

# Make

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## Press Release

## Biophilia

Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset

17 July – 4 Sep 2021

Opening Reception: Friday 16 July, 4 – 8 pm

Featuring Abigail Booth and Max Bainbridge (Forest + Found)



For the exhibition 'Biophilia', artists Abigail Booth and Max Bainbridge examine the complex relationship and innate affinity of humankind with the natural world at a time of critical change. Reflecting on how their own psyches continue to be shaped by interactions with plants, trees, and interconnected ecology, both artists draw upon deeply personal narratives formed by their physical encounters with nature. In light of their recent move to rural Somerset, this new body of work contemplates the transitional experience of finding yourself surrounded by the unfamiliar and the ways in which we seek out a sense of belonging through the tactile memory of making.

As the landscapes of their imagination collide with a total immersion in nature, the resulting works are a direct response to a new and evolving sense of place, while retaining the intimate connections of their past. By teasing out the inner voice of the plants, wood, and other natural materials the artists' work with, they reflect on the powerful influence of the natural world, its ability to shape our understanding of who we are and our future within it. The inner life of the tree, or the quality of light in a colour locked within a plant, asks the viewer to question what they thought they knew and allows nature to have direct influence over the way we interact and perceive our environment.

Both artists have received funding from the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST) to further their respective skills through one-to-one training with master craftspeople, helping to support Britain's cultural heritage and sustain vital skills in traditional and contemporary crafts. The new work they have been developing over this period will feature in the exhibition at Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset. Bainbridge, as the 2019 Winch Design Scholar, has undergone the first part of his scholarship in professional chainsaw training, enabling him to learn

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the process of safely felling and processing trees in their entirety. Working in this way has allowed him to strengthen the site-specific nature of his practice and has made it physically possible to source and work with whole trees for the first time. By seeking out trees that have come to the end of their natural life, he has been able to work on a much larger scale as well as using an entire tree across a series of sculptures. Booth, as the 2020 Jenifer Emery Scholar, has worked under David Cranswick RA, a master in traditional painting materials and techniques. Under his mentoring, she has learnt in-depth processes of extracting and purifying pigments from nature, mixing and applying natural paint mediums, preparing traditional grounds and the philosophy of natural colour as it relates to history, landscape and place.

## About Forest + Found

Forest + Found are a UK based partnership between artists Max Bainbridge and Abigail Booth. Living and working together since 2014, their studio gives them a space for material experimentation and collaboration, as well as a platform to pursue their individual art practices. Abigail Booth studied Fine Art at Byam Shaw School of Art, San Francisco Art Institute and Chelsea College of Art, where she graduated in 2013. Max Bainbridge studied Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art, where he graduated in 2013 as a photographer and sculptor. Working in both the visual arts and contemporary craft, they exhibit their work throughout the UK and internationally.

Selected solo exhibitions include: Walking the Line, Oriol Myrddin, Camarthen, UK (2019) and Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, UK (2018); Outland, Egg, London, UK (2018). Selected group exhibitions include: From Nature, Informality, Henley-on-Thames, UK, (2021); Common Thread, New Art Centre, Roche Court, UK (2020); Jerwood Makers Open, Jerwood Space, London, UK (2019/20); Levelling Traditions, Make Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Bruton, UK (2018); Collect Open, Saatchi Gallery, London UK (2018). In 2017 they were artists in residence at Pitt River's Museum, Oxford, UK, (2017).



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Make opening hours:  
Wednesday – Saturday  
10 am – 1 pm & 2 pm – 4 pm  
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Installation view, 'Biophilia', Forest + Found,  
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