

Curated by Xavier Ellis

young
gods

London Graduates 2014

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100
LONDON
ARTISTS

CHARLIE SMITH LONDON

Griffin
Gallery

Curated by Xavier Ellis

young
gods

London Graduates 2014

Foreword /s

by
BECCA PELLY-FRY
DIRECTOR, GRIFFIN GALLERY

We are delighted to be hosting the western edition of *Young Gods* for the third year running, collaborating with Xavier Ellis of CHARLIE SMITH LONDON to showcase the most exciting young artists coming out of London art schools.

Griffin Gallery was established by the world leaders in fine art materials, Winsor & Newton, Liquitex and Conté à Paris, in order to support and develop the careers of the most promising artists emerging onto the international contemporary art scene. Our collaboration with Xavier Ellis on his *Young Gods* project is extremely exciting, and represents the central part of an important and mutually beneficial relationship: we are able to offer our large, purpose-built contemporary exhibition space and in turn are brought into contact with a group of extremely talented young artists.

This year we have taken the relationship a step further by offering a short term residency to one of the *Young Gods*, Tezz Kamoen, to create a new piece of work for the show. Tezz has been working in our purpose built studio, adjacent to the Innovation & Development Laboratory, provided with materials and support from Griffin Gallery staff over a period of 6 weeks. We are delighted to see the result of the residency as part of the *Young Gods* exhibition.

At the heart of the ethos of Griffin Gallery is an aim to explore craftsmanship in contemporary fine art practice, and interrogate what that means in the context of today's art scene in the UK and beyond. The artists selected for *Young Gods* demonstrate both conceptual rigour and technical expertise, and are closely engaged with their chosen material. The quality demonstrated here is reflective of the current state of the UK's Fine Art education sector, which continues to produce some of the world's most promising artists, in defiance of the landscape of ever-decreasing government funding and escalating costs to students. We are proud to be able to show the work of the participating artists at the beginning of what will undoubtedly be highly successful careers.

With many thanks to all exhibiting artists for their unique vision and artistic commitment, and to Xavier for his incredible curatorial eye and unstoppable dedication to supporting emerging talent.

by
ZAVIER ELLIS
DIRECTOR, CHARLIE SMITH LONDON

I am delighted that Griffin Gallery has invited me to curate *Young Gods* again for the third year running. This is an exhibition that excites and frustrates me every year. The process begins with visiting every BA and MA show in every London art college. I have no criteria other than inviting artists who I think are the most exciting, ambitious and progressive. My only limitation is the physicality of the gallery spaces where we will host the exhibition. Being able to utilise Griffin Gallery's beautiful space enables me to branch out considerably from my own gallery in Shoreditch. It is also always refreshing to interact with a space that is not extremely familiar. And curating the exhibition at Griffin as well as my gallery CHARLIE SMITH LONDON allows me to set up a dialogue that reaches from west to east London, and which bridges the commercial and institutional. I do hope that everyone will visit both locations, so that they can see the same artists in different curatorial contexts simultaneously.

I don't restrict myself to requiring a specific amount of artists and I also grant myself freedom in terms of numbers of artists from different colleges (or not). With this in mind *Young Gods* 2015 will feature seven artists from China, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom who are graduating from three different colleges: Chelsea, the Royal College and the Slade. Is this fair or democratic? No, because there are so many colleges not represented. Yes, because these are the artists that really stood out, irrespective of where they are from, and I am a firm believer in meritocracy. Additionally, this exhibition features large scale, sensational work, and it needs space to breathe. The flavour of the show changes every year, as it must do to continuously reflect the evolution of London's newest contemporary practices. And I'm quite certain that this year will be the most challenging and eccentric *Young Gods* edition to date.

It should be obvious then why this exhibition excites me. It gives me freedom; I have two great locations to experiment with; and it gives me the opportunity to work with the most exciting young artists out there, many of whom go on to considerable success. But why does it frustrate me? I would like to see every single art student being as rigorous as those on show here. I would like to see every college show the ambition to grow stronger as the Royal College has done so admirably in recent years. And I would like our politicians to readdress their priorities and fully fund our next generations so that young artists from all backgrounds have the opportunity to go to art school debt free.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at the Griffin Gallery, especially Rebecca Pelly-Fry, who continue to show their faith in this project specifically as well as emerging artists generally.

