

ROMAN ROAD
PRESS RELEASE

ZOË MARDEN

HADAL ZONE

Private View: Friday 10 November 2023, 6 – 8 PM

Exhibition: Saturday 11 November – Friday 01 December 2023

Location: Roman Road, 69 Roman Road, London E2 0QN

Opening Hours:

Monday – Tuesday, by appointment

Wednesday – Friday, 11 AM – 6 PM

Saturday, 11 AM – 5 PM

Roman Road is thrilled to present *HADAL ZONE*, a solo exhibition by multimedia artist Zoë Marden. Through an alluringly dimly-lit and immersive installation, encompassing new aquatic and sensuous sculptures, Marden invites viewers to take a dive into the depths and potentials of their internal world within a space that explores the darker dimensions of desire.

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6000 metres below sea level is the darkest region of the ocean known as the hadal zone, named after Hades, the god of the underworld. The deepest ocean trenches are the least explored and the most extreme marine ecosystems, in which only the freakiest creatures survive the lack of light and maximum pressure. This vast and unknown space mirrors the depths of our subconscious, where lies what Carl Jung calls “the thing a person has no wish to be” or the shadow self.

It is in these dark spaces or darkrooms that we can learn to dive deep into our shadow selves and find ways to embrace the parts that we fear. The darkroom, also known as the backroom or the playroom, is a space that invites exploration of your deepest fantasies, and is historically often found in a queer space or at the back of a rave, nightclub or sauna. The room is dark with little or no lighting, where under the cover of darkness you can, in a collective space, reveal your inner world.

The focus of Marden’s installation is a black central pool with a ceramic fountain acting as a hole or an orifice, a stand-in for the holes through which you can receive and give pleasure. The water bubbling out from it is an expression of desire and release. The central pool provides access to an exploration of the darker realms of desire in all its many forms: physical, spiritual and emotional. The ceramic sculptures along the walls echo forms that may appear in our subconscious, creatures that we see in our dreams yet do not know their names.

On the occasion of the exhibition, a special sonic performance by the artist in collaboration with Mohammed Rowe, will take place at the gallery on Friday 01 December at 7 PM, followed by a DJ set.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Zoë Marden (b. 1985, Hong Kong) is a London-based artist, filmmaker and writer, working with performance, video, text, sound, sculpture and installation. She graduated with an MA in moving image from the Royal College of Art, London, in 2018. Her recent solo exhibitions include *Becoming Creature*, Kong Art Space in partnership with Young Soy Gallery, Hong Kong (2023); and *Marine Lovers...their fishy beginnings*, V.O. Curations, London (2021). Selected group exhibitions and performances include *Living A Performance Artist's Life: 2023 Performance Art Documental Exhibition*, Madeln Art Museum, Shanghai (2023); *Faces of Gaia*, 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong (2023); *Under Blue Shade*, curated by Mollie E Barnes, Roman Road, London (2023); *Myth Makers—Spectrosynthesis III*, Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong (2022); *Becoming Creature*, Tabula Rasa Gallery, London (2022); *Born to make you happy*, The Residence Gallery, London (2022); *Queer to the Bank*, Galleria Fonti, Naples (2021-2022); *Futureless*, SomoS, Berlin (2020); and *Stay LIVE at Home*, Performistanbul (2020).

ABOUT ROMAN ROAD

Roman Road, formerly an art gallery founded by Marisa Bellani in 2013, is a community driver and catalyst for artists' career growth and creativity, driven by its founder's desire to propose a new and viable support system for artists, responding to the XXIC ever-evolving art world. As such, Roman Road's activities are dedicated to two main aspects: Studios and Curation.

Studios are spaces where artists can expand the parameters of their practices. Roman Road's mission to unearth talent and root artists to its community is achieved through the implementation of its studio programme, providing a sense of belonging and furthering its purpose and commitment as a leading facilitator fostering experimental freedom and artistic autonomy.

As opposed to the showcasing of full-on programming specific to galleries, Curation is a branch dedicated to the conception and production of fewer exhibitions, either internally or in partnership, to push further the academic research focusing on an in-depth and qualitative study of two main topics: the future of the world through utopia and dystopia, and the complexities of the human mind, from non-normative identities to challenging stereotypes in modern society.