

Inner Space

**15th August 2020, 12 - 7pm, by appointment
49-50 Poland street, Soho, London W1F 7ND**

A one day show at Oliver Beer's London studio arranged together with Nick Hornby. The exhibition features work by Ellie Antoniou, Mark Batty, Lynn Chadwick (1914-2003), Lewis Davidson, Arthur Fleischmann (1896 - 1990), Zuza Mengham, Henry Moore (1898 – 1986), Ruyin Nabizadehhighi, Katie Paterson, James Rogers and Tom Sachs.

It's hard to finish things during a global pandemic. This one day exhibition takes place in a studio workshop - a place of flux - ideas transitioning into reality within a building also transitioning. This one day exhibition brings together historic preparatory drawings alongside finished and almost finished works by contemporary artists.

In Henry Moore's *Eight Reclining Figures on Rock Background* from 1963 there are three distinct layers. Often modern sculptors would draw objects they then would make – sketches “of.” In this work by Moore – the middle layer is not a drawing “of” but rather what appears to be an interactive line – the prequel to a drawing of. With an anachronistic eye – it evokes generative and algorithmic design. Rogers drawings appear generative and algorithmic but are in fact autobiographical – reenactments of moments in his life. These scenes are then re-staged by a 3D printer hacked to draw the object flat in concentric lines.

Aspects of Ruyin Nabizadehhighi's *I wai Him to Know*, 2016 mimics this manufactured design. An ornate tea-set takes on the appearance of a sprawling metropolis rising and hovering in a spectral orb of light. A framed portrait brings the image back to domesticity. Displaced possessions; a sim card and e-cigarette fragment, form the foreground in Ellie Antoniou's . A LED screen is treated as a canvas for a collage of memories and movement across the Greek terrain which suddenly emerges as the screen turns on.

Zuza Mengham's *Soma*, 2018 is a faux geological specimen unearthed from a science fiction. It has been excavated in reverse by building up layers in its casting and re-working. The title alludes to its bodily undulations, a symbiosis between stone and human. Ambiguity and abstraction repeat in Mangham's practice. These strange relics remind us of a jeopardized version of nature, moulded, shaped and smoothed for human purpose. Mangham's biomorphic sculptures are both abstract in form and in their performativity – taking on the appearance of marble or moon rock, the marbling is synthetic. They also perform scale – mimicking micro and macro. Katie Paterson also evokes vast scales – her work *Earth Moon Earth* (where she converts Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* into Morse code and bounces it off the moon before returning it to the piano but with notes missing) – within the skipped notes is a journey of 768,800km. Fleischmann started his career as a figurative sculptor, modelling the human body in clay, but by the 1970s his work was exploring futuristic abstraction—one of his sculptures even stands at the centre of a scene in *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) set in a fictional cloud-city of the distant future.

In Mark Batty's work astronomical matter is brought down onto the canvas. In *Martian Sunset*, 2020 hematite, an iron oxide responsible for Mars's red hue, is ground into pigment. Specific to planetary geology, the colour evokes exploration and the frontier, presenting a universe that is both overwhelming and within grasp. Davidson's vacuum formed structures revel in their impermanence. An old record player with transparent plastic results in an image of a 70s science fiction landscape ready to transmorph and animate.

This exhibition brings together late Modern sculpture alongside contemporary artists' work to highlight the continuation of conversations between form and concept, and between figuration and abstraction, often associated with Modernism. Contemporary artists re-animate modernist debates through reference, both to their predecessors and to narrative structures that frame their work. The recurrence of these debates is echoed by the plural temporalities these artists inhabit - futuristic but recalls past uses and journeys, Fleischmann's work straddles the 1970s and sci-fi futures. Mengham evokes an organic-geological time in objects that are made in human time, while Moore and Chadwick, to contemporary eyes, are artists with both historical connotations of a mid-century aesthetic and a critical contribution to the abstract idiom which remains as visible in contemporary art today as it was at its inception.

