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Press Release

Objects of Contemplation

Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset

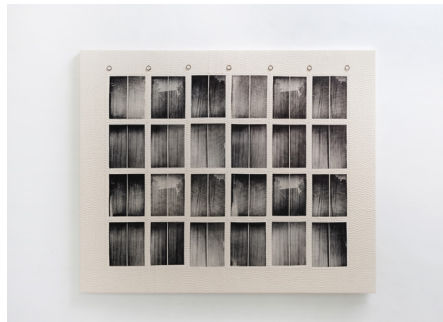
16 March – 12 May 2024

Opening Reception: Saturday 16 March 2024, 10 am – 4 pm

Featuring Max Bainbridge, Abigail Booth, Anthony Bryant, Adam Buick, Helen Carnac, Samuel Chatto, Samuel Collins, Alexander deVol, Daniel Freyne, David Gates, Akiko Hirai, Harry Morgan, Annemarie O’Sullivan, Mark Reddy, Romilly Saumarez Smith, Maria Sigma, Katie Spragg, Olivia Walker, Alice Walton



Daniel Freyne, 'Anchor 1,'
2022



Abigail Booth, 'For Now We See Clearly,'
2022 – 2023



Romilly Saumarez Smith, 'Land Sea and Night
Sky,' 2023

'Objects of Contemplation' celebrates over five years of collaborative exhibitions with artist-makers from across the UK and Europe, spanning disciplines from wood to ceramic, textile, metal, stone and mixed materials. Launching in Somerset this March, an iteration of the show will travel to London in May, demonstrating Make Hauser & Wirth's long-term commitment to contemporary craft and, above all, to the exceptional individuals who have been at the core of the program since its inception. Curated in dialogue with each other, the 19 featured artist-makers present singular works that exemplify their current practice. Characterized by the unique relationship between material and maker, broader conceptual and aesthetic concerns are brought to the fore through formal research, the complex layering of narratives and contextual enquiry.

Anchored by process and the language of form, the works on view include Harry Morgan's geometric explorations in concrete and glass and Daniel Freyne's works in iron which, together, redefine material perceptions. David Gates's collecting cabinets, referencing the vernacular of agricultural buildings, respond directly to a sense of place similarly reflected in the metal vessels of Helen Carnac, with both artists drawn to human interventions in the landscape. Abigail Booth delves further into our understanding of place and identity working across a material language of textiles, print and natural color. Adam Buick's interpretations of the traditional moon jar draw on his native geology, whilst Akiko Hirai's investigations of the form evoke the visceral power of clay, simultaneously exploring the vagaries of the human condition. Romilly Saumarez Smith's enigmatic objects of curiosity are created from rescued treasures, their silent memory retraced, reimagined and transformed. This telling of stories and our connectedness to the past and land recurs as Mark Reddy looks to nature for the roots of our co-evolution, sourcing found and foraged wood to rework and coax into new abstract forms.

The collection of works communicates at a haptic level through an active engagement with the handmade, whilst expanding our understanding and appreciation of material-led practice. As the gallery looks to the future, we will continue to encourage and articulate the limitless potential of contemporary craft, both in the UK and overseas, underlining its reach and significance through a program of learning initiatives and equally supporting our artist-makers across the breadth of our platform and residency opportunities.

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About the Makers

Max Bainbridge

Working predominantly in wood, Somerset-based Max Bainbridge's sculpture practice reflects his drive to preserve a tangible and grounded presence through the physicality of the sculpted material object. By seeking out trees that have fallen where they once grew, his sculptures retain a direct and intimate connection to land and place, recognizing the tree as a living being that can occupy both our inner psyche and the physical character of its former site. His search for the true essence of the tree is thereby ever present within the form of his large-scale vessels and free-standing sculptures. Selected solo exhibitions include 'Idylls of the Field,' Lemon Street Gallery, Cornwall, UK (2022); 'Walking the Line,' Oriol Myrddin, Carmarthen, UK (2019); and Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, UK (2018). Selected group exhibitions include 'Material Matters,' Court Barn Museum, Gloucestershire, UK (2023); and 'Material Beings,' Cromwell Place, London, UK (2023).

