

Grafting: The Land and the Artist

Photo50 exhibition at
London Art Fair 2024
explores the relationship
between artistic labour and
the land

17–21 January 2024

Preview evening:
Tuesday 16 January



Eugenie Shinkle, *Ideal City (Somebody Else's Landscape)*, 1998

- Revolv Collective have been announced as the curators of the latest edition of **Photo50** at London Art Fair, 17–21 January 2024
- The annual guest-curated exhibition provides a critical forum for examining distinctive elements of current photographic practice
- The exhibition will focus on the relationship between labour, art and the landscape, with particular emphasis on processes which expand the possibilities of photography

The latest edition of Photo50, London Art Fair's annual guest-curated exhibition of contemporary photography, has been announced. *Grafting: The Land and the Artist* will be co-curated by the photography organisation **Revolv Collective** and will explore the subject of labour and its diverse representation within the context of the land, looking at practices expanding the possibilities of photography. Eight artists have now been named for the exhibition, with more to be announced soon.

The exhibition will feature a broad range of artists working in the photographic medium, some of whom will show new and previously unseen work. *Grafting: The Land and the Artist* will look at land as a site of work, resistance, action, co-dependence, regeneration and communion. Named after the horticultural technique of grafting, whereby two plants are joined in order to grow together, the exhibition proposes entanglement with the natural world, presenting itself as a space for contemplation of the world and its complex systems and ecologies.

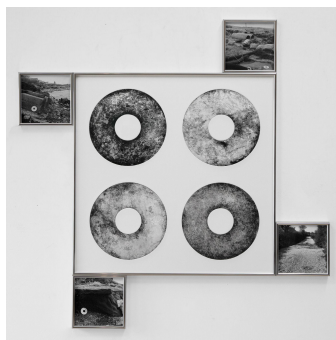
Revolv Collective said: *"This is a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase a selection of visionary early and mid-career artists whose practices are centred in expanded photography."*

Grafting: The Land and the Artist challenges traditional representations of the land, situating it as a site of artistic labour. The exhibition brings together multiple contemporary approaches that, drawing from diverse histories, work practices and environmental concerns, encourage us to contemplate our relationship with the land, as well as our inextricable future together."

A number of exhibiting artists will be presenting work that explores the relationship between art and nature. **Joshua Bilton's** series, *Seed Pod*, interlaces the stories, poems, wishes and offerings of 23 children from Ferry Lane Primary School with self-guided nature activities, polaroids documenting performances and workshops, guided water rituals and a seed saving storage area. Elsewhere, **Marie Smith's** 2023 work *Extraction: In Conversation with Anna Atkins* takes inspiration from the work of the 19th Century Botanist by creating a series of cyanotypes of leaves and plants documented at London's Horniman Museum. Smith's lens-based approach incorporates low-toxic plant, food, or herb-based developers to process their analogue film. Due to this methodology not being transferable to developing colour film, Marie now only works with black and white and camera-less film processes.



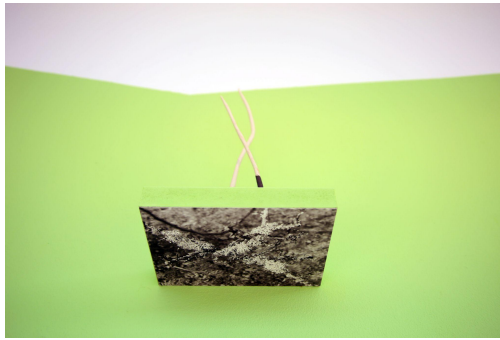
Other exhibiting artists will look at how we interact with the urban landscape. **Eugenie Shinkle** will be showing work from her series *Ideal City (Somebody Else's Landscape)*. She writes of this series: *"On arriving in London from Canada in 1997, my first experience was one of culture shock and profound claustrophobia. Unable to photograph in the way I was accustomed to, I turned my 35mm camera down towards the surface of London's streets, and up towards the sky".* The resulting 35mm contact prints were then used as 'pixels' in collaged recreations of classic landscape paintings by JMW Turner.



A number of artists will be bringing a similarly mixed-media approach to the exhibition. Notably, **Jackson Whitefield**, who works in a mixture of photography, film, drawing, book making and site-specific 'earthworks', will be presenting a number of works which engage with the environment of Southwestern England, including black and white landscape photography, rubbings, etchings and collages. The collected work will document the region as seen through the eyes of the artist.

Artist **Hannah Fletcher** works with cameraless photographic processes, whose work combines organic matter such as soils, algae, mushrooms and roots with photographic mediums and surfaces to create work which is a fusion of scientific techniques with photographic processes. *(is)land*, a collaboration with **Alice Cazenave**, on display as part of Photo50, is a collection of 16 pinhole photographs made using direct positive paper exposed in waste film canister cameras. These were then developed using plant-based photographic chemistry and set using salt evaporated from the Baltic sea surrounding Örö. The resulting photographs invite the viewer to experience the land through images that have been generated by the landscape matter itself.





