is considered to be "women work". Her work is sometimes unabashedly positive. Faith makes magic.



Jeanne Peylet-Frisch

2018-2020

The Weather Station Installation

Dawnwork, a notebook,

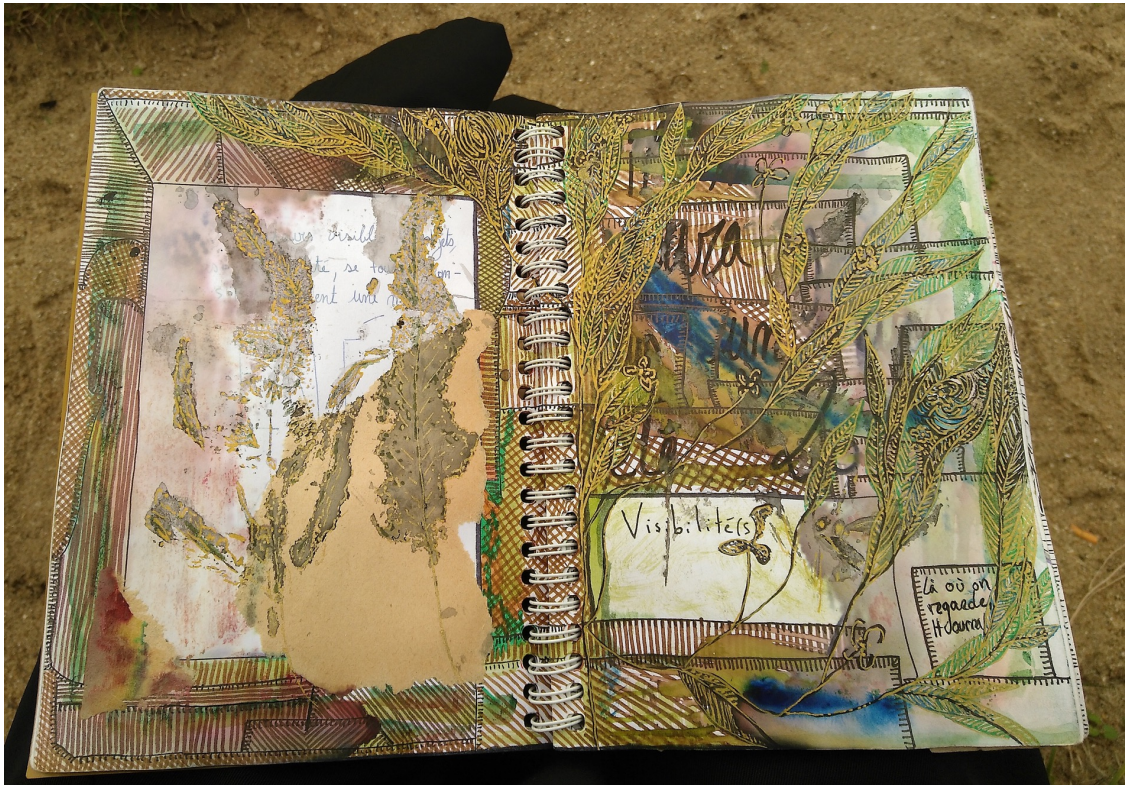
Artist Book

Ella Dit Film

jeannepeylet@gmail.com

The Weather Station is an invitation to sit down, one by one. Put on the headphones, take up the notebook and watch. These stories are told from the heart, whispered in the ear. They are between you and the artist.

Let yourself be weathered!



Barbara Thwaites

2019

Not Perfect but Proud
Textiles

silverunicorn@hotmail.co.uk

Barbara Thwaite's work consists of a knitted lace shawl in 1 ply Shetland yarn. The isle of Shetland is famous the world over for its hand knitted cobweb lace shawls; the shawls being a source of income for the women of the island for over 500 years.

Barbara's shawl however has deliberate faults, - holes, tears, loose threads and catches - symbolising the rebellion against societies continual search for perfection. These blemishes on an otherwise perfect shawl, have lovingly been repaired using gold and silver threads. By embracing these flaws and giving them value, they become an important message, acting as a narrative for the liberation of all women.

We no longer need to strive for perfection; we no longer need to be the perfect mother, daughter or lover; we can be ourselves and embrace all our imperfections, revealing them proudly to the world. These imperfections also act as a reminder, that by rejecting the search for that which is visually perfect, we allow ourselves to focus on finding beauty in an imperfect world; embracing peacefully the natural cycle of growth and decay within our live sand in nature. Not hiding our faults, but accepting them.



