

Conversations within the art world and curatorial thoughts

Autumn 2024

### Thread

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### Editor's Letter

Welcome to the first publishing of *The Art Thread*, I am incredibly excited to finally be releasing this and be able to tread through this journey with you. Diving into a range of conversations about spaces, collections, personal interviews, recommendations, theory, and more. Together, we'll be able to explore the art world with intrigued minds, taking on thoughts from a curatorial eye. I've always been drawn to determining what makes someone's mind tick. What sparks that feeling of connection? What triggers deep thought through our senses? For me, art has become the answer to understanding it. There is a unique blend of emotion, yearning to understand, and instinct that pulls us in repeatedly. That's why I fell in love with it. Within looking at curatorial practice, it has become essential to create a platform that not only highlights an individual's work but also investigates the broader context of the work and the narrative that comes with it in how they are portrayed. It allows those who view it to be fully involved. I want to continue to bridge the gap between artists, artwork and the audience.

In this issue, you'll discover an inspiring interview with Kieran Ingram, a fine artist whose deep knowledge of history, literature, and archaeology is now merged further into the art of tattoos. His journey offers a reflection on how art, in all its forms, continues to evolve and shape our creative processes; the limit is boundless. The Conversation on Space segment will guide you through the thoughts on how spaces powerfully impact our perceptions and experiences, discussing how the environments around us shape how we view the world into which we step. Putting this first issue together has been a triumph. I'm so glad to see it brought to life. I've poured my heart into curating these pages; I hope you'll feel inspired, intrigued, and connected to the ever-changing dialogue within our art world. Thank you for joining me. Let's keep these conversations alive, allowing art to draw us closer to each other and ourselves and deepen our understanding of where we are and how we think.

Toria Eve -

Founder, Writer and Editor

"A moment of serenity can be reached once we can truly feel the beauty in what is around us."



## KIERAN INGRAM FINE ARTIST, TATTOOIST

### Kieran Ingram



Kieran Ingram painting in his studio

**Toria:** Thank you for doing this interview. Let's start with your journey into becoming an artist. Is there any particular stories or aspects of your life that helped you develop that you would like the readers to know?

Kieran: Well, that's a pretty long story, but I suppose the fundamental choice that set me on my path as an artist was leaving Australia to study classical drawing and painting at a classical atelier in Florence, Italy. It was a wonderful experience and an incredibly quick way to develop some real skills as a traditional and representational artist. But in some ways the effectiveness of the system we were taught and the intensity of the school was creatively constrictive. Both myself and most of my fellow alumni found it difficult to find our own voices as artists after completing our studies. I ultimately chose to keep the techniques we learnt central to the techniques I use while painting, but I've been a lot more experimental with my choice of subject matter.

**Toria:** I've been following your work for a while now; you have also started to transition into tattoo work alongside your fine artwork – this is interesting as tattooing is a lot more intimate and direct with a client, whereas fine art is a conversation of personal expression with a canvas. What inspired you to explore this as a new medium? And do you feel the two art forms interlink in your practice?

Kieran: Yeah, I began an apprenticeship with Rachael Rose at the Wild Rose Tattoo studio late last year, and she has been an amazing mentor. During Covid, I tutored several tattoo artists in classical drawing and painting, and through them, I gained a better understanding of the industry and became more and more interested in it as a profession. One of my favourite aspects of what I do as an artist is work with clients on commissioned work - particularly when they bring ideas to me, and we work together to realise a shared vision. This is a big part of tattooing, so I've really be enjoying that process so far. When I'm painting, I work alone in my studio, which can be a bit stifling, so I find interacting with customers in person and working alongside other artists in a studio very inspiring. I have also tried to remain less constricted with my approach to tattooing, and I feel that this will be reflected in a more loose approach to subject matter and style in my paintings.

**Toria:** Can you tell us a little bit about the influences within your work, such as natural history, archaeology and anthropology for example?

**Kieran:** I tend to pull references from topics you mentioned and literature in a fairly instinctive manner. The objects I incorporate into my still lifes are stored in boxes in my studio, and I will play with them until something begins to click into place. I don't usually have a subject in mind

when I start, but as I add, remove and alter elements, their relationship to one another the meaning becomes apparent to me. In that sense I consider the process to be fairly subconscious; I know when things are right and when they're wrong when I'm building the piece, then over time; usually as I'm painting the subject, the meaning becomes clear to me consciously.