ARTISTS BIOS

Mark Batty lives and works in London. After his BA in Illustration he fully transitioned to painting. Astronomy was always an academic passion and after studying it as an extra GCSE, Mark joined a local observers group in Surrey where he regularly met with amateur and professional astronomers. Shortly after he made the cosmos his artistic focus. Astronomical history and ancient mythology have always served as inspiration and Mark has worked closely with the Royal Astronomical Society and Ashmolean Museum as researcher and artist. Working with traditional painting methods, he has experimented with grinding pigment from materials found on different terrestrial bodies in our solar system, essentially painting the planets or moons using the materials they are composed of. In recent months, Mark has been working on his *Star Cloud* series, exploring more abstract and expressive realms of painting. His residency at Carpenter's Wharf Studios has allowed him to rethink ideas and loosen his technique.

Lynn Chadwick (1914 - 2003) was an English sculptor and artist. Much of his work is semi-abstract sculpture in bronze or steel. His work is in the collections of MoMA in New York, the Tate in London and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Lynn Chadwick came to sculpture through unconventional means initially working as an architectural draughtsman. He began his sculptural career making mobile constructions for building trade fairs and it was the resulting success of these early mobiles and stables two of which were shown on the South Bank during the Festival of Britain in 1951, that first allowed him to seriously consider becoming a freelance sculptor. Chadwick first came to international prominence in 1952 when he was included in the British Council's 'New Aspects of British Sculpture' exhibition for the XXVI Venice Biennale alongside Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, Bernard Meadows, Geoffrey Clarke, Robert Adam, William Turnbull and Eduardo Paolozzi. The following year he was one of the twelve semi-finalists for the Unknown Political Prisoner International Sculpture Competition and went on to win the International Prize for sculpture at the 1956 Venice Biennale, beating Giacometti. Many honours and awards followed this period and his work was widely collected both privately and by major institutions globally. In 1964, he was awarded a CBE and in 2001 was elected a Royal Academician. A major retrospective of his work was held at Tate Britain, London in 2003.

Lewis Davidson (1990) is a Mixed Media Artist, based in London. His work addresses themes of value, transience and displacement through Sculpture, Photography and Installation. In 2010 Lewis undertook a BA in Fine Art at Chelsea School of Art and Design. 2014-16 he was part of the touring Art@Tell Programme, directed by the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. 2017-19 Lewis studied at Slade School of Fine Art (MFA, Sculpture), with the addition of the Felix Slade Scholarship and the Deans Bursary. Upon graduation he was awarded the Almacantar Studio Award (2019) and placed on the Deans List of Academic Excellence at UCL. Exhibitions include Season of Fire from the Passenger Seat (Raw Labs, London, 2020), Adjacent Directly (Unit 1, London, 2019), Under Sole and Sky Head (Slade School of Fine Art, London, 2019), Holiday (ARCADE, London, 2018), Catch of the Year (DIENSTGEBÄUDE, Zürich, 2017) and The Observer Effect (GEMAK, The Hague, 2015). Upcoming exhibitions include solo show Gearhead (A Room Upstairs, London, 2020) and Gargle (Bow Arts, London, 2020).

Arthur Fleischmann (1896 - 1990) was a Slovak-born, London-based sculptor, who pioneered the use of Perspex in sculpture. He spent time in Bali, and in Australia, where he was at the centre of the Merioola Group, before settling in London. In 2001, the Arthur Fleischmann Foundation was formed. Working with the Mestske Muzeum and the City of Bratislava, the Foundation helped set up a permanent museum in the house at 6 Biela Ulica, Bratislava where Arthur Fleischmann grew up. He is also commemorated with a plaque at his London home, 92 Carlton Hill, Westminster. The plaque was unveiled on 28 July 1998 by the Austrian and Slovak ambassadors, together with the Deputy Lord Mayor of Westminster, Joy Fleischmann, and former Arts Minister, Lord Gowrie. Since 2004 there is a plaque at the house Favoritenstraße 12 in Vienna (now a hotel), where he lived and worked from 1934 to 1938.

