RELAY RESPOND RELAY

SOCO ARTISTS | LANDING GALLERY | ELECTRO STUDIOS PROJECT SPACE | ST LEONARDS ON SEA | 1-10 JULY 2022

INHABIT

28 ARTISTS divided into groups **A** and **Z** have taken on a visual relay over a period of fourteen weeks from March 20th to the end of June 2022. Each artist had one week to make a piece of work before handing on the 'baton' via email to the next 'runner' in their group. To begin, the first artist in each group received a sealed envelope containing the same word, **INHABIT**, to be interpreted freely. From then on each artist responded directly to the image sent to them by the preceding artist in the relay. **RELAY** RESPOND **RELAY** plays with the idea that as artists we all interact with and influence each other and this catalogue is a chronological record of the images and texts produced by the artists in the two relay groups A and Z.

Z

Z1.

HELEN SAVAGE

I started with how I inhabit my allotment – my private space of paths, beds, nests, corners, ponds and woody glades. Drawing in-situ, perched amongst the weeds. The paintings came quickly, with ideas of wombs, nests, trunks and branches; collaged and layered, the dissolving and merging of body and nature;

cycles of growth, decay and rebirth. The vertical triptych of an altarpiece suited the work. I stopped while the paintings were still a mystery to me.

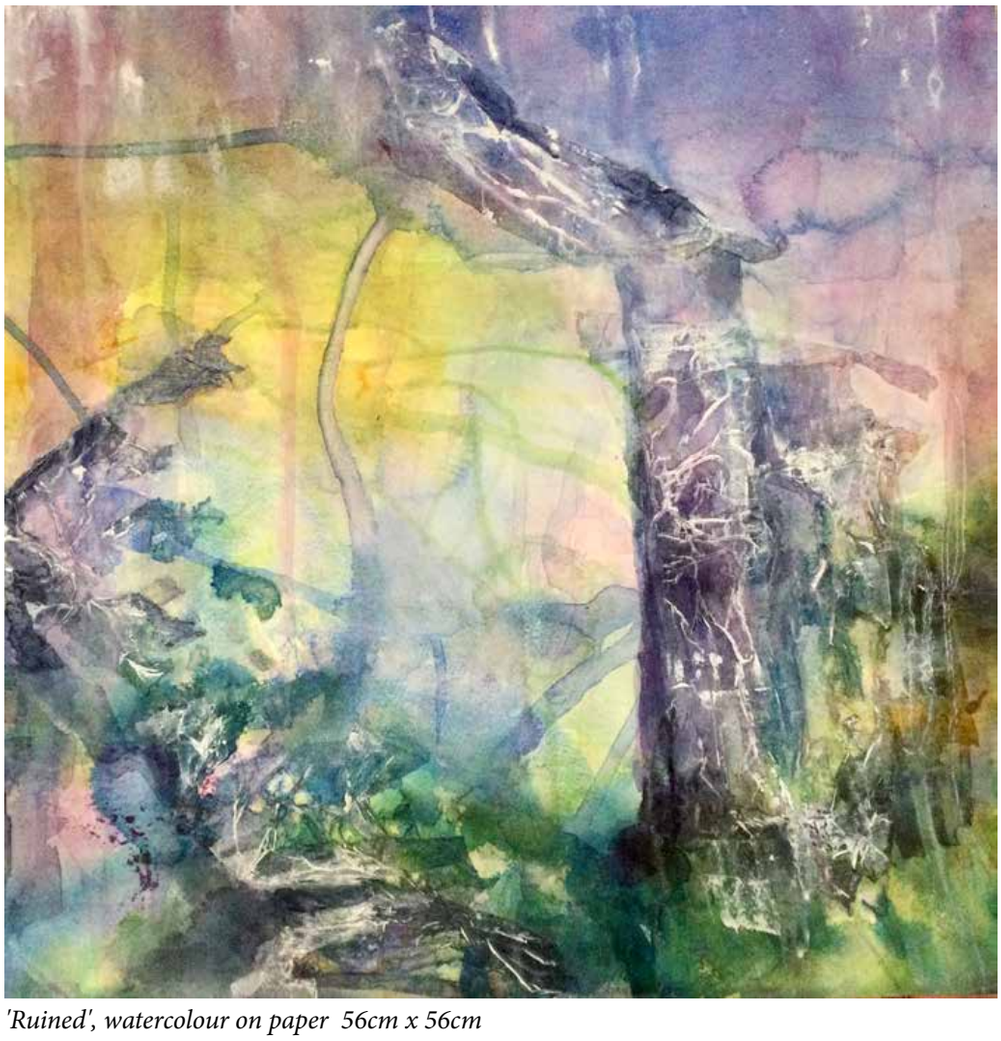
'Triptych', Mixed media on canvas, each canvas 26" x 20"

Coloured pencil on paper 21x15cm

Z2.

