

PRESS RELEASE

A Strange Kind of Knowing

**Thirteen contemporary artists explore land, intuition and phenomena
Haarlem Gallery, Wirksworth, 5th February – 13 March 2022**

Curated by Olivia Penrose Punnett with Verity Birt, Holly Bynoe, Kristina Chan, Fourthland, Susan Hiller, Katja Hock, Coral Kindred-Boothby, Penny McCarthy, Kate McMillan, Aimée Parrott, Chantal Powell, Tai Shani, Eleanor May Watson



My Body is A Cave (2021), Kate McMillan

...the places inside matter as much as the ones outside. It is as though in the way places stay with you and that you long for them, they become deities. Rebecca Solnit

Haarlem Gallery is pleased to announce *A Strange Kind of Knowing*, a touring exhibition of new commissions and recent work exploring the land, seasonal cycles, natural phenomena, intuition and nuance. Artists Verity Birt, Holly Bynoe, Kristina Chan, Fourthland, Susan Hiller, Katja Hock, Coral Kindred-Boothby, Penny McCarthy, Kate McMillan, Aimée Parrott, Chantal Powell, Tai Shani and Eleanor May Watson present works on paper, paintings, sculpture, video and installations that draw on alternative, marginalised and embodied ideas of knowledge intrinsically connected to the natural world. The exhibition opened at Arusha Gallery in December 2021 and launches at Haarlem Gallery in Derbyshire on 5 February.

How to Sway on Crick Hill (2020), a video work by artist, spiritualist and medicine woman **Holly Bynoe** shows the gentle movement of wild cane fronds at twilight in St James in Barbados, drawing on her deep interest in the spiritual and healing properties of plants, regenerative agriculture and ways of undoing the 'plantation-ocene'. The work captures the ritual of walking, looking and listening in on a small plot of wilding land, which has since been razed to the ground as part of 40 year development programme.

Verity Birt's screenprint *In Dark Derision* (2021) collages archival mythological images with ceramic artifacts, part of her ongoing research into the ancient and contemporary cosmology of Gaia. Drawing on anthropology, psychoanalysis, science and other practices to investigate knowledge or understanding that has traditionally been ignored, **Fourthland's** installation *Mola, Mola*, re-imagines the ancient mola mola fish, with its huge roughly-textured skin and many mouths, as a ritualistic totem before which songs and stories are performed, and offerings made. In **Coral Kindred-Boothby's** *Keys/Conductors* (2021), small sculptures made from burr oak threaded with copper wire conduct electricity from the skin to a receptor in intuitive 'experiments' where the objects are comfortable to hold and use.

Tai Shani's watercolour painting *Outsides and Erotics 13* (2021) is from a new series of poetic, intuitively driven considerations on her experience of separation from the world during lockdown. The familiar yet subtly changing view from the artist's home hinted sometimes seemed fused with anxiety and danger, human contact reduced to screens and misconstruction, forcing a more intimate relationship to intuitive self.

Emerging from the forced 'winter' of the global pandemic, and taking place in the winter season, *A Strange Kind of Knowing* also subtly investigates phenomena such as the weather, the sea, caves, cloud formations and fire; lost knowledge and civilisations; and natural and psychological cycles of transformation.

Kristina Chan's *Survey* (2020) explores the human relationship to the environment, grief and knowing in black and white photogravure prints alluding to early engravings from the age of exploration. The series of works document an untouched landscape on Gospers Mountain in New South Wales, Australia, before it was devastated by wildfire.

Susan Hiller's print *Rough Moonlit Night* (2015) combines components from her 'rough sea' postcard series in a uniform grid, of giant waves cresting over cliffs and beaches, bombarding esplanades, grand hotels and piers, recalling in multiple the great tradition of the Sublime. The sea is also a forceful presence in *My Body is A Cave* (2021), **Kate McMillan's** nine collaged works for *A Strange Kind of Knowing*. A series of photographs taken along the north coast of Cornwall looking out towards the Atlantic are torn to function like shards of memory, symbolic portraits of the personal, the mythical and folkloric, and of tragic, disparate moments in history and individual lives.