Julie Bellemann

2019

Naure Study 1,2, 3

35mm Photographs printed on
giclee paper

juliebellemann.com

This photographic work depicts fragments of an ecosystem found within a once unwanted and scarped green glass bottle, half submerged into woodland soil. The vessel, acting as a protector and keeper of its inhabitants, provides the foundation for a flourishing community of organisms living in harmony, hidden under fallen leaves, as if only to be found by those who truly seek.

The glass bottle symbolises both fragility and protection & offers the audience an opportunity to gaze upon Nature's magic. The vessel, along with its depiction, presents an intimate exploration of Nature's ability to rebuild & resist - and the power to create and sustain life.



Polly Bennett

2016

Utopia (K) 'Dominica, Kent'
Linocut on paper

pollybennett.com

Polly Bennett's work responds to the theme of ECOFeminism; exploring the relationship between nature and women, through its aesthetic, imagery and motivation. Being a lino-printer for almost 10 years now, she has developed a certain cutting style, which she believes creates very organic, curved and flowing shapes, referencing nature's idiosyncrasies.

The imagery is centred on the natural world, as Polly's work recollects the rural environments she explores, but through her memory of it, producing uncanny, and playful results.

The lino-prints themselves were the result of an unhappy period in her life where her sense of self and choice were being determined for her. Breaking free from this she sought solace in what she loved and what couldn't be taken from her: creativity and her memories of more peaceful experiences. From this pain she created her *Utopia* series, which although depicts artificial landscapes, recalls personal moments of freedom in open and tranquil spaces. By combining her experience with tangible imagery, Polly's prints speak universally for a lot of women and celebrate our Festival mantra of "A Utopian world where Nature and Women are not mistreated."