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- i. **Gabriele Dini**
- ii. **Russell Hill**
- iii. **Tezz Kamoen**
- iv. **Hilde Krohn Huse**
- v. **Joshua Raffell**
- vi. **Zhu Tian**
- vii. **Newton Whitelaw**

i.

Gabriele Dini

Gabriele Dini makes complex sculptures that replicate structures found in the natural world. By using ceramic to render a tooth or plastic and wax to construct honeycomb, Dini demands that his audience considers the correlative aspects of nature, manufacture and replication in the digital age. Dini is specifically interested in swarm intelligence, where an individual's behaviour is governed by the collective in animal and insect communities. These instinctive mass movements have been studied by computer scientists since the 1950's, informing the evolution of notions around artificial intelligence. Without denying traditional ideas of beauty and nature, Dini encourages consideration of community, labour and the systematic in the natural, technological and digital spheres.

EDUCATION

2012 – 2014 | MA Printmaking | Royal College of Art, London
2009 – 2010 | Art Science | Royal Academy of Art, Den Haag
2006 – 2009 | BA (Hons) Media Arts | Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara, Carrara

BORN

Viareggio, Italy, 1985



Gabriele Dini
Rhizome
2014
Ceramic
1.1x1x0.9cm



Gabriele Dini
Swarm's Scale
2014
Plastic, wax, mixed media
210x80x40cm (Detail)



Gabriele Dini
Swarm's Scale
2014
Plastic, wax, mixed media
210x80x40cm

ii.

Russell Hill

Russell Hill uses everyday domestic substances and objects including toothpaste, J-cloths and hardware to make sculpture and installation that comments on the hierarchy of materials, domesticity, labour and commerce. We are reminded variously of art historical strategies including minimalism, abstract expressionism and the readymade. However, Hill toys with the grandiose polemics that accompany these modes with sardonic humour, cleverly transgressing accepted notions of what art is and does. This demystifying, anti-Romantic approach is underpinned by a well-honed aesthetic. Russell's work is precise with a strong compositional harmony that reveals a knowing and considered approach to making work.

