

Sherbet Green



Madeleine Pledge, *receiver (quadruple soft drop wadded)*, 2023, chromed and patinated lost wax cast bronze shoulder pads, c. 14th - 18th century dress pins collected from the Thames foreshore, chromed and unchromed dress pins cast in hard brass from two originals

JUPITER WALK

**Lulu Bennett, Steph Huang, Jean-François Krebs, Madeleine Pledge
and Anna Woodward**

01 - 24 June 2023

Private View: Wednesday 31 May, 6 - 8.30pm

Evoking both the desire to transcend the earthly, and the fear of what might be out there, JUPITER WALK draws together works by artists responding to the notion of planetary excursion. Across painting and sculpture, Bennett, Huang, Krebs, Pledge and Woodward contemplate space in relation to humanity. These objects, emblems of aspiration, ego, otherness, longing and fear, together form a collection of past-and-future totems. They constitute symbols of community, commodity, politics, Politics, and existence, and underline the bizarre reality of being so... human.

About the works:

Anna Woodward

Through her practice, Woodward looks to create fantasy worlds that sit between utopia and dystopia, pulling into existence a space that is beyond the realm of the viewer's reality. Biomorphs grow freely in worlds that feel marked by human presence. The artist works predominantly in oil on linen, using processual layering to create intensity, perspective and depth, being particularly interested in ways of painting, and drawn to contemporary artists such as Julie Curtiss and Jane Hayes Greenwood, whose practices sit between the surreal and the skill of the artist. Woodward's layers can be broken down into different painting languages, from the loose washes of oil paint, to highly rendered and voluptuous biomorphic forms that snake their way around the painting, and metallic rods that are engulfed by the rapturous creatures. All of these aspects come together to create a wild, overgrown world, reflected in the artist's self-described use of repetition and obsession in her approach to making and her subject.

Lulu Bennett

Bennett draws together fragments and figures from across history to explore the intersection of personal and broader cultural histories. Through the exploration of the politics of the personal, the artist's project thus far is a reaction against a post-Brexit neo-colonial British government. Having grown up in Lancaster, she also seeks to redress the lack of rich representation of the north in a London-centric artworld and situates her work as part of a contemporary revival of the northern Gothic.

The painting shown here responds to notions of transcendence and the uncanny spatial elements embodied by JUPITER WALK. It attempts to capture a grim dystopian political reality, while also pointing towards the possibilities of solidarity. There is also something interstellar about the way space and light are depicted here, almost photographic but at the same time unfamiliar, flat and illustrative, layered and 3D.

The work marks a change in Bennett's working method, where she is beginning to work from a growing personal archive of her own photographs, much of which documents the lives of the trans people around her. This painting was a moment of shared intimate solidarity among a crowd at a protest in January. Watercolour is also a novel medium for the artist, and they've described a researched interest in the work of Alice Neel, wider social documentary, and a painting practice that moves out of the studio, as well as the formal, illustrative quality of Peter Blake's watercolours, and John Singer Sargent's watercolour depictions of feminine subjects.

"I feel that the situation and the people around me are demanding a painted response, and demanding to be documented somehow, and I'm looking, within the work, for truthful means to articulate this. Politically, the painting speaks for itself- and it's my friend's statement not mine that dominates the piece - and in that sense it works as a kind of collaboration with the subject - and a means, for me, of deepening a personal connection with this person (my friend, Bug)."

Madeleine Pledge

Working via replicas and remakes, Pledge often uses the surfaces and structures of fashion and design to approach bodies as subjects and objects within systems of production and power. Strategically borrowing from a lineage of artistic production including Sylvie Fleury and Rosemarie Trockel, objects from the cultural imaginary surrounding figures like Christine Keeler, and the 'artist uniform' of colleague and friend Michelle Williams Gamaker, her work attempts to find and hold space between the repetitive tyranny of capitalist production and fictions of individualised authorship and artistic originality.

