

PAPER MATTERS 2018

6-30 June 2018

Christopher Cook, Simon Lewty, Will Maclean, Bridget Macdonald, Jack Milroy

This is the second exhibition in our planned series, *Paper Matters*, and once again it takes place in the form of a 'Residency' at the Eagle Gallery in Clerkenwell, where Emma Hill directs her programme of museum quality independent exhibitions.

Bookish could be an alternative title for this gathering of works, and indeed it is an adjective that can be applied to all five artists in different ways. 'Art and Literature' is another shared category. Perhaps the underlying common denominator is the implication of narrative, for every piece tells a story of some kind, leaving it wide open for our interpretation, the way poetry does.

A further characteristic is that every participant has taught in a national art school and they each have work in distinguished museum and other public collections in the UK and abroad. Over the past two decades they have formed connections and enjoyed dialogues while exhibiting at ART FIRST and we would like to share the quiet resonances between them, with you; the viewer and the collector.

This year we are including the work of two ceramicists: Molly Attrill and ffolliott Fisher and we hope you will see at once *and* enjoy, their formal correspondence.

Christopher Cook won the coveted *New Light Art Prize* 2017 (The Valeria Sykes Award) for his graphite work *Forbidden Fruit* from a new sequence based on the 17th century Dutch Still Life genre, which he sees as containing the seeds of modern capitalism and materialism, and hence inserts contemporary elements, subtly undermining the genre to speak of our current capitalist discord.

Simon Lewty has produced a pair of tall, thin texts comprising evocative, vivid poetic phrases, repeated as in a litany, line after line, like a formula, or a musical chorus. *A Timeless Litany* and *Pages from a Beach Diary* exemplify forms of visual thinking that relate to musical notation but which offer an additional aesthetic pleasure, an intuitive visual understanding beyond language or formal knowledge.

Will Maclean's intimate collages include his *Homage to Gerrard Winstanley*, one of the heroic 'True Levellers' (or 'Diggers') of 17th Century, who opposed enclosures. Maclean's admiration clearly resonates with the Lewis Land Raiders whose history he has been intimately involved with for over two decades while working on the remarkable stone land memorials placed throughout the Isle of Lewis. He is currently engaged on a fifth monument, to be unveiled in 2019, and we are in the process of producing a book on the subject.

Bridget Macdonald's latest charcoal drawing is a hauntingly beautiful scene set in the Malvern countryside where she lives. Her sources are a blend of observation, memory and imagination, and her love of poetry deeply informs her work and her choice of titles. In this case, coming across the grey mare in the twilight of a June evening evoked thoughts of magic, fairy tales and a Midsummer Night's Dream.

Jack Milroy's recent cut book constructions are a re-presentation of distinguished books on South African wild flowers, in the form of towering *Flowerfalls*. Milroy repaginates the books, releasing the Cape Sandveld flowers in one, and in the other, the flowering plants of the Tsitsikama Forest (illustrated by M Courtney-Latimer, the same person who in 1938 discovered the great *Coelacanth*). They escape their definitions in English, Afrikaans and Latin through his virtuosic interventions with a scalpel, and give endless pleasure revealing in a new, slightly subversive way, the very beauty that the careful botanists sought to catalogue scientifically and preserve in the first place.

For details, prices and further information please visit our website or contact us:

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