

Expanding Landscapes: Painting After Land Art Hestercombe Gallery 12th November 2022 – 26th February 2023

Expanding Landscapes: Painting After Land Art foregrounds work by contemporary painters, including Jessica Warboys, Onya McCausland and Hannah Brown alongside works by artists such as Nancy Holt, Richard Long, Andy Goldsworthy, and Turner Prize 2022 nominee, Ingrid Pollard.

Expanding Landscapes: Painting After Land Art comes to Hestercombe Gallery on 12th November until 26th February 2023 and brings together historical works by artists associated with Land Art with six contemporary artists who engage directly with landscape through the language of painting. The exhibition also includes prints from Ingrid Pollard's 2001 series, 'Landscape Trauma'.

Works by artists associated with Land Art including Nancy Holt, Andy Goldsworthy Robert Smithson, Richard Long, Michelle Stuart, Roger Ackling and Marie Yates will be on show alongside contemporary works by painters Hannah Brown, Sam Douglas, Onya McCausland, Rebecca Partridge, Fred Sorrell, Damian Taylor and Jessica Warboys.

Curator of Hestercombe Gallery, Tim Martin, said: "We can trace a history of land art back to the period when Hestercombe's C18th Landscape Garden was constructed, to the birth of English Landscape gardening and landscape painting, indeed the birth of romanticism. We're delighted to be able to host this exhibition which so closely links to Hestercombe's landscape history."

In the 1960s and 70s many artists left the studio and went into the landscape, using both the physical materials of the land and their direct experience of it as the source and inspiration for new art works.

Land art emerged alongside conceptual art practices, in the wake of which the activity of painting a landscape was put into question as a strategy for making contemporary art. Fifty years later we are witnessing a return to landscape as a critical subject for contemporary artists across disciplines, including the traditional medium of painting.

Shown across all seven galleries of Hestercombe House, this exhibition considers works by contemporary artists alongside historical works. Like the Land Art works which went before them, the exhibited paintings explore the romantic motifs of earth, sea and sky through a variety of materials and processes, including the physical experience of landscape as a creative act in itself. Sharing a concern for the vulnerability of nature and the importance of our attention to it, for materiality and the record of time, for all these artists and their predecessors the experience of being in the landscape is at the heart of the work.

Ingrid Pollard has been shortlisted for the 2022 Turner Prize for her solo exhibition 'Carbon Slowly Turning'

NOTES

Expanding Landscapes: Painting After Land Art is showing at Hestercombe Gallery from November 12, 2022 – February 26, 2023.

Full artist list:

Roger Ackling, Hannah Brown, Sam Douglas, Andy Goldsworthy, Nancy Holt, Richard Long, Onya McCausland, Rebecca Partridge, Ingrid Pollard, Robert Smithson, Fred Sorrell, Michelle Stuart, Damian Taylor, Jessica Warboys and Marie Yates.

- The exhibition is curated by Rebecca Partridge and Joy Sleeman and has been made possible by loans from The British Council, The Government Art Collection, University of Bath and other private collections.

Further info about the contemporary artists:

Jessica Warboys creates vast, abstract paintings reminiscent of the expressionism of the 1950s, though here the works have been physically performed in the landscape. By taking canvas and mineral pigments directly into the sea, Warboys fully entangles herself in a relationship between body, process and environment, creating the dynamic and physically absorbing work we see in the gallery. Onya McCausland uses the physical material of the land to create pigments, literally turning landscape into colour. These site specific pigments explore the geology, ecology, history and sociology of places such as ex coal mines and industrial landscapes across the UK, creating ochres – earth pigments whose history traces back to the first cave art – to create contemporary, sustainable paints.

Hannah Brown's paintings all begin with her own experience of her local landscapes, her attention to these ordinary spaces invests them with importance, encouraging our attention to them. Using the traditional language of landscape painting, she has said of her work that she looks for 'quiet, potentially unsettling places with a peculiar type of beauty'. The works from her 'Hedge' series, shown here, are loaded with a sense of ambiguity. Their towering scale immerses us in magnified aspects of hedgerows, connecting us to a physical experience of being in the landscape.

Conversely, Sam Douglas's paintings have a presence far beyond their tiny scale. The ancient monoliths and circles which appear in his landscapes speak to sites which were of importance to Land Artists, who also made direct reference to prehistory. Douglas connects the meteorological recurrences tracked by the ancient stones, to the physical act of painting– in pouring layers of paint and varnish he builds up a surface that has its own history, which he suggests as 'akin to the geological processes of sedimentation and erosion. Beneath many paintings is often the strata of previous images that sometimes emerge like archaeological remnants'.

This layering over time, both in the process and the subject resonates with Damian Taylor, whose paintings are derived from photographic records of changing light over elemental subjects such as clouds, rocks and seas. The paintings here show rocks which in their substance record the passage of time over billions of years. Taylor has created the image through the photographic record of several minutes of light passing over these rocks, subsequently built up with layers of paint over many months. The lush physicality of the paint surface brings a sense of deep time to the present. Similarly concerned with the observation of light and time, Rebecca Partridge's work shifts between acutely observed photorealistic paintings in series which mark time, to large watercolours of skies painted from the memory of those observations. Fred Sorrell has described 'trying to capture the experience of looking... of sensation in the landscape'. His paintings also originate in his own experience of being in the natural world, indicated in titles such as 'Long Tide', and 'Field', which, like Warboys', are expressed through abstraction, distillations of rhythm, colour and light.

The exhibition includes prints from Ingrid Pollard's 'Landscape Trauma' series from 2001, which mediate between contemporary and historical aspects of the exhibition. Pollard's decades-long practice offers an important precursor to contemporary artists' attempts to engage directly with the

experience of being in landscapes while critically encountering landscape's Romantic and Land Art pasts. 'Landscape Trauma' relates to the substrate of landscape, to the geology of the earth and the chthonic realm beneath our surface world, as well as explicit and more hidden social and cultural histories. These works resonate with the embodied and material experience of landscape characteristic of the paintings in the exhibition.

The exhibition is curated by Rebecca Partridge and Joy Sleeman.