The bracketed titles of the chromed and patinated bronze works are taken from the names and functions of the shoulder pads their forms replicate. 'Receiver' could refer to their inverted form (maybe even passive or submissive – thinking about the docking systems described in the *World Wide Gold* text by Natalya Serkova), the way they are designed to cup and augment a shoulder, their appearance as a kind of receptacle, or possibly a satellite-dish like appearance. It might also allude to Isa Genzken's series of sculptures titled *world receivers*.

Prior to casting with silicone and wax in the studio, the shoulder pads were augmented with an additional layer of mock-croc synthetic 'scuba' fabric (triple soft drop wadded) and lizard-skin patterned kid leather (quadruple stitched and wadded). Though the stitches visible in the detail of the bronzes expose their direct relationship to fashion production, their metalised substance and surfaces push them closer to armour or exoskeletons, and their upturned, stacked and de-familiarised forms approach the animal, or perhaps extra-terrestrial, whether engineered or 'organic'.

The 'plinths' and bronzes exist separately but together and are potentially interchangeable – both being formed through a logic of stacking and accumulation and having developed in tandem. The 'plinths' are topped with mirror polished steel, which reflects the bronzes into their surface. They are an expansion of the artist's interest in Vogue as a globalised corporate institution, and its relationship to bordering and the state as part of that function, and part of a cultural and ideological superstructure. The interjection of issues of Vogue USA and Vogue Russia is intended to emphasise these relationships – gesturing implicitly towards the space race, cold war tensions, and ongoing states of war. The USA and Russia editions are formatted differently, creating breaks in the uniformity of the stacks and indicating their difference. The issue of *Vogue Russia* is the penultimate issue in existence: Condé Nast, which only began publishing in the country in 1998, suspended and then halted operations as Russia's invasion of Ukraine escalated.

Steph Huang

Poetically charged, Huang's work expresses autobiographical narratives through a process of layered storytelling. Rooted in the close observation of incidental details, the relationships objects have with each other, and the eccentric moments in everyday life, her work attempts to examine something of the lives of modern human beings through mass-produced objects. Often captured through her analogue camera, these moments become trigger points for new ideas given form through assemblage. In this way, the artist's sculptural works have a lyrical

quality, one where the encounter is an invitation.

Jean-François Krebs

Krebs's transdisciplinary and experimental practice offers a space of transformation, healing, and grief. Suspended between worlds, trance-like states of mediumship and metamorphosis, Krebs often works in collaboration with friend entities, plants-as-kin, in a cocreative dynamic. Queering the limit between incarnated and ideal, vegetal / animal / mineral, liquid and born, they use materials of high versatility, transparency (fragility) such as glass, silicone and light.

Their work is often concerned with space and genius loci, especially in the context of site-specific installation of different scales (window in Soho, ancient wash-house in a village in France, disused industrial spaces). The notion of blessing is often explored from several angles, be it the etymological sense with liquid aspersions, with ex-votos in uranium glass, or with plants and flowers qualities.

About the artists:

Anna Woodward (b. 1998) lives and works in London. She gained both her MA and BA Fine Art at City and Guilds of London Art School, in 2020 and 2022 respectively. She had her first solo exhibition, *A Cloned Realm*, at Galeria Duarte Sequeira, Braga, Portugal, earlier this year. Selected group exhibitions include: *Tomorrow, is Tomorrow, is Tomorrow*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2023); *Second Expression*, The Split Gallery, London (2022); City and Guilds of London Art School MA Show, London (2022); *I'll Be Your Mirror*, Boisdale of Bishopsgate (2022); and *The Reality in Whytch You Create*, Studio West, London.

