



Rooted  
20 June - 27 July  
Private View 20 June, 6 - 8 PM

Berntson Bhattacharjee is delighted to present *Rooted*; a three-artist exhibition exploring the interplay between urban and natural environments, offering unique perspectives on connections to and perceptions of the English countryside. Featuring new works by Tom Bull, James Owens, and Georg Wilson, the exhibition honours the artists' intimate ties to rural England while simultaneously investigating idealised representations of the countryside.

The artists navigate themes of the English countryside through a dual lens, one steeped in nostalgia and intimate familiarity, capturing the essence of rural landscapes imbued with a sense of place and personal history. Simultaneously, they approach these themes through the contemporary urban experience of living in London, providing a broader perspective from which to interpret and engage with the rural landscape. The resulting works become a dialogue between past and present, rural and urban, preserving memories of the countryside while critiquing and reinterpreting popularised associations through a contemporary viewpoint. This duality challenges the traditional romanticism often associated with rural landscapes in art. By incorporating the urban influence, the artists push against conventional portrayals of the countryside as purely idyllic and picturesque. Instead, they reflect a more complex and nuanced understanding of the natural world, acknowledging the tensions and transformations brought about by modern urban living. This approach encourages viewers to reflect on the evolving relationship between the natural world and contemporary society, recognising that the relationships between rural and urban are increasingly complex.

Bull's exhibited works delve into the complexities of "country life," critically examining themes such as land, loss, access, community, wealth, and nostalgia. His stark black sculpture, crafted from bitumen and expanding foam, straddles the line between absurdity and functionality. His hay bales remind city dwellers of the moment during a road trip when crossing into "the country." His Country Life Magazine collages underscore the cultural fascination with the aesthetic inspired by Western agricultural lifestyles. In an era where "cottage core" is rapidly gaining popularity, offering an idyllic, pastoral escape from the complexities of modern urban life, Bull's work serves as a poignant reminder of the blinding nature of romanticism.

Informed by his upbringing in rural England, Owens employs painterly techniques in geometric abstraction to merge foreground and background into a single flat surface, where figures and vegetation blend seamlessly, challenging hierarchies between humanity and the natural world. In his exhibited works, Owens captures the cyclical nature of existence where birth, growth, death, and regeneration form the interconnected fabric of life. Each painting balances on the edge between resilience and vulnerability, optimism and despair- the growth of one flower mirroring the demise of another, twisting tendrils evolving into parasites, and landscapes permeating the contours of figures - thus illustrating the perpetual rhythm of existence.

Wilson presents a series of new works depicting verdant landscapes abundant in biodiversity, intricately laced with folkloric emblems and narratives unique to her artistic practice. Created during her recent residency at Anchor Studio in Newlyn - an area of Cornwall with significant personal importance to Wilson - the works act as portals into porous terrains where layers of history, tradition and memory are conveyed through her distinctive storytelling. Through these works, Wilson explores an intricate web of narratives woven within England's landscape.

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## About the artists

**Tom Bull** (b. 1995) is a British artist living and working in London. He completed his Foundation of Fine Art at Northampton University (2015). He completed his BA (Hons) in Fine Art At Central Saint Martins (2018) and his MFA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths (2022). He has received multiple awards including the London Bronze Casting Fellowship (2023), the Hari Graduate Art Prize (2022), and was selected for Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2022. He has presented two solo exhibitions; 'Under Cover of Darkness' at E-Werk in Freiburg (2023) and 'To Whom Do You Trust with the Spare Keys' at Airspace Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent (2019). Recent group exhibitions include: 'All the world's a stage' at Sherbert Gallery in London (2024); 'Alchemical Landscape' at Cob Gallery in London (2024); 'Untitled' at Artvisor in London (2023); 'Shallow Haunts' at Kupfer in London (2024); 'La Caverna una Casa' at General Expenses in Mexico City (2023); 'Disagreements as Domains of Nausea and Elation' at the Austrian Cultural Forum in London (2023); 'The Other Side of Paradise' at The Bomb Factory in London (2023); 'Precarious' at Art Exchange in Essex (2023); 'Will-o'-the-wisp at Des Bains in Turin (2022); New Contemporaries at Ferens Gallery in Hull (2022).

**James Owens** (b. 1995) is a British painter based in south-east London. He received his Foundation Diploma in Art and Design at London College of Communication (2015), his BA in Illustration and Visual Media at London College of Communication (2016), and his BA in Illustration at Camberwell College of Arts (2018). Solo exhibitions include 'Dreaming of UFOs' at Lychee One Gallery in London (2022) and 'Quiet Fire' at Arusha Gallery in London (2021). Selected group exhibitions include: 'Art Brussels' at Newchild Gallery in Brussels (2024); 'Out of Earth' at The Approach in London (2024); 'Disembodied' at Nicodim Gallery in Los Angeles (2024); 'Once, Then, Gone' at Newchild in Antwerp (2023) 'Felt cute, might delete later' at Arusha Gallery in London (2023); Hawthorn and the Feast of Julian at Arusha Gallery in New York (2023); 'A New Sensation' at Galerie Marguo in Paris (2023); 'The Moth and the Thunderclap' at Stuart Shave Modern Art in London (2023).

**Georg Wilson** (b.1998) is a British painter. She received her BA in Art History at the University of Oxford (2020) and MA in Painting at the Royal College of Art (2022). She is a twice-recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields award (2021-2), was shortlisted for the Ingram Prize (2022) and New Contemporaries (2023). Recent solo exhibitions include; 'Time Held Me Green and Dying' at Public Service Gallery in Stockholm (2024); 'In May, I Sing Night and Day' at Palazzo Monti, Brescia (2023); 'What Mad Pursuit' at Berntson Bhattacharjee Gallery, London (2023); 'Ill Met by Moonlight', online with Delphian Gallery & Artsy New York (2023); 'This Other Eden' at Kravets Wehby Gallery, New York (2022); 'The Garden Thief' at Arusha Gallery, Bruton (2022). Recent group exhibitions include; 'TOTEM' at Newchild Gallery in Belgium (2024); 'Bloomberg New Contemporaries' at Camden Art Centre in London (2024); 'Surrealism and Witchcraft', Lamb Gallery, London (2023); 'A Celebration of Portraiture', Marlborough Gallery, London (2023); 'Who Is Your Master?', 1969 Gallery, New York (2023); 'We Are Floating In Space', Newlyn Art Gallery, Cornwall (2023); 'Pocket Universe', Philip Martin Gallery, LA (2023); 'Even the Worm Will Turn' duo show, Soho Revue, London (2022); 'The Red Room', Berntson Bhattacharjee, Cromwell Place, London (2022); 'AMPHIBIAN' supported by Hannah Barry Gallery, London (2022); Ingram Prize Show, London (2022). She is a twice-recipient of the Elizabeth Greenshields award (2021-2), and Ingram Prize Finalist (2022).

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