Known for large-scale painted installations examining the charged interiors of stately homes, **Eleanor May Watson's** large-scale commission created for the exhibition, takes on the atmospheric weather of gothic novels. The monotype work utilises Japanese Hoshō paper to evoke the transparency of rain, and its cleansing, cathartic and empathetic properties. **Katja Hock's** silver gelatin print, *Cloud* (2021), from an ongoing series documenting individual formations, has evolved in parallel to another, recording pebbles found by the artist on woodland walks. Hock's subtle observations draw attention to the transient flux and flow of the cloud in contrast to the vast geological time contained in the pebble on the ground.

Penny McCarthy's sculpture *Moon Egg* (2018) is a blown hen's egg delicately painted with a map of the moon to show its actual elongated form created by the gravitational push and pull of the Earth. Connecting cycles of the astronomical with the embodied, the work relates to early depictions of the moon by John Russell and Galileo, and the role of intuition in depicting individual perspectives and realities.

Aimée Parrot's *As Above so Below, Receiver* and *White Lip* (2020) melds painting and printmaking with textiles and organic materials, in three reliquary-like works conjoining the global with the personal, recalling changing sea levels, creation myths and lost civilisations, and moments of domesticity or intimacy. In *Blood Moon / Reddening, As It Ripens* and *There Is Nothing In Which I Have Not Been* (2021), **Chantal Powell's** labyrinthine ceramic sculptures are marked with constellations of red particles, signalling alchemical transitions around the cyclical lunar Albedo state, from white to red as life-giving 'blood' enters the works.

For further information, images and interview requests, please contact Janette Scott Arts PR on janette@janettescottartspr.com, or call 07966 486156.

Notes To Editors

Exhibition details

A Strange Kind of Knowing, 5 February – 13 March 2022, Haarlem Gallery, The Red Lion, Wirksworth DE4 4ET. Open Saturdays and Sundays 11:00am-4:00pm. Free admission. Telephone 01629 825980 Email studios@haarlemartspace.co.uk www.haarlemartspace.co.uk

Events

Haarlem Gallery

Saturday 12 February 2022, 4.30pm, *Element*, a reading by Catherine Rogers, *Element* is a collection of short stories inspired by the studio artists of Haarlem Artspace written by Catherine Rogers, with an exclusive story from exhibition artist Chantal Powell.
Saturday 5 March 2022, 4.30pm, Tarot, rune and I Ching workshops and readings

Booking details available at www.haarlemartspace.co.uk

Artists / Curator Biographies

Verity Birt (b.1989) is a practice-based PhD researcher at Northumbria University and BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art (BxNu) in Newcastle. Birt's practice of writing, performance, sculpture, sound and film-making - situated in intersectional feminism - seeks to materialise enchanted encounters and meaningful intimacies between each-other and the more-than-human world.
<https://www.veritybirt.co.uk/>

Holly Bynoe is an independent curator, writer, artist, educator, spiritualist, Earth Ally and researcher from St. Vincent and the Grenadines. She is part of The Hub Collective Inc, developing their sustainable, regenerative, environmental and intergenerational pillars. She is co-founder of Sour Grass, a curatorial agency supporting contemporary Caribbean art practice, co-founder of Tilting Axis, an annual regional meeting charting arts activism, de-colonial methodologies and models of creative sustainability, a co-founder of ARC Magazine and a co-director of Caribbean Linked, a regional residency programme held annually in Aruba supporting cultural exchange. Bynoe was Chief Curator of the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas 2014-2019.
<https://hollybynoe.com/>

