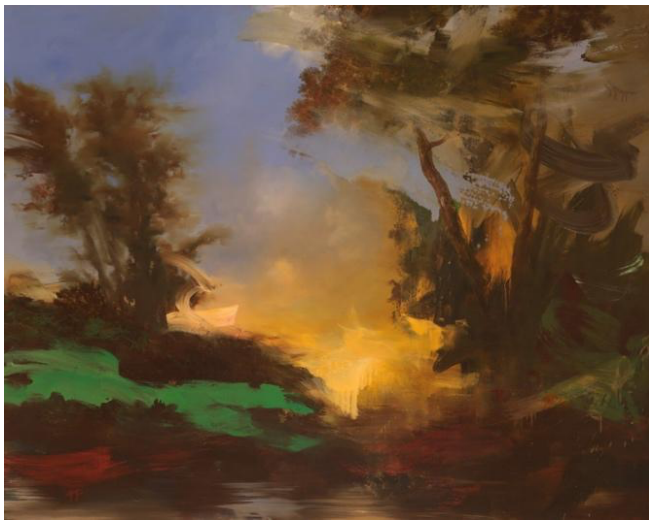


PRESS RELEASE

Into the Sublime – an exhibition of works by Alan Rankle and Rosannagh Scarlet Esson

21 - 26 November 2023

Gallery 3, Cromwell Place, London SW7 2JN



Zuleika Gallery is delighted to announce *Into the Sublime* an exhibition which celebrates the landscape paintings of Alan Rankle and Rosannagh Scarlet Esson. Both working on canvas, they observe nature and natural forces through the lens of concern for the environment and in doing so they present prescient and vital re-interpretations of classical and romantic landscape painting with a contemporary twist.

The title of the exhibition and the use of the word ‘Sublime’ is deliberately ambiguous. Rankle invites an emotional rather than an intellectual response as his Romantic landscapes seek to express a moment of fusion in which the divine is manifested into the natural world and beauty is fulfilled, whilst Esson’s use of iron oxide, gold, salt, flint and rain water is a form of alchemy – a sublimation of substances and a type of purification.

Celebrated for his large-scale paintings and in-situ projects, often involving collaborations with architects, designers and fellow artists, Rankle takes as his main subject the development of landscape art as a concept related to changes in attitude to the environment. He paints what appear at first glance to be classic encounters with the Sublime, but where nature is disturbed and threatened.

Describing his work, Rankle explains *“Revisiting times, places and styles from when I first became interested in referencing the English Watercolour School as an early conceptual equivalent of the ‘walking in landscape interventions’ of artists such as Richard Long and particularly Hamish Fulton for whom a single photograph or text often represents an entire day spent walking and observing nature and natural forces.”*

Esson is interested in considering the alchemy of material alongside assigned human notions of allegory, combining these perspectives in experimental ways that visualise ecology, the collective unconscious and the impact of human presence and absence on the environment. Symbolic and unconventional materials are mixed in experimental ways that work with, rather than against, the transformative effects of fire, rain, ice, time or gravity to reflect and augment the untameable nature of the wild, and the duality of creation and destruction.

Speaking about her new series of works as a celebration of the raw beauty of nature and an exploration of the sublime alchemy of elemental materials found within the landscape, Esson says *“Organic plant and mineral matter blend and react to produce abstracted imprints of the natural world, conjuring up phantom-like visions of time and place. Earth, grit, salt, ashes, mosses, chalk and other found materials bring with them their own characteristics and significance, transforming on the canvas with pigments carried by rain, sea or river water. As reference to our troubled times, industrialised elements creep in insidiously in the form of metal oxides, sequestered carbon or powdered gold, referencing the growing dilemma of mankind’s presence within the awe and sublimity of nature.”*

Lizzie Collins, Director of Zuleika Gallery says *“We are delighted to be showing the shimmering landscape paintings of Alan Rankle and Rosannagh Scarlet Esson side by side in Cromwell Place. Beneath the surface of arcadian beauty, their paintings reveal a deeper meaning and concern for human kind’s disruption of the natural order”.*

-ENDS –

Illustrated:

1. Alan Rankle (b.1952), *Untitled Painting XIV*, 2015, oil on canvas, 120 x 150 cm
2. Rosannagh Scarlet Esson, *All that is gold*, 2023, iron oxide, raw umber, burnt sienna, kintsugy gold, salt, flint, rain water and raw chalk on canvas, 100 x 120 cm

About Alan Rankle

Alan Rankle (b 1952) explores historical, social and environmental issues informed by his interest in the evolution of landscape art. Since his first exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Arts London in 1973 while still a student at Goldsmiths College, he has worked variously in painting, video, photography, printmaking, architectural intervention and curating, through a series of international exhibitions and commissions.

Rankle studied at Rochdale School of Art (1968–70) and Goldsmiths’ University of London (1970–73)

Retrospective surveys of his work have been presented at Gallery Oldham in 2006 and Fondazione Stelline, Milan in 2010 where he also began his critically acclaimed series of collaborative exhibitions *On the Edge of Wrong* with the artist Kirsten Reynolds. Recent projects include curating the exhibition *Axis: London Milano* for *Fabbrica del Vapore* in Milan with Claudia De

Grandi and a prize winning immersive installation Riverside Suites at the Lowry Hotel, Manchester in collaboration with the designer Veronica Givone and AFK Architects.

About Rosannagh Scarlet Esson

Rosannagh Scarlet Esson (b 1989) graduated from Oxford Brookes in 2016 with First Class Honours in Fine Art, and was awarded the Fine Art Dissertation Prize for the best critical submission in her year. She has exhibited in the UK and Europe, and has work in several collections across the UK.

Our primal relationship with nature and wildness feeds into Esson's work through an alchemical painting language that focuses on the symbolism of material and the transformative effects of the elements. Themes explored include wildness, rewilding, ecological succession, alchemical symbolism and Deep Ecology.

About Zuleika Gallery

Zuleika Gallery's focus is on Modern British and emerging contemporary art. The gallery was founded in 2015 and held premises in St James's London before moving to Cromwell Place in 2022. In 2020, the gallery opened premises in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, now the gallery headquarters, with a regular exhibition programme. Using our extensive experience in the art market, we offer bespoke art advisory services for private or corporate collectors through Atelier Zuleika, our art consultancy arm. We enjoy placing art in the right context, whether public or private, and helping collectors making considered choices - balancing pure visual joy with stimulating ideas, while also inspiring change through art. The gallery is committed to showing art that inspires, and to making art accessible without compromise to quality, working with both the entry level collector and the connoisseur. Zuleika Gallery is a member of the Gallery Climate Coalition and is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and improving sustainably and gives artists a platform to explore the existential threat facing our planet.

Venue

Gallery 3, 1-5 Cromwell Place, London, SW7 2JE

Opening Hours

Tuesday - by appointment please contact +44 7719 043763

11 – 7pm Wednesday - Saturday

11 - 4pm Sunday

Press Contact

Camilla Binelli – camilla@zuleikagallery.com +44 7719 043763

www.zuleikagallery.com