

STUDIO WEST
PRESENTS

GROUND WORK

AN EXHIBITION OF LONDON'S MOST EXCITING EMERGING SCULPTORS

Alexandra Searle | Catriona Robertson | Gabriela Pelczarska | Irena Posner | James Southall Ford | Jesse Pollock | Josh C. Wright | Marian Lee | Tom Bull

14 SEPTEMBER – 13 OCTOBER 2022

PRIVATE VIEW 14 SEPTEMBER | 6.30-8.30pm

EVENT 20 SEPTEMBER | 7-9PM



Alexandra Searle

STUDIO WEST is proud to present GROUND WORK, a group exhibition of artwork by London's most exciting emerging sculptors. The pieces on show are thematically united by the artists' collective commitment to working in three dimensions and their mutual interest in ideas of form, matter, tension, physical force, and substantial transformation. Combining the industrial and solid with the fragile and decaying, the artists in this exhibition speak to us through the objects they create. When shown together, the sculptures become suggestive of an almost apocalyptic wasteland, void of humanity and populated only by unexpected assemblages and nameless forms.

Alexandra Searle's sculptures recall the body in a simplified and abstracted form, and explore ideas around health, medicine and hypochondria. Central to her enquiry is material transformation and the blurred barriers between the organic and the inorganic. Her works straddle the bodily and the industrial, drawing attention to our increasingly machine reliant existence.



Irena Posner

For Catriona Robertson, her own body comes into play as the vehicle through which her monumental pieces are constructed. Working with recycled materials, she creates large-scale, site-specific column-like structures which recall formal architectural tropes, yet their materiality implies a post-capitalist incarnation whereby scrap metal stands in for marble.

Irena Posner, meanwhile, works with reclaimed marble and limestone using traditional direct carving methods. Her practice is very physical, revolving around kinetic interaction with materials. Unlike many of the other sculptures on show, her pieces are made through a reductive method, carving away stone to reveal hidden shapes enclaved within.

Catriona Robertson



Central to Gabriela Pelczarska's work is an interconnected relationship with the forces that bind us - gravity, friction, acceleration and surface tension. She recontextualises found and cast items through unique combinations which are humorous, playful and pointed, drawing inspiration from construction sites and images glanced during urban cycles.

James Southall Ford explores contemporary modes of economic consumption and the potential harms they may cause. Much of his work reaches a point of near collapse, mirroring the tension in Pelczarska's sculptures and inviting ever-present forces to disrupt his pieces. In their precarity, Southall Ford's pieces challenge capitalist logics - fragility rejects usefulness and productivity.

Jesse Pollock's sculptures explore arcadian visions and pastoral ideals with a dystopian and eerie undertone. They hark back to a rural pre-capitalistic existence, inspired by working in a remote studio in Kent. Pollock's pieces contain a sense of frustration at the current state of affairs, leading the viewer to their central proposition - a reluctantly patriotic return to the bucolic traditions of the past, as a route to questioning the present.

Though visually different, Josh C. Wright's sculptures contain a similar sense of foreboding. They appear to be formed of solid and heavy red bricks when in fact they are each hand-made from Jesmonite and painted to deliberately mimic the real thing. They are lightweight, precarious and stacked in ways that seem as though they could fall at any moment. Central to Wright's practice is an ongoing exploration of the relationship between anxiety and sculpture.

Tom Bull



Marian Lee's work is provocatively playful. It allows for active audience engagement yet it is unclear as to the nature or aim of this participation. There is a jet-black merry-go-round that the viewer may spin - but why? These dysfunctional and disobedient objects are sculptural when static and performative when active. They stage unlikely locations of play that are populated by barely decipherable fragments of myth, culturally significant architectural structures, and industrial elements of late capitalism.

Aesthetically similar to Lee's work, Tom Bull's slick black sculptures explore pastoral symbols to create disquieting, dark and slightly absurd maquettes of 'country life'. His work interrogates rural British society, both past and present, with a surreal and ominous sidelong gaze at personal and collective issues around land, loss, community, wealth, access, labour and violence.

Marian Lee



Gabriela Pelczarska



Overall, GROUND WORK celebrates the work of London's most exciting contemporary sculptors, while shining a light on the common themes emerging in their practices. An overwhelming sense of anxiety, apprehension and use of both literal and metaphorical tension comes through much of the work, perhaps a salient reflection of urban life in these strange times. When shown together, the sculptures visually combine to present an unusual, almost apocalyptic immersive environment, where scrap materials, fragments, memories and functional objects have become jumbled into new and intriguing assemblages. The exhibition champions the power of sculpture to move us, explores the limits of material transformation and invites reflection on the issues we face today in an urban metropolis.

Jesse Pollock



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STUDIO WEST

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PRESS ENQUIRIES | IMAGES

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ABOUT STUDIO WEST

STUDIO WEST is a cultural hotspot in Notting Hill founded by curator Caroline Boseley. The gallery focuses on showing work by emergent and newly established London based artists, offering support, mentorship and hosting opportunities that showcase the most exciting upcoming talents. The gallery takes a new approach to commercial, contemporary art – it puts artists' needs at the forefront and nurtures an awareness of the local community within which it operates.

STUDIO WEST opened in November 2021 with a show by Victoria Cantons and Xu Yang and has since hosted two group exhibitions, *The Reality in Whytch You Create*, and *Fancy a Bite?*, a solo show of new pieces by Karolina Albricht titled *16 Branches High*, and a duo exhibition with paintings by Anthony Laurencin and sculptures by Roland Lawar titled *As Seen By Me*. It is becoming known for exceptional one-off events, including a recent ballet performance collaboration with Portobello Dance School. [@studio_west_gallery](https://www.instagram.com/studio_west_gallery) | [studiowest.art](http://www.studiowest.art)