



MEHTABELL  
PROJECTS

PRESENT

# AFTER EDEN

A GROUP EXHIBITION

Herrick  
Gallery

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# AFTER EDEN

“ The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven ” PARADISE LOST, JOHN MILTON, 1667

'After Eden' celebrates the diversity and richness of the natural world and hints at its fate and potential decline at the hands of man. Mehta Bell Projects are pleased to present a carefully curated collection of artists that explore these concepts, investigating the complex relationship between man and nature and the potential consequences of the human pursuit for knowledge and power. 'After Eden' uses the fall of man after his banishment from paradise, as a starting point for a broader discussion about the state of the world we live in today.

Artists Orlanda Broom and Kristjana Williams create immersive compositions of lush vegetation and exotic flora and fauna, capturing in both paint and hand-cut paper the alluring power and joy of nature. Williams' use of Victorian cartography depicts an intricately carved map of the world, thriving with plants, flowers and exotic animals. Amongst this dense landscape the roaming flamingos, insects, leopards and birds are competing for the land and are pushed to the edges of the frame, suggestive of man's encroachment on the landscape and the threat to the animals' natural habitat. With issues of over development, logging, human overpopulation etc, humanity's excessive consumption is having potentially catastrophic consequences to our planet. How much longer until these creatures are out of the picture completely? Furthering this idea are the monumental watercolours by Thai artist Tawan Wattuya who deftly illustrates a leopard with this delicate medium and minimal brushstrokes, emphasising the

leopard's majesty and yet hinting at its fleeting and endangered presence. Lauren Baker's red deer skull is a poignant and stark pause for reflection; captivatingly painted in vibrant colours, it provides a 'memento mori' highlighting nature's transience and its threat at the hands of man. It manifests connotations of a hunting trophy and man's mistreatment of animals as recreational or ornamental objects at our disposal. Jane Ward manipulates digital photographs by dissolving the ink by hand, leaving traces of previous forms, implying man's manipulation of the landscape and suggestive of a sense of memory and the passage of time. Her work is meticulously composed from fragmented images that are repeatedly broken down and collaged, creating imaginary land and cityscapes, hinting at an otherworldly Eden-like place, shattered and infinitely altered by time and humanity.

Image:  
Ting Cheng 'Hello  
Hello', 2016



Central to the exhibition is the theme of the consequential fallout as a result of human actions. This is perhaps best illustrated through the character of Eve, who was punished for introducing original sin to the world, although she was duped by the evil serpent. It is her defiance and quest for knowledge that are largely held responsible for the fall of Eden, and so through her representation we discuss the role of humankind in the condition of the world today. Nick Archer depicts Eve as an innocent young girl in his lusciously painted 'Eden'. She innocuously wanders through a verdant landscape, however, the deep, foreboding sky envelops the figure, and she is almost swallowed up by the triffid-like flowers and vegetation. Amongst this beautiful otherworldly scene, seductively flecked with gold-dust, the viewer is aware of an impending sense of doom, conscious of the devious serpent lurking in the depths of Eden and his inevitable encounter with the unsuspecting Eve. This raises questions of how intentional the harm caused to earth has been by man, whilst also being suggestive of how apprehensive we are as a society of our advancements and their ramifications. The symbol of Eve is further explored in the work of Marc Quinn, as he presents the hallucinatory face of Kate Moss, arguably the archetype of modern beauty, endowed with a reverential and goddess-like quality, evocative of Eve as the first woman and "the mother of all the living". Her beauty which captivated Adam, and eventually contributed to the fall of Eden, is implicitly explored in the enchanting photographs by Anouska Beckwith, where a beautiful girl's hair is carried by birds – an 'earth mother' interpretation of the figure of Eve. In 'Aura' a female nude lies across a rocky landscape, surrounded by a halo-like form surrounding her body, created with meticulously sewn embroidery thread through the actual photograph. However, the figure's pose and stark nudity suggests submissiveness and possible surrender, a resignation of her fate and the consequences of her actions in Eden. Kamolpan Chotvichai's photograph of the female form embodies the notion of female desirability and sexuality that was prevalent throughout the story of Eden. Her photograph of the female figure is printed on canvas, and then shredded away with



