



Artground.

Meet me on the first floor...

30 NOVEMBER – 3 DECEMBER 2023
10 GREATOREX ST, E1 5NF

About

Artground is a new contemporary roaming gallery, exhibiting works by outstanding emerging artists from across the country. The concept of Artground has been evolving for over a decade. Since her time at University of the Arts London, founder Betty has envisioned forming a space for authentic community between the artists who create and the people who come to view, to buy, and to be moved by the art.

With each show finding a home in a different London location, Artground aims to evolve the traditional concept of a gallery and give extraordinary, expressive artists the physical space and community support to become established names in the contemporary art scene. We want everyone to come and meet the art, the artists and each other, and to have the experience elevated by music, the physical gallery space, and the curiousness of fellow art lovers.

Artground's inaugural exhibition opens on 30th November and runs to 3rd December. An exciting, multi-disciplinary exhibition, *Meet me on the first floor...* brings together eight up-and-coming artists and eight different ways of seeing, translating, and communicating the world in art.

Nathalie Hollis, Melanie Issaka, Barnaby Lewis, Lucie Gray, Helena Lacy, Gerry De Banzie, Wink King Moe and Meryl Yana will show their paintings, drawings, ceramics, sculpture and photography in a stirring, complementary companionship. Curated by founder Betty, the exhibition will be accompanied by a sonic journey from DJ and music curator David Foster in the arresting surroundings of Greatorex Street gallery.

Lucie Gray

<https://www.instagram.com/luciebgart/?hl=en>



Lucie Gray

Processed Love, 2023

Acrylic on Canvas

150cm (w) x 100cm (h)



Lucie Gray

Lucie Gray is a painter of consummate female rage and liberation. Set in a bright and heady palette, Gray's paintings depict wide-eyed women splintered and seized between different worlds of rancour, power, hunger, and peace. Each painted woman looms large, contorted in exertion within the frame and dripping in food and heat and colour: she wills the viewer to see the whole of her.

Gray paints complete performances. The female character is the narrative through-line connecting each painting to the next, driving forward the combined uprising and nourishment of female evolution. Deeply and increasingly autobiographical, Gray's painted women represent both joyful and painful conversations with herself and the many hungering, wishful, prodigal characters she plays in alternate storylines.

Gray gives each figure different tools and luxuries for hedonism. Some devour or destroy decadent food with industrial precision. Others simmer, undressed and undone in slippery and dizzying heat. More still wield oversized knives or hammers to smash, beat, cut, destroy any expectation for a confined or muted life with absolute completeness.

Each of Gray's works are born from a clear, discrete flash of an image, the totality of the painting she wants to create presenting itself to her. The painting process is then an oft laboured, sometimes tortuous, process of reproduction and problem-solving to replicate the image in her mind. This produces paintings that offer painstaking clarity in mark-making, icons, colour, and form. It is notable, too, that Gray paints in her home studio, imbuing her work with the simultaneous warmth, restrictions, and latent rebellion of her domestic reality.

