

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cynthia Corbett Gallery presents an exhibition of new painting by two alumni of the Glasgow School of Art in London this Summer

Tales from the North
Contemporary Painting from the Glasgow School

An exhibition of works by Alastair Gordon & Elaine Woo MacGregor, presented by Cynthia Corbett Gallery

31 May – 15 June 2024, coinciding with London Gallery Weekend
Gallery 67, York Street, Marylebone, London, W1H 1QB
Open daily, 11am – 6pm, (Sunday 12pm – 5pm)



Images: (left) Elaine Woo MacGregor, *Matisse sketching a portrait of Françoise*, 2024, acrylic on linen, 100 x 100cm; (right) Alastair Gordon, *Remains of the Dawn, From Berwick Law*, 2024, oil and acrylic on canvas, 120 x 140 cm

Cynthia Corbett Gallery is thrilled to present 'Tales from the North' an exhibition of recent works by two of the UK's most exciting painters, Alastair Gordon and Elaine Woo MacGregor at Gallery 67, York Street, Marylebone, London. The exhibition will take place in the year of the Gallery's 20th anniversary, two decades on from one of the Gallery's first exhibitions 'Young, Female, and Scottish' which also featured work by Woo MacGregor.

The exhibition features recent and new works by both artists, exploring the intersection of painting and narrative, both personal and deeply immersed in the context of art history. Both Gordon and Woo MacGregor hail from Scotland, and trained at the prestigious Glasgow School of Art.

The exhibition includes a series of Alastair Gordon's extraordinary, meticulous illusionistic paintings that explore the possibilities of 'quodlibet', a form of trompe l'oeil that proliferated in 17th Century Northern Europe. Quodlibet (a Latin word meaning 'whatever you please'), usually includes a board with objects and implements that speak to the artist's own surroundings and life.

Gordon's works hold precision and expression in an exquisite tension. Similarly, the academic and historical possibilities of the Quodlibet genre dance with the expansiveness of the Scottish landscape and its deep Celtic history. Gordon's works are as much about painting as depicting the landscape itself; a commitment to observational painting, made in sight of the subject.

Gordon's painting begins in the studio, where he paints the illusion of masking tape, wood and paper. From here, the prepared canvas is taken out to the landscape where Gordon paints from observation. Some of the works for this show were painted in Gordon's native Scotland on the Isles of Lewis and Harris. Others were painted more locally to his London studio: Wimbledon and Tooting Common,

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heralding a new season of paintings about the common grounds of London; pockets of tamed wilderness in the city.

Elaine Woo MacGregor's work is similarly engaged with the processes of making, and the narrative and imaginative possibilities of painting. Combining mark making and imagery, she weaves together atmospheric and theatrical stories. Brushstrokes and areas of colour have a free-flowing placement interjected with deliberate acts of drawing and mark making. The flow and repercussion of movements with the brush in the stages before plays a pivotal role over the outcome of the work. Expressive layers of paint are revealed with a feeling of excavation, and hidden subversion of expectations.

The subjects of her paintings are drawn from popular and high culture; the life of Audrey Hepburn, Matisse drawing his muse, Peggy Guggenheim in her prime. Black and white stills are reinjected with colour, drenching the past in new colours. The work also embodies a cultural fusion of east and west, painted from her perspective as a Scottish artist brought up by traditional Chinese parents who moved to the U.K in the late 70s from Hong Kong.

Together, Alastair Gordon and Elaine Woo MacGregor's work offers an exciting view of contemporary painting today. Painting that is very much about the process of painting, mark making, colour and technique; viewed through the lens of art history, and the poetics of identity and where we come from.

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

Exhibition Information

Tales from the North
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31 May – 15 June 2024, coinciding with London Gallery Weekend
Gallery 67, York Street, Marylebone, London, W1H 1QB
Open daily, 11am – 6pm, (Sunday 12pm – 5pm)

Nearest Tube: Marylebone/Edgware Road/Marble Arch

Opening Reception, coinciding with London Gallery Weekend: 31 May 2024, 6 – 8.30pm
Finissage: 15 June 2024, 1 – 5pm

Exhibition events are sponsored by Stirling Distillery, a maker of award-winning craft gin and whisky in the shadow of Stirling Castle. With a background in art, their bottles include artwork from Edinburgh-based artist Ritchie Collins. They are proud to be sponsoring this exhibition celebrating the work of two contemporary Scottish artists.

Contact information

For more information or high res images please contact cristina@thecynthiacorbettgallery.com
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About Elaine Woo MacGregor

b. 1981, Scotland, UK

MacGregor's artistry offers a unique perspective, encompassing a fusion of cultures. Through her eclectic use of mark making and imagery, she weaves together atmospheric and theatrical narratives. While her painted stories may often be fictitious, they are rooted in real people, places, and objects.

Elaine Woo MacGregor is a Scottish-born, Chinese artist who trained at the Glasgow School of Art. She graduated in 2003 with a bachelor's degree with honours, acquired a studio and began working as a full-time artist.

