

# palmer gallery

Exhibition 03

LAND, SEA, AIR

24.05.24 - 13.07.24

Private View:  
Thursday 23rd May, 6-9pm

Carolina Aguirre  
Kavitha Balasingham  
Shaan Bevan  
Max Boyla  
Connie Harrison  
Action Pyramid  
Sean Savage Ferrari  
Grace Woodcock

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*Land, Sea, Air* brings together a group of emerging artists whose work engages with ecology and the natural landscape. The selected artists are all interested in capturing the essence of our natural world, focusing on one (or any combination) of land, sea, and air. The title's military connotations chime with the history of the Palmer Gallery building (once a factory in which parts for the Spitfire, Hurricanes and Lancaster Bombers were built during the Second World War), and alludes to the tensions between the natural and non-natural that are present in each of the artists' work. *Land, Sea, Air* celebrates the natural abundance of our planet and examines the relationship between these fragile ecological systems and human life. Humanity is inextricably linked with the natural world, enmeshed in a complex system it falsely appears to have transcended. As our weather systems grow more erratic, and our climates more inhospitable, young artists of today are perhaps more aware of this brittle balance than any previous generation.

Carolina Aguirre's textured wood board works have a geological feel. She utilises the mineral sheen of Sumi ink, the sticky, bodily gloss of shellac (made from the female Lac beetle), the smokiness of charcoal and the chalkiness of Gofun (made from crushed up seashells) to create surfaces reminiscent of cave paintings. They have an elemental, ancient aesthetic emphasised by an earthy, rustic palette.

Max Boyla's swirling, gaseous, satin canvases have an ambiguous quality which drifts between pure abstraction and natural landscape, swinging between sea and sky. As a composite material made from natural and non-natural materials, satin is the perfect canvas to think about environmental balance. His work uses material to draw attention to the contrast between sustainable and unsustainable products, and how 'green' and 'un-green' living are so often woven together in our society.

Shaan Bevan typically draws turbulent seascapes that are intended to mirror the internal state of her body when she was undergoing treatment for Hodgkin's Lymphoma. She made one drawing for each level of the Beaufort scale, attempting to capture the power of the wind and equate that with a body in revolt. Shaan will present a large-scale iron work that has been periodically sprayed with water, causing it to oxidise and form a beautifully patinated surface.

Sean Savage Ferrari utilises assemblage techniques to juxtapose found materials. His hybrid works are rooted in the earth and natural materials. During an artist residency in the Amazon rainforest, he made works from seeds and natural fibres paired with found plastic sacks and ceramic tiles. Here, he uses wheat stems, which are dried, flattened, and combined to make tactile sheets. These are arranged on rough textured paper made from pulped grass clippings and framed with wood from discarded pallets, forging a place-based visual narrative of re-use and recycling.



*I Said Rock, Carolina Aguirre, 2024, Sumi Ink, Shellac ink and charcoal on wood board, 102 x 82 cm*

Throughout the exhibition the artists repeatedly challenge viewers' perceptions of ecologies and the positioning of human beings within environments. Connie Harrison does this by rejecting the traditional rules of landscape painting, eschewing traditional perspective in favour of a prismatic approach to composition that blossoms from a central point in the canvas. Kavitha Balasingham's sculptural installations take the form of flowers and butterflies, engaging the natural world. The organic forms are often have an electrical component, tapping into a tension between the organic and non-organic.

Grace Woodcock's predominately sculptural practice is rooted in the interwoven threads between biology and sci-fi. Wooden forms often make up the basis of the works, before fabric is stretched over them and solidified through layers of primer and oil paint. Fluid, natural forms twist and ripple, using a mixture of organic and synthetic materials to echo elements of the natural environment. Finally, Action Pyramid is a sound artist who records elements of the natural world. His most recent project saw him place hydrophones under the River Lea, live streaming the sound recording online. In *Land, Sea, Air* he will present an audio recording of underwater plants during the process of photosynthesis.

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## About the Artists

Carolina Aguirre (b.1990) is an Argentinean artist based in London. Having lived in Chile, South Africa, and Egypt, she graduated with a BA (First Class Honours) in Graphic Design from Central Saint Martins and worked in the film industry before transitioning into an interdisciplinary art practice and completing an MA at the Royal College of Art. She is a recipient of the Ali H. Alkazzi Scholarship Award (2021-2023) and the 2022 Kyoto City University of the Arts exchange programme. She has exhibited at Fold Gallery (London), Guts Gallery (London), Frestonian Gallery (London) and Lismore Castle Arts (Cork). Upcoming projects for 2024 include a solo presentations with Ruttowski;68 (Paris) and a group show with Thaddaeus Ropac (London).