EDUCATION

2012 – 2014 | MA Sculpture | Royal College of Art, London

2007 – 2010 | BA (Hons) Fine Art | Wimbledon College of Art, London

BORN

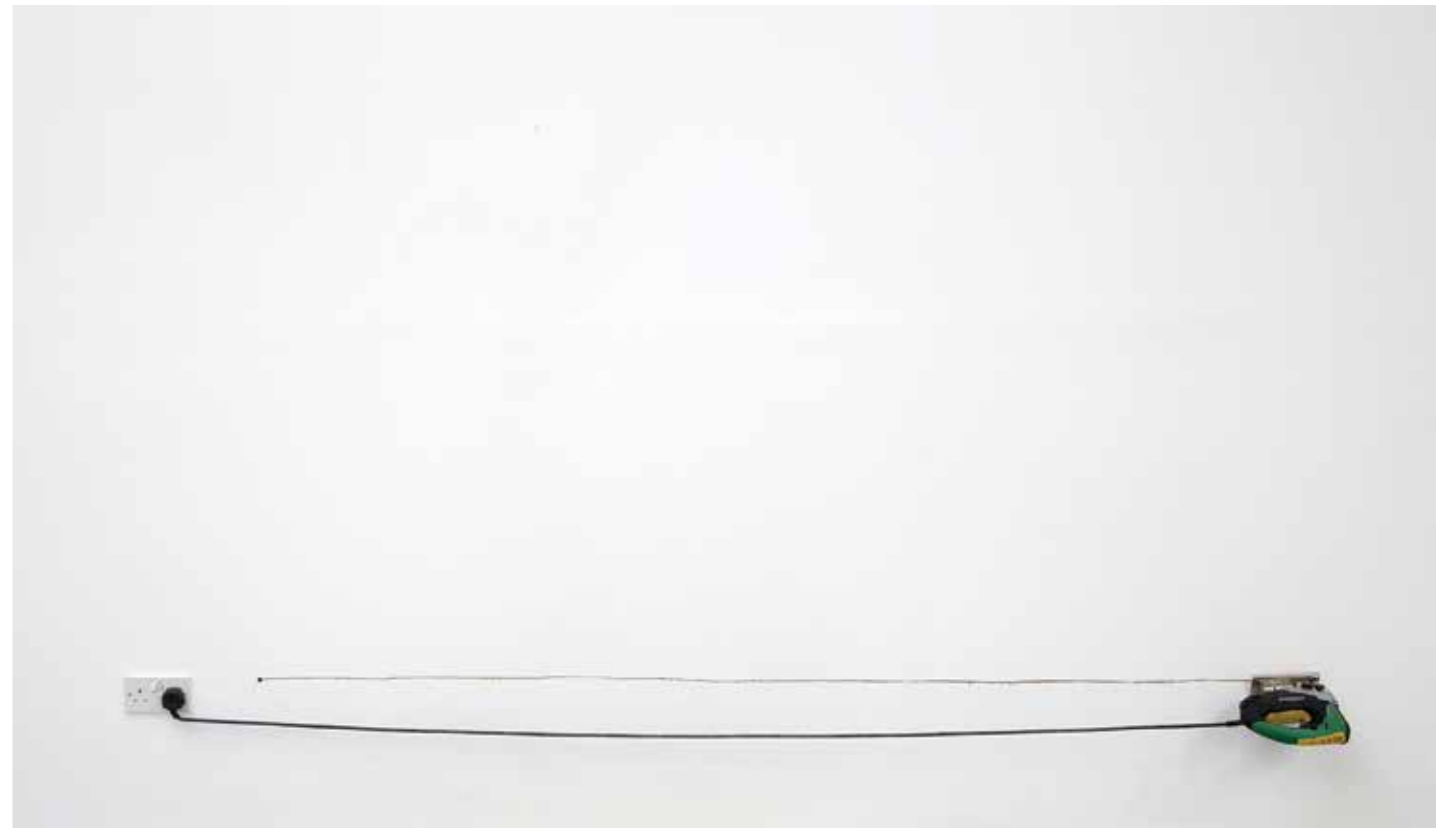
Rugby, United Kingdom, 1988

Russell Hill
Cocktail
Toothpaste, glass, resin
17x6x6cm
(Image courtesy of
Millington Marriot)





Russell Hill
Marion II
2014
Toothpaste, wall
Dimensions variable
(Image courtesy of BALTIC
Center for Contemporary Art)



Russell Hill
Line Drawing
2014
Plug socket, jigsaw, wall
Dimensions variable

iii.

Tezz Kamoen

Tezz Kamoen makes monumental works on paper in crayon, ink and marker pencils. Kamoen's dazzling surfaces are packed with information, combining figures, objects and text. Her vibrant, all over style recalls 1980's Neo-expressionism and is equally highly charged. Kamoen ruminates on the individual's position in society; success and failure; commercialism; and societal relationships. Her work is self-reflective and psychological, displaying a stream of consciousness that is raw, urgent and fractured. Textual slogans interlaced with looming faces and disparate motifs combine to create a cacophonous blaze of form, colour and discordant meaning.

EDUCATION

2013 – 2014 | MA Fine Art | Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

2009 – 2013 | BA (Hons) Fine Art | ArteZ Institute of the Arts, Enschede

BORN

Nijmegen, Netherlands, 1992



Tezz Kamoen
Replacement Fish Casper Greg 5
2014
Pastel crayons, oil crayons, ink,
marker pencils
320x750cm (Detail)



Tezz Kamoen
Replacement Fish Casper Greg 5
2014
Pastel crayons, oil crayons, ink, marker pencils
320x750cm

iv.