**Toria:** As far as technique goes, especially the way you allow fragments of the underpainting and textures to emerge, adds a mesmerizing depth and vibrancy to your pieces. What drives this artistic choice, and how do you feel it contributes to the narrative of your work? It really brings a sense of life and light to the work for me.

Kieran: That technique actually came from my interest in Tonalism which was a largely landscape based art movement that was prominent in America at the end of the 19th Century. I noticed that they tended to use extremely saturated warm ground colours beneath the largely grey, misty subjects that they favoured. I adopted this approach for my own landscape painting before beginning to experiment with it under my own - largely grey toned, still lifes. From a purely visual point of view the intense orange glinting and glowing through the grey tones creates a vibration that enlivens the whole piece, it would otherwise be overly flat and, well, boring. I can't quite express how it relates to the narrative of my work intellectually but it certainly feels correct.

**Toria:** The surfaces and shapes you choose, along with the way you frame your work, seem to play a crucial role in your artistic expression. Could you take us through your creative process on these aspects — how do these elements evolve from concept to completion in your art?

**Kieran:** About 4-5 years ago I altered the way I approach the creation of my framed work. So instead of first creating a painting, then getting a frame made for it I began acquiring empty antique frames, often gilt, that appealed to me and making paintings that respond to the frame.

**Toria:** I saw you have been on both *Portrait Artist* of the Year and Landscape Artist of the Year. How did you find it?

**Kieran:** I found the experiences to be quite different actually, I did Landscape Artist of the Year first and found it to be a fairly relaxed day despite being followed by cameras all day. Each artist had their own pod and we didn't have a huge crowd watching us so I didn't feel too stressed or pressured. Whereas the Portrait Artist of the Year was filmed in the central chamber of the Wallace Collection in London which was a pretty cramped space considering it had to fit the artists, sitters, cameras and lights as well as all the crew and a fairly large audience. This made for a pretty claustrophobic working environment that caused everyone to be harrowed all day. I tend to work better under pressure so I was pretty happy with the

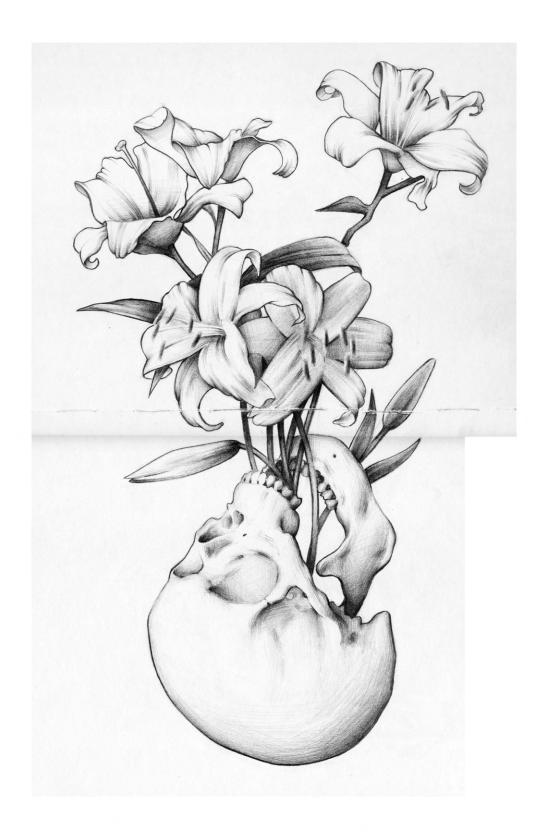
work I produced both times. Though the *Portrait* Artist of the Year did push my limits in terms of stress

**Toria:** As you continue to push boundaries in your artistic career, are there any upcoming projects, exhibitions, or milestones that you're particularly excited about and would like to share with our readers?

**Kieran:** I've been focusing on building my tattooing practice throughout most of this year so I don't have any painting exhibitions planned at the moment though I will definitely be doing more in the future. I am really looking forward to traveling and guesting as a tattoo artist when I'm experienced enough because it seems like a great way to expand one's horizons technically and artistically. I'm terrible at taking proper holidays so the ability to travel and work is ideal for me.

"I think it's really important to follow your own path as an artist, both creatively and professionally. A lot of people, including myself make the mistake of assuming the path you need to follow to become a successful artist is going to be the same as the path taken by artists who have already succeeded. However the path to success is always changing as the industry changes, so the people who will be considered successful in 10 or 20 years time will have done things differently to the preceeding generations. Personally I don't worry too much about the old rules that surround traditional galleries and art sales practices; I sell my work directly to clients through Instagram and my website, I'll discount work, I tattoo now. I feel a lot less constricted creatively as a result."