Abigail Booth

Working across a material language of textiles, painting and natural color, Somerset-based Abigail Booth's works delve into the internal narratives of our imagination, dreams and memory as they originate in our interactions with nature. Reflecting on the intrinsic relationship of her materials to the human body and psychological condition, she looks to her painted and patchworked canvases as a site where tactile images can manifest and play with our shifting understanding of place and identity. Selected solo exhibitions include 'Idylls of the Field,' Lemon Street Gallery, Cornwall, UK (2022); 'Shallow Lands,' Informality Gallery, Oxfordshire, UK (2021 – 22); 'Walking the Line,' Oriol Myrddin, Carmarthen, UK (2019); and Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, UK (2018). Selected group exhibitions include 'Material Matters,' Court Barn Museum, Gloucestershire, UK (2023); and 'Material Beings,' Cromwell Place, London, UK (2023).

Anthony Bryant

Anthony Bryant is a Cornish wood artist internationally recognized for his unsurpassed work in green wood turning, creating sculptural forms with a lithe and subtle sensibility. With over 40 years of experience, Bryant demonstrates an ever-evolving style that continually seeks to surpass functionality. Working with native species, he seeks to exploit and reveal the natural characteristics inherent in the wood, stretching the potential of the material in scale and depth. His work can be found in museum collections internationally, including Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK; Liverpool Museum & Art Gallery, UK; and the Sainsbury Collection, Norwich, UK. Recent exhibitions include 'Modern Made,' Lyon and Turnbull, Mall Galleries, London, UK (2023); 'A Part of Us,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2023); and 'From Trengwainton to Tremeneheere,' The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland (2022).

Adam Buick

Drawing upon his longstanding interest and knowledge of geology, Adam Buick unearths not only the physical resources for his jars but inspiration for their aesthetic. The way he observes, experiences and understands landscape is reflected in the embellishment of their surfaces and the materials within. Taking inspiration from the form of the Korean moon jar, Buick's thrown and coiled interpretations play with scale and the introduction of locally sourced clays and organic materials. Buick works from his studio at Llanferran on the north coast of St. David's Peninsula, South West Wales. His work is held in several public collections including Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK; Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth, UK; and National Museum, Cardiff, UK. His selected exhibitions include: 'British Ceramics Biennial,' Spode China Hall, Stoke on Trent, UK (2019); 'Things of Beauty Growing: British Studio Pottery,' The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, UK (2018); and the UK Pavilion at Cheongju Craft Biennale, Cheongju, South Korea (2017).

Helen Carnac

Helen Carnac is an artist, maker and curator who lives and works in Somerset, UK. Setting up her studio in the early 1990s, Carnac develops projects using methodologies that are rooted in an acute awareness of physical location, place and working practices. Exploring the explicit connections between material, process and maker, she has worked with many materials in numerous contexts, but her area of expertise is the combination of vitreous enamel on metal. Projects include 'Holding Space: Contemporary Enamel Vessels,' Springfield Museum, Missouri, USA (2023); 'Like Paper,' Galerie Noel Guyomarc'h, Montreal, Canada (2022); 'Impertinente,' Musée

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des Beaux-Arts de Limoges, France (2022); Blaze - International Contemporary Enamel Art Exhibition, Taiwan (2018); 'Meister der Moderne,' Munich, Germany (2017); and the UK Pavilion at Cheongju Craft Biennale, Cheongju, South Korea (2017).

Samuel Chatto

Samuel Chatto explores the idea of transformation through process in both ceramics and printmaking, developing a highly individualistic practice where both the subjects of his work and the materials he uses display his deep connection to the landscape around him. His practice began in 2018, studying at North Shore Pottery in Latheron, Scotland, with an early focus on functional objects inspired by the studio pottery movement. This is where he developed his passion for wood firing, digging clay and making glazes. He undertook an apprenticeship with porcelain master Yagi Akira in Kyoto, Japan in 2023, working with porcelain to learn the strict traditional technique of throwing. Since his return, he has been working on a series of abstract sculptures inspired by the qualities and limits of porcelain, fascinated by the way in which material breaks into natural patterns, evoking landscape, whilst remaining a living material. Chatto's work is held in several private collections and his recent projects include 'Ceramic Collection,' Fels Gallery, London, UK (2023); 'Summer Presentation,' The Royal Drawing School, London, UK (2023); 'Imagined Landscapes,' Yervan Im Ser Foundation, Yerevan, Armenia (2022); and 'Ceramic Selection London,' Laurence Coste, London, UK (2021).