Lulu Bennett (b. 1995) graduated from Glasgow School of Art in 2017 and Slade School of Fine Art in 2021. Solo exhibitions include *Alive in Actual Time*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2023); *Ariel*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2021); *Tears Like Northern Rain*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2020), *Bloomsbury Festival Art Prize*, Senate House Library, London (2019) and *Louis Bennett: Three Paintings*, The Storey Gallery, Lancaster (2017). Group exhibitions include *Shortlist Exhibition East London Art Prize 2022*, Nunnery Gallery, London, UK (2023); *Untitled Miami Beach*, Art Fair, Miami, USA (2022); *Raising Boys*, Black White Gallery, London (2022); *Northern Deviants*, Unit 3 Projects, London (2022); *Enter Art Fair*, with Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark (2021); *Facing the Sun*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Schloss Görne, Germany (2021); *Graduate Showcase*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2020), and *RCA/Slade Graduation Show*, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London (2020).

Jean-François Krebs studied landscape architecture at Edinburgh College of Art, and the Ecole Nationale Supérieure du Paysage de Versailles, and horticulture in Ecole du Breuil in Paris. They were part of the Maumaus programme in Lisbon and did an exchange in Malmö Art Academy. They recently graduated from the MFA Fine Art at Goldsmiths University of London. In 2022 Krebs exhibited at Ugly Duck, IMT Gallery, Chisenhale Studios, Copeland Park, Goldsmiths St James Church (London), as well as Jeune Creation 72 and Galerie Jean-Collet (France). In 2021, they were part of the Fondation Martell residency, and exhibited at the Centre Tignous d'Art Contemporain (France), Korai Project Space (Cyprus), hArtslane Gallery and Access (Lon-

don). Past solo shows include at Galerie du Granit (France), Umbigo magazine and Azan Space (Portugal). In 2023, they will exhibit at Dunkirk Triennale, and will take part in residencies in Cabana Georgina, Domaine de la Richardière, and Factatory (France). Krebs is a Fluxus Art Project 2023 laureate.

Madeleine Pledge (b. 1993, UK) lives and works in London. She graduated with a BA from the The Slade School of Fine Art in 2016. Selected solo and duo exhibitions include *Weaponized Glamour*, duo exhibition with Alice Channer, Case Study Project Space, London (2021; two-person exhibition with Alice Channer); *Stretch*, Flatland Projects, Hastings (2019); and *Die Wohnung* (The Dwelling), duo exhibition with Eva Gold, SET Project Space, London (2018). Selected group exhibitions include *The London Open*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2022); *Between You and Me*, San Mei Gallery, London (2022); *On the Western Window Pane*, Van Gogh House, London (2021); *Like a Sieve*, Kupfer, London (2020); *The Weather Garden: Anne Hardy curates the Arts Council Collection*, Towner Eastbourne (2019); *Portrait (for a screenplay) of Beth Harmon*, Tenderpixel, London (2017). In 2023, Pledge was a lead artist on the Camden Art Centre Transformative Futures programme. In 2020, she was shortlisted for the Mark Tanner Sculpture Award and was the recipient of a Henry Moore Foundation Artist Award grant.

Steph Huang (b.1990, Taiwan) lives and works in London. She received her MA in sculpture from the Royal College of Art, 2021. Huang has presented recent solo exhibitions at Public Gallery, London (2023); Taipei Fine Arts Museum (2022); Volt, Eastbourne (2022); Goldsmiths CCA, London (2022); and mother's tankstation, London (2022). Her work has been featured in recent group exhibitions at Public Gallery, London (2023); Galerie du Monde, Hong Kong (2023); Bloomberg New Contemporaries, Humber Street Gallery, Hull and South London Gallery, London (2022); Staffordshire St, London (2022); AplusA Gallery, Venice (2022); Belmacz, London (2021); San Mei Gallery, London (2021); Bloc Projects, Sheffield (2021); South London Gallery (2021); and Cromwell Place, London (2021). Huang was recently awarded Mark Tanner Sculpture Award 2023-24; the Henry Moore Foundation Artist Award 2022 and the Grand Prize in the Taipei Art Awards 2022.