Zuza Mengham (1989) is a London-based multidisciplinary artist. Her practice explores the recovery of traditional crafts and the creation of new methods of making. The use and manipulation of materials within her work invites questions about the ways in which they are synthesized. Formal arrangements are put under pressure, combining elements that might be expected to oppose one another, so that new associations can materialise. Often sculptural work serves to create a sensorial tie or anchor to ideas of landscape and geologies, both actual and forged. The results have the effect of compacted narratives, merging natural and synthetic elements, both historical and contemporary.

Henry Moore (1898–1986) was a British artist. He is best known for his semi abstract monumental bronze sculptures that are located around the world as public works of art and was instrumental in introducing a particular form of modernism to the United Kingdom. His forms are usually abstractions of the human figure, typically depicting mother-and-child or reclining figures. His forms are generally pierced or contain hollow spaces. Many interpreters liken the undulating form of his reclining figures to the landscape and hills of his birthplace, Yorkshire. Moore was born in Castleford, the son of a coal miner.

Ruyin Nabizadeh (1993) received his BA in History of Art and Fine Art at Goldsmiths University 2016 before he went on to obtain his MA at the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2019. His praxis explores the sociohistorical and conceptual meanings of sculpture to question 'the interplay between markings of hospitality and hostility' while probing the ramifications of 'the figure of the absent author' by addressing the medium's specificity. Recent exhibitions include *Abducting the Priestess might solve your crops*, (date TBC), Space 52 and ERGO Collective Space, Athens, Greece, 16th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul (2019) Space 52, Athens (2019), and Studio 59, London (2018). He was awarded the NEON Contemporary Art Exhibitions Grants Program in 2019.

Katie Paterson (1981) is widely regarded as one of the leading artists of her generation. Collaborating with scientists and researchers across the world, Paterson's projects consider our place on Earth in the context of geological time and change. Her artworks make use of sophisticated technologies and specialist expertise to stage intimate, poetic and philosophical engagements between people and their natural environment. Katie Paterson has exhibited internationally, from London to New York, Berlin to Seoul, and her works have been included in major exhibitions including Hayward Gallery, Tate Britain, Kunsthalle Wien, MCA Sydney, Guggenheim Museum, New York, and The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. She was winner of the Visual Arts category of the 2014 South Bank Awards, and is an Honorary Fellow of Edinburgh University.

James Rogers (1993) is a British artist living and working in London, England. His work explores figuration in the realm of post digital, employing and hacking 3D printing methods to work with, iron, copper, bronze, and precious materials. Rogers studied at Camberwell College of Arts. He was awarded the prestigious Mead Scholarship supported by the philanthropist Scott Mead. His work was included in the FBA Futures show held at the Mall Galleries. He has also collaborated with Puma in their recent collections focusing around reinvention and innovation.

Tom Sachs (1966) lives and works in New York, his native city. Sachs re-envisions modern iconography, masterpieces of engineering, and popular and industrial inventions of the 20th century. He revisits, in model form, both history-making space shuttles and the MacDonald's workplace. From the module of Apollo 11 to Hello Kitty, Sachs plays with genres and "brand image". In fact, he doesn't refrain from taking major luxury brands and ripping them out of their contexts. The themes central to his universe focus on American culture and society, which he treats with a heavy dose of humor and sarcasm. Attentive to detail and the finished result, he executes his work using both high and low materials. Most often, his models are created out of foamboard, and some of his sculptures are cast in bronze. Sachs is a sculptor in the classical sense of the term. Like a Carl Zeiss lense, his unique designs break down the history of our production techniques even as they underline the meaning behind them, from their excellence to their alienation.

Inner Space has been organised by Nick Hornby, Oliver Beer and by Dr Cleo Roberts, studio director at Oliver Beer Studio.

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