Samuel Collins

Predominantly working in marble and limestone, Samuel Collins's work is informed by a curiosity for the natural world, surrealist forms and his pursuit to find a balance between space, mass and materiality. His recent works reflect the abstracted anomalies shaped by nature and incorporate a range of materials that can offer a second purpose as sculpture, such as discarded building stones pulled from local churches or reclaimed limestone masonry. Collins graduated in 2019, having studied Design & Craft at the University of Brighton, UK. He now works from his studio on the edge of Dungeness Nature Reserve in Kent, UK. His recent exhibitions include 'Atmosphere,' Francis Gallery, Bath, UK (2023); 'Materiality,' Kindred House, Margate, UK (2022); and 'Hard Knocks,' The Radford Gallery, London, UK (2022).

Alexander deVol

Alexander deVol is an artist-maker based in Lancashire, UK. Working with unseasoned locally felled trees, his practice represents an ongoing investigation into the material properties of wood, as well as its transference into other states. For deVol, the process of change that the wood goes through as it dries is essential; his skilful, alchemic artistry transforms surface perception, the outcome of which is an object sculpted by both maker and material. deVol studied Design at the University of Central Lancashire, UK. His previous exhibitions include 'Dunhill's The Home of Craftmanship,' London, UK (2017); 'Making It Now,' Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, Wales, UK (2017); and 'Burberry Makers House,' London, UK (2017).



Mark Reddy, Collection of Three Standing Spoons, 2023



Adam Buick, Large Jar, 2021



Harry Morgan, Untitled, 2022

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Daniel Freyne

Pushing the boundaries of perception, blacksmith Daniel Freyne is a Scottish artist based in Clackmannan, questioning the symbolism of the vessel. Freyne aims to challenge the viewer's perspective of his chosen material, iron. By adopting archetypal forms, he reinterprets metal work, creating cracks and fissures throughout the surface. What seems solid and impenetrable can be seen as deceptively fragile and open. After a five-year blacksmithing apprenticeship at Ratho Byres Forge, Edinburgh, Scotland, he enrolled in a bachelor's degree at Gothenburg University, Sweden, to study Fine Art, specialising in Metal Art. He was represented by Craft Scotland for Collect 2020 and participated in Future Heritage at Decorex 2021, curated by Corinne Julius.

David Gates

David Gates's work is centrally concerned with how furniture, as a contextually entwined sculptural entity, is connected to the objects it contains and the space it is situated in. His recurring motif is the collecting cabinet, the cabinet of curiosities. His work has a relationship with agricultural and industrial architecture. Once finding these forms and structures along stretches of the River Thames and its estuarine landscape, Gates's work is now concerned with finding new but analogous alignments and resonances with the silos, barns, sheds and pylons of his new working context in Somerset. Gates was awarded a BA (Hons) in Three-Dimensional Design, Furniture from the Ravensbourne College of Art, UK and in 2017 a PhD from King's College London, UK with his thesis 'The Makers' Tongue: Small Stories of Positioning and Performance in the Situated Discourses of Contemporary Crafts Practitioners.' Gates's work is exhibited and collected internationally. Selected exhibitions include: 'M2 Artists,' ASC Gallery, London, UK, (2022); 'Taste Contemporary, Odd and Even: A Collection,' Maison Louis Carre, Bazoches-sur-Guyonne, France, (2021); and the UK Pavilion at Cheongju Craft Biennale, Cheongju, South Korea (2017).

Akiko Hirai

Akiko Hirai's vessel forms focus on the interconnectedness between maker, the object and the viewer. Hirai's moon jars push her material to its limits, with the originality of her process evidence of the unstable and unpredictable nature of clay and the fire itself. Inspired by the moon jars of Korea which embrace cracks, stains and chips from years of use, Hirai intentionally references the human condition through the making of her vessels with the shifting outcome of color, the scarred and disrupted surface, and scale and generosity of form as unpredictable as the vagaries of life experience. London-based Akiko Hirai was born in Shizuoka, Japan and her work is included in permanent collections at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK; Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, UK; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, UK; and the Keramik Museum, Westerwald, Germany. Internationally exhibited, her work featured in the exhibition 'Things of Beauty Growing,' Yale Center for British Art, New Haven CT (2017), which travelled to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, UK (2018); 'Pioneering Women,' Oxford Ceramics Gallery, Oxford, UK (2021); and 'On foot: An exhibition curated by Jonathan Anderson,' Offer Waterman, London, UK (2023). Hirai was shortlisted for the Loewe Foundation Craft Prize in 2019.