BENJI THOMAS

Helen's work was beautifully dynamic and abstract, which was liberating for me considering I was taking it as inspiration, but also quite difficult to respond to. What I did find was that her work reminded me of natural landscapes. So in response I drove to a continual source of inspiration for me – Hastings Country Park. It just so happened that a front of bad weather was arriving and the sun was setting, a slightly unsettling mood that I thought was put across quite well in one particular photograph, where the darkening sky was reflected in some puddled water.



'Ruined', watercolour on paper 56cm x 56cm

Z3.

SUSAN MILLER

Not connecting with the landscape element of Benji's work, I focused on colouration. After 4 days, realising I wasn't present in the work, I moved from the essence of his image to intuitive response. From this revised perspective, the ruin emerged from my blandness. So symbolic. My recent work has responded to our discombobulated world. Allowing my unconscious a voice resulted in this social commentary on the state of our green and pleasant land.

Revolog Plexus on film

24.

JOSIE BARNES

Susan Miller's image was abstract and full of colour and reminded me of nature. However I realised that I had to refrain from relying on my usual social realism photography style, create something less literal and more abstract, as a challenge to myself and different from my normal work. I shot on Revolog Plexus on film using an Olympus Pen EE-3 half frame camera. The Revolog film stock series is resonant of natural forms that we see within nature and science.

'Flight Risk', assemblage with drypoint and linocut prints, pen and ink drawing, feathers and objects 48cm x 43cm x 11cm

Z5.

CHERYL BELL

This imaginative project allows artists to learn and grow by studying colleagues' work and responding to it in our own way. My passion is nature; fractals and infinitely complex patterns repeated over and over. This is what struck me with Josie Barnes' beautiful image; shapes repeating and undulating, like bubbles, or a cracked landscape, or scaly skin from a dinosaur or a bird. Skin and follicles and feathers – complex, repeating, protecting. 'Flight Risk' is about birds and their feathers, risking all for survival.

'Wing' (diptych), oil on Arches huile paper, plywood and stainless steel 60cm x40cm (each panel 60cm x 20cm with space in between)

Z6.

FI BROWN

To contrast with Cheryl's lively monochrome assemblage, I wanted to focus on the juxtapositions of colours in plumage. I was reminded of the simplified shapes and patterns used in bird-like representations in many indigenous artworks. I also refer to the notion of collection and classification and the use of birds within clothing, decoration and design. The vertical, coloured strips hint at swatches and labels on exhibits, hung game, and the commodification of these beautiful creatures.

'Fragment', Acrylic on paper, 85cm x 61cm

Z7.

ALEX LEADBEATER

I thought I missed having deadlines, but struggled with having an expectation in mind. Fi's work reminded me of interior design swatches and seemed beautifully composed. I tried layering odd pieces of unfinished work and after many attempts reduced it to just one fragment, like a museum exhibit where only a small piece remains. The background suggests an old wall or notice board where over time, transient marks have left traces across the surface.

Z8.

HARRIET MACAREE

Alex's bleak blue grey ground with a tiny torn fragment of painting suggesting heaving waves or mountains was enigmatic, open to interpretation. For me, it conjured the idea of a post-apocalyptic world in which the only records of live nature were scraps of old photos and paintings. My response was to 'find' another stash of old black and white images of nature in its last throes, revealed by tearing through brown paper, museum archives perhaps and mounted in a column to suggest geological strata, snapshots in time, repeated extinctions...

Ink and bleach on paper, mounted on card 165cm x 40cm (detail above)

Ink, charcoal, gesso, gouache, monoprint and collage 126cm x 86cm

Z9.

ADRIENNE HUNTER

Harriet's inky palette and her subject matter – trees and plants – were familiar to me in my own practice. I liked the four images, like a film strip. I recalled a video I had taken of tall trees swaying in the breeze; my starting point. I made four separate drawings, building up the layers so that each drawing could stand on its own but related to the others, perhaps like the theme of this exhibition. Connections.

Watercolour, oil and hessian twine on watercolour paper A4

Z10.

SAM MCGOUN

I received a painting from Adrienne which was split into quarters. Plants and flowers flowed over each quarter. It felt like a window frame which is what I built my response image upon. Dividing my A4 sheet into four. I used hessian twine to sculpt a physical divide and a passage way into the piece juxtaposed over the top of the watercolour paint.

Saggar-fired ceramic fragments 94cm x 60cm

Z11.

EMMA HARDING

I have responded simply to the shapes and composition. The more I look the more I see. I love the pieces of grass or organic matter that Sam has attached to his surface. I have used similar pieces of frayed string pressed into moulds, creating organic shapes with clay and firing them with combustible materials in a saggar. This creates spontaneous colour that is different, but echoes the free colour and mark-making in Sam's work.

Soft sculpture made from waste materials

Z12.

REBECCA SNOTFLOWER

Day 1: focused on starting point of Emma's image. Running with body theme, I conspired to make a life-sized living doll.