Kathryn Wakeman

2020

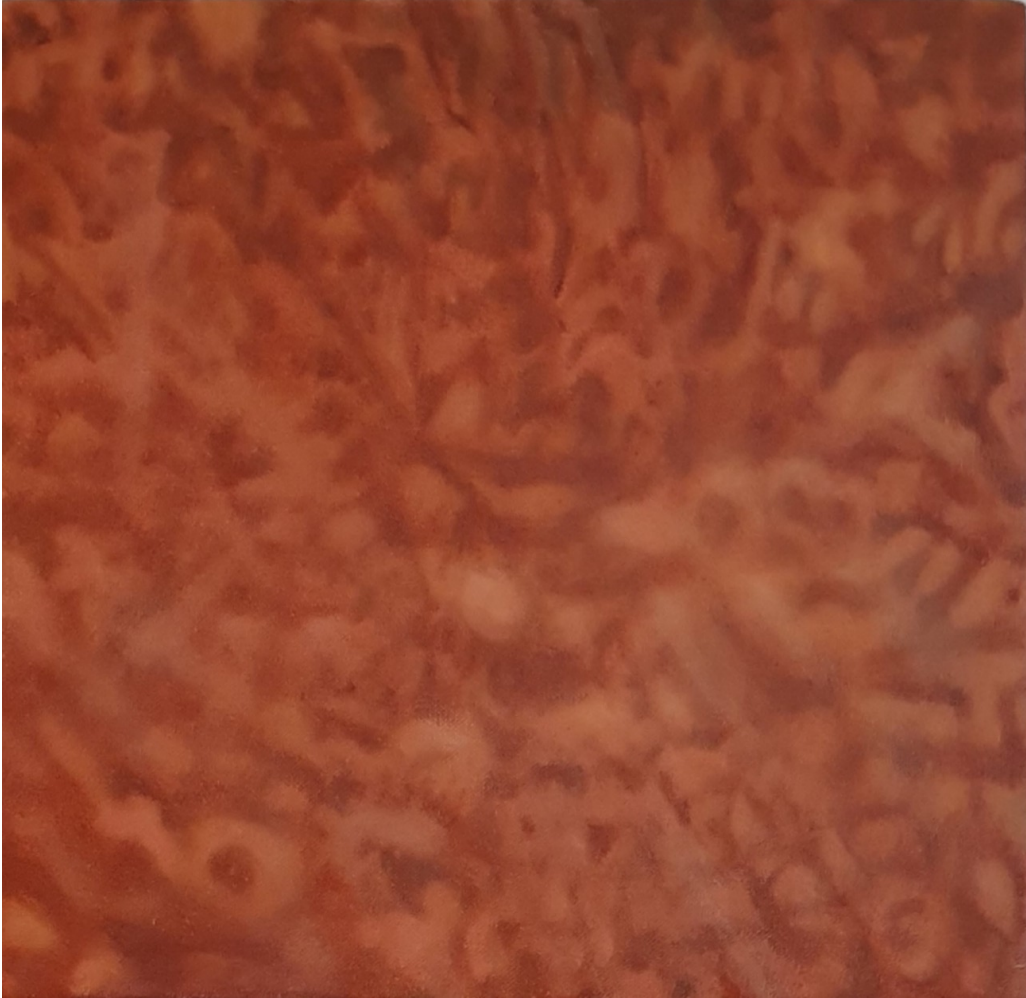
Limitless

Acrylic & Oils on canvas

kathrynwakeman.com

Kathryn's oil paintings explore a magnification of the body's landscape, an amplification that circumvents gaze with engagement. These abstract works perform as a prompt for the dialogue with writer R.D. Wakeman. The spontaneous words are transferred to transparency and surround the image. They interrogate hierarchies of word and image or body and mind, aspects of hierarchy that are relevant to our lived experience, exploring boundaries, limitations and definitions. Hierarchies of positive and negative, especially relating to the image. A questioning that opens up alternative perspectives, interpretations and ways of looking.

Kathryn & R.D. Wakeman create joint works of Word & Image. Their large works consist of oil on canvas with an acetate ribbon of stamped letters.



Claire Mont-Smith

2016

Pandora's URN 2

Etching and drypoint monoprint

axisweb.org/p/clairemontsmith

Artist Claire Mont-Smith retelling of stories always sits in relation to other older stories and creates a jostling of memory and meaning. In the retellings of the creation myth of Pandora, the vase/womb, once the principle of nourishing nature and the source of all things, became a box and the source of all evils. The sequence of works 'Pandora' is a retelling, involving 'ghost' prints of multiple plates, remembering the vase/urn as a signifier of rebirth and creativity and bees as the principle of fertility and fruitfulness.



Annaig Catesson

2020

Genesis 1

Etching and chine collé

annaigcatesson.com

Genesis represents a fruitful and colourful womb. In it, you can distinguish people, as wombs symbolising the origin of life, the genesis. The strikes across them embody nature, yet they could be seen as cage bars, as the women's expression is too often repressed. Women tend to stay confined to an invisible role and are not invited to take part in the public space.



Renata Kudlacek

2016

Tondo I

Screen-print on Bütten paper

renatakudlacek.com

Tondo is a term born in the Renaissance for circular paintings, were original wooden birth trays which were used as a service tray for mothers during confinements and later displayed as a 'memento mori' and painted on them, a symbol of life and eternity. Now also a symbol for the petri dish and contemporary science. The work relates to the centuries old discussion which raises the question of life and its origin, the challenge between old standards and new science -that requires constant revision.

Tondo is a series of 3 circular four colour hand printed screen-prints.



Laura Puig

2019

Ease and peace
B&W Photograph

behance.net/lapuig

Loss of self-respect, lack of comfort and a harmful emotional state - Laura Puig's photography has been led by solitude and void, experimentation and inevitable perseverance for the past two years. "Utopia" was, without doubt, a challenge that forced her to imagine the imaginable through image-making - a process that has transformed her anger and despair to a wishful peace of mind.

"Dormant Patriarchy" is an artwork that depicts the calm after the storm, the reconciliation between Sisters and Brothers, The Mothers of Earth and The Children. These four pieces, pair able in two, show man as a dormant creature with his dormant hierarchical thoughts and superiority complexities in a world where nature dominates, and women remain vigilant.



Leonie Flower

2020

Themyscira
Screen print

leonieflower.com

Inspired by Greek Mythology and the female-only lands from classic feminist utopian literature, such as *The Herland Trilogy*, *The Female Man* and *Wander ground*, Leonie Flower explored a hypothetical utopian future where women and nature are not repressed by the patriarchy. Instead, they have reclaimed the Earth and reign over the man-made cities.

Leonie wanted to evoke a feeling of freedom, harmony and body positivity. A New World, without oppression, exploitation, and prudishness. Aesthetically she was inspired by the imagery of Ancient Greek pottery and Matisse's paper cuts. She wanted the negative space to be as important as the positive space and she restricted her colour palette to three colours that represent life and optimism: orange sun, blue water and green plants.