Harry Morgan

Harry Morgan's approach to making fluctuates between the use of intuition, geometry and material expression. His work is characterized by its unexpected marrying of materials and experimental approach to traditional processes. Morgan's work challenges both the physical and cultural connotations of his chosen materials, reimagining the ancient craft of the Venetian glassblowing technique 'murrini.' These new material investigations continue his exploration of industrial materials and our conflicting relationship with the built environment. Harry Morgan is based in Manchester since graduating from the Edinburgh College of Art in 2014 and has exhibited widely throughout the UK and internationally. As a finalist of the 2019 Loewe Craft Prize, his work was exhibited at Isamu Noguchi's indoor garden 'Heaven' in Tokyo, Japan, where he was awarded a Special Mention. His sculptures are also held in the permanent collections of the Victorian & Albert Museum, London, UK; The National Museum of Northern Ireland; The European Museum of Modern Glass, Coburg, Germany; and the Loewe Foundation, Madrid, Spain.

Annemarie O'Sullivan

Annemarie O'Sullivan is a basket maker, working on small-scale domestic objects to large-scale architectural installations. O'Sullivan works with willow, which she grows and harvests, using weaving and binding techniques used for hundreds of years to make a range of functional and non-functional work. Engaging with every step

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from harvesting to construction, her work draws on the curves of the landscape and demonstrates a connection with nature that results in beautiful pieces steeped in history. She grows around 20 different types of willow and is passionate about seeing the making process through from source material to finished piece. Previous projects and exhibitions include: 'Over & Under,' Lewes Festival of Basketry, Sussex, UK (2023); 'Five Seasons,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2022); and 'Basketry — Function and Ornament,' Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, Wales, UK (2019).

Mark Reddy

Mark Reddy is an artist maker working with wood, metal and found objects to explore and question our relationship with the utilitarian and functional form of the spoon and the sculptural and symbolic properties of his materials. Reddy abstracts the form of the spoon through animated sculptural totems, singular and grouped, referencing the interdependence and animacy of the living world. Reddy has worked as an illustrator and creative director in design, print and television, receiving international recognition. His works in metal and wood have been exhibited widely at galleries including: The Study, London, UK; Primavera, Cambridge, UK; Open Eye Gallery, Edinburgh, UK; and Lynne Strover Gallery, Cambridge, UK. Recent exhibitions include 'a contour, a curve — the lie of the land,' 'making arrangements' and 'organic forms,' Gallery 57, Arundel, UK (2018 – 2019). Awards include the D&AD Awards, Creative Circle Awards, British Television Awards and Creative Circle Presidents' Lifetime Achievement Award.

Romilly Saumarez Smith

Romilly Saumarez Smith was a bookbinder for 25 years, having trained at Camberwell School of Art and Crafts, London, UK in the mid-1970s. Around 1997 she started to use copper wire on book bindings and this led her to make jewellery and, later, objects that are somewhat uncategorizable. Saumarez Smith is drawn to hidden worlds, taking metal detecting finds which have lain lost and unseen beneath the soil for hundreds of years, filling them with new life above the ground. Opposed to striving for mechanical perfection, through her work, Saumarez Smith ask us to reignite our senses. With her jeweller's eye and through the hands of her studio 'translators,' in this case Carola Solcia, who have become her hands as her own do not work anymore, she combines fragments of the past with the richest of materials—silver and gold, coral, seed pearls and diamonds. Mythical worlds are conjured through intricate artistry and the salvaged transformed into new artefacts. Her previous exhibitions include 'Poetry in Ocean,' Gill Wing Gallery, London, UK (2023); 'Uncommon Beauty – objects of curiosity and wonder,' Makers Guild Wales, Cardiff, UK (2023); and 'Homo Faber – Crafting a more human future,' Giorgio Cini Foundation, Venice, Italy (2022).

Maria Sigma

Maria Sigma's wall pieces focus on texture and materiality, each one a woven landscape which embodies a unique harmony of form, a constant exchange between processed and raw materials. Sigma's approach is based on creating beautiful textiles through 'zero waste' design and craftsmanship, with high quality and sustainable natural fibres being key to this philosophy. She strongly believes that the importance of weaving must be highlighted. Sigma studied at Chelsea College of Art & Design, London, UK and since she graduated in 2014 she has developed her own weaving practice in London, UK. Sigma regularly hosts her 'Weaving From Waste' workshops which teach participants the techniques explored in her book 'Weaving: the Art of Sustainable Textile Creation,' published in 2020. She has exhibited as one of Design Nation's 20 makers of 'Exceptional Craft for Exceptional Times' at Collect Art Fair, London, UK (2021); London Design Festival, London, UK in partnership with Teer & Co at Planted (2021). Recent collaborations include Candice Lau x TOAST (2021); Selfridges, London, UK (2021); and London Craft Week at COS (2022).

