

# Darl.e

AND THE BEAR



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present

Sandra Beccarelli  
Miranda Boulton  
Justine Formentelli  
Fi Hunter  
Robyn Litchfield  
Mandy Payne



### a bit about us...

Darl-e and the Bear has been an organic, wonderful rolling adventure. Since the summer of 2019 we have travelled a very personal journey of self-discovery, establishing and developing our own unique footprint for the gallery.

We are committed to our driving principle of being accessible to everyone, and work hard to promote our established artists whilst championing new and emerging talent. Our talented and dedicated 'team' are all artists, dipping their toes in both camps, having empathy with all our artists.

Three unique spaces are housed in two Georgian listed buildings, in the heart of Woodstock near Oxford and the home of Blenheim Palace.

#### **No: 17**

houses our curated collection of contemporary artworks by our gallery and visiting artists.

#### **the Firehouse**

offers a wide variety of engaging special events including talks, workshops and screenings alongside a dynamic exhibition programme. We are expanding and our new first-floor area opens in the new year, allowing us to work with Table 13, a highly renowned plant-based, social dining experience, offering food and art experiences.

The outside courtyard garden is a place to traverse, sit and relax. The courtyard acts like a corridor between both spaces, and much like the interior, one entity intertwines with the next, organically merging into itself - naturally beautiful.

Taking immense pride in our curation, artworks are shown with love and care in a warm, welcoming, eclectic environment. We have a strong ethical and environmental ethos, running as an unofficial not-for-profit gallery supporting and donating to our chosen charities. We have an offset programme, planting a tree for every artwork sold.

The gallery is dedicated to being an open, transparent institution and stand forthright in our vision to have a boldly independent approach to the gallery model.

### join our mailing list

or follow us on instagram to be kept up to date on all our forthcoming events

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## Sandra Beccarelli

Sandra Beccarelli creates abstract works based on systems and processes to explore the complexities of emotion and reasoning. Constantly pushing the boundaries within painting, drawing and mixed media, she pursues these concepts in both expressive and obsessive ways, where process and meaning are intrinsically linked.

'Beyond the Surface of Seeing' best describes the way she approaches her art, both in content and in its creation. Sandra aims to get to the 'essence' of a feeling, often referring to nature as a starting point; an interpretation of what we can see and what we can't; the structure which underlies rhythms and movements stripped down and distilled to pure energy.

The 'backs' of her artworks are the equivalent to these unseen energies, where often the reverse side of her canvas will inform the 'front' e.g. syringing through a 'hidden grid' or sewing and rippling pins through paper.

This method of working resonates with the idea of cause and effect and how everything is linked and exists, even if we can't see it.

The recurring theme of how emotions can be visually described has been her obsession throughout her career, as has the religious concept of light, dark, loss and hope, order and chaos and looking towards nature as a metaphor, where shadows shift and emotions change.

In all her works she creates structured working systems and then disrupts them, letting go of order and control to chance and spontaneity. Beccarelli is interested in the use of 'empty' space within her work, silent, yet active, where captured moments of intensity such as the accumulation of marks, drips, or heightened colours harmoniously emerge.

Beccarelli has been selected for exhibitions across the UK including the RA Summer Exhibition - 2018 & 2019 and the ING Discerning Eye - 2016 & 2021. In 2021, her first solo exhibitions were held in London and Oxfordshire.

to see all available works by Sandra  
please [click here](#)





## Miranda Boulton

Boulton's paintings are about the passing of time, they are Memento Mori, reminding us of our mortality and the transience of life. She paints flowers, alive, beautiful, decaying, dying, haunting, life-affirming, poignant, and reassuring. Always at the height of their beauty, they fade away. They cover the monumental and the everyday.

Painting is an ongoing conversation between the past and the present. Miranda is fascinated by Flower Paintings from Art History, having spent a great deal of time looking at paintings by Morandi, Winifred Nicholson, Manet, Rachel Ruysch and Mary Moser to name a few, absorbing their work and following their brushstrokes as if listening in on a conversation. Memories of their paintings are used as the starting point of her process. She searches for a space where she has touched on the presence of a painting from the past. There is an essence of the original, an acknowledgement of a time, place and history all in the mix. Colours slide and slip around the surface, and large sweeping gestures made by hand or brush sit next to layers of impasto paint and carefully painted details. Areas of soft powdery spray paint collide with hard built-up oil paint. The canvas is turned to destabilise and shift the composition, giving a fresh perspective to the process.