On a different theme, *A Sudden Branching* by **Rowan Lear** combines horticulture, photography and sculpture in an examination on the horticultural process of 'grafting', taught to Lear by their father in rural Scotland. Each silver gelatin photograph is mounted on the underside of wooden shelves, designed to disorient and bend the viewer's body like a leaf twisting toward light. Slim ceramic stems curve upward from the surface, created from the grafting together of two types of clay.

Finally, artist **Rahima Gambo** will present work which looks at the power relations at play in the processes of documentary, storytelling and photography. Included in this exhibition is *A Walk*, a psychogeographic collage of three-dimensional objects from things picked up, recorded or gathered on walks, such as sound, video, torn photographs, discarded material, a stick or a leaf.



– ENDS –

LONDON ART FAIR: 17 – 21 January 2024 (VIP Preview 16 January)

Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 0QH

www.londonartfair.co.uk

Tickets from £14 to £40. Full ticket types and prices at: www.londonartfair.co.uk/tickets.

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PRESS CONTACT

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IMAGES From top to bottom

- Eugenie Shinkle, *Ideal City (Somebody Else's Landscape)*, 1998
- Marie Smith, *Extraction: In Conversation with Anna Atkins*, 2023
- Jackson Whitefield, *Whitefield Imprint I*, 2023
- Hannah Fletcher and Alice Cazenave, *(is)land*, 2022
- Rowan Lear, *A Sudden Branching*, 2023
- Rahima Gambo, *Space for Sale*, 2021

ABOUT LONDON ART FAIR

London Art Fair will return to London for its 36th edition in 2024, recognised as a platform for connecting the best galleries from around the world with both seasoned and aspiring collectors, providing a unique opportunity to discover and champion outstanding modern and contemporary art.

The Fair seeks to nurture collecting at all levels whilst providing expert insight into the changing international market. Sitting alongside the main Fair, curated sections Encounters and Photo50 feature the next generation of artists, collectives and gallerists; showcasing increasingly innovative and interactive ways to engage with art. The Fair's strong gallery line up is also complemented by an extensive programme of engaging talks, panel discussions, interactive performance art, and onsite activations from the Fair's partners.

Taking place from 17-21 January 2024, London Art Fair is an unmissable opening to the international art calendar. www.londonartfair.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY FOCUS DAY

London Art Fair's Photography Focus Day (Friday 19th January) will feature a full day of photography talks and discussions dedicated to the examination and discussion of some of the most innovative and distinctive elements of contemporary photographic practice, with experts from the world of contemporary photography.

ABOUT REVOLV COLLECTIVE

Revolv Collective is an artist-run organisation based in the UK that promotes the practice, teaching and dissemination of expanded photography. Lina Ivanova and Krasimira Butseva established Revolv in 2017 in Portsmouth, UK, with the ambition to create opportunities for early-career artists. Since then, their numerous projects have fostered creativity and artistic innovation through a collaborative, interdisciplinary and non-hierarchical approach focused on access to educational and professional resources. The collective's active members are Lina Ivanova, Laura Bivolaru, Victoria Doyle, Alexander Mourant and Lucas Gabellini-Fava, with honorary members, Krasimira Butseva and Ibrahim Azab.

ABOUT JOSHUA BILTON

Joshua Bilton is a visual artist making socially engaged artwork through workshops, performance and mixed media. His process is to learn through communities and nature, often working with a community group for a period of one to two years in response to a landscape or environment. Most recently this has been through residencies at Kettle's Yard and St George's Hospital. During the last five years the output of his residencies has developed into performative workshops, video and sound works and photography that often involve gesture, ceramics and ritual. These immersive works have been shown as part of a one-year residency at St George's Hospital, a 6-month residency at the Wellcome Collection, a two-year residency at the Canal and River Trust, a commission for Kettle's Yard and a series of research workshops at Tate Exchange.

ABOUT MARIE SMITH

Marie Smith (she/they) is a neurodivergent visual artist and writer born, living, and working in London. Smith graduated in 2017 with an MA in History in Art with Photography at Birkbeck, University of London. Being a neurodivergent person with dyspraxia and anxiety has informed how they navigate the world. Marie's practice incorporates audio, digital, and analogue media alongside text as a form of visual language that addresses identity, the body, nature, sustainability, mental health, and well-being.

Marie is currently exhibiting her work *The Body in Space* at Bloc Project as part of their Billboard commission which will be on display until February 2024. Smith has been artist in residence at Horniman Museum and Gardens and at Tate Britain and Tate Modern. Smith has exhibited at Peckham 24 in 2021 and their commissions have featured in WIRED US, FT Weekend Magazine, and BJP Portrait Britain n Award

in 2021 for their Portrait of Tina from the series Whispering for Help. In 2022, Smith was awarded Single Image winner for the series The Wanderer in the BJP Female in Focus Photography Award. Her book of cyanotypes, Extraction: In Conversation with Anna Atkins was recently acquired by Horniman Museum and Gardens.

