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Hear The Wind Sing

Audrey Bialke

Andie Carver

Christopher Huff

Jameson Magrogan

June 6 - July 13, 2024

RAINRAIN is pleased to announce the upcoming group exhibition *Hear the Wind Sing*, focusing on paintings by four artists Audrey Bialke, Andie Carver, Christopher Huff, and Jameson Magrogan. The exhibition features the artists' variegated paths of expressions, from abstract to mimetic, symbolic to mythological, navigating the muddy waters of paintings' historical relevance and future implications. Departing from the prevailing contemporary culture toward a result-driven process that pursues precision and legibility, these artists embrace the nuanced realm of non-verbalized expression. They treat painting as a portal that allows for shifting perspectives and uncertainties, ambitiously exploring the medium's physical surface and visual depths with playful control.

The cascade of information flow has rendered images endless, each an open-ended annotation easily manipulated to fit any purpose. Images are like the gusting, swirling wind, while paintings are the leaves that rustle and dance in its persistent force. This oversaturation of imagery and pursuit of instant gratification seemingly leaves little room for the contemplation and nuanced interpretation that art often invites. Yet, amidst this deluge of information and the undermining of the significance of viewing, *Hear the Wind Sing* offers a counterpoint. The exhibition shares the same title with Japanese author Murakami Haruki's first novel, which in fact referenced American novelist Truman Capote's final sentence in *Shut a Final Door*: "Think of nothing things, think of wind." It exemplifies a state of mind that embraces the uncertain, unpredictable, and variable nature of things which can happen both in an artist's creative process and in a viewer's encounter with a finished work.

Audrey Bialke applies the pictorial formats from medieval illuminated manuscripts to depict astrological patterns that could connect mythical animals, man-made amenities, vegetation, or other elements into a flattened panel. Comprising free-roaming creatures and intricately woven vignettes, each of her paintings almost feels like a talisman or a palimpsest—an encrypted documentation of the natural world that bypasses the conscious mind. Similarly treating nature as a fertile ground for her visual representation, **Andie Carver** nonetheless takes a different approach to probe the complex connections and overflowing emotions hidden beneath the natural order within the ecosystem. Following modernist painters' tradition *en plein air*, she alters scenic landscapes into dense, dynamic gestural paint marks that almost feel primal and breathable. Her paintings ignite the emotions seen intuitively in an animal's eyes—apprehension, delight, agony, awe—all equally felt and flowing in the natural setting.

Christopher Huff's paintings are both a personal investigation and reconciliation with his own genetic blood disorder. In his high-contrast and surrealistic landscape pieces, he uses materials from hand/body-warmers, mixing them with salt, sand, pigments and binders. To paint is to embody the ailment, the trauma, and the bodily fight. Mountains, beams of sunlight, wildfire and pop graffiti of free will find a structural harmony, complicating the correlation between human activities and non-human anomalies. **Jameson Magrogan**, with his abstraction of forms and vivid colors that feel full of force, portrays interplays of forms that defy the linear progression of time, spatial expansion, and even gravity. These works seem fluid and unrehearsed, yet they are meticulously hand-painted using custom-made cut-out stencils. A tension between order and entropy is thus created. Painterly marks, when stacked and layered as in Magrogan's paintings, no longer serve as traces of an artist's physical labor, but compress and disrupt the internal order of narratives. Ultimately, the canvas remains adorned with echoes that invite a further exploration beyond rational understanding of the objective world.

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About the Artist

Audrey Bialke (b.1991) is based in rural upstate New York. She received her BA from the State University of New York at Fredonia in 2013. Bialke works primarily as a painter to create fantastical scenes that combine her interest in spiritual traditions, Pagan iconography, and concerns regarding impending climate catastrophes. Her small-scale oil paintings on panel feature mythological creatures, such as dragons, winged lions, and unicorns, shown alongside domestic objects and pastoral landscapes suggesting a thread between fantasy and everyday human life. These sometimes anachronistic and surrealist juxtapositions draw attention to the human relationship with imagined fauna and flora, a nod to the artist's keen interest in our historical relationship to the natural world. Culling from an interest in Medieval illuminated manuscripts, Bialke frames each painted scene with an elaborate decorative border. In some of these designs, Bialke seeks to recontextualize botanical imagery from the Voynich Manuscript, which is a so far untranslatable and indecipherable manuscript from the early 15th century. These borders, which also act as an ode to early domestic patterning, further accentuate the feel of a composed visual narrative and suggest that a story is being told in symbols. The paintings become an allegory of a real and imagined past and present, as well as of life, death, and that mystical place in-between.

