

Tom de Freston

SMALL WORLDS

2 June - 9 September 2023

Arts

No 20 Arts
20 Cross Street
London
N1 2BG



Skellig (Dream), 2022 Limited edition print on Hahnemuhle German etching paper bound to aluminium, 56 x 80 cm



Ice Drift, 2021, Limited edition print on Hahnemuhle German etching paper bound to aluminium, 56 x 80 cm

No 20 Arts is delighted to present *Small Worlds*, the first exhibition of Tom de Freston's drawings. Long an admirer of Maurice Sendak, Jon Klassen, and Leonora Carrington, and having built a career around the construction of multimedia worlds, it is little wonder that de Freston has turned his hand to illustration in the past five years.

From jointly creating stories around miraculous animals with his wife, novelist Kiran Millwood Hargrave, to being selected to make work for the first illustrated edition of David Almond's iconic *Skellig*, he has brought his full range of process to paper. Monoprinting, collaging, maquettes, and painting combined with interplays of scale and texture give each finished work depth and intrigue. His fierce belief in an image's ability to communicate complex narrative is on full display here, made no less complex by the size, simplicity of line, and colour palette.

These are works that illuminate rather than illustrate the texts they accompany, and shown in isolation their power is evident. Populated by the uncanny, the sublime, and the strange, they act not as mirrors but windows to the text, opening out onto wider vistas. As de Freston himself says, these works exist not to '[lock] down a reader's own version, but rather [expand] the architecture of the spaces they might enter.' We invite you into these spaces, these windows into small but mighty worlds.

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About Tom de Freston

Tom de Freston's practice is dedicated to the construction of multimedia worlds, combining painting, film, and performance into immersive visceral narratives. His work is exhibited widely. He has held various prestigious residencies and fellowships, including the inaugural **Creative Fellowship** at Birmingham University, the **Levy Plumb Artist in Residence** at Cambridge University, and a **Leverhulme Artistic Residency**. He is currently Artistic Director of **Medicine Unboxed**.



Julia and the Fox, de Freston's second collaboration with his wife, novelist Kiran Milwood Hargrave, was listed as one of The Guardian's best children's books of 2022. De Freston's debut narrative non-fiction book, *Wreck* was published by Granta in March 2022. Forthcoming publications include *Strange Bodies*, a non-fiction collaboration with Milwood Hargrave, as well as the illustrated 25th anniversary edition of David Almond's *Skellig*.



Drawing from the animation for the forthcoming feature length documentary *Insight* by Mark Jones

About No 20 Arts

Opened in January 2017, No 20 Arts is a centre for contemporary arts. A multi-functional space, the gallery hosts a programme of exhibitions, performances and events that support emerging and established artists working across all media.

For more information and prices, please contact info@no20arts.com

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