Kieran Ingram



Large conceptual tattoo design - flowers, branches and bones 2024, graphite on paper
Kieran Ingram

### LOCATION LOCATION;

### **EXHIBITIONS THIS SEASON**

12th September - 5th October

### Louise Zhang: Queen Mother of The West

N.Smith Gallery, Sydney, AUS



Louise Zhang in her studio with Moo, her cat. Courtesy of the artist and N.Smith Gallery, Sydney

A flourishment of colour and fantastical abstract blooms, creating a kaleidoscope-like dreamscapes where beauty meets grotesque.

This comes from the gorgeous work of the Chinese-Australian multidisciplinary artist Louise Zhang, she masterfully blurs the line between allure and aversion, weaving emotions of fear, anxiety and a reflection in her own identity.

Zhang's latest exhibition Louise Zhang: Queen Mother of The West is being held at N.Smith Gallery, Sydney, Australia.



Queen Mother of the West (Peaches) 2024, 152 x 121 cm, 59.8 x 47.6 in acrylic on linen, Louise Zhang Courtesy of the artist and N.Smith Gallery, Sydney

6th September - 5th October

### Between the Five Wells

Tara Downs Gallery, New York, US



Exhibition view of *Between the Five Wells*, Tara Downs New York, 2024. Courtesy of the artist and Tara Downs Gallery

Fluid and surreal. **Preslav Kostov**, a Bulgarian artist has his work features twisted and melded limbs, torsos and other body parts into a tapestry, this stretches across a vivid landscape. The webbed forms end up tangled in an ambiguous dance of connection and disfiguration in prominent composition, they don't necessarily offer a clear story or straightforward interpretation. Each piece can tease the viewer with hints of what is familiar yet remains elusive, refusing to settle into any single narrative.

Kostov's first solo show Between the Five Wells, being held at Tara Downs Gallery, New York, US.

31st August - 26th October

### Bijan Amini-Alavijeh: a glimmer

The Art House, Wakefield, UK



Bijan Amini-Alavijeh: a glimmer Courtesy of Emily Ryalls for The Art House

An investigation into motifs within Medieval English and Persian art and architecture, an understanding of sacred geometries and their extensive lexicons of decoration.

Artist **Bijan Amini-Alavijeh** starts to uncover a commonality of the same shape: the circle, a spiritual shape that can offer unity, wholeness, and perfection. Blending figurative and abstract forms, the artist rejects the traditional hierarchy of materials and processes, challenging the audience to rethink abstract, tradition, and ornamentation. In this exhibition, you'll be asked to reflect on spirituality, mortality and your relationship with nature and geometry in the 21st century as you stand mesmerized by the glimmering forms.

Amini-Alavijeh's show Bijan Amini-Alavijeh: a glimmer, being held at The Art House, Wakefield, UK.

Supported by the **Henry Moore Foundation** and funded with a Culture Grant by Wakefield Council as part of **Our Year 2024** - Wakefield district.

### 9th October - 14th December Magdalene Odundo

Thomas Dane Gallery, London, UK

Finding yourself standing amongst exceptional craftsmanship and a deep sense of resonance. **Odundo**'s refined forms reveal the storytelling power of clay, drawing from a wide range of historical and contemporary practices.

Ceramist Magdalene Odundo's vessels end up being able to embody a harmonious interplay between the physical and spiritual, strength and fragility, and permanence and ephemerality. Inspired by both manmade objects and the natural world, her works feel both organic and deeply personal, makes the pieces feel almost animate as they hold narratives within their curves and surfaces. It ends up feeling like this is an invitation to know more, an urge to understand more deeply.

Odundo's first solo exhibition in London in over two decades is being held at the Thomas Dane Gallery, London, UK.



Untitled Vessel, Symmetrical Series, 2020 © Magdalene A.N. Odundo. Courtesy the artist, Anthony Slayter-Ralph and Thomas Dane Gallery Photo: Richard Ivey

# A Conversation on Space



In this issue, I wanted to dive into a topic with you that has sparked my interest for a long time: the choices in curating a space and how it influences the perception and narrative of the art within it — the importance of the space itself. The environment in which art is displayed becomes defined by its lighting, spatial dimensions, form, and wall characteristics; it becomes a powerful frame for the artwork to develop as an interpretation and experience for the audience.