Melanie Issaka

https://www.instagram.com/melo_onny/



Melanie Issaka

In place of seeing / In continuous motion, 2023

C-Type Photogram on Fuji Crystal Archive
Gloss

16" (w) x 24" (h) exc. frame

Edition 1 of 1

Melanie Issaka

In place of seeing / A touch, 2023

C-Type Photogram on Fuji Crystal Archive
Gloss

16" (w) x 24" (h) exc. frame

Edition 1 of 1



Melanie Issaka

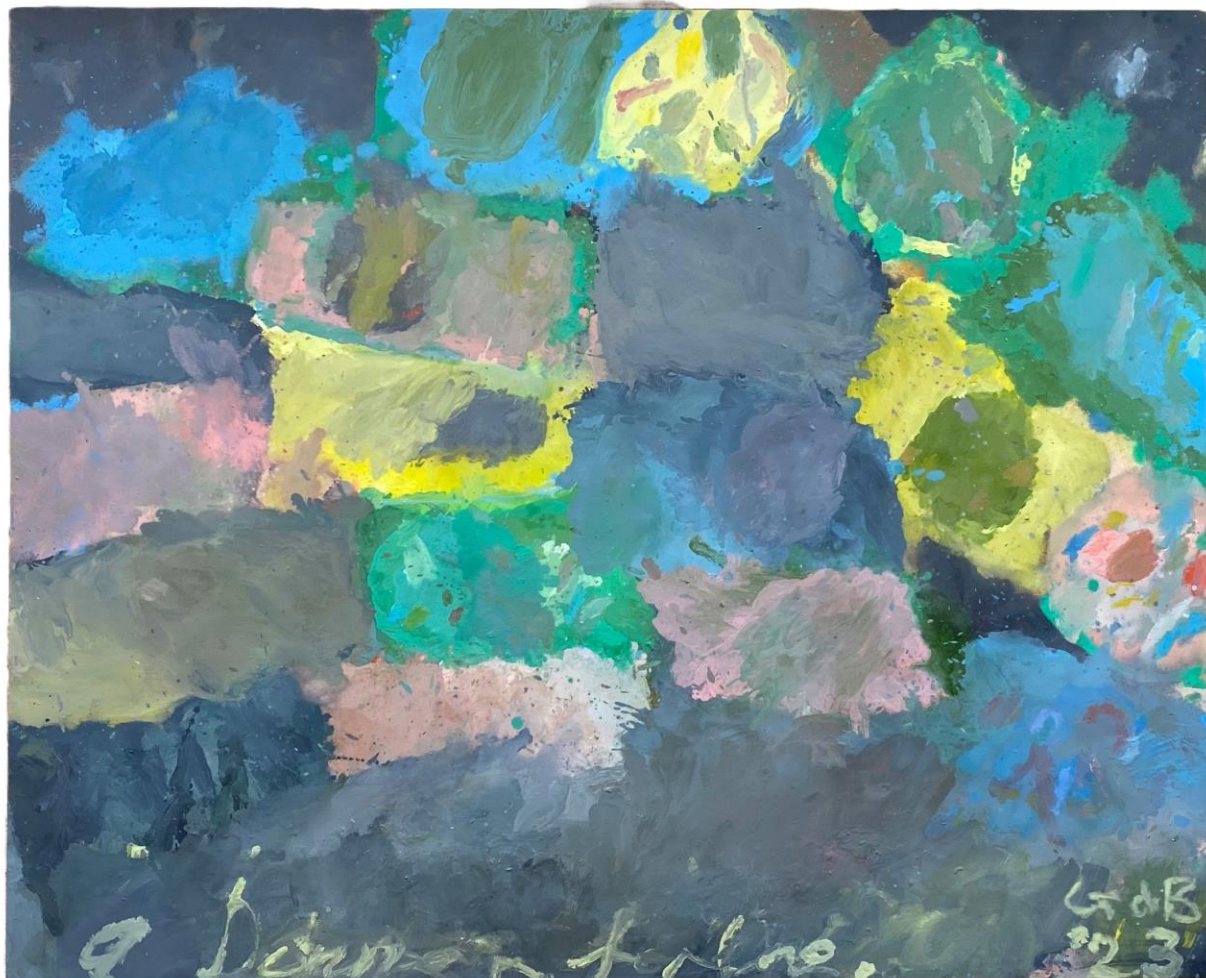
Melanie Issaka is a master of light, form, and brazen self-discovery. In a trance-like process, Issaka folds and then holds her body in different gestures under a careful, bold balance of darkness and light. Through this contortion, she creates mesmerising photograms of shapes carved from the boundaries of her own physical negative space: her body is suspended in one time and one space, imprinted absolutely in bright and bold cyan, cerise, or crimson.

An alumna of Brighton University and later the Royal College of Art, Issaka sought out photography alongside her screen printing and letterpress printing practice, discovering comfort in the connection and repetitive processes of these media. Issaka's most recent bodies of work include powerful, gracious family portraiture, alongside her distinctive photogram self-portraits.

Profoundly intimate, Issaka's photograms are created in hours-long, black-out dark room meetings with, and using, herself or parts of herself: her natural hair, her fingerprints, her pressed limbs, her gesturing hands, and her ancestral fabrics. In this unique self-portraiture, Issaka creates bodily abstractions with the masterful layering of shadow, brilliant colour, and physical matter. The final forms are irreplicable: a one-to-one scale record of one life in one time. Yet, they are indistinguishable as Issaka, with each negative form speaking to the shared humanity in our bodily boundaries. Issaka's use of a bright, halting red anonymises herself further, and agitates the viewer with associations of violence, fury, power, and devotion.

