

PRESS RELEASE

Tamsin Relly – For the Sun Gods

Online exhibition from 27 February – 28 March 2021 at Zuleika Gallery



Illustrated: Left, *For the Sun Gods II*, 2020 watercolour on Fabriano paper, 50 x 70 cm. Right, *I am Plant (Pincushion 3)*, 2021, water-based monotype on Somerset paper 300gsm, 38 x 28 cm.

Zuleika Gallery is delighted to present *For the Sun Gods*, an online exhibition of new works on paper by London-based artist, Tamsin Relly (b. 1981, South Africa). Relly's multi-disciplinary practice includes painting, printmaking and photography and explores the preservation of arboreal and botanical environments through conservation, urban parks, and memory – be it personal, collective or held within the land.

Presented at a time when the world is waking up to the first signs of Spring, and the welcome news of a lifting of lockdown now imminent, this timely and inaugural solo exhibition with Zuleika Gallery of new work by Relly is a celebration of the natural world. *For The Sun Gods* features a new series of watercolours and monotypes, which consider the origins and global migration of wild and cultivated plants and flowers, whilst reflecting on the interdependent and reciprocal relationship we have with our vegetal world.

Drawing from both found media imagery and first-hand observation, Relly's references include the Dahlia, indigenous to the mountain regions of Mexico and Guatemala, and the South African Pincushion Protea, a tropical flowering shrub native to the artist's own home country. Working with the fluid and unpredictable qualities of painting and printmaking, these botanical forms break down and lose focus whilst retaining a vibrancy of colour, evoking memories of warmer summer days.

Much of the series has been made in response to frequenting parks in London over the past year of the pandemic and a visit to Worton Organic kitchen garden in Oxfordshire between stretches of lockdown in 2020. During a period when our own movement as individuals has been so restricted, spending time in living green spaces is increasingly recognised as important for personal wellbeing, bringing into question the inequality within our communities around access to parks and gardens.

Relly's most recent monotypes *I am Plant (Pincushion 1, 2 & 3)* 2021 introduce an arched shape into her compositions. Suggestive of a window, bell jar or temple, the silhouette invites a sense of reverence for our living world, whilst serving as a reminder of the fragility of our planet's ecology and biodiversity, as we have an ever-greater impact on it.

"Dahlias first fully drew my attention whilst visiting a kitchen garden in the countryside last summer, between pandemic lockdowns. The petals and tubers are edible, they grow in an impressively diverse range of design and colour and bloom generously through Summer into Autumn. Whilst Dahlias have become a widely celebrated plant species and the pride of flower shows and domestic gardens worldwide, the wildflowers were first cultivated by Aztecs, who are said to have associated them with the Sun Gods. Reflecting on how in a globalised age of dispersed culture, flora and fauna, we can easily lose touch with the origins of things, I wanted to acknowledge these flowers' beginnings in the title of the series." Tamsin Relly.

Online exhibition dates: 27 February – 28 March 2021. Enter the Viewing Room at www.zuleikagallery.com

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About Tamsin Relly

Tamsin Relly (b. 1981) is a London based visual artist working across a range of media that includes painting, printmaking and photography. South Africa born, she moved to London in 2009 and received her Masters in Fine Art at City & Guilds of London Art School in 2011. Relly's work has been exhibited and collected widely in the United Kingdom and internationally, appearing in group exhibitions at *The Royal Academy of Arts*, *The National Maritime Museum* and *Oliver Projects* in London, *SMITH*, Cape Town and *Galerie Rue Visconti*, Paris. She has had solo exhibitions hosted by *The House of St Barnabas*, *The Place Downstairs* and *Brocket Gallery* in London. Artist residencies include *Arteles*, Finland (2016), *RE·THINK: Environment*, National Maritime Museum, London (2015), *Pocantico*, Rockefeller Brother Fund, New York (2015), and *The Arctic Circle*, Svalbard (2014).

About Zuleika Gallery

Zuleika Gallery was founded in Oxford in 2015 by Lizzie Collins and focuses on Contemporary and Modern British Art. Artists represented by the gallery include Trevor Sutton, Manijeh Yadegar, Andy Barker, Rachel Gracey, Claudia Clare and Frances Aviva Blane. Lizzie Collins is a History of Art graduate of UCL, and a postgraduate of the Courtauld Institute in London. Lizzie was a director and auctioneer at Bonhams, and a specialist at Christie's in 20th Century British Art, before founding Zuleika Gallery. In 2016 Lizzie set up the art programme for Saïd Business School, University of Oxford where she has curated exhibitions by Nigel Hall RA, Nicola Green and Alice Kettle. Hannah Payne joined Zuleika Gallery as Senior Director in 2020 following a career background of 20 years at leading institutions and art businesses including Blenheim Palace, Royal Academy of Arts, and Olympia International Art & Antiques Fairs. Hannah has directed art programmes at leading art sector businesses in London developing exhibitions with emerging and mid-career artists, as well as consulting for contemporary art galleries. Hannah is on the Advisory Board of University of the Arts London's *Made in Arts London*, a non-profit organisation supporting graduating artists.

For further information or images please contact info@zuleikagallery.com or visit www.zuleikagallery.com

In line with government guidelines, Zuleika Gallery is temporarily closed physically but remains open for business online. A virtual viewing appointment booking system is available, and our exhibitions can be viewed online. Announcements regarding re-opening after 12 April will be shared on the gallery website and social media. Our COVID-19 Policy is available to read on the website.

Normal Gallery open times:

Woodstock: Monday - Saturday 10.30 am - 5.30 pm, Sunday 12 pm - 4pm

London: By Appointment.

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