



Jessie Stevenson: Broken Gleam
27 October - 8 November 2022
Linnegatan 4, Stockholm
Private view: 27 October, 5-8pm

Berntson Bhattacharjee is delighted to present 'Broken Gleam', a solo exhibition of recent work by Jessie Stevenson.

The exhibition is taking place at a former industrial unit in central Stockholm, whilst in contrast the work explores the potency of the landscape. Following a month-long residency at Claestorp, Sweden (2022), Stevenson is interested in the sensory experience of nature, influenced by her personal exploration of landscape in both North Norfolk, UK and Sweden. A download of physical energy, the interdisciplinary exhibition includes expansive paintings alongside preliminary sketchbooks, paperwork and moving-image.

The title 'Broken Gleam' are the words by the Romantic poet William Wordsworth (1770 - 1850) and is a powerful sentiment which embodies the exhibition. At odds with each other, the two words create a poetic paradox and suggest a conceptual understanding of hope amongst a grey and fallen world. Wordsworth's evocative writing and ability to express both the fickle and fantastical encounters of daily life remain a constant source of inspiration for Stevenson. To a place unknown, Stevenson brings her own peripatetic upbringing inspired by a connection to the North Norfolk coast including scots pine tree, rhododendrons and marsh clay to the surface of the paintings. The canvas itself becomes a site of excavation; the drips, spills, slashes are part of her own artistic lexicon and a sense of memory to dig and create a psychological environment.

The unique experience surrounded by the rural countryside of Södermanland manifested in the largest painting to date made by Stevenson. The 180 x 400 cm canvas acts as a distorted panorama and is both a macro and micro of view of a boundless space. On the edge, from above and side to side, there are moments when logic is thrown into the air and the materiality of the paint itself takes control. The expansive painting allows you to enter from multiple angles and gives a combined feeling of blissful serenity and a sharp cognitive assault on our senses.

The Claestorp residency allowed Stevenson to experiment her formal painting ideals of light and colour whilst responding to the natural phenomena of a new environment. The abundance of light in Swedish July was hugely inspiring; long, quiet days filled with shifting seasonal colours. Woodlands and lakes surrounded

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the studio, creating light constellations and reflections. This solitary period enabled Stevenson to research the painterly characteristics of Swedish artists, namely Eugène Jansson whose swathes of blue pigment and emotive calligraphic scribbling had a profound effect on Stevenson's own mark making.

Whilst the work is embedded with her interest in art history, particularly the compositional devices of the Old Master J.M.W. Turner, Stevenson adopts a contemporary colour palette influenced by fashion photography and digital media which she explores as 'colour beginnings' across her multiple sketchbooks.

In her landscapes, Stevenson captures our sense of ideal beauty whilst simultaneously depicting the subtler harsher realities that lie beneath. Shocks and surprises unfold, which she replicates through the act of painting. There is both a sense of pandemonium and paradise, the euphoric and the dark, the public and the private. It is a paradox which represents the experiential duality in life and it is in the handling of paint itself where she tries to find them.

About the artist

Jessie Stevenson (b. 1993) is a British artist based between London and Norfolk. She graduated from Central Saint Martins with a BA in Fine Art in 2017, including an Erasmus programme at the Akademie der bildenden Künste, Vienna in 2015. In 2022 Jessie graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art with an MFA in painting, receiving The Bartolomeu dos Santos Graduate Award.

Recent exhibitions include; Dreaming in Colour, Bonhams, London (2022); The Pump House, Berntson Bhattacharjee, London (2022); Way Out East, Solo show with Sapling Gallery, London (2021); Staying Alive, Berntson Bhattacharjee, Sweden (2021); Colour and Poetry online exhibition, The Slade (2021); Berntson Bhattacharjee X Women's Aid Charity Auction (2021); Mnemysone, Purslane (2021); Cutting At Lemons For Freckles, Skippings Gallery, Great Yarmouth (2021); The Ing Discerning Eye Exhibition (2020); The Heart of Light, The Silence (2020); Slade Runner, ASC Gallery, London (2020); Savage 2020, The Crypt Gallery, London (2020). She was winner of the Cass Art Prize in 2017 and is the recipient of the 2021 Col Art Residency in London. In November 2022 she will continue her work as part of The Richard Ford Award at The Prado Museum, Madrid.