Gerry De Banzie

<https://www.instagram.com/gerrydebanzie/>

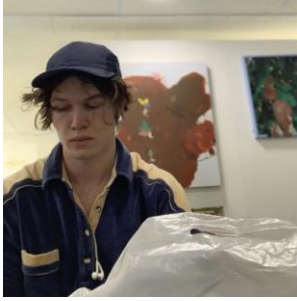


Gerry De Banzie

Dinner for One, 2023

Oil on Cotton

133cm (w) x 107cm (h)



Gerry De Banzie

Gerry De Banzie is a painter of the world as he makes it. A graduate of Camberwell College of Arts, De Banzie finds life in colour: deep and interesting purples, pinks, yellows and greens give him cause to create. By tempering and diluting hues, De Banzie then allows his paint to forge enigmatic, distinctive marks: hazy forms with determined lucidity. De Banzie's playful colours bind together in the looseness of the shapes they perform, in the new tones and energies born from their connection. His final paintings are daring, fun, philosophical. They command attention and make intellectual mischief for the viewer.

A painter from a very young age, De Banzie has experienced his whole world and life through painting. In a childhood mapped between urban and rural landscapes, he found dancing bracken, animated buildings, and endless discovery. Raised too on old English fairy tales, De Banzie retains a childish intrigue into the sly weirdness of folklore and circus tomfoolery. It follows that, like a child at play, De Banzie paints on the floor, often on bedsheets which let his spirit-diluted paint freely dance and distort. All of this gives an inimitable life and curiousness to De Banzie's work.

Though guided by play, De Banzie's style is striking in its maturity and sureness. De Banzie has a quasi-religious, deeply philosophical relationship to his work, born from formative relearning and perseverance. De Banzie himself discovers the paintings as he makes them, and feels understood by Carl Jung's analyses: he is guided to make each mark by the unconscious mind, the ancestral, collective consciousness. Each painting is an enigma, a something created for the very first time, escaping rationale description and understanding outside of its presence. That is, De Banzie's paintings can be nothing but paintings.

Barnaby Lewis

<https://www.instagram.com/barnabymakes/>



Barnaby Lewis

Figurative Study, 2023

Mild Steel

40cm (w) x 30cm (d) x 150cm (h) Size

includes plinth



Barnaby Lewis

Barnaby Lewis is a maker of curious, utilitarian furniture and metal-work sculpture. A master manipulator of metal, Lewis coaxes raw beauty and functionality from his base material to create fluid, twisting movements in silver and his distinctive, unpredictable and mollifying constructions.

A trained carpenter, Lewis has since been drawn to working with metal for its infinite recyclability and the latent possibility in its easy compliance. He heats, hammers, strengthens, angles, patches, welds, deconstructs, re-forms his pieces which become emblems of his winding discovery-like process.

Each piece begins with a simple, loose idea, and from there Lewis encourages accidents and malformations – embracing a sometimes chaotic, forgiving metalwork practice. He works often in single movements or gestures, pushing metal to the edge of its potential, transforming metals into smooth lines which move and sway in rhythmic ease. Lewis' furniture pieces are undeniably art, though he holds onto their functionality as a way of evading the depth or grandeur that art can sometimes want to be: for Lewis, the meaning is the object – the chair is for one person sitting, the candlestick is for one candle burning. His more sculptural pieces, however, embrace art as art: visually assertive and structurally animated, Lewis' sculpture combines a near-anarchic vitality and enchantment.

Lewis, who works from his self-made outdoor workshop in Bermondsey, leaves a raw, dented, and honest finish to his work which pays tribute to the force and tools that were used to create it. His furniture and sculpture is an offering to his own future – the life of continuous creation, discovery, and motion that Lewis is forging for himself from his own unruly metal artistry.