ABOUT EUGENIE SHINKLE

Originally trained as a civil engineer, Eugenie Shinkle went on to study photography, art history and critical theory at Concordia University in Montreal and later at the Slade School of Fine Art in London. Alongside her artistic practice, Shinkle is a writer, editor of the photobook platform C4 Journal, and Reader in Photography at the University of Westminster.

ABOUT JACKSON WHITEFIELD

Jackson Whitefield is an artist born in St. Ives, Cornwall, England in 1991. Jackson works with a diverse range of media including photography, film, drawing, book making and site-specific earthworks. Themes which run through his work include geology, anthropology, process and language. While his choice of media and interests are diverse, his inspiration is rooted firmly in his surroundings, always allowing his environment to lead his immediate inquiry.

ABOUT HANNAH FLETCHER

Hannah Fletcher, b. Oxford 1995, is an artist working with cameraless photographic processes, founder of The Sustainable Darkroom, Co-director of London Alternative Photography Collective and a facilitator of sustainability within the arts. Fletcher works with and researches the many intricate relationships between photographic and not-so photographic materials. Intertwining organic matter such as soils, algae, mushrooms and roots into photographic mediums and surfaces.

Fletcher has exhibited in museum, galleries and festivals across the UK and Europe, including Chappe Art Museum (Finland), Belfast Photo Festival, Art Rotterdam, Unseen (Amsterdam), Art The Hague, Photo Oxford, Format Festival (Darby), Tate Exchange (London), The Photographers Gallery (London), Sluice HQ (London), Old Fire Station (Oxford) and Woodend Gallery (Scarborough).

ABOUT ALICE CAZENAVE

Alice Cazenave (b.1990) is a photographic artist and doctoral researcher. She is currently based in New York and is a visiting scholar at the Rochester Institute of Technology. Her photography is informed by her background in molecular science. Created using hand-mixed, plant-based chemistries, Cazenave's work reimagines alternative futures of analogue photography that move away from its toxic history.

Cazenave's PhD (AHRC funded) research examines the afterlives of photographic metals and chemistries, and how these change people's lives and ecologies. This informs her visual enquiries into the photographic potential of ecological matter. Cazenave innovated the use of pelargonium printing, a photographic process that uses living leaves as photographic paper. Cazenave is the Executive Director at the Sustainable Darkroom, a not-for-profit organisation researching lower-toxicity photographic methods. As part of her work with the Sustainable Darkroom, she is the 2024 artist-in-residence at Hong Kong International Photo Festival.

Cazenave has exhibited internationally and has been published in The British Journal of Photography and New York Times, as well as Phaidon Press' PLANT: Exploring the Botanical World.

ABOUT ROWAN LEAR

Rowan Lear (1987) is an artist based in Glasgow, Scotland. Playing with photography, text, sound, vegetation, clay and other lively materials, and in collusion with people, texts and more-than-human others, Rowan traces the entangled histories of sensation, embodiment, agriculture and ecology.

In 2018, Rowan received the Artquest Peer Forum Award to initiate Planetary Processing, a collective of photographic artists speculating on materiality at The Photographer's Gallery, London. Since 2019, they have cultivated a living community of seeds and stories at Glasgow Seed Library, a project hosted by Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow. Rowan currently co-organises Un/Nature, a queer ecologies reading group at Glasgow Zine Library, and is developing The Sentient Garden, a multispecies and multisensory commission at Forgan Arts Centre, Fife.

Solo exhibitions include a sudden branching, Birnam Arts, Perthshire (2021) and Adheres to the Tongue, The Muted Horn, Cleveland, Ohio (2018); while group shows include Why do it together when you can do it alone?, curated by Pic London at Lewisham Arthouse, London (2019); and Rising from the Hill, NCAD, Dublin (2017).

ABOUT RAHIMA GAMBO

Rahima Gambo (1986, London) is a visual artist and documentarian who came to artistic practice from photojournalism and independent long form documentary projects. She explores the experimental and conceptual territories between documentary, psycho-geography, socio-politics, ecology, and autobiography. Her practice ranges from drawing, video, sculpture, installation and sound, using them as extended poetic and speculative tools that enquire around documentary processes that lie outside pre-existing traditions.

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ABOUT HACKETT

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ABOUT VISIT MALTA

Set in the sparkling blue Mediterranean Sea and boasting over 300 days of sunshine a year and just a three-hour flight from the UK, there's every reason to add Malta to your bucket-list. Valletta, the sunniest city in Europe, is home to 320 historical sites that can be explored on foot as the city is perfectly sized for a weekend's exploration. The Maltese Islands boast over 7,000 years of history and three UNESCO World Heritage Sites; Valletta, the Megalithic Temples and the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum. Spring 2024 also sees the launch of the Malta Art Biennale and so there is no better time for art lovers to visit The Maltese Islands. <https://www.visitmalta.com/en/>



ABOUT MUNDY CRUISING

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