Yula Kim

2019

*'iwi'i at Bryon's Road, Kilauea
Hawai'i*

Ink on paper

ykim058.wixsite.com

Yula Kim's artworks are generally related to nature and aesthetic. As a female artist, she expresses her concerns about environmental issues and the pure form of nature throughout her artworks, without implying feminist ideas per se, but the aesthetic of the objects that interlink women and nature.

Yula's artworks portrays the relationship between women, aesthetic and beauty through natural elements to show that woman (her appurtenance or her body) is not the only object to define the idea of beauty to the public. There are other factors that can define beauty. And, women are also impressively expressing her ideas about the environmental issues, showing their natural utopia, as well as innate beauty.



Catherine Hall

2020

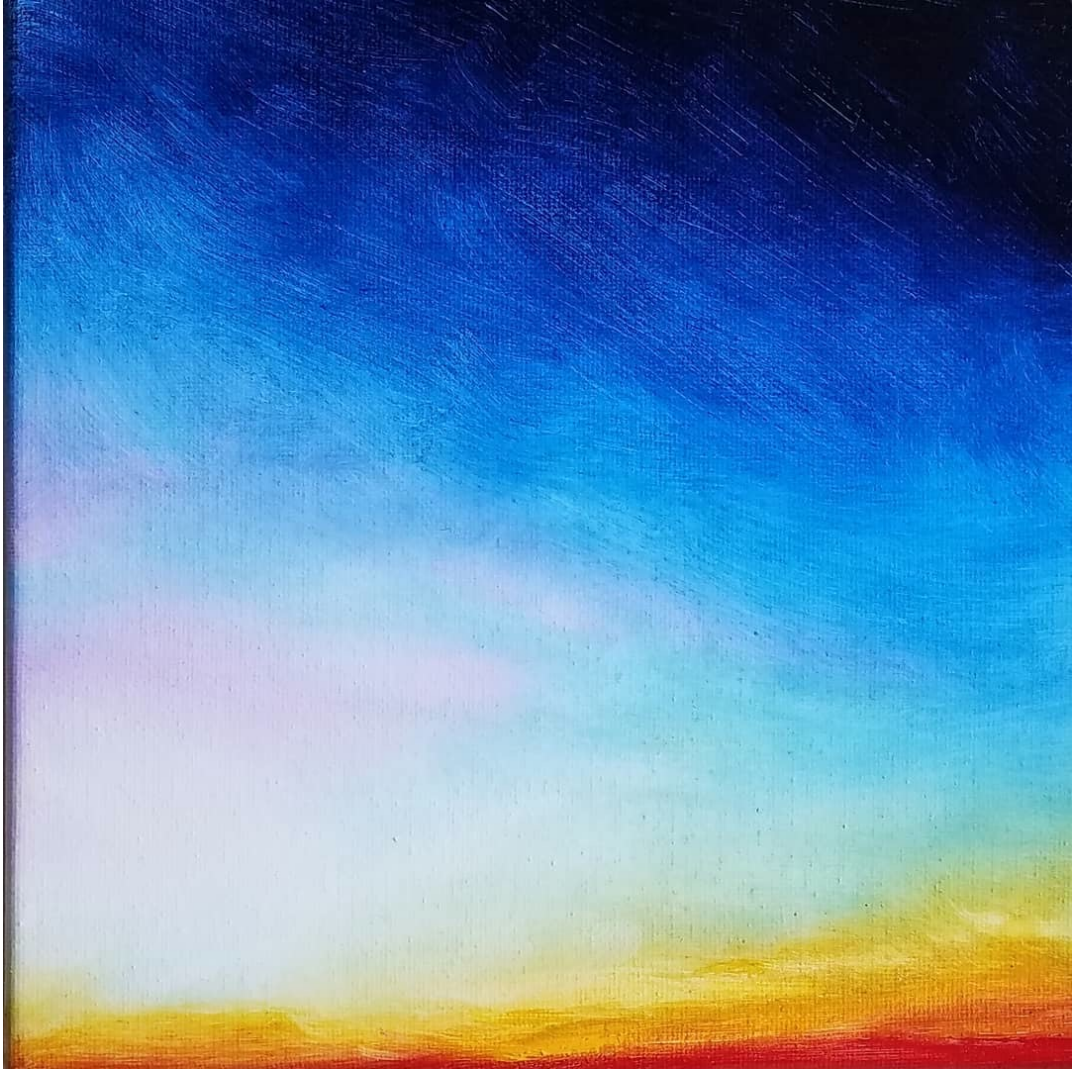
Study, My Sky

Oil on canvas

catherinehallart@gmail.com

The sky is a part of where we live - we live IN it, moving through it and breathing it in to ourselves. Yet we perceive the sky to be external and somehow far away or disconnected from us - even categorising it as celestial, otherworldly or beyond our reach.