Boulton's practice is an ongoing conversation with the past, exploring new forms from old imagery and narratives, linked through expressive layers of colour, gesture and form.

Miranda Boulton lives and works from her studio in Cambridge, UK. She studied Art History at Sheffield Hallam University and Turps Banana Art School in London. In 2021 she won the Jacksons Painting Prize and has been included in notable exhibitions such as the RA Summer Exhibition - 2016 & 2019, Creekside Open - 2019, ING Discerning Eye - 2021 and the Young Masters Autumn Exhibition - 2022.

to see all available works by Miranda  
please [click here](#)







## Justine Formentelli

Justine Formentelli's work is a profound exploration of inner landscapes through linear and abstract forms. Formentelli is fascinated by the interaction of the internal self and the external world and the porous border between the two.

Justine adopts collages and paint on paper to express inner landscapes, emotions, and experiences. Her bold gestures and layered elements form abstract compositions that possess vivid energy. Dancing between the worlds of painting and calligraphy, her paintbrush balances the intersection between intention and chance.

While many artists look to the world to offer inspiration, Justine dares to look inwards to reflect on our mysterious interior architecture. Her combination of shapes and varied textures is suggestive of the fragile formations within us all. In each piece, contrasting forms and colours are caught in motion, loaded with a sense of happening. Connections and relationships are created, and we are drawn into a state of mind as well as body.

Formentelli spent her childhood living on the island of Réunion in the Caribbean and Morocco. She studied her MA at City and Guilds of London Art School and has participated in numerous exhibitions in the United States, Europe and Dubai. Her work has been selected for the ING Discerning Eye - 2022, Works on Paper II at Blue Shop Cottage - 2020 and is now included in the Soho House art collection.

to see all available works by Justine  
please [click here](#)

## Fi Hunter

Working from her studio in Marlow, Fi Hunter starts by sculpting larger-than-life heads in clay. Instead of creating portraits, she prefers to morph various sketches into timeless beings. From a finished clay head, she produces moulds using silicone and resin. Working not only in bronze she combines resins with unusual materials such as stone, iron dust, textiles, feathers and dried foliage.

Nature plays a big part in her work, using natural objects found on the Thames path in her outdoor works, which express emotions that are tied to the seasons. Fascinated by the strength and fragility of the human condition, she looks to reflect this not just in human expressions but through the final material's physical attributes, from hard metals and stone to delicate lace and leaves.

Hunter was an internationally awarded advertising art director and creative director before transitioning into fine art in 2019. Since then, her work has been exhibited across the UK including at the John Lewis Odney Club in Maidenhead, the Marlow Art Trail, the Affordable Art Fair - Battersea and Fresh Art Fair - Ascot & Cheltenham.

to see all available works by Fi  
please [click here](#)







## Robyn Litchfield

Drawing from archival photographs and personal documents relating to the early exploration and colonisation of New Zealand, Robyn Litchfield reimagines and examines the experience of those early forays into a hitherto unknown space.

Her paintings envisage how sublime encounters with places; pristine and untouched might encourage contemplation and self-reflexivity. The landscape becomes a ubiquitous template for exploring personal history, notions of cultural identity, alienation and a sense of belonging. Wilderness is used as the transitional liminal space, which can be seen as a place of disorientation and dissolution of order. Processes such as scraping into the paint, layering and erasure reference the destructive and constructive nature of being in a state of liminality. This space can offer an opportunity for reconfiguring subjectivity and reimagining possibilities. An alluring luminosity projects through the monochrome images of dense forests. Elements extracted from the documents of primeval landscapes intrude into the space.

For Litchfield they are haunting symbols of loss and longing; for past lives left behind, the dispossessed and the primeval forest. This layer of amorphous red shapes acts like a semiotic screen casting its shadow on the gaze.

Through the uncanny layering and the juxtaposition of images, the viewer is encouraged to form their own associations and interpretations of the work whilst engaging with the otherness of landscape through paint.