Hilde Krohn Huse

Hilde Krohn Huse makes video, collage and installation that investigate narrative, and specifically its intention, representation and misinterpretation. Krohn Huse accentuates the fugitive elements embedded in the communication of a story and asserts its inherently subjective condition. Its reading will never be replicated as its effect is dependent on a combination of the original intention of a narrative, its means of presentation and the individual position of the viewer. Krohn Huse interjects potential for ever renewed interpretation by disrupting the correlation between objects and images, thereby implying narrative and encouraging the viewer to form their own conclusion. By extension Krohn Huse contemplates identity, and how it is constructed according to display, editing, anecdote, omission and association.

EDUCATION

2012 – 2014 | MFA Fine Art Media | Slade School of Fine Art, London

2009 – 2012 | BA (Hons) Fine Art | University for the Creative Arts, Farnham

BORN

Bergen, Norway, 1988



Hilde Krohn Huse
Hanging in the Woods
2014
Digital video (11mins 33secs)
Dimensions variable



Hilde Krohn Huse
 Standing Narratives
 2014
 Steel, perspex, photographs, text
 Dimensions variable (Detail)



Hilde Krohn Huse
 Standing Narratives
 2014
 Steel, perspex, photographs, text
 Dimensions variable

v.

Joshua Raffell

Joshua Raffell makes beautifully grotesque sculptures from a multitude of found and collected materials. They are at once absurd, monstrous and playful. Roughly hewn, Raffell's figures are expressive, raw and overtly sexual. Huge phalluses and masturbating moving parts are intended to provoke. Raffell seeks to unravel the repressed and uses the gratuitously sexual to challenge established hierarchies defined by the dominant, straight, white male. Raffell's intention is to bring to attention the marginal, the suppressed and the base in order to readdress taboos prescribed by prevailing rule and taste makers.

EDUCATION

2013 – 2014 | MA Fine Art | Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

2007 – 2010 | BA (Hons) Fine Art | London Metropolitan University, London

BORN

Nuneaton, United Kingdom, 1970

Joshua Raffell
Sinsung
2014
Mixed media
220x130x120cm





Joshua Raffell
Observation
 2014
 Mixed media
 200x130x130cm

Joshua Raffell
Big Bell
 2013
 Mixed media
 230x80x80cm



Zhu Tian

Tian Zhu is a multi-disciplinary artist who subverts the everyday and undermines the expected. She questions prevailing notions of power relations and asserts the identity of the individual, adroitly turning corporate or misogynist strategies back upon themselves in order to critique them. Moving effortlessly from object intervention to digital to performance to set piece installation, Zhu presents complex and engaging work that is challenging, layered and courageous.

EDUCATION

2012 – 2014 | MA Sculpture | Royal College of Art, London

2006 – 2007 | MA Sound Design | Bournemouth University, Bournemouth

BORN

Zhejiang, China, 1982



Zhu Tian
Selling The Worthless
2014
Video (30 mins)
Dimensions variable



Zhu Tian
Dear Boss
 2014
 Sheep skin, neon sign, metal,
 motor, LED strip, rubber, rope,
 cable tie, leather, perspex sheet,
 wood
 Dimensions variable



Zhu Tian
Babe
 2013
 Rubber, human hair, pigment
 18x12x8cm

vii. **Newton Whitelaw**

Newton Whitelaw makes sculptural installation using combinations of organic and manmade materials. Recalling Joseph Campbell's tripartite conception of departure, initiation and return, there is a distinctly anthropological sense to Whitelaw's work. On immediate viewing we are invited to contemplate the mythological and ritualistic, recalling notions of Jungian archetypes. However, on closer inspection Whitelaw reveals an instinctive understanding of the physicality of materials where modern, manmade elements serve to disrupt our nostalgic presuppositions. Whitelaw asserts that there is a paradox in nostalgia, where an expected return either never happens, or when one does return it is to something different.