Nathalie Hollis

https://www.instagram.com/nathalie_hollis/



Nathalie Hollis

Trouble Comes In Threes, 2022

Oil and pastel on paper

90cm (w) x 64cm (h) Exc. frame



Nathalie Hollis

A London-based drawer, painter and print-maker, Nathalie Hollis creates with poetic, urgent, and ferocious mark-making. Formidable and evocative, Hollis' distinctive pink and red works show bodies caught in fight or flight, motion and tension standing still, figures held in infinite disorder. Her recent pieces have translated that same, certain aliveness to the natural world, with Hollis finding in rhythmic flora a wicked and tempestuous vitality.

An alumna of the Royal Drawing School and of Camberwell College of Arts, Hollis has a studied and complete understanding of the human body and its movements, and a profound way of expressing the union of body and being in line and colour. Lovers and fighters feature heavily in Hollis' most prominent series of works, with figures wriggling, wrestling, threshing, dancing, and mutating together, in lucent pinks and reds. Hollis' use of red is important: together with the physicality and near violence in her mark-making, the red moves each strike to become the pulse of her work, willing it into living motion.

Often drawing from theatre, combat or performance, Hollis' work harnesses the dynamism of life in movement, articulating on paper bodies moving in sticky synchronicity. Figures lose boundaries and transmute to new forms bound by both tension and softness. Some of Hollis' larger pieces works are heavily layered: drawings beneath and above wrestle with each, colliding to become one whole. To Hollis, the body is also a vehicle of expression and a site of translation: she often scores marks presenting as words, drawn in the haze of artistic reverie and unable to be literally read, speaking to the necessary ambiguity in physical expression.

Helena Lacy

<https://www.instagram.com/helena.lacy.clay/?hl=en>



Helena Lacy

Fingō Vase III, 2023

Stoneware

38cm (w) x 10cm (d) x 38cm (h)



Helena Lacy

Helena Lacy is a London-based ceramicist and creator of unnatural yet organic shapes. Lacy has been making in her singularly earthy style for nearly a decade, finding cause and inspiration in the movement of natural forms – stones, coral, fossils, lava, and nature-born female body.

Lacy is currently undertaking a Master's in Ceramics at the Royal College of Art, building on her degree from the Wimbledon College of Art, her sculpting background, and her many residencies: at Shiro Oni Studio in Japan, working with an always-burning, ritual-making wood-fired Anagama kiln; at AARK in Finland; and at Zentrum Fur Keramik in Berlin.

Lacy's ceramics play with and push the boundaries of their necessary dimensions, presenting as flat silhouettes and willing new forms to appear through the negative space between them. This creation within creation, the flow of shape from shape, is the guiding process in Lacy's work.

Emblematic of her work is Lacy's Fingo collection: *fungō* from the Latin meaning *I create, mould, form, shape, imagine*. Lacy's *fungō* vases are curious to the eye, standing in defiant balance, having been created with a grounding centre to support the near-cascading shapes. The delicate tipping point of the vases' weight, the intrinsic flow of movement in the outer lines of the ceramics, and the simultaneously delicate yet heavy and grounding fired-clay, all come together to mirror the sheer thrill and calm of standing in a wild, harmonious natural world.

Wink K Moe

https://www.instagram.com/wink_king_moe/



Wink King Moe

Untitled, 2023

Ceramic, hand painted

30cm (w) x 48cm (h)



Wink King Moe

Wink King Moe is a ceramicist and fine art student cultivating a journeyed, soft style of making at Chelsea College of the Arts. King Moe's big-bellied ceramics are each born from the kiln as a piece of her heart, with carved poems of love and painted dream-like florals.

A trained oil painter and contemporary dancer, King Moe turned to ceramics and the grounding energy of clay only last year. Vase-making promised a therapeutic tactility and a way to cradle her dreams and her difference in the bodies of these new works.

Each of King Moe's pots takes a near-month or moon cycle to complete. Every movement, to trim, colour, carve, sgraffito, glaze, fire, pours another layer of integrity and love into the vase and imbues it with another part of King Moe's fluid self. Working in calm moments feeds soft, textured handling; rapid thoughts give way to more forceful, colourful mark-making. The tightly-held, small necks of her vases both protect and let breathe King Moe's open, melancholic fancies.

