

PRESS RELEASE

GROUNDWORK:

Miriam Austin, Rob Chavasse, Freddy Dewe Mathews, Tom Lovelace and David Murphy

Curated by Holly Willats and Alma Zevi

1 August – 27 September 2015

In line with the New Art Centre's important history of supporting forward-thinking young artists, each artist represented in the group exhibition GROUNDWORK is at a significant point in their early careers. Miriam Austin, Rob Chavasse, Freddy Dewe Mathews, Tom Lovelace and David Murphy are London-based and of the same generation, providing an illuminating showcase of current concerns in emerging contemporary practices. GROUNDWORK has been curated by Holly Willats and Alma Zevi.

Exhibited is a broad selection of media: sculpture, film, drawing and photography, with each artist making new work for the gardens of Roche Court, alongside further new and existing works shown in the indoor galleries.

Taking their work out of the city and presenting it within the Wiltshire countryside was perhaps a daunting task for these urban artists, but it has proven to be an exciting and fruitful opportunity for them. The particular location of the New Art Centre, with its beautiful parkland setting and ancient earthworks within the adjacent woods, and the culture surrounding nearby Stonehenge was hard to ignore. Despite the varied application, the heavy reminder of the passing of time was something that each artist responded to; looking at the ways that this can be measured, recorded and experienced. Each artist has embraced this opportunity, performing and intervening in the characteristics of an English garden, and the rituals of the changing seasons.

With an undeniable reference to Land Art, these artists strive to communicate a human experience of nature in the 21st century. There is a clear interest in the natural environment, which is tempered by an awareness of topical concerns that subvert straightforward associations between land, nature and indeed, urbanisation. The artists are interested in nature in relation to interventions, grappling with the reality that human life is inextricably linked to the purity of the outdoors.

PRESS PREVIEW: Saturday 1 August 2015. Free bus from London departing Tate Britain (Millbank) at 10 a.m. and leaving Roche Court at 3 p.m. Please contact the New Art Centre to reserve a place. For further information about the exhibition and for images, please contact Stephen Feeke on 01980 862244 or nac@sculpture.uk.com.

Artists' Biographies:

Miriam Austin graduated from the Royal College of Art with an MA in Sculpture in 2012. Since graduating, her practice has focused on an investigation of specific ritual practices in relation to contemporary theoretical debates around subjectivity, identity and technology, drawing on a range of sources from post humanist theory to psychoanalysis. Recent exhibitions and projects include: *An Ear of Corn in Silence Reaped*, Grove House, London, UK, (2015); *A Sense of Things*, Zabludowicz Collection, London (2014); *Elements of Religion, Bold Tendencies*, London (2013); *Happening #1*, The White Building, [SPACE] Studios, London (2013); *The Birth Caul*, Vitrine Gallery, London (2013); *Creekside Open*, APT Gallery, London (2013); *Heart of Darkness*, Villa Arson Art Centre, Nice, (2012). She completed a residency at the Villa Arson in 2012 and was the winner of 'New British Art 2013' at Lloyd's of London.

Rob Chavasse, born in Shoreham-by-Sea in 1984, now lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Earth wire*, The Sunday Painter, London (2015); *Ceremonial Platforms*, Cosmos Carl, Online (2015); *Ghostie!* The Royal Standard, Liverpool (2014); *Sand In The Disk Drive*, Rod Barton, London (2014). Recent group exhibitions include: *Finite project altered when open*, David Dale, Glasgow (2015); *Drawing Biennial*, Drawing Room, London (2015); *Thank you*, Jupiter Woods, London (2014); *Space and time are reborn to us today*, And/Or, London, Project Numbers, London and Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge (2014).

Freddy Dewe Mathews uses archival and research material to produce artworks that look at human impositions on landscape and community. These examples of interaction between the physical world and culture hope to show how one influences the other; feeding, developing and creating new forms in fluctuation of meaning and influence. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Eternal Soup, Sudden Clarity*, [SPACE] Studios & Space in Between, London (2015); *Ritschercha*, Lendi Projects, Celerina, Switzerland (2014); *Milk*, Kiosko Galeria Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia (2013); *Bouvetøya, The Shadow Line, 54°25'S, 3°21'E*, Space In Between, London (2012). Awards and residencies include; Lendi Projects, Switzerland, (2014), supported by The Artist International Development Fund and The Gasworks International Fellowship at Kiosko, Santa Cruz, Bolivia, (2013).

Tom Lovelace lives and works in London. Since 2007, he has been producing work at the intersection of photography, sculpture and performance. Recent exhibitions include: *This Way Up*, Flowers Gallery, London, UK, (2015); *PROJECT 05*, Contemporary Art Society, London (2014); *The Opinion Makers*, Londonewcastle Project Space, London, UK, (2014); *Blog Reblog*, Austin Center for Photography, Texas, USA, (2014). He was recently artist in residence at Lendi Projects, Switzerland (2015); Aarhus, Denmark (2014); and Anna Mahler Residency, Spoleto, Italy (2012).

David Murphy was born in Newcastle in 1983, and lives and works in London. Recent exhibitions include: *Deep, Deeper*, Galleria Monica de Cardenas, Milan (2015); *Keep it Real*, Bayt Al Sin-nari Centre for Culture, Cairo (2015); *Certain Impacts*, PEER, London (2014); *Zeichnung ohne Zeichnung*, Christian Ehrentraut, Berlin (2013); *New Basics*, Galleria Monica de Cardenas, Zuoz (2013); *Young English Sculptors*, Fundaziun Not Vital, Switzerland (2012). He was recently artist in residence in Murano, Italy (2015) and at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2014).

Curators' Biographies:

Holly Willats is the founder and director of the not-for-profit organisation, Art Licks. Since it launched in 2010, Art Licks has grown to provide an essential platform and voice for the lesser-known and under-represented activities that provide the vital well-spring for visual culture in the UK. Art Licks exists in several strands of activity, as a website, tours, events, quarterly printed magazine, learning programme and its London-wide annual festival, the Art Licks Weekend. It actively promotes and supports the work of emerging creative individuals, providing commissioning opportunities and the situation to create new networks. Through this, Art Licks also presents the work of these artists to a wide public audience.

Alma Zevi is an independent curator and writer specialising in contemporary art. She founded Lendi Projects (Celerina, Switzerland) in January 2013 as her first permanent space, with the aim of creating a non-profit venue where early-career artists can work and exhibit. Alma is passionate about promoting and nurturing emerging artists with exceptional talent. In this context she has curated exhibitions in galleries, museums and artist-led spaces in Austria, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, and the UK. Since 2010, Alma has been working closely with Not Vital, compiling and writing his catalogue raisonné. She has also curated several of his museum exhibitions, the most recent being at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Geneve (2014) and Museo d'Arte di Mendrisio (2014-2015). Alma frequently contributes to numerous art periodicals, including *The Art Newspaper*, as well as co-authoring gallery and museum catalogues. In 2013, she launched her website, ALMA'S ART DIARY, where she publishes articles about contemporary art that she is in close contact with.