

MEDIA RELEASE

Curious Nature

26th April – 18th June 2008

Newlyn Art Gallery, New Road, Newlyn, Cornwall. TR18 5PZ

Tel: 01736 363715. www.newlynartgallery.co.uk

Open: Mon -Sat 10am-5pm, Sun: Closed

An exhibition of drawings, paintings and photographs, Curious Nature presents work by artists who look at the natural world from an unusual perspective.

Curated by Lucy Day and Eliza Gluckman, the selected work presents the beautiful and the bizarre in diverse media, discovering the unexpected in landscape and nature.

The darker side of nature is explored by each of the artists in these selected works. Helena Goldwater creates her own botanical specimens, exquisitely rendered in watercolour paint. Each depicted sample is familiar yet altered, hinting at some kind of strange science. Whilst referencing 18th and 19th Century studies these images are extremely contemporary, suggestive of our ability to radically alter the nature of our environment.

Nadege Meriau has taken a similar viewpoint, in certain cases isolating individual plants and their plant system, in others exposing the surreal nature of plants simply through the direction of her lens. Throughout her work, Meriau pushes context and composition to reveal new understandings.

Both Leonora Chan and Melanie Stidolph use photography to give us a new angle on the familiar landscape. Chan's landscapes are highlighted with an eerie, effervescent light that makes an ordinary hedgerow or shoreline appear magically staged. In fact these are lit 'naturally' by light pollution. This unsettling fact brings into question the human and urban impact on nature.

Where Chan uses long exposures to capture the artificial light, Stidolph shoots off reels of film to capture that moment when life itself seems a little off key. A large photograph of a hillside will suddenly reveal a hare sitting, just off centre. The viewer comes across the unexpected detail and invariably discovers more on each viewing.

Andy Harper constructs complex visual fodder through paint. He uses the paint to physically build the dense foliage. Through an exact and repetitive technique, he builds up leaves, fruit and twigs into a disturbing image of barely controlled wilderness. Based in London and St Just, Cornwall, Harper runs Assembly - a live/work space for artists in the region.

John Timberlake paints similarly disturbing scenes that illuminate narratives within landscapes. Timberlake draws and paints over photographs creating layered landscapes. In Giardini Allagati a photographed dilapidated building is contrasted with a sky reminiscent of 19th Century masters where the omnipotent presence of nature is dominated by the subject matter. In this particular work the patina of the walls and texture grit in the road are reflected in the pencil work of the tumultuous clouds, the contemporary and ancient striving for dominance.

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Blair Todd, Exhibitions Manager at Newlyn Art Gallery, says:

“This elegant exhibition is in contrast to the jangling, whistling, automated labyrinth created by Peter Geschwind for The Exchange – on display until 28th June. Having two galleries has really allowed us to broaden the programme and be able to concurrently present a variety of contemporary art.”

Ends

Please note change in opening hours at both The Exchange and Newlyn Art Gallery for the summer season.

For more information please contact Teri Laing, Marketing & Development Manager on 01736 363715 or email teri.laing@newlynartgallery.co.uk.
www.newlynartgallery.co.uk.