King Moe's love of poetry is written on her pots themselves in her own bold carvings. King Moe repeatedly carves words from four respectively Japanese, Chinese, Korean and English poems in their original scripts. Each line laments the truth of life in dreams, the passing of time, the force of longing, the joy and fleetingness of love, and beauty in the ordinary. Sat alongside floral iconography and on the bulging bodies of King Moe's ceramics, these poems become part of her new, brave, and beautiful world.

Meryl Yana

<https://www.instagram.com/merylyanaart/?hl=en>



Meryl Yana

Untitled I, 2022

Handmade paper, turmeric, print, henna,
eco resin, vinegar
22cm (w) x 33.5cm (h) variable dimensions

Meryl Yana

Untitled II, 2022

Handmade paper, turmeric, print, henna,
eco resin, vinegar
22cm (w) x 33.5cm (h) variable dimensions

Meryl Yana

Untitled V, 2022

Handmade paper, turmeric, print, henna,
eco resin, vinegar
22cm (w) x 33.5cm (h) variable dimensions



Meryl Yana

Meryl Yana is a London-based French artist and painter of elemental, near-sacred abstractions. A graduate from the Chelsea College of Arts, Yana has since completed residencies at JO-HS in Mexico City, the Museum of Goa, India, PADA in Barreiro and MONO in Lisbon. Yana's works are each near-alchemic experiments, using natural ingredients like hibiscus, baking powder, lime, and conchinnilla, to create soft, elemental movements on canvas.

Yana works in a harmonious uncertainty with her materials, allowing the laws of physics, chance and chaos to create shapes and patterns from transcend and transgress the bounds of human conception. In this way, she explores themes of the human condition, modernity and ancestry and sacred practices of elemental immersion.

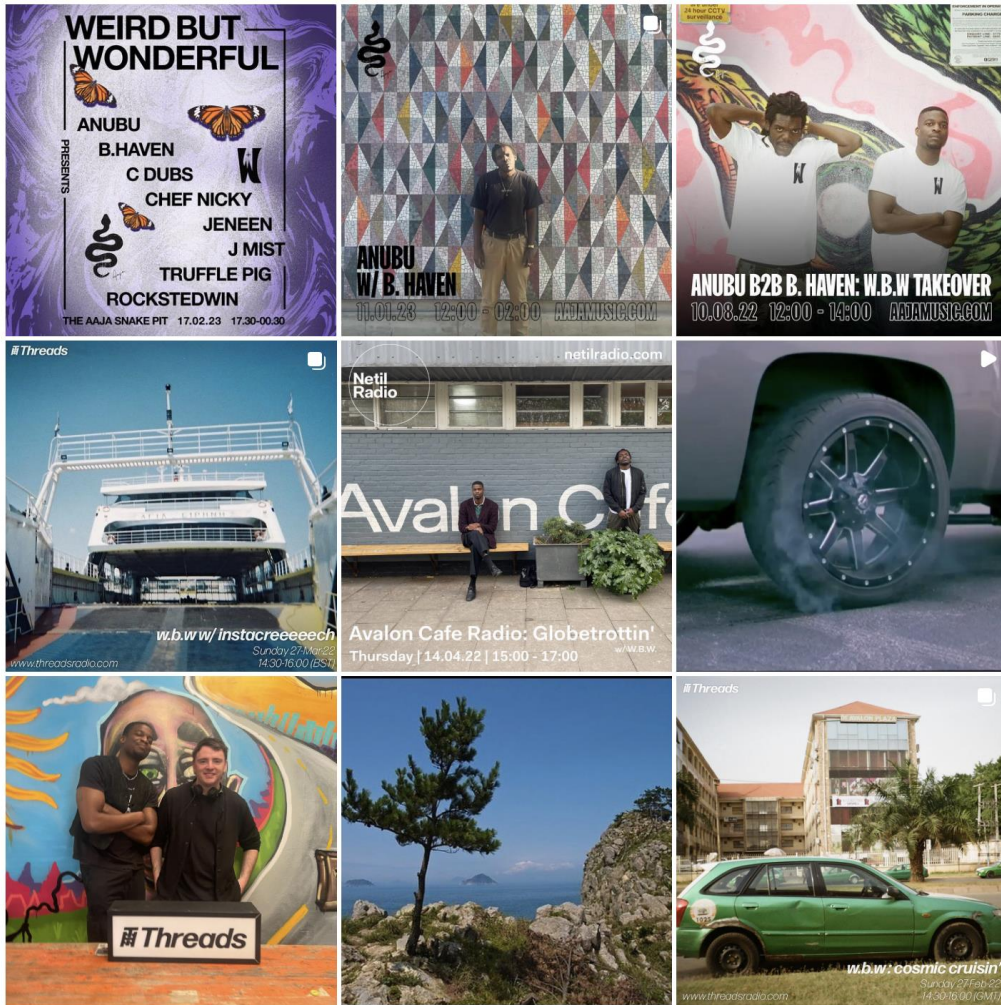
Yana uses the process and principles of palimpsest, that is: something that has been repurposed or reformed, though retains its previous life and utility visible beneath. Here, her works speak to the uncovering, erasure and layering processes of archaeological endeavour: exploring the worlds that have come before us.