In truth, the sky is connected to each of us, being only slightly further away from our skin than our clothes are. Our skies are affected by each breath that we inhale from them and by everything that we put out into them.



Lorraine Botbol

2020

Mother Nature, Mother Earth
Etching on Somerset 300 GSM
Paper

lorrainebotbolfineart

In this etching of Mother Nature, Mother Earth, artist Lorraine Botbol wanted to portray a strong but yet soft feminine figure. One who is also in touch with nature and the environment.



Uta Tiggesmeier

2020

Tower for a Ritual

Sculpture Installation

uta.art

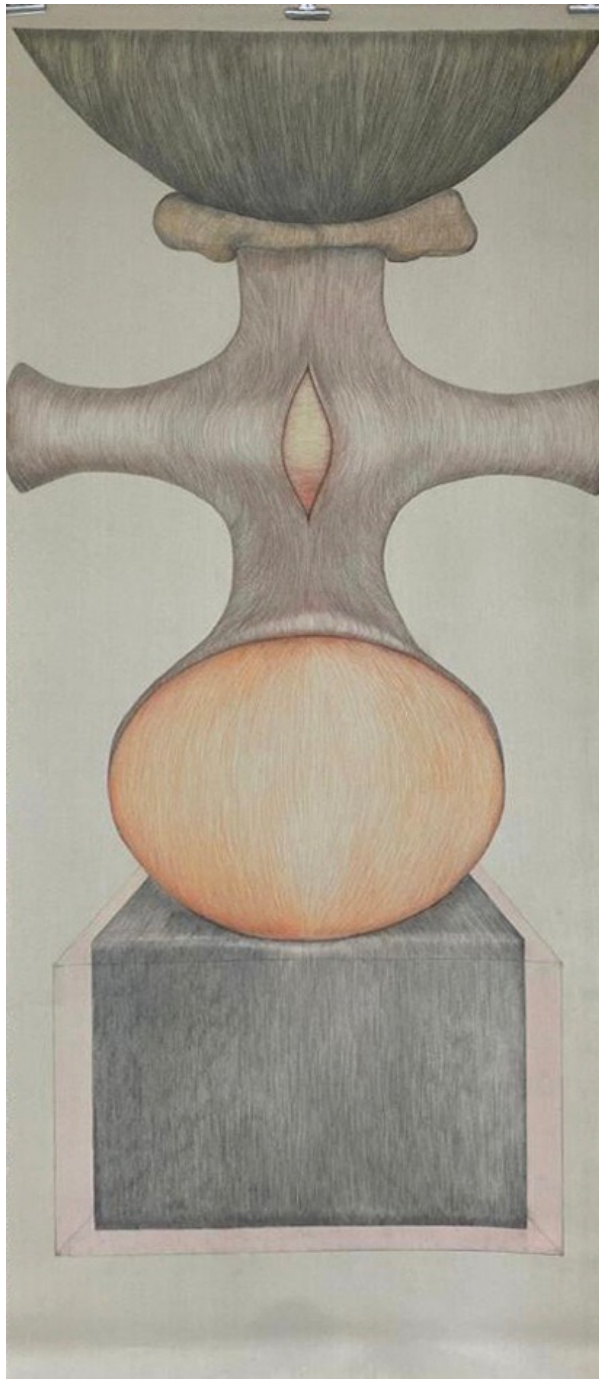
Artist Uta Tiggesmeier conceived this installation of a drawing and a clay vessel during the first London lockdown in March 2020. She fell ill with the virus but continued working on a series of large-size colour pencil drawings on canvas pinned to the walls of my flat. It felt right to surrender to a much larger force. Drawing line after line she dissolved into a state of gratefulness and devotion. The "tower" resembles a Japanese Gorinto, composed of stacked geometric forms that represent the five elements of earth, water, fire, wind and space. The stupa embodies the interconnectedness of all creation in tangible form.