Katie Spragg

Katie Spragg is an artist working predominantly in ceramics. Her work explores our interconnected relationship with nature, questioning the evolving patterns in which humans and plants co-exist. She is interested in how plants behave and how their behaviour can help us reconsider our own approach to communities, care, landscape and our place in the world. Spragg often creates work in response to participation of other people. Recent projects include 'Lambeth Wilds' (2019 – 2020) at the Garden Museum, created with Lambeth Young Carers and Clay for Dementia group; 'Plants, Porcelain People' (2021), a collaborative exhibition with Norwich International Youth Project; and 'Sowing the Seed' (2022), workshops for children at a community allotment in

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partnership with GROW Eastbourne and Towner Gallery, which was nominated for a HAF government award. Spragg's catalogue of work includes a piece in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, a permanent installation at the Garden Museum and commissions for the British Ceramics Biennale and Sotheby's.

Olivia Walker

Devon-based ceramicist Olivia Walker's thrown forms are layered with thousands of individually applied fragments of clay. Each stage has a set of rules which motivates Walker to understand the versatility of material, learning and improving on this tacit knowledge. Fascinated by the intersection between the man-made and natural, Walker allows her organic accretions to spread out—eating through or expanding over the vessel form beneath, resembling fungus, coral and bacteria as they accumulate. Walker completed a master's degree in Contemporary Craft, studying under celebrated ceramic artist Magdalene Odundo, at the University of Creative Arts in Farnham, UK. She simultaneously completed an apprenticeship with the renowned studio potter and writer Julian Stair. Her work is held in both public and private collections throughout the UK and worldwide. Featured publications include British Vogue, The Evening Standard, Financial Times's How to Spend It and Colossal magazine. Walker has recently exhibited in 'Cut and Fold,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2023); 'The Value of Things,' Vessel Gallery, London, UK (2023); and 'Monumental Fragility,' National Design and Craft Gallery, Kilkenny, Republic of Ireland (2019).

Alice Walton

Ceramicist Alice Walton creates highly complex, multi-layered labyrinthine forms infused with a rich tonal blending technique. Comprised of individual clay components, Walton's abstract scenes emerge through a technique of repetitive and ritualistic mark-making, highlighting the tension between the meditative coloured clays and kinetic surface furnish. Thin ribbons of porcelain ripple across the surfaces of Walton's abstract sculptures. Gently sloped domes and pillars are covered in countless individual strips, which vary in thickness and length and add irregular texture and depth to the finished pieces. Her work is about a consideration of the everyday, taking the time to notice the unseen things in our environment—the linear and chaotic, the regular and irregular—and re-evaluating them, pivoting from the literal into the imaginary and abstract. Walton's previous exhibitions include 'The Value in Things,' Ting Ying Gallery, London, UK (2023); 'Le Salon Vert,' Parcours Ceramic Carougeois, Geneva, Switzerland (2022); and 'New Ceramics,' Beaux Arts Bath, Bath, UK (2022).

About Make Hauser & Wirth

Make Hauser & Wirth is a dedicated space for contemporary making and the crafted object, committed to showcasing some of the world's best emerging and established artist-makers. Make is a natural extension of the wider Hauser & Wirth gallery ethos, embracing art, craft, gardens, food and architecture. Since launching in 2018 in Somerset, UK, Make has presented work by over 80 artist-makers and provided valuable insights into material-led processes and the rich narratives of their practices.

Works exhibited by Make embrace material truth, provenance, sustainability and the value of emotional engagement with the handmade. In addition to a varied exhibition program, Make has hosted practical workshops, discussions and studio visits to expand learning and engagement with makers and global craft organisations.

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Wednesday – Sunday
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Daniel Freyne, Anchor 1, 2022. Photo: Dave Watts

Abigail Booth, For Now We See Clearly, 2022 –
2023. Photo: Forest + Found

Romilly Saumarez Smith, Land Sea and Night Sky,
2023. Photo: Lucinda Douglas Menzies

Mark Reddy, Collection of Three Standing Spoons,
2023. Photo: Dave Watts

Adam Buick, Large Jar, 2021. Photo: Dave Watts

Harry Morgan, Untitled, 2022. Photo: Gian Paul Lozza