

ROMAN ROAD

PRESS RELEASE

# *A Gothic Midsummer*

Roman Road is thrilled to be working with Anna Souter on *A Gothic Midsummer*, a special pop-up group exhibition advancing on the gallery's intent to promote more diversity and inclusion amongst local and international ultra-contemporary artists. Taking place in Bruton, Somerset's epicentre for art, the show extends Roman Road's programming beyond the walls of its own physical exhibiting space, attempting to stimulate more visibility for its participating artists while bringing the gallery's showcases to a new and wider audience. Featuring varied paintings and ceramics by eight emerging female artists, *A Gothic Midsummer* looks to re-examine bucolic representation through ostensibly charming yet curiously ominous works.

No 6 Bruton High Street  
Somerset  
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Private View: Saturday 15 July 2023, 3 – 7 PM  
Exhibition: 14 July – 23 July 2023  
Opening Hours: Friday – Sunday, 11 AM – 5 PM

The turning of the earth brings birth and death in inextricably quick succession; life is given and taken away by the cyclical proclivities of a mother both cruel and kind. Sunup and moonrise spell out equinox and solstice, marked by rituals, festivities, and stories which linger on in the rhythms of the countryside. Occurring between the summer solstice and the traditional feast of Lammas, *A Gothic Midsummer* acknowledges the transition into the waning of the year. The irresistible pull of night that drives the second half of the solar calendar provides a parallel to the human tendency to seek out the darkness within the light and the sinister within the sweet.

Co-curated by local writer Anna Souter and featuring a mixture of artists working both in the South West and internationally, the exhibition examines the perpetual appeal of the rural while also exploring its shadowy side. Many of the works depict pastoral scenes or landscapes, where a sense of serenity or innocence is undermined by a lurking menace. Folklore is shown to have a sinister edge and the happy endings of fairy tales inevitably come at a dangerous price. Paintings fray and unravel at their edges, while alchemical symbols hint at the power of the occult.

The show also draws out an interest in inner landscapes and psychology. Across these artists' practices, the bitter-sweet quality of memory is counterbalanced by a concern with the bodily and mental manifestations of trauma. Eerie imaginary places are set against allusions to sacred geometries, subconscious desires, and the symbology of dreams. Embracing uncertainty and mysticism, many of these artists look to the natural world for spiritual nourishment.

*A Gothic Midsummer* presents a contemporary take on the landscape painting tradition that runs back to Nicolas Poussin and his 17<sup>th</sup> century masterpiece *Et in Arcadia Ego*, in which a group of idealized shepherds examine a tombstone inscription: a reminder that death is everywhere, even among the pastoral perfections of Arcadia. The exhibition reframes this bucolic inheritance, looking to the past with a self-aware nostalgia for a harmonious relationship with the more-than-human world that may never have existed. As the year slips into high summer and the surrounding fields turn from green to gold, *A Gothic Midsummer* acknowledges both the allure and the vulnerability of nature – even as it slips through our fingers.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Johanna Bath (b. 1980, Warendorf) is a German artist working with painting. She studied illustration design at the Bildkunst Akademie Hamburg (1999-2002) and design and painting at Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW), graduating in 2007 with a Diploma. In 2017 she gained international recognition after being named on Saatchi Art's 'One to Watch'. Bath was also selected by the CAC (Contemporary Art Collectors) for the Emerging Artist Programme of 2022. Her solo exhibitions include *Shivers*, Pipeline, London (2023); *Vanish into thin air*, März Manufaktur, Paderborn, Germany (2019) and *Neue Arbeiten*, Part2Gallery, Düsseldorf (2019). She also recently had a duo show at Enari Gallery, Amsterdam (2023). Her work has been shown widely in group exhibitions, including at C1760 at Academy Mansion, New York (2023); Roman Road, London (2023); Eve Liebe Gallery, London (2023); BLANKGallery, Shanghai (2023); Van Der Plas Gallery, New York (2022); Galleri Nobel, Oslo (2022); RAUM 55, Essen (2021); and Haze Gallery, Berlin (2021).

Daisy Dodd-Noble (b.1989, United Kingdom) is a London-based artist working with painting. She received her MFA from the New York Academy of Arts in 2016. Dodd-Noble has completed artist residencies with L21 Gallery, Palma de Mallorca, Spain (2021); and Bloom Galerie, Saint-Tropez, France (2023). Recent solo exhibitions include *Landscapes from the UK*, Roman Road, London (2022); *Origins*, L21 Factory, L'Hospitalet, Barcelona (2022); and *Grounded*, L21 Gallery, Palma de Mallorca (2022). Her work has been exhibited in numerous group shows, including *Femme F(r)iction*, C1760 at Academy Mansion, New York (2023); *Lost in the Worlds*, F2T Gallery, Paris (2022); *Mystical Nature*, Roman Road, London (2022); *Summer Lovin'*, Stems Gallery, Ixelles (2022); *Two Sisters*, Roman Road, London (2022); and *Desire and Anxiety*, G/ART/EN Gallery, Como (2021).