I've thought about these various elements. Negative white versus black space, rough walls, enclosed versus large and unconventional shapes all contribute to a rich tapestry once combined. It becomes a great interplay of elements that offer a range of possibilities and create a landscape for the artwork, creating a multitude of narratives.



Close up of Working Model for Three Piece No.3: Vertebrae, 1968, Bronze, Henry Moore. Tate Modern. Photograph by Toria Eve

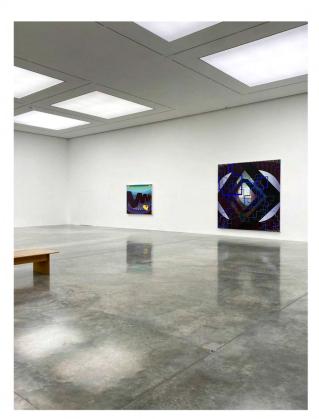
Curation becomes such an essential factor. In curating space thoughtfully, there is an allowance of new dimensions in interpretation; the artwork isn't just seen but truly experienced; it explores the psychological aspects of how the work is viewed in the flesh. Let us get more in-depth...

In terms of research, I've started to read some fascinating books: Ways of Seeing, Berger, J. (1972), The Poetics of Space, Bachelard, G. (2014) and, of course, Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space, O'Derherty. B. (1986). All are staples within a curator's library; I highly recommend them to anyone interested in this topic - for writers, architects, critics, psychologists, and many more readers alike. Within the first chapter of Ways of Seeing, Berger can be quoted on the following;

"Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. But there is also another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it." (Berger, 1972)



Man standing under Haegue Yang's sculpture Sol LeWitt Upside Down - Structure with Three Towers, Expanded 23 Times, Split in Three (2015) Tate Modern. Photograph by Toria Eve



Installation at the White Cube, London of AI Held's *About Space*. 2024 Photograph by Toria Eve

So, what does this mean? With Berger's words, he brings up the primacy of visual experience, suggesting that becomes the most immediate way we interact with the world. Long before we can even speak, we make sense of the world through what we can see; establishing specific spaces with varied visual experiences establishing a person's relationship with the environment and the work itself. It becomes a crucial role in our awareness and understanding. The tension between what we see and how we can describe it forms a central theme that influences our perceptions

When we think of a perfect space to present artwork, a space like the White Cube is often envisioned, with minimalist design aesthetic in the space white-walled exhibition clean, rooms. Allowing the artwork placed within it to take centre stage with minimal distractions whilst also being able to hold a variety of media that includes things such as conceptual art, installations, video art, photography and then more traditional mediums such as painting and sculpture. Making it quite accessible for the majority of artists to present within.

A metaphor for a gallery space can be drawn by examining **Samuel Morse**'s *Exhibition Gallery at the Louvre* (1832 - 33), a Salon-style painting from the 1830s - the term refers to groups of art that are arranged densely, often extended high and lower than average eye level, in contrast to the more modern or minimalistic "museum-style" hanging. As noted by O'Doherty,

"it implicitly defines what a gallery is, a definition appropriate for the esthetics of the period. A gallery is a place with a wall, which is covered with a wall of pictures. The wall itself has no intrinsic esthetic; it is simply a necessity for an upright animal" (O'Doherty, 1986).

The tight placement of the artwork within the piece creates a sense of visual competition and overwhelmingness; with each piece lacking its isolation, it makes it challenging to focus on the works as an individual and gauge an understanding.



The chair and its shadow. Photograph by Toria Eve

When comparing this as a historical contrast to modern gallery spaces, such as the "White Cube" format, the ample negative space illustrates the shift in how we curate and perceive art. The space where the work is placed, particularly the walls and in contrast to the various heights of ceilings, creates the active element for an experience. Larger, open spaces evoke a sense of grandeur, allowing the artwork to 'breathe', enhancing it's impact, but in contrast, smaller, more intimate rooms can create a much more personal and reflective experience. Creating the atmosphere between the spatial design and lighting of the space can transform it from a neutral container into something that becomes immersive; a well-curated space uses these elements to heighten or soften the emotional impact you get from the work.

As we reflect on this discussion of how space impacts the work within it, consider the following: Imagine standing before a soft landscape painting filled with delicate marks of white bluebells. If this peaceful scene is placed in a space with rough, textured walls and dim lighting, would the softness still evoke a beautiful memory frozen in time? Or would the eerie atmosphere make you question whether you are meant to experience it that way? Does the environment change your perception of the work's meaning?