David Foster (WBW)

DJ & Musician

<https://www.instagram.com/w.b.w/?hl=en>

David Foster (WBW), Music curator and DJ, will be curating the music for the private view, his passion and talent for the discovery of evocative under the radar music and ability to curate a set that reflects the energy of a space is unparalleled. In speaking to each of the artists he plans to weave a rich narrative to accompany the evening, a soundscape that resonates with the work on display.



Betty Sims Hilditch

Founder & Curator



Betty Sims-Hilditch has worked in set design for film over the last ten years, known for her meticulous attention to detail and skilled sourcing of fine antiques and objets d'art. A trained painter, Sims-Hilditch was one of the first foreign students at ESAG Penninghen, a renowned French art school and Matisse's Alma Mater. There she cultivated her personal painting style and was surrounded by extraordinary talent, teaching her the matchless value and necessity of true art in life, and sparking her interest in curation.

Since then and following undergraduate training in Set Design for Screen at Wimbledon College of Arts, Sims-Hilditch has forged a wildly diverse and fulfilling career in film set design.

She began her film career in production working with David Thompson at Origin Pictures before going on to work with designer Suzie Davies on the film *Mr Turner* and *On Chesil Beach*. Since then, she has set decorated her first feature *Animal Within* and worked for set decorators such as Katie Spencer on a number of projects: (*Barbie*, *Rebecca*, *Cyrano*), Alice Felton (*Cruella*, *The Bubble*), Charlotte Watts (*The Personal History of David Copperfield*, *The Courier*, *Peterloo*) and more.

For the recent *Barbie* film, Sims-Hilditch worked with renowned glass-blower Italian, Simone Cenedese of the infamous Murano island, to personally commission a huge 52-piece glass pop-bubble chandelier. Other recently notable experiences have been her sourcing and negotiating the loan of exquisite, hand-painted museum ceramics from 16th century China for Joe Wright's *Cyrano*, and her sourcing of multiple artworks for the opulent sets of Guy Richie's *The Gentleman*.

In film, Sims-Hilditch made use of her curatorial eye daily to create worlds that captivate an audience. Now, she is using that same eye to assemble artworks and artists in powerful compliment, bringing a new verve and community to the London art scene.

Note from the founder – From Betty

I very much look forward to welcoming you to our first Artground exhibition.

My goal with Artground is to build a new kind of gallery experience where both the artist and the client are first and foremost. As an artist and designer myself I am keen to evolve the traditional 'estate agent' style gallery show rooms which feel to me often uninspiring and outdated and to make an accessible space where all are welcome to experience art made by the thinkers of today and the voices of the contemporary art community. The perfect gallery partner to me is one which combines true community and nurture with commercial nous.

My background is in Set Design working on films including the recent *Barbie*, Disney's *Cruella* and Joe Wright's *Cyrano* amongst others. The last ten years of experience in the film industry has sharpened my eye for the extraordinary and developed my skill as an organiser amongst creatives. I am excited to translate my skills and knowledge from the film world to the world of art, bringing fresh perspectives and ideas.

Please come and join us on 30th November from 6pm to meet both art and artists at Greatorex Street.

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Betty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent loop at the end.