Camilla Emson (b. 1985, London) is an interdisciplinary artist working with textiles, painting and glass. Since completing an MA in fine art at City and Guilds, London (2011), Emson has engaged in further postgraduate studies in dance movement psychotherapy, somatic experiencing, and family constellations training at institutions including Goldsmiths University and the Institute of Dream Studies at CCPE. Her solo exhibitions include *Fibrosis*, curated by Cyril Moumen, New York (2013); and *Gateways*, The Crate Gallery, London (2011). Her work has also been included in a wide range of group exhibitions, including shows at the Freud Museum, London; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Leila Heller Gallery, New York; Gallery Nosco, Rio de Janeiro; Fundacion Rozenblum, Argentina. Notable residencies include Xenia Creative Retreat (UK, 2022); Beekeepers (Portugal, 2015); Fundacion Rozenblum (Argentina, 2013); and Arteles (Finland, 2012).

Nadine Lohof (b. 1983, Kassel) is a German artist working primarily with painting. She completed her BFA at the University of Fine Arts Hamburg (HFBK) in 2022. Her solo exhibitions include *Nothing to iron*, curated by Johann Haehling von Lanzenauer, Circle Culture Gallery, Berlin (2023); *Mental Ragout 1*, Erich-Weinert-Str.15, Berlin (2019); and *My Hands Smell Like Fear*, Aesthetik01, Berlin (2017). Lohof's works have been shown in numerous group exhibitions, including *Kind of Blue*, Circle Culture Gallery, Hamburg (2023); *Fathers Chariot / THE FALL*, curated by COUNCIL+, von Racknitz + Baer Gallery, Berlin (2023); *TERRAIN VAGUE*, Atelierhof Kreuzberg, Berlin (2022); and *But I have my gossips, everyone, one foot further I will not go*, Frappant, Hamburg (2021).

Sophie Mason (b. 1985, London) is an interdisciplinary artist working with painting, textiles, plants and participatory projects. Alongside an MA in fine art from City & Guilds of London Art School, she also holds a diploma in garden design from Chelsea Physic Garden. Solo shows include *Blanket*, Groc Projects, Barcelona (2019); and *Landscape*, May Project, London (2017). Mason's work has also been exhibited widely in group shows in locations such as Saatchi Gallery, Hauser & Wirth Somerset, Spike Island and the Eden Project. Other projects include a permanent installation for the Art, City, Landscape programme at La Maison de la Culture in Amiens, and talks for Art Dot Earth, Tate, and Arnolfini. She was also selected for the CCANW Soil Culture Residency and has an upcoming residency at Groundwork.

Calli Moore (b. 1991, Iowa) is an American artist working with painting. She received a BFA from the University of Iowa (2014) and an MFA from American University, Washington, D.C. (2016). Moore has completed residencies at the Chautauqua Institution, New York (2016) and GlogauAIR Artist Residencies, Berlin (2015). Her first solo exhibition *Standing in the Sun* was held at Deli Grocery New York, Brooklyn, New York (2021) and she recently had a two-person show *Alternative Medicine* at Red Arrow Gallery, Nashville, Tennessee (2022). Selected group exhibitions include *Nashville Hot Summer*, Red Arrow Gallery, Tennessee (2023); *Nothing to Hide*, The Curators Room, Barcelona (2023); *Femme F(r)iction*, C1760 at Academy Mansion, New York (2023); and *Melrose*, Harper's, Los Angeles (2021).

Chantal Powell (b. 1977, West Midlands) is an artist and curator working with ceramics. Based in rural West Dorset, her art practice explores the symbolic language of the unconscious and is informed by a PhD in social psychology and an ongoing study of Jungian theory and inner alchemy. She has exhibited at galleries and institutions across the UK and internationally, including Arusha Gallery, Edinburgh; The Lightbox Museum, Woking; Parlour Gallery, London; Guildhall Art Gallery, London; Orange County Museum of Art, California; and WW Gallery, Venice, amongst others. Chantal is also the founder of the artist residency programme Hogchester Arts in West Dorset and hosts the Jungian online book club and speaker programme "The Red Book Club".

Noelia Towers (b. 1992, Barcelona) is a Chicago-based artist working with painting in a photorealistic style. Before moving to Chicago in 2014, Towers studied at the prestigious arts and design school Escola Massana in Barcelona, Spain. Solo exhibitions include *Opening an Umbrella Indoors*, de boer, Los Angeles (2022) and *Outdoor Theatrics*, Half Gallery, New York (2022). Her work has been included in international group shows at PM/AM Gallery (London), M+B Gallery (Los Angeles), Nino Mier (New York), Stems Gallery (Paris), and Public Works (Chicago). Her paintings are held in a number of public and private collections, including ICA Miami and SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia.

## ABOUT THE CURATOR

Anna Souter is an independent writer, researcher, and curator based in Bradford-on-Avon. Her work focuses on the intersections between contemporary art and ecology. Her criticism and essays have been published by The Architectural Review, Burlington Contemporary, Hyperallergic, The Guardian, and Resurgence & Ecologist, among others. She has worked on curatorial projects with Lychee One, Omved Gardens, RCA, and Subsidiary Projects, and she was the co-founder of Roman Road Journal. She also writes fiction and in 2020, she was appointed writer-in-residence by Corridor8 for a project created in partnership with University of Leeds and Manchester Museum.

## ABOUT ROMAN ROAD

Roman Road is a next-gen catalyst for creativity, bringing its vast network and expertise of a gallery to its collaborations with artists while offering a more flexible approach. Its mission is to unearth talent, root artists to Roman Road's community, and foster their careers through a bespoke and synergetic framework. Founded in 2013 by Marisa Bellani, Roman Road continues to expand its activities and presence; it has recently established a new gallery space in West London and sponsored the implementation of an international studio programme, furthering its purpose and commitment as a leading facilitator for artists' career growth.

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