

Make

HAUSER & WIRTH
SOMERSET

Press Release

Prophetic Land

Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset

2 November 2024 – 5 January 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday 2 November 2024, 12 – 3 pm

Featuring Max Bainbridge and Abigail Booth



Max Bainbridge, 'Corpus' (detail), 2024



Abigail Booth, 'Tender,' 2024

'Prophetic Land' is a poetic response to the shifting nature of the complex landscape and environment that artist-makers Max Bainbridge and Abigail Booth encountered in Braemar, Scotland, during their month-long residency with Make Hauser & Wirth last year. Immersed in the geological formations of the Cairngorms, they were struck by an increased ability to read the land and look beyond the mask of the picturesque and instead toward the environmental collapse of its ecosystems. Their works in 'Prophetic Land' are a reflection of the paradoxical role humans have had in tipping those ecological balances and the importance of looking to new ways of turning the tide of environmental collapse.

The exhibition's title is a direct reference to the recorded prophecies of the Brahan Seer, a highlander in the 1600s who supposedly had second sight. Many of his prophecies are believed to have come to pass or have been partially fulfilled, often interpreted as predicting the environmental changes and human impacts that have occurred over the last 500 years. His forecasts, including the highland clearances and the industrial revolution, among other events up to our current day, can be cited to his unique intuition for humanity and the natural world. In this exhibition, both artist-makers play on this ability to foresee, reading the land through the behaviour of water, trees, earth, stone and the interconnected web of living beings to create works that convey the threats nature is facing.

Max Bainbridge's sculptures look beneath the physical surface of the tree to both reveal the fragility of nature and to highlight our mortality. By working with trees that have fallen where they once grew, his sculptures are a direct and intimate connection to land and place. The works on view present excavations of sections of wild cherry, Scottish elm and beech wood, all displaced from their natural environments in the Cairngorms where they face a battle for survival. Bainbridge explores what is imbibed within these trees throughout their lifetime and uncovers what they can tell us about ourselves and the future of natural habitats. Reducing the monumental presence of the tree into objects on a more human scale, the works on display comprise fragile and sanded tree limbs as well as bodies of beech containing burls from disease and trauma. Looking to how their environment has shaped and changed the trees, his sculptures speak simultaneously to the threats these species face and to their ability to endure and persist against the odds we bring upon them. Building a paradoxical narrative of strength and vulnerability, each sculpture offers a different lament on what it means to exist within a fragile

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and ever-changing ecosystem. Reflecting on our relationship with the natural world and our place within it, his works carved from wood sit in relation to objects made with stone and cast metal. These sculptures look to the metamorphosis of material as a representation of our ability to manifestly adapt and change.

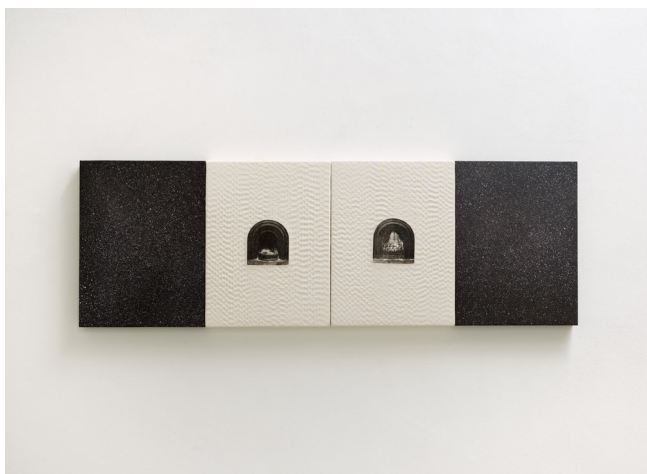
Abigail Booth's panelled paintings and quilted textiles can be interpreted as a series of allegories reflecting on our past actions, or as brooding portents of those that are yet to come. They conjure turbulent and enigmatic images as seen in her mind's eye of the environmental threats we face. Cultivating and unearthing objects and pigments from the environment she encountered in Braemar, her material language draws on dyes extracted from the bark of pine trees, ochres and schists collected from mountain tops, as well as soft thistle-down, sheep's fleece and burnt heather and juniper, referencing the controversial burning of moorland and traditional practices of purification to stimulate clairvoyance. Booth's works speak to her knowledge of plants as she grapples with our contradictory ability to cause harm and our desire to engage in acts of healing. They demand a level of decoding, a 'reading' beneath their surface, to piece together our forgotten relationships with animals and plants and the intimacies of care required to reignite our natural intuitions. Drawing on the transfer of intergenerational memory, her panels, when read together, reveal deep truths about our past and future relationships to the natural world.