Andie Carver (b.1998) was born in North Carolina and currently lives and works in New York. She creates paintings of natural environments, reflecting her deep immersion in these landscapes. In her view, the Earth is a vibrant, ever-unfolding tapestry of interactions among various species. This dynamism is constant, yet it underscores the profound chasm of perceptual worlds that separate us. For Carver, painting is a means to explore this perceptual void, striving to connect with animal senses. Her artistic gestures are deeply intertwined with her personal perception and curiosity, yet they elude definitive representation. For Carver, painting is not just an artistic endeavor but a repository of unanswerable queries, a manifestation of her inherent animalistic traits that capture and momentarily hold her interactions with the world. It is a pursuit that perpetually opens her to a realm of unknowing that remains forever unresolved. Carver completed her Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts at Columbia University, following a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art from the College of Charleston. She has been honored with the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant.

Christopher Huff (b.1989) currently lives and works in Providence, Rhode Island. He earned his MFA degree from Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and his BFA degree in painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). His work focuses on abstract and representational imagery in relation to the effects of his chronic illness, sickle cell anemia. Within his work, Huff aims to shed light on the complexity of living with a chronic illness while exposing the multi-layered faceted effects of health issues that affect people across the diaspora of sickle cell anemia and other chronic health issues. Huff's work addresses and explores his personal experiences living with a genetic blood disorder, Sickle Cell Anemia. Within his work, he explores the abstract realms of emotions such as uncertainty, desire, longing, faith, perseverance, structure/lack of structure, fragility, conflict, fear & rage through the processes of painting and drawing. Each image is created in search of self-discovery, surveying past experiences in an attempt to greater understand the internal entity and its purpose within myself and the world. Huff questions how trauma, pain, moments of loneliness, and desire for better days have shaped him not only as an African American male living with a chronic illness but as an artist as well. Huff is a 2018-2020 Elaine L. Schaefer Scholarship recipient, 2022-2024 MFA Gelman & Nicolette Ausschnitt '66 Scholarship Award recipient. His work has been exhibited at Asya Geisberg Gallery, New York, NY, Andrew Reed Gallery, Miami, FL with Unit London, London, UK & the Reginald F. Lewis Museum, Baltimore, MD and is featured in New American Paintings southern issue #160.

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Jameson Magrogan (b.1992) was born in Baltimore, MD. He is a Brooklyn-based artist whose work contains a fractured sense of braided temporality and ungroundedness. Considering the generic or anachronistic, Magrogan processes echoes of disparate recurring modernist conventions through a unifying schematic procedure, as if pushed through the same sieve. Ideas of authenticity and newness are challenged by considering how the personal is found not counter to, but among the social. Painterly languages which have been historically associated with immediate uninhibited subjective expression are glitched, by way of both digital and analog interventions, and interpolated with some other more unstable temporal frequency. Rarely are marks made directly, rather they occur along numerous contemporaneous frequencies as a result of sanding, wiping, masking, or other less material mediating processes. These layers of mediation produce marks, which instead of feeling stacked - appear to be inside of, and flickering in between one another, all at once. One's initial perception of the image and its chronology are undermined by the ambiguous spatial and temporal tension that the object divulges over time: the fast reveals its slowness, and the aleatory proves calculated – never this or that, but both and neither. Magrogan's work formally approaches painting as a transgressive refrain from binary reductive logic, one which plays a consistent role in the social body's ability to interrogate our preconditioned understanding of the world. By presenting spatially and temporally ambiguous spaces, Magrogan's work eludes efficient reducibility and thus, interrupts the systematic reduction of all beings and phenomena to quantifiable data. Magrogan earned his MFA degree from Hunter College, and his BFA degree from Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA).