



# Fairhurst

Gallery & Framers



Press release for immediate release

---

**"If we opened people up we'd find landscapes"** (Agnés Varda)

Ruth Bunnewell / Lara Cobden / Katarzyna Coleman / Alex Egan

Katie Falcon / Emilie Houssart / Malca Schotten

4<sup>th</sup> June - 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Fairhurst Gallery is proud to present a group show of all female landscape artists. With shifting political landscapes happening around the world, galleries and museums are re-assessing the underrepresentation of women artists. Highlighting this last year was Tacita Dean's unprecedented triple exhibition across the Royal Academy, National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery. The forthcoming exhibition at The Fairhurst Gallery seeks to specifically examine the genre of landscape art from the perspective of 7 contemporary artists working in and around Norfolk today.

As a genre, landscape art has particularly strong roots in the past as well as being an acknowledged source of inspiration and a guiding force in contemporary thinking. Paving the way in the Victorian era, female landscape artists actively helped shape the art scene, despite the odds stacked against them in comparison to their male counterparts. *"To my mind, the most fascinating and under-researched ex-*

*amples of dissenting landscapes derive from women; kicking against the white, landed, male observer's supremacy. Women were excluded from the chief contexts of mid-eighteenth-century landscape representation: effectively locked out of land-ownership, the military, the Royal Academy and Royal Society, and the male aristocrat's political experience and power. Women were discouraged from accessing sublime elevated viewpoints, leaving their coaches, or getting their boots muddy."* Rachel Hewitt. (Lecturer in Creative Writing and Deputy Director of the Newcastle Centre for Literary Arts, Newcastle University)

The modern day explorers represented in the Fairhurst exhibition all approach the practice in different ways, some braving all weathers to work 'en plein air' or investigating the early morning with a flashlight, some rendering scenes from their memory/imagination or documenting the eroding coastline and urban scenes. They are all connected by a single thread - the ever-changing landscape - their daring curiosity and technical virtuosity leading to artworks of great depth and beauty. The invitation into these works might be a lonely tree, a sunlit beach, a broken lamppost, an industrial warehouse, an illuminated greenhouse, a fire on the shore of a lake. It might be "*... a particular arrangement of lines or forms that speak an unexpectedly familiar language. There's no need to have been there to feel someone else's place.*" Fiona Stafford (Fellow & Tutor in English Literature, Somerville College, University of Oxford)

Nina Fowler, assistant Director at the Fairhurst Gallery says: "The title of the exhibition *"If we opened people up we'd find landscapes"* is a quote from the filmmaker Agnès Varda (1928-2019) a French film director, photographer and artist. Varda, whose recent death has been deeply mourned, made films with a distinctive experimental style focused on achieving documentary realism while addressing feminist issues. We chose this quote on which to base the exhibition, for it's emotive, poetic provocations which lead us to think about a more unconventional perception of landscape, what it means to us and how we respond to it."

## The Artists

**Ruth Bunnewell** graduated with a BA in Fine Art from Norwich School of Art and Design in 2004. She has since exhibited extensively in Norfolk, Ipswich and London. In the June 2015 issue of *House and Garden*, Bunnewell's work was highlighted as "putting a contemporary spin on traditional British landscape painting." Capturing a mood is central to her technique, inspired by the films of David Lynch, much of the work is underpinned by underlying geometry and subtle abstraction. Working from her own photographs she produces paintings that are studies in form, colour, texture and light, the contrast between the wide open spaces of the landscape, and the tight, dark, density of groups of trees. Bunnewell is interested in the notion of memories, altered emotions and perceptions which we attach to places

**Lara Cobden (b.1971)** is a figurative painter living and working in Norwich, Norfolk. Lara graduated with a degree in Painting from Brighton University in 1996, and then spent 11 years in Ireland before relocating to East Anglia. Focusing on memory and sense of place, her paintings are a response to the natural world around her. She is a member of The Arborealists, a group of artists specialising in the art of trees, who exhibit widely across Europe. Her work has been exhibited in the UK and internationally and has been a recipient of a number of awards. In 2018 Lara received the Parker Harris Mentorship Prize at the Wells Arts Contemporary Art Awards and was recently awarded second place in the Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize. She has been preselected for this year's Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy.

**Katarzyna Coleman's** work reflects the unarranged, industrial harbour area of South Denes, Great Yarmouth, where her studio is located. The grid of streets, harbour-side, warehouses and factories have provided the focus and the backdrop for her work for many years. Originally from London she studied Fine Art at Hornsey and then an MA at Manchester, attracted by the monumental, Piranesi industrial architecture. Katarzyna makes drawings on site, usually on a Sunday when no one is about. These drawings are intensely focused and observed: - measurement, proportions, perspective and composition an essential element of her practice. She develops paintings, drawings and prints from her studies back in her studio, and usually works on a series concurrently. She finds it essential to keep the exact proportional-scale relationships and underlying structure when the drawings are scaled up onto canvas.

**Alex Egan** studied Fine Art at Bristol and has since exhibited extensively throughout the country. Previous exhibitions at the Fairhurst gallery include two solo shows: *Back to My Roots* (2016) and *Tree Portraits* (2015). More recently, her work was featured in the exhibition *Inheritance* (2018) at Norwich Castle Museum. She is an active member of the Norfolk-art-collective 'Group Eight', who are renowned for working outdoors 'en plein air' and exhibit regularly. She is also part of The Arborealists, a group of artists passionate about trees. Egan's intricate drawings of trees explore the subject as a source of delicacy and power in the natural world. She is inspired primarily by the light, movement and energy of her subjects, studying them from life in minute detail.

**Katie Falcon (b.1960)** lives and works on the coast of Norfolk. Having completed an MA in drawing at Norwich University of the Arts in 2006, Falcon has exhibited in numerous solo and group shows in Norfolk and London. She regularly sketches and paints outside at all times of the year. Through mark-making Falcon responds to the ever changing weathers, seasons and changing light. Working in pastels, oil paints and mixed media most of her work is done 'en plein air'. Sometimes when conditions are too challenging she finishes work in the studio, always attempting to capture the spirit of the place.

**Emilie Houssart** is a painter, printmaker and sculptor based in upstate New York. Her recent work explores our confrontations with chaos and absurdity, often incorporating natural and discarded materials. Through landscape painting, a long-standing pillar of her work, she finds an opportunity to imagine the planet free of the destructive tendencies of humans, and to celebrate natural forms. Following a BA Hons. at the University of Durham, Emilie studied and taught drawing and painting at the Charles H. Cecil Studios in Florence, graduating in 2006. After years in London and Austin, Texas, she moved to New York's Hudson Valley in 2013, where she is currently Resident Artist at the Barrett Art Center, Poughkeepsie, NY. She teaches drawing, painting, etching and monotype. Her work is exhibited and collected internationally.

**Malca Schotten (b. 1961)** studied illustration at Brighton Polytechnic. Her practice predominantly involves large-scale, high energy drawings in response to the “visual drama” of the landscape. Using a camera as an aid memoir she takes quick pictures, then returns to her studio while the experience is fresh in her memory to create uninhibited, evocative drawings. Experimenting with colour and materials Schotten's work reflects nature's contrasting forms and perspectives and the changing moods of the seasons. She has been supported by the Arts Council England on several occasions to produce a series of self initiated public art projects, including *Lives in Science* at the John Innes Centre, Norwich in 2017. Previous solo exhibitions at The Fairhurst Gallery include *New Works* (2015) and *Maternity* (2014).

**Private View** - Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019, 12 - 4pm

The gallery, on Bedford Street, is open Tuesday to Saturday, 9.30am to 5.30pm with additional viewings available by appointment. For more information visit [www.fairhurstgallery.co.uk](http://www.fairhurstgallery.co.uk)

**ENDS**

---

Notes to Editors:

About Fairhurst

Tucked away in the Norwich Lanes, once a 17th century skittle alley and formerly the Cat Trap jazz club, the Fairhurst is a unique gallery space, hosting regular exhibitions.

The Fairhurst Gallery champions contemporary fine art, bringing variety and brilliance to the city of Norwich. With a view to developing the careers of new profes-

sional artists and helping established practitioners reach new audiences, The Fairhurst repeatedly show inspirational work of the highest standards.

The Fairhurst Gallery also offers a traditional framing business as well as a bespoke restoration service, with clients including stately homes around the region, Norwich Cathedral, Norwich Castle and the Sainsbury Centre.

Follow Us:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fairhurstart>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FairhurstGallery>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fairhurstgallery/>

Press Enquiries: Nina Fowler :: [nina@fairhurstgallery.co.uk](mailto:nina@fairhurstgallery.co.uk) :: 01603614214