

LAF 2023, **Stand 10**

Business Design Centre, 52 Upper St, Islington, N1 0QH

18 – 22 January, opening at 11am daily.

PREVIEW: Tuesday 17 January

ART FIRST is delighted to present six artists whose work relates to the gallery's current exhibition programme. **Kate McCrickard** and **Will Maclean** are to have solo shows in March and May 2023, and **MacAlister's** Autumn '22 exhibition has a fully illustrated online catalogue featured on the gallery website. A marvellous 2.3 metre **Simon Lewty** drawing, *The Plucking of Mandrakes* 1992, has never been exhibited before and will take you by surprise. **Kate McCrickard** has released a freshly painted group of canvases from her beguiling *New Romantics* and *Belleville Café* series as leads into her forthcoming exhibition. **Jack Milroy's** *Six Stories in Search of an Author* 2022 is the latest of his virtuosic cut postcard constructions. And we introduce **Marisol Jacquemot Derode's** gorgeous sculptural ceramics. Each artist has works held in museum and public collections, and their exhibitions and publication history are featured on www.artfirst.co.uk

We look forward to seeing you! Please do contact us if you would like to receive e-tickets.



Simon Lewty, *The Plucking of Mandrakes*, 1992, ink and crayon, 224 x 150cm

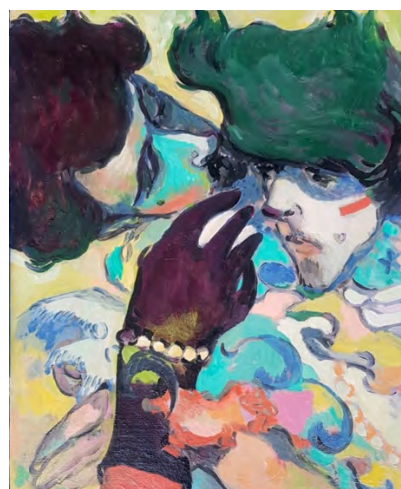
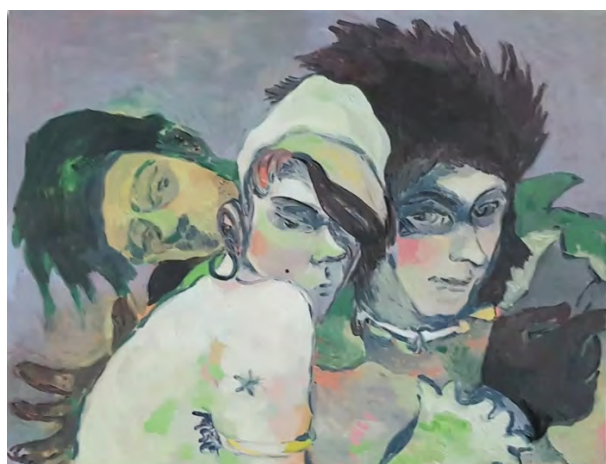


Mid June, 2004, ink, 114 x 38cm

The fascination with mandrake roots goes back to Ancient Greece - its medicinal and mythological 'uses' continuing through the Middle Ages and beyond. A dynamic revival came about through the Harry Potter mandrake potting sequence with earmuffs (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G17jQg_pUJg) so brilliantly rendered in the film. **Lewty's** interest incorporates the mythological and Tolkein's approach in his mysterious Warwickshire setting where the Mandrakes' screeches are given graphic release.



Jack Milroy's *Six Stories in Search of an Author*, 2022 (108 x 101 x 15cm), offers a different kind of narrative, also veering towards the surreal. All writers are welcome to sharpen their pencils and come up with suggestions. Fascinating and wonderful to live with.



Kate McCrickard's *Goths*, 2022 (oil on canvas, 50 x 65cm) was painted in her Paris studio but the Inspiration was a walk through Leeds. Their New Romantic, Punkish kit is testament to the impact of David Bowie, of the Rock Star phenomenon, and the androgynous, gender-fluid, flamboyance which surrounds us in urban settings right now. (Above right, *New Romantics*, oil on canvas, 55 x 44cm)

Helen MacAlister's elegant, reductive paintings have the appearance of botanical lacework and diagrammatic landscape in which barely visible texts are inserted. *Banal Nationalism* 2018 (oil on linen diptych 29.7 x 42cm), hints at the distinctive Scottish cultural resistance underlying her work, which draws on poetry literature, history and place.



Scotland's Highland history and the lives of those who live and work by the sea is **Will Maclean's** subtle narrative within his exquisitely crafted box constructions such as *Ice Log* 1998 (below). Now 25 years old, the piece alludes to Inuit or Northern fishing techniques in the ice where the traditions and the ice itself are both waning. Memorials, silent, evocative poetic tributes to the traditions and values of communities often forgotten, have a universal relevance in Maclean's work. The powerful impact of five decades of output was striking in his major retrospective, *Points of Departure* at the City Art Centre, Edinburgh in 2022.



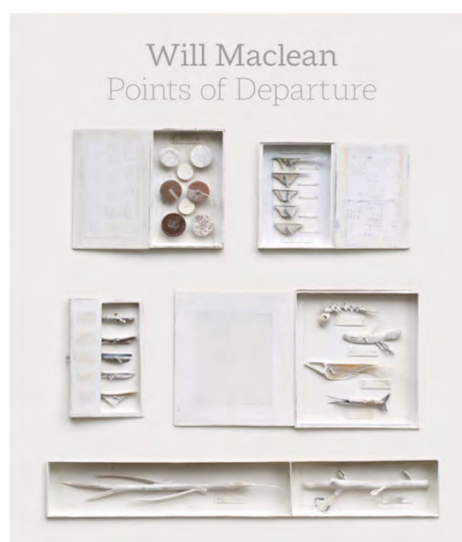
Will Maclean, *Ice Log*, 1998, mixed media, 121 x 71 x 21cm, and right, *Sea Portal*, 2018, bronze, 33cm diameter

“Clay is a funny thing, quite like children” says Marisol. “It never totally does what you thought it would, so you learn to appreciate the qualities of the end result”. Her sculptural approach is evident in the pieces we present. Sumptuous, organic, with glazes that range from the richest browns to gleaming metallics and deep moss greens, it is their textures too, which beguile. Your fingers will tell you. We are thrilled to be working with Marisol and look forward to connecting you with her unique creations. She embraces practicality too, with her stoneware ‘tipsy’ cups. They are arranged as installations and guests may choose their particular cup for an espresso or a delicate tea. Fun, different and always intuitive, Marisol’s artistry is captivating.



Marisol Jacquemot Derode, *Ruffles*, stoneware 12 x 28cm diameter, and *Twirl*, hand-built earthenware vessel, 33 x 35cm

Below are two new publications for Will Maclean, available on the stand: *Compelled by Memory* covers his stone monuments of great power and beauty on the Isle of Lewis, and *Points of Departure* is the catalogue accompanying his magnificent retrospective exhibition at the City Art Centre during the Edinburgh Festival in 2022.



Illustrated PDF’s with prices are available on request. Please contact Clare Cooper – clare@artfirst.co.uk for details.

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