MacGregor's first solo exhibition was *Portraits* in Glasgow. Recent exhibitions include her solo exhibition *Maman et Muses* PatrioHall Gallery, Edinburgh (2023), *Art on a Postcard*, Fitzrovia Gallery, London (2023), Women in Art Fair, Mall Galleries, London (2023), ING Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London (2023), Art Miami, USA (2023), Expo Chicago, USA (2023) *Young Masters Autumn Exhibition*, London (2022) and The British Art Fair, Saatchi Gallery, London (2022 & 2023). Notably, MacGregor was selected for Platform 2023 at the London Art Fair in *Reframing the Muse*, an exhibition curated by Ruth Millington, showing with The Cynthia Corbett Gallery.

MacGregor's work has been critically recognised by virtue of the Dewar Arts Award, James Torrance Memorial Award, Hope Scott Trust Award and the Cross Trust Fund. In 2022, she was a finalist in the Jackson's Painting Prize, received the Art Paisley Prize for outstanding work, and Velvet Easel Award. In 2023, she was awarded the RSA Blackadder Houston Mid-Career Travel Award. She will be travelling to Hong Kong and Shanghai for art research in 2024.

Artist Residencies include Visiting Artist and Lecturer in Guizhou Art Academy, China in 2008, and Artist in Residence with Partial Fellowship Award in Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, USA in 2009.

Woo MacGregor's work is in British and international museum collections including Atkinson Art Gallery and Museum, UK, Art Gallery of South Australia, and 21C Museum and Hotel, USA, Rudolph Blume Foundation, Houston, Texas, and Didrichsen Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland.

About Alastair Gordon

b. 1979, Scotland, UK

"I don't seek a view but a sense of place. From here the paintings are developed in the studio to appear as drawing boards and sketchbook work. Oscillating between hyperrealism and intuitive gesture, they both tame and subsume to the wilderness itself." - Alastair Gordon.

Alastair Gordon is best known for highly illusionistic paintings (rooted in the quodlibet tradition) but he combines his heightened sense of realism with historical notions of intuitive wildness and British wilderness painting. Gordon makes paintings about paintings; works that oscillate between artifact and artifice. We are presented with landscapes as still lives and sketches as completed works. Certain questions emerge about authenticity, the painting process and how we consider notions of landscape today. The veracity of the object is constantly in doubt yet the wild is ever calling.

In making his works Gordon travelled to the outer reaches of the British Isles, undertaking a painting pilgrimage from the heights of the Lake District, depths of Caithness peat flows and furthest reaches of the Outer Hebrides. Sitting atop mountain peaks and sinking into peat bogs each work begins in the landscape.

Alastair Gordon is a London based artist and tutor and a course leader for the Graduate Residency Scheme at Leith School of Art, Edinburgh. Last year, Alastair was artist in residency for City and Guilds of London Art School followed by a parallel residency with PADA Studios in Lisbon. He studied for a BA(hons) in Fine Art Painting at Glasgow School of Art, graduating in 2002. He later studied MA Fine Art at Wimbledon School of Art in 2012.

Alastair's solo exhibitions include *Quodlibet*, Aleph Contemporary, UK (2021), *Without Borders*, Aleph Contemporary, UK, (2020). Alastair's first solo museum exhibition opens at An Lanntair Art Gallery, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis in late May 2024.

Notable group exhibitions include: *LA Art Show*, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, Los Angeles (2024), *Art Miami*, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, Miami (2023), *British Art Fair*, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, London (2023), *Expo Chicago*, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, Chicago (2023), *Here After*, Bridge Projects, Los Angeles, (2022), *Unpacking Gainsborough*, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, London (2021), *The Long Echo*, Terrace Gallery, London (2021), *The Just*, Aleph Contemporary London, (2020), *The Collectors Room*, JGM Gallery, London (2020), *London Art Fair*, Cynthia Corbett Gallery, London (2020), *Summer / Winter Exhibition*, Royal Academy, London (2020).

Alastair was the inaugural winner of the Shoosmiths Painting Prize in 2014 and co-recipient of the Dentons Art Prize. Gordon has been shortlisted for the Denton Art Prize, 2020.

Gordon's work is found in numerous prominent private and public collections including Beth Rudin DeWoody, New York; Simmons and Simmons, London; Ahmanson Collection, Los Angeles; Landmark PLC, London; Bow Arts Trust, London; The Royal Bank of Scotland Collection, Rudolph Blume Foundation, Houston, Texas, and The Glasgow School of Art Alumni Collection

About Cynthia Corbett Gallery

Cynthia Corbett Gallery, established by American former economist, art historian and curator Cynthia Valianti Corbett in 2004, is an international nomadic gallery representing emerging and established contemporary artists from diverse backgrounds.

The Gallery has a broad annual exhibition programme including international art fairs and collaborative projects with global partners. Since its inception, the gallery has championed the work of women artists, queer artists and artists of colour working across a wide range of media encompassing practices at the intersection of fine art and craft.

The gallery has a remarkable track record of nurturing artists by placing their work in prestigious public collections, notably the V&A, National Museums of Scotland, 21c Museum Hotels, and private collections including Omer Koc and Jorge Perez.

In 2009, Cynthia Corbett launched the Young Masters Art Prize, a not-for-profit platform supporting emerging international artists.



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