

# STUDIO VISIT

6 September - 31 October 2019

No 20 Arts  
20 Cross Street  
London N1 2BG

No 20 Arts is delighted to present STUDIO VISIT, a group show including works by Mike Ballard, Araminta Blue, Monica Perez Vega, Jhonatan Pulido and Alexandra Searle. Pieces from recent graduates from The Slade and Royal College of Art mix with the works of a mid-career artist in an exhibition that wishes to present the viewers with an insight into the creative and artistic processes of these artists by showcasing small preparatory works alongside final pieces.

Fascinated with the concepts of ownership and displacement, Mike Ballard takes inspiration from the visual noise in the urban environment, sourcing his materials from the city itself. Initially a graffiti artist, the studio works of Ballard re-contextualise and appropriate materials and marks that he finds interesting. By photographing residues and inscriptions left by illicit stickers or posters, and then printing these images to transfer them onto the canvas surface, where he finalises the work, Ballard comments on the ever-changing embellishment/defacement process undergone by the city landscape. In a similar fashion, his sculptures are made out of "ghost woods" – deteriorated wooden panels with interesting marks and inscriptions that he collects and replaces with brand new panels.



Mike Ballard, *The Sense of an Ending*, 2018



Araminta Blue, *Drifting Heroics*, 2018

Having studied anatomy directly from the cadavers at The Ruskin, University of Oxford, recent MA graduate from The Slade, Araminta Blue's works often include human figures or body parts. Interested in dreams and the surreal, multi-layered, her paintings have an unfinished quality to them that allows to see through the subject matters: *Drifting Heroics* presents us with a two-headed human figure, spinal cord, muscles and tendons visible, immersing into a pond to rescue a fish from being caught in a net, not realising that once it is out of the water it is going to die. This work

also reflects a constant in her work; a concern with the contradictions of human nature and the fine line between some of its behaviour; rescue can easily turn into destruction, protection into control, etc.

A recent MA graduate from The Slade too, California-born Monica Perez Vega's works also embrace the accidental and incidental. Inspired by nature's processes that imply both death and regeneration such as leaves falling or bark peeling, the artist's interest in making 3D paintings that would curl off the wall like bark resulted in acrylic sculptures that are formed over a constructive/destructive process involving fire and spray paint. Having lived in Amsterdam for 10 years, where trees are very much intentionally planted and live in straight lines, Perez Vega struggled with the lack of wilderness. Moving to suburban London allowed the artist to reawaken her relationship with nature, bringing memories of her growing up among the Californian Giant Sequoias which, just like her sculptures, rely on fire and heat to grow and reproduce.



Monica Perez Vega, *Embrace*, 2018

With his birthplace also at the core of his artistic process, Jhonatan Pulido graduated recently from the Royal College of Art, where he was able to develop a unique palette and find the voice to tell stories he did not want to tell before. Originally from Colombia, Jhonatan draws inspiration from the graffiti of the illegal armed groups in the rural territories of the country. The interference of these inscriptions with the natural marks and aging of the walls of the houses that belonged to the civilian population became Pulido's first experience of pictorial decision-making in terms of colour, surface and composition. Once the conflict came to an end, the inhabitants used bright colours to cover up those messages completely, becoming the painting and covering of those surfaces a symbol of resurgence for many communities. Pulido's works materialise those memories and comment on the relationship between painting, architecture and war.



Jhonatan Pulido, *Diciembre*, 2019

Architecture is also a concern of Alexandra Searle; whose sculptures frequently exist in an intimate relationship with the exhibition space – either hugging and coupling with it, or being restricted by it. Searle's works play with the ideas of context and materiality, some of her sculptures proudly bare the natural colour of their materials while others scream of their shop-bought artificiality. Inducing the viewers to challenge commonly accepted notions relating to materials, the artist presents us with voluptuous and fragile sculptures that tend to escape in bulges of protest.



Alexandra Searle, *Applying Pressure*, 2018

By presenting small preparatory works alongside final pieces, STUDIO VISIT offers a unique opportunity to delve into the creative journeys of five different artists that draw inspiration from their surroundings and formational experiences.

## 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](mailto:info@no20arts.com)

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