Kristina Chan's work has been widely exhibited at Musée du Louvre, Royal Academy of Fine Art Antwerp, Mall Galleries London, Beers London, Royal Academy, and others. She is the recipient of the Canadian Council for the Arts (CCA) Research and Creation Grant (2021), Ingram Prize, CCA Digital Originals Innovation Grant, Queen Sonja Print Award Finalist (all 2020) and is a two-time recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant (2017/2018), Her works reside in the Royal Collection, V&A and Ingram Collection. <https://www.kristinachan.com/>

Fourthland (Isik Sayerer and Eva Knutsdotter) is an artist collective creating objects, ritual, storytelling, sound and moving image works. Seeking to create artworks as vessels for transforming exchange between diverse groups of people and their encounter with the land and each other. Their work repositions marginalized knowledge to address new modes of social and environmental consciousness. Often forming collective stories and symbols of enchantment. Fourthlands' work has been exhibited widely, additionally hosting a series of nomadic residency programmes. <https://www.fourthland.com/>

Artist and 'paraconceptualist' **Susan Hiller** (1940-2019) is best known for her investigations into consciousness, dream states and paranormal activity. With a doctorate in anthropology from Tulane University, New Orleans, the artist worked with photography, video and sculpture to explore esoteric subjects including attempts to communicate with supernatural beings and experiments in

automatic writing. She is loosely connected to the British conceptualists of the 1960s and 1970s and was included in Tate Britain's survey of the movement in 2016. She taught as a BALTIC Professor of Fine Art from 1999 to 2002 at the University of Newcastle, and worked on curatorial projects. <http://www.susanhillier.org/>

Katja Hock is an internationally exhibiting artist working mainly with still and moving image. For many years. She has been photographing and filming historically relevant woodland and skies across Europe. Having grown up on the edge of the border-woods between Holland and Germany, memories of her experiences of the area have become subject to a lost world of innocence. Hock's work explores the relationship between 'what is shown' and 'what might only be 'suggested' while also addressing the importance of historical memory to our perceptions of our cultural and social context. She currently teaches Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University. <http://www.stillunresolved.org/index.php/artists/katja-hock>

Coral Kindred-Boothby is a musician and maker based at Haarlem Artspace studios. She releases music under the name 'The Silver Field' and is currently receiving an arts council Developing Your Creative Practice grant to learn and make electronics and musical instruments.

Penny McCarthy works primarily with drawing and text, presenting internationally in museums and galleries, at conferences, and in live projects and publications. Group exhibitions and projects include *Ulysse(s): L'autre mer*, FRAC, Rennes, France; *Nothing is Forever*, South London Gallery; *On The Image*, Venice International University, San Servolo, Venice (2017); *Liquid Crystal Display*, Site Gallery, Sheffield and mima Middlesbrough (2018); and *Beware the Cat*, a touring theatre project, RSC and other venues (2017-19). Publications include: *Time will darken paper*, a picture essay for Esopus (New York); and an illustrated essay *Mirror in Memories of the Future* (eds. Deborah Jaffe and Stephen Wilson, 2017). Penny was awarded the Evelyn Williams Drawing Prize in 2019. <https://pennymccarthy.com/>

Kate McMillan has exhibited internationally in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Berlin, Perth, Melbourne, Mexico City, Sydney, Shanghai, Hong Kong and elsewhere. Her work draws on phenomenological philosophy, poetic literature and art history, integrating form, genre, notion and aesthetic. A Celeste Prize finalist (2017), McMillan has completed residencies in St Petersburg (National Centre of Contemporary Art), and in Tokyo, London, Basel, Beijing and Sydney. McMillan lectures at Kings College London in the Department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries, and her PhD thesis, *Contemporary Art and Unforgetting*, was published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2018. <https://www.katemcmillan.net/BIOGRAPHY/>