Exhibition Gallery at the Louvre, 1832 - 33, oil on canvas Samuel F.B. Morse. © Image courtesy of the Terra Foundation for American Arts.

Change one's stripes, 2024, oil and soft pastel on paper, Verity Ure-Jones



Capturing Emotion:

The Poetic Marks of Verity Ure-Jones



Portrait photograph of Verity Ure-Jones in studio

**Verity Ure-Jones** is a figurative painter based in London, UK. Recently nominated for her work within *RBA Rising Stars* 2024 and *Jackson's Prize* 2024. The first time I met her was briefly by chance at my part-time job. We had gotten placed together for training - un-related to the arts! Distracted throughout in talking about art, we shared stories of our journeys and specific interests in our work. Later that day, we connected on social media, which became the beginning of a friendship.

Since connecting with Ure-Jones, I have expressed my admiration for the way she conveys emotion in her work and the significant amount of movement in her brushstrokes; they bring tactile quality into the pieces. Her skill in capturing the facial expressions of her subjects the way she does, with such expressive marks, is a challenging feat. There is a simple balance between soft skin tones, rougher fabric patternsand carefully chosen dynamic colours that come off alongside the marks as abstract in sections, however they end up feeling harmonious and like poetry as they flow together in and out of each other. Let's look at Change one's stripes for example, the striking patterns and textures become a narrative tool, the deliberate contrasts create a depth that furthers the emotional aspects of the work through tension combined with the organic background, creating layered figures full of life and their own story. The work itself features two figures lying in comfort and ease, seemingly happy and intimate beside each other. We end up paused in time looking at a moment between the figures, their thoughts and moment. The viewer is invited into trying to understand the figures internal states as they occupy the space around them.

Within Dark Swan Rises - Nightingale, there is a intense sense of emotion, looking at the figure in contemplation, withdrawn posture, and waiting as they grasp their instrument. The saxophone becomes an extension of setting the narrative for the figure as they lie in a striking but classical outfit combining black and white detailing. A sort of rhythmic pattern emerges in marks and subjects present in the work.

**Ure-Jones** creates the beauty of untold stories, connections, human emotions and understanding.



Change one's stripes 2024, oil and soft pastel on paper Verity Ure-Jones



Dark Swan Rises - Nightingale 2024, oil and pastel on panel Verity Ure-Jones

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### Makiko Harris Multimedia Visual Artist



Pinch, 2024, oil and acrylic on canvas, powder-coated aluminium, Makiko Harris Photograph: Ben Pipe

Makiko Harris had her first solo show with Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery (23rd August - 21st September) in London, UK.

I had the pleasure of working with them as an Intern recently; being surrounded by such a great choice of artists and collections was a highlight. You can't help but get inspired, and oh my, the work for *Lacquered Rebellion* is beautiful! Giant knitting needles, larger than life nails and multi-media paintings, what more could you want?



Makiko Harris: Lacquered Rebellion, installation view Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, London, UK Photograph: Ben Pipe

### Tina Figarelli Figurative Fine Artist



To Bury A Friend, oil on panel, 2023 Tina Figuarelli

Tina Figarelli is a residential artist at East Oaks Studios located in North Carolina, US. Figarelli has been on my radar a few years, watching her artistic evolution has been nothing short of inspiring. She has worked to learn many classical techniques, especially those reminscent of Bouguereau, gradually transforming into something that is so uniquely her own, there is an ethereal quality that emerges amongst her work that can not be missed.

She has notably been placed in multiple **Portrait Society of America** competitions, recently awarded first place in the Member's Only competition for her piece *To Bury A Friend* (2023). She has participated in numerous group and solo shows in local and national galleries.

**Figarelli** offers teaching workshops as well as showcasing her process with her audience and **East Oaks Studio** YouTube, where she often live-streams sessions within the residential artists group.

Artists Marc Gomez and Diocles working on a mural of Camilo Carreño Gonzalez for dArt



Camilo Carreño Gonzalez is known for his filled sketchbooks of the uncanny, the disregarded and often overlooked, influenced by his perspective on being an immigrant from Latin America. His works come across with striking energy and a dialogue of order and chaos. The visual language he presents with his lines and marks feels both architectural and free. There is a significant amount of effort in exploring form that becomes captivating, inviting discovery in each viewing.