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.



Max Bainbridge, 'Heartwood I,' 2024



Abigail Booth, 'Mantle To Mantle,' 2023

About the Makers

About Max Bainbridge

Spanning a material language of wood and metal, Bainbridge's work seeks a grounded presence in the physicality of the sculpted object through his enduring relationship to the natural body of the tree. Selected solo exhibitions include: 'Soft Bodies,' Dark Hearts, Ruthin Craft Centre, Wales, UK (2024); 'Hollow Bodies,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2024); 'Shallow Lands,' Informality Gallery, Oxfordshire, UK (2021 – 22); and 'Biophilia,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2021). Selected group exhibitions include: 'This Country,' Crafts Council Gallery, London, UK (2024); 'Objects of Contemplation,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2024); 'Material Beings,' Cromwell Place, London, UK (2023); 'Les Trames du Possible,' Amelie Maison D'Art, Paris, France (2022); and 'Common Thread,' New Art Centre, Roche Court, UK (2020). Selected Awards include: QEST Scholarship, Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust, UK (2019).

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Abigail Booth

Working across a material language of quilt-making, painting and print, Booth's practice explores the emotional capacity of the domestic quilt and textile object to embody dreams and memory across time and space. Selected solo exhibitions include: 'Soft Bodies, Dark Hearts,' Ruthin Craft Centre, Wales, UK (2024); 'Shallow Lands,' Informality Gallery, Oxfordshire, UK (2021 – 22); and 'Biophilia,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2021). Selected group exhibitions include: 'This Country,' Crafts Council Gallery, London, UK (2024); 'Objects of Contemplation,' Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2024); 'Crafted By Nature,' Radnor, New York, US (2023); 'Material Beings,' Cromwell Place, London, UK (2023); 'Les Trames du Possible,' Amelie Maison D'Art, Paris, France (2022); and 'Common Thread,' New Art Centre, Roche Court, UK (2020). Selected Awards include: Develop Your Creative Practice Fund, Arts Council England, UK (2024); QEST Scholarship, Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust, UK (2020).

In 2014, both artists established Forest + Found, an art collective with whom they work on public commissions, exhibitions and curatorial projects.

Press Contacts:

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Make opening hours:

Thursday – Sunday
11 am – 5 pm

www.hauserwirth.com
[@make_hauserwirth](https://www.instagram.com/make_hauserwirth)
[#hwmake](https://www.tiktok.com/@hwmake)

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Max Bainbridge
Corpus (detail)
2024

Cypress wood and pewter
Dimensions available upon request
Photo credit: Forest + Found

Abigail Booth
Tender
2024
Cinnamon dye, oak tannin dye, hide glue and thread on quilted cotton calico, mixed cottons and gesso panel surround
105 x 145 x 5 cm / 41.3 x 57.1 x 2 in
Photo credit: Forest + Found

Max Bainbridge
Heartwood I
2024

Ash wood and steel cable
Dimensions available upon request
Photo credit: Forest + Found

Abigail Booth
Mantle To Mantle
2023
Soot, gum arabic, linseed oil, gesso and thread on cotton calico and gesso panels
40 x 120 x 3.5 cm / 15.7 x 47.2 x 1.4 in
Photo credit: Forest + Found