Kavitha Balasingham (b.1994) completed her MFA at Goldsmiths in 2022, having previously undertaken a BA at the University of Westminster in 2017. Her artwork has been featured in various galleries, including a duo exhibition at Indigo Plus Madder (London) and Sadie Coles HQ Shop (London), SET Lewisham (London), AMP Gallery (London) and Xxijra Hii Gallery (London). She has also gained international recognition in Milan and Marseille. Kavitha's achievements have been recognized by the Gilbert Bayes Sculpture Grant, the Goldsmiths MFA Junior Fellowship award, and support from the Arts Council England Project Grant. She has also exhibited at the Plop Residency space in a show curated by Georgia Stephenson.

Shaan Bevan (b.1990) is based in the Montagne Noire, Southern France. She completed her MFA at the Slade in 2023. Before then she had worked in fashion, but left the industry when she was diagnosed with cancer. She has exhibited with Des Bains (London) and at Feria Material (Mexico City) and Zaza Gallery (Naples). Palmer Gallery will host a two-person exhibition of Shaan's work - alongside her partner Owen Pratt, who is a sound artist - during Frieze London 2024.

Max Boyla (b. 1991) is a Scottish artist from Edinburgh who is based in London. He completed his BA with First Class Honours in Painting at Gray's School of Art, Robert Gordon University (Aberdeen). Max recently graduated from the Royal Academy Schools. Highlights of recent exhibitions include the solo show 'Crying Like a Fire in the Sun' at Workplace (London); as well as group shows with LBF Contemporary (London); Des Bains, (London); Mamoth (London); Sim Smith (London) and The Artist Room, (London).

Connie Harrison (b.1993) is a British artist who lives and works in London. She graduated from the Chelsea College of Arts, after completing a foundation at New College, Nottingham. Recent solo exhibitions include, 'In Midst, Unfolding', Informality (London), 'Knitted Hedges', Blue Shop Gallery (London), 'Nurtured Furrows', Arusha Gallery (Edinburgh). Her work has been included in group exhibitions at Guts Gallery (London), Arusha Gallery (Edinburgh), Delphian Gallery (London), Flowers Gallery (London), among others.

Tom Fisher (b. 1985) is a sound artist and musician based in London. Working primarily under the name Action Pyramid, his projects vary from site-specific sound installations for galleries and museums, to experimental radio works, documentary film and music. His work has been featured at LUX, Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Cafe OTO, The Grant Museum of Zoology, London Transport Museum, Project DIVFUSE (UK), Bibliothèque Nationale de France & Jardin des Plantes (France), the Fjuk Art Center and Husavik Whale Museum (Iceland). He is the recipient of the Phonurgia Nova Award 2021 in the Field Recording category. He has also led numerous workshops in collaboration with University College London and University of the Arts London and participated in artist residencies at RIVERSSOUNDS (Online/Ukraine/Romania), Fjuk Arts Centre (Iceland), and BioArctica (Finnish Arctic).

Sean Savage Ferrari (b. 1996) is a self-taught artist from Bristol who lives and works in London. He is currently part of the nomadic arts programmer School of the Damned, honing a practice deeply engaged with the exploration of materials found within both urban and rural landscapes. After graduating from UWE in 2018, Sean lived and worked in Brazil where he was introduced to traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and initiated community art projects. In 2021, Sean was awarded a funded residency in Cyprus. He has been a resident at the environmentally responsible DARP art project in Derbyshire, and The Wilson residency at Cheltenham Art Gallery. This is Sean's first gallery exhibition.

Grace Woodcock (b. 1993) graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2019 and Edinburgh College of Art in 2016. She recently had a solo exhibition, '23.5°' at Castor Gallery (London). She was a recipient of Arts Council England's Develop Your Creative Practice grant in 2021. Grace has exhibited at Like a Little Disaster (Polignano a Mare); Alice Black Gallery (London); Roksanda (London); Tuesday-Friday (Valencia); Newchild Gallery (Antwerp); Thameside Studios Gallery (London); Contemporary Sculpture Fulmer (Fulmer); The Artist Room (London); Rugby Art Gallery & Museum (Rugby); Haze Projects x Thorp Stavri (London); Leicester Contemporary (Leicester); Fels World (London); and Castor (London).