Alongside his work, **Carreño** became a familiar face within the contemporary portraiture community for a range of art forms. The distinct features of his face and stoic expression, combined with various photographs he had taken in different lighting, led him to become the perfect subject. A mural for example had been painted of his face at **dArt** in Spain by artists **Marc Gomez** and **Diocles**.

### Camilo Carreño Gonzalez Fine Artist



Ballpoint Self-Portait ballpoint and graphite, 2024 Camilo Carreño Gonzalez



#### Diana Orving Textile and Multimedia Artist

Within Swedish artist **Diana Orving**'s pieces as a Textile and Multimedia artist, you are thrown into a dynamic exchange between various techniques, materials, and communication of themes such as memory and the subconscious. I've been a long-time fan of her work due to its immersive nature; the interplay between body and space she is able to create seems to be done effortlessly whilst also keeping a juxtaposition of calm and chaos. The works become a sort of dance, telling a story, a choreographed narrative.

The tranquillity of the movement presented makes you want to recline into the artwork, becoming enveloped in an array of materials. I believe the word to describe **Orving**'s work that comes to mind is 'interconnectedness', the state of being connected.

Diana Orving: Spirit Playground, installation view

Carvalho Park, New York, US

Photograph: Se Yoon Park / Carvalho Park Gallery

### Clare Gregory Fine Artist





(1) Verity Kerr, (2) Clare Gregory Acrylic paint on canvas, 2023 Clare Gregory

#### Jemima Lanario Multimedia Artist

Jemima Lanario is a graduate from the University of the Arts London. She explores various mediums and was nominated for RBA Rising Stars 2023 and 2024. In her series of sculptures, Concrete Jungle, she visually plays on combining concrete and foliage, bold architectural features with juxtaposing shapes and sporadic designs of nature. Each element with its unique qualities is highlighted, promoting an admiration for the two simultaneously.

Lanario thrives on allowing the imperfections and flaws to shine through within the work, maintaining an organic and genuine aesthetic.

Clare Gregory is a fine artist fighting for more eyes on Endometriosis - a chronic condition that occurs when tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus.

Her compelling works within her Endo Belly Buttons series showcase the painful reality that those who suffer the horrific condition of Endometriosis have to face. The vividly detailed paintings by **Gregory** have allowed the people she has worked with, as well as herself to raise awareness and create conversation about what it is capable of. The bruising tones within the work and creating the sense of visceral pain is only a fraction.

### A SERIES: ENDO BELLY BUTTONS

"The belly button (navel) is the first scar we get, created by the umbilical cord marking the area where it was attached to us as a baby. Arising from its biological function, the belly button has been imbued with symbolism. One of these meanings is life, where life begins as we enter its initial stage. Another meaning is the belly button representing a connection, a close and physical connection to our mothers. Whilst others might celebrate this part of their bodies by having it on show through certain fashion choices or adorning it with a piercing, mine has been added to with surgical scars. Since 2021 I have had 3 Laparoscopic surgeries to help in finding and removing my Endometriosis. This has left me with scars from the bottom of my belly button. Whilst initially being shocked by the sight of my tummy, especially my belly button, after surgery, I have now chosen to celebrate these marks left behind in my new painting series as they represent a big milestone in our journey, our strength and fight to finally get a diagnosis as well as hoping to be better understood."

- Clare Gregory



Concrete Jungle (Group), Concrete, 2023 Jemima Lanario



Camden Road, Concrete, 2023, Jemima Lanario

#### Yuxuan Hou Multimedia Artist



Epping-1, Graphite on paper, 2024. Hou Yuxuan

Yuxuan Hou is a fine artist residing in London, exhibiting his work recently in various group exhibitions, for example Can you afford to "pay" attention? Curated by Mu Qing, the exhibition explored new ways to experience art in the language of neuro-aesthetics. Hou's drawings produce imagery that sees reminiscent of memories of a time and place we could have been before, or simply - maybe it is just a sense of longing or conservancy. A dream-like state lost and gazing at civilization from afar.

The attention to faint glows, seamless transitions and minimal details give his work an intense atmospheric feeling; varied tones set the scene on whether it feels peaceful or isolating. The works become meditative and evocative. It keeps me drawn to his work and lets me feel as if I have a moment to travel somewhere else.



2024/7/17. Graphite on paper, 2024. Hou Yuxuan

The Art
Thread

### TheArtThread.com

Founder, Editor and Writer: Toria Eve Thank you to all the artists and galleries for your contribution to this issue - August 2024

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