The clay vessel filled with soil has motifs of the Great Goddess myth, the goddess of life, death and regeneration. The installation is inspired by the story of Leah Penniman, American activist and author of the book "Farming while black". Leah is committed to ending racism and injustice in our food system and works to increase farmland stewardship by people of colour, restore Afro-indigenous farming practices, and end food apartheid. When disillusioned by her lobby activism she walks out into her fields, digs a hole and cries her anger into the soil and walks away.

Mother Earth is the ultimate composter. She transforms anger and fear into hope and strength.

Reflecting on our daily rituals, what empowers, elevates us?

Can we create objects of solace to anchor our souls?



William Stok

2020

Blue leaf

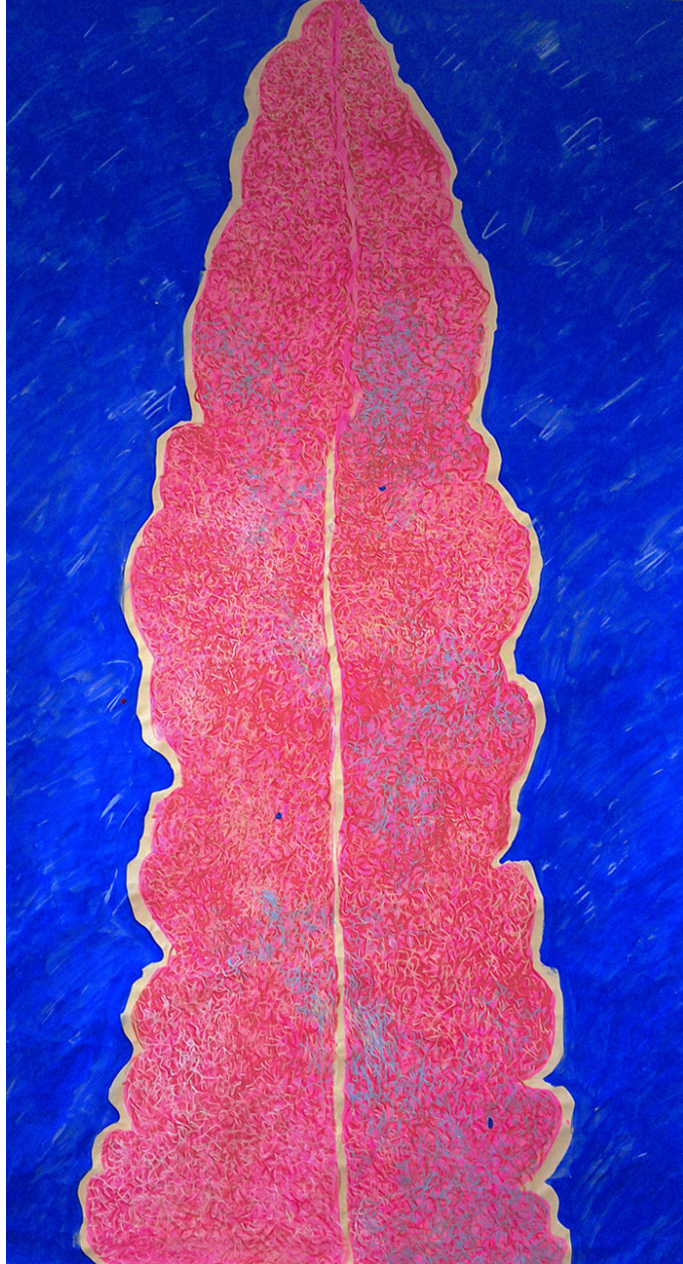
Paper, canvas, acrylic paint

williamstock.com

Artist William Stok since the winter of 2019, has painted on A4 paper, in an abstract way, the same type of leaves that he has been reproducing since 2012 on a larger scale. (In the 70's he built tree-like sculptures with pieces of tree trunk that had been discarded). The huge leaves are intended to be closer to trees (this is the reason why they are so tall) and are also meant, in the way they lift towards the sky, to give a sense of spirituality.

Historically the theme of trees has also been followed or underlined in the relationship that exists between ancient Greek columns and the body, especially in the Corinthian style and the caryatids. In the myth of Apollo and Daphne, the nymph, to be able to assert her freedom from the desires of the god Apollo, was changed into a tree.

Working on the theme of leaves, William discovered that they were taking on the shape of the female reproductive organ. The leaf itself has the purpose of sustaining the life of a tree through the process of photosynthesis.



**Thank you to all participating artists
&
our festival partners**



ditada



DIAMOND MEDIA



GENESIS



TOWER HAMLETS