EDUCATION

2012 – 2014 | MA Sculpture | Royal College of Art, London

2005 – 2008 | BA (Hons) Fine Art | Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

BORN

London, United Kingdom, 1984

Newton Whitelaw
///\\\\///
Mixed media
Dimensions variable





Newton Whitelaw
hold you <3 <3
Slate menhir, synthetic hair
70x200x45cm

ZAVIER ELLIS



Zavier Ellis was born in Windsor in 1973. He read History of Modern Art at Manchester University before undertaking a Masters in Fine Art at City & Guilds of London Art School. He has lived in London since 1998.

Zavier is the founder and director of CHARLIE SMITH LONDON, a vibrant contemporary art gallery in the heart of Shoreditch that specialises in showing and representing emerging to mid-career artists. He is also co-founder and co-curator of the independent and annual museum scale show *THE FUTURE CAN WAIT*, which is currently organised in partnership with Saatchi's *New Sensations*. *THE FUTURE CAN WAIT* is the largest exhibition of its kind globally.

Zavier has curated exhibitions internationally including in Berlin, Helsinki, Klaipėda, London, Los Angeles, Naples and Rome; and has placed work in many notable collections globally including the Saatchi Gallery, Peter Nobel, Jean Pigozzi, David Roberts and Thomas Rusche. Known as an acute talent spotter Xavier has identified and exhibited a number of important young artists directly from Art College including David Blandy, Oliver Clegg, Tessa Farmer, Virgile Ittah, Sam Jackson, Monica Ursina Jäger, Annie Kevans, Alexis Milne, Nika Neelova and Douglas White.

Zavier also collects and maintains a studio practice, and as such has exhibited in recent years at Museum der Moderne in Salzburg, Torrance Art Museum in California and Paul Stolper Gallery in London. His work is featured in many private collections including the Peter Nobel Collection.

Most recently Xavier has published his first iArtBook *100 London Artists* with renowned art critic and historian Edward Lucie-Smith.

ZAVIERELLIS.COM

CHARLIE SMITH LONDON



100
LONDON
ARTISTS

GRIFFIN GALLERY

Established by world leading fine art brands, Winsor & Newton, Liquitex and Conté à Paris, Griffin Gallery opened in early 2012 with an overarching ambition to support and develop the careers of the most promising emerging artists.

A particular focus for the gallery is an exploration of craftsmanship within the context of the international contemporary art scene. We are interested in interrogating the meaning of 'craftsmanship' today, and in encouraging an engagement with the material properties of contemporary artwork.

Griffin Gallery occupies the ground floor of the brands' Head Office in Shepherd's Bush, which also houses an Innovation and Development Laboratory and two purpose-built artists' studios. Through the annual Griffin Art Prize process, we select a particularly talented emerging artist to take up residency in one of these studios for six months each year. During the residency, the chosen artist works closely with our chemists, explores the full range of our art materials, and makes a new body of work for a solo show at the end of the six month period.

Winsor & Newton, our flagship brand, was built on the marriage of science and art and today this continues to keep us ahead of the game in the field of fine art material manufacture. The Griffin Art Prize residency builds on this tradition, allowing scientists and artists to collaborate, communicate and innovate.

GRIFFINGALLERY.CO.UK
GRIFFINARTPRIZE.CO.UK

Griffin
Gallery

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YOUNG GODS 2015
showing 2014 London Graduates & Postgraduates
Curated by Xavier Ellis

Young Gods is presented in association with CHARLIE SMITH LONDON and Griffin Gallery, supported by fine art brands Winsor & Newton, Conté à Paris and Liquitex.

The exhibition takes place simultaneously at CHARLIE SMITH LONDON and Griffin Gallery

GRIFFIN GALLERY
Private View
07 January 2015, 6.30 – 8.30pm
Exhibition Dates
08 January – 06 February, 2015
Mon – Thu, 10am – 5pm
Friday, 10am – 4pm

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CHARLIE SMITH LONDON
Exhibition Dates
14 January – 14 February, 2015
Wed – Sat, 11am – 6pm
or by appointment

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Portrait Xavier Ellis:
Photography by Lana Vanzetta

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