Combining methods of painting and printmaking, **Aimée Parrott** plays with pictorial depth by building up veil-like layers of colour that coalesce into amorphous forms. She says, "I want to create different spaces within the work; using raw or stained canvas holds the viewer on the surface of the piece, forcing them to consider the texture, the weave, whilst gestural marks push beyond the physical object into an illusory or imaginary space." A graduate of the RA Schools, Parrott's solo/two-person exhibitions include *The Box*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London (2019); *Aimée Parrott*, Trade Gallery, Nottingham; *Soaked, Not Resting | Helen Frankenthaler and Aimée Parrott*, Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, London. Group exhibitions include *The World As Yet Unseen, Women Artists in Conversation with Partou Zia*, Falmouth Art Gallery, Falmouth (2019); and *Implicit Touch*, Stadtgalerie Villa Dessauer, Bamberg. <https://www.aimeeparrott.com>

Chantal Powell creates sculptural works about the unseen aspects of our psyche, informed by her studies in social psychology, Jungian theory and alchemy. Drawing upon archetypal motifs such as "the vessel", "the toad" and "the night sea journey", she brings awareness to the importance of energy filled symbols to connect us to a world beyond the rational. Powell was shortlisted for the Mark Tanner Sculpture Award in 2015 and has exhibited at the Guildhall Art Gallery London, collateral events at the 53rd and 54th Venice Biennales, and most recently co-curated the exhibition *NightShaking* with the Ingram Collection of British Modern Art. <https://www.chantalpowell.com>

Tai Shani uses performance, film, photography, sculptural installations and experimental texts to explore forgotten histories and stories. She is currently a Tutor in Contemporary Art Practice at the Royal College of Art. <https://www.taishani.com>

Influenced by the literary, **Eleanor May Watson**'s paintings of empty spaces with layered negative spaces retain a likeness to the printed image, allowing for the room and its contents to set a scene for stories. She had a solo show at the Foundry Gallery, Chelsea; a joint exhibition at Mall Galleries, London; was included in the RA Summer Exhibition and was shortlisted for the Young Masters Prize 2014. <https://www.eleanormaywatson.co.uk>

Olivia Penrose Punnett, is a neuro-divergent curator and founding co-director and cultural producer at Haarlem Artspace, a rural contemporary studio and gallery in Wirksworth, Derbyshire. Punnett seeks to raise expectations about what art can be and to celebrate the quality of art in non-central locations. Driven by her interest in alternative ways of knowing, she seeks to challenge perceptions of place and inherited narratives of what makes "extraordinary" art. Her attention to place, time landscape and rurality strives to raise audience expectations, question contexts and facilitate new perspectives. She has curated numerous exhibitions and events with artists including Ama Josephine Budge, Adam Moore, Verity Birt, Annalee Davis, Feral Practice, Deirdre O'Mahony, Tazelar Stevenson, Fourthland, David Steans, Victoria Lucas, Chantal Powell, Dorothy Cross, Alastair Mackey and Liz Orton. Punnett's art practice includes printmaking, installation, film and projection, with works held in the British Library, The Tetley, The Ruskin Archive and the Tate Library and Archive. www.oliviapunnett.com

Galleries

Arusha Gallery is a contemporary art gallery with its main premises in Edinburgh's historic New Town. Opening in 2013, Arusha runs an annual programme of exhibitions, events and fairs, both nationally and internationally, with regular collaborations with guest artists, curators, festivals and institutions. www.arushagallery.com

Based in Wirksworth, Derbyshire, **Haarlem Artspace** is a town centre gallery and off-site studio space championing rural contemporary art regionally, nationally, and internationally through online exhibitions, residencies, publications, symposia, talks and events. From 28 November – 19 December 2021 Haarlem Gallery presents *Gathering*, exploring the communal act of intimacy spanning prehistoric sites, folk rituals and rave music with artists Verity Birt, Simon Bayliss, Verity Birt, Ilker Cinarel, Georgia Gendall, Steven Claydon, Jonathan Michael Ray, Dan Howard-Birt, Abigail Reynolds, Lucy Stein, and Tom Sewell. www.haarlemartspace.co.uk



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