Litchfield has won both the Collyer Bristow Exceptional Award - 2018 & 2019 and the Landscape Award - Jacksons Painting Prize - 2020. She has been shortlisted for the for the Beep Painitng Prize - 2022 as well as longlisted for the CBPP - 2019 & 2021 and the John Moores Painting Prize - 2020. Her work has been selected for numerous exhibitions including the RA Summer Exhibition - 2020 & 2022.

to see all available works by Robyn  
please [click here](#)



## Mandy Payne

For Payne, the important concerns within her paintings are materiality, surface textures and fracture. She wants to work with materials that have a physical connection to the sites she depicts, namely concrete and spray paint (referencing graffiti). Her work suggests that 'the built' is a form of nature. Mandy's use of concrete, a material associated with the 'made', which main components derive from nature; sand and water, recognise the hidden roots that intertwine and connect us with the natural world.

The natural environment where the artist's materials derive from is in direct relation to the urbanisation of the natural environment. Payne is inspired by the urban landscape, issues of gentrification, inequality, social housing and the flux of city environments. She is interested in Brutalist architecture, modernism, notions of utopia/dystopia and finding beauty in the ordinary/overlooked.

'I wanted to document the estate in transition and also for the work to speak of the loss and displacement of the existing communities. I am interested in issues of gentrification, social housing and the flux of the urban environment. I am inspired by the spaces people inhabit, the traces they leave and the capacity of places to absorb memories and experiences. I am particularly drawn to locations that are in a transitional state, that are overlooked or derided.'

Mandy Payne originally trained as a dentist and spent 25 years working in the NHS specialising in Children's Dentistry in the Community and Hospital Dental Services. In 2012, she left dentistry to pursue art full time. Since then Payne has been selected for multiple exhibitions including the CBPP - 2016, Lynn Painter Stainers Prize Exhibition - 2019, the RA Summer Exhibition - 2014 to 2019 & 2022, the John Moores Painting Prize Exhibition 2014, 2016 & 2020. She has also won several awards and is now included in collections worldwide, most recently The Devonshire Collection at Chatsworth.

to see all available works by Mandy  
please [click here](#)





## EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS 2023

### MARCH - Zari Sona Moti : Glitter Gold Pearls

South Asians consider the minefield of a sliding scale of code-switching between whiteness and brownness. When we have more than one cultural influence, how does our sense of self shift when we become parents? **Saroj Patel** and **Mita Vaghela**, artists and co-curators, bring fellow South Asian artists living in the UK together to celebrate their roots through experiences of parenthood.

### APRIL / MAY - Spring Exhibition

#### MAY / JUNE - Earth-story

**Pam Franklin** responds to the fragility and beauty of what we face losing on Earth from the intimate 'housing' of richly-marked icons, built in wood. Navigating with eclectic, natural instruments (a Polynesian stick chart to read the currents by, a Dogon ladder for the soul, the whorled casings of seashells or rams' horns) she offers diptych and triptych work for the viewer to engage with directly.

#### JULY - Robyn Litchfield

Representations of sublime encounters with pristine and untouched landscapes. Litchfield draws from archival material and personal documents relating to the early exploration and colonisation of New Zealand, Robyn aims to reimagine and examine the experience of forays into a hitherto unknown space.

#### AUGUST - Online Exhibition

#### SEPTEMBER - Body Language/Being Human

In **Philippa Paterson's** first solo show, she focuses on the female struggles present in modern society. She creates narratives of these struggles through her work that resonate with women regardless of their background, race, ethnicity or religion.

#### OCTOBER - Some Roses and their Phantoms

Artists **Camilla Bliss**, **Miranda Boulton**, **Rebecca Louise Law**, **Florence Reekie** and **Sue Williams-Acourt** - head an all-female exhibition. Each artist's work re-examines the narrative behind Dorothea Tanning's painting of the same name.

#### NOVEMBER - Tim Steward

Working between Oxford and North Cornwall, Steward works for long periods in specific locations. He explores the beauty of 'place' through the study of the physical, historical and spiritual elements, quietly observing and becoming part of his surroundings.

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