Day 2: scrapped the outer form of body and wished for a few dangling body organs, half puppet, half mobile.

Day 3: reached the beating heart of the matter.

'Heart of the Landscape', Acrylic on canvas 60cm x 60cm

Z13.

LOUISE BODY

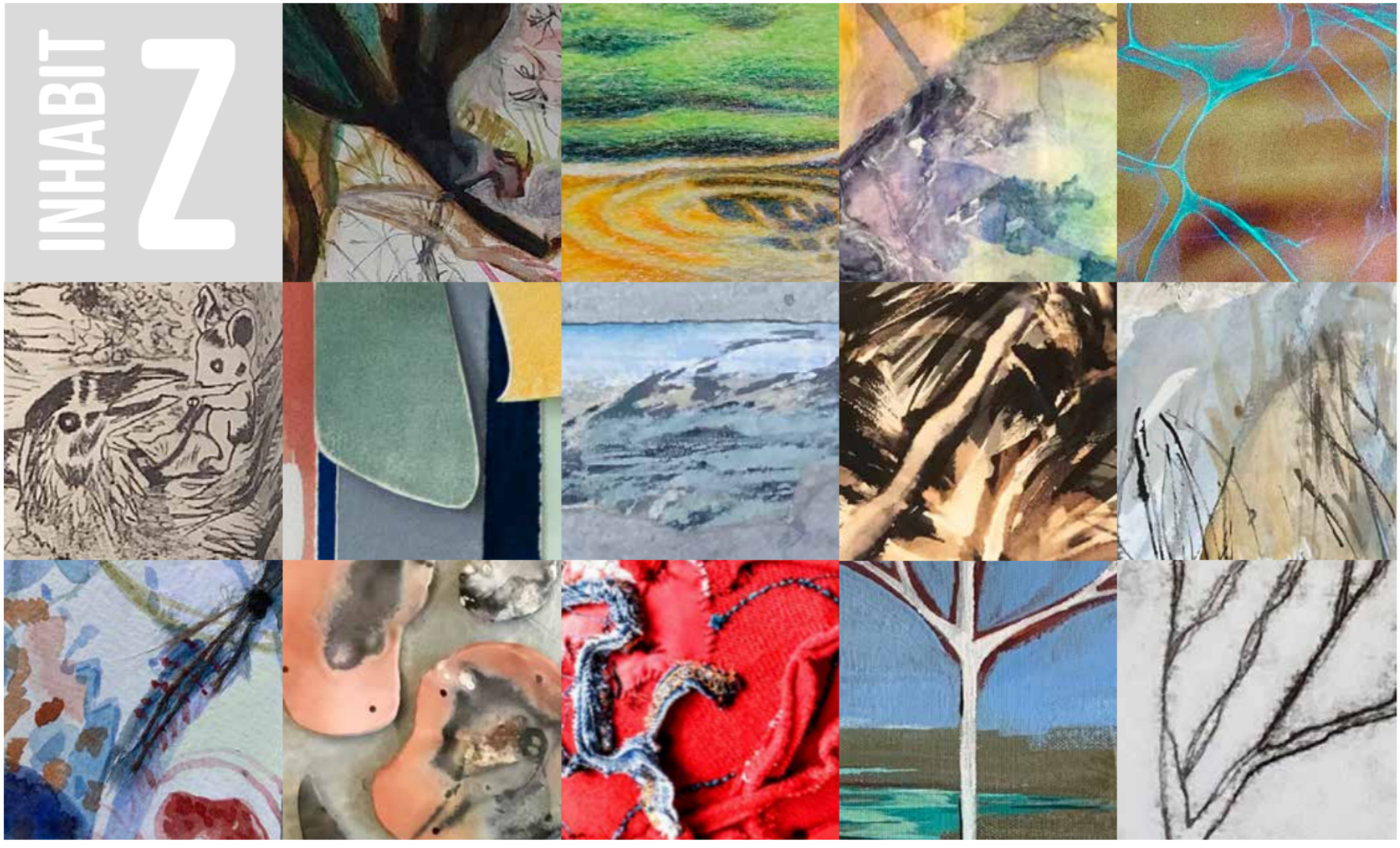
As a landscape painter, I wanted to use the heart as a metaphor within the landscape. In response to Rebecca's work, I was interested in the recycling of fabrics and the heart as a metaphor for the cycle of life. My landscapes are always intuitive and imagined and at the heart of this painting I wanted a feeling of continuation and the flow of life but also of mystery and secrets.

'On the Water', Acrylic and monoprint 53cm x 42.5cm

Z14.

MELANIE TWIGGER

In response to Louise's painting, I've focused on her beautiful use of colour and separated this from the symbolism of nature within her work. I've tried to take the individual colours and apply them to the frame to create 'natural tiles', a common theme within my recent paintings. I took the tree from Louise's painting and mono-printed it to create a stark contrast of colour and form, representing the destruction of nature – something that is an important element to my works.



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