Image:  
Kamolpan Chotvichai  
'Years of Pain', 2016

fine strips of the canvas suspended from the picture plane. Striking in its 'V' shaped composition with the female's legs suggestively parted; this work alludes to the female form and its sexuality, a factor that Adam and Eve became shamefully aware of after their loss of innocence. The implications of physically shredding away the female form remind us of the curse of physical pain in childbirth that Eve is given from God as a result of her actions, and broadly asks the question of whether there is always a price to pay for man's crusade for advancement. The depiction of nature and desire is surreally captured in Taiwanese artist Ting Cheng's quirky installation, incorporating photographs and a neon work. These four works touch on issues of religion, nature and sexuality. The neon piece 'I am your F(o)llower' poses the question: is Eve a subservient follower of man, or is she the flower, empowered by her prowess, beauty and ability to procreate? This work hints at the subtle power play between man and woman that echoes the Genesis narrative.

The idea of the inevitable downfall of paradise is subtly explored in the works of Peihang Huang. Frequently inspired by images from the media, the artist seduces the viewer with rich swirls of vibrant oil paint, in a vivid colour palette that belie the darker subject matter she depicts. In 'The Boy's' we see the abstracted and blurred outline of a young child, depicted in a flurry of dynamic brushstrokes and streaks of colour that suggest a hazy recollection of a memory or image. On closer inspection this familiar image presents itself – derived from the heart-wrenching photograph that flooded the news in 2016 of the Syrian boy pulled from the rubble in the aftermath of an airstrike. Syria, once a flourishing country and nostalgically considered a paradise, is all but destroyed through the act of war. Man's destruction of itself and not only nature through his hungry pursuit of power, is evocatively portrayed in this emotionally charged work. If man continues in this vein what will remain of our world?

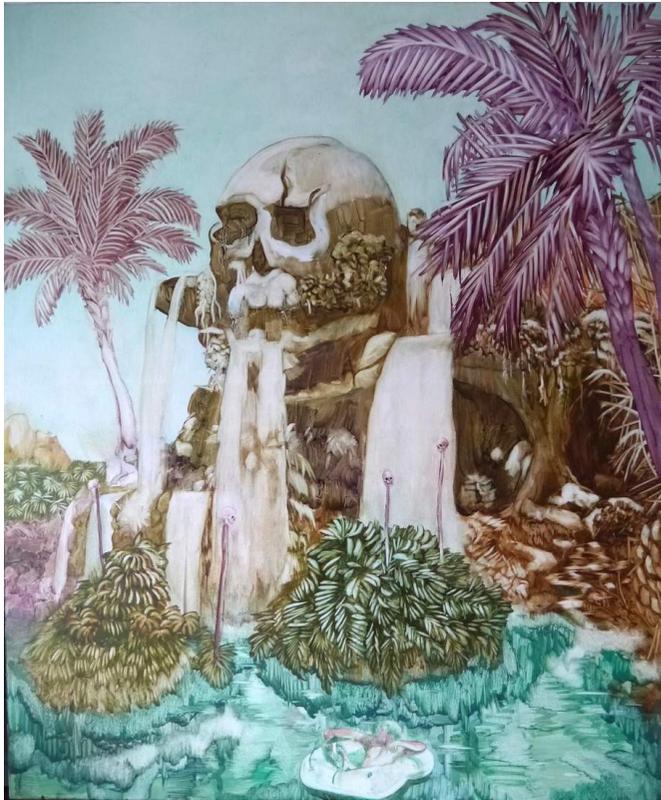


Image:  
Tom Shedden  
'Adrift', 2014

In the surreal and intimate paintings by Tom Shedden, a strange and hybrid version of paradise is depicted. In 'Adrift' a human skull dominates a scene of tropical paradise, evocative of the inevitably dark cost of man's colonisation. In 'Armadillo' snow falls over armadillos hanging from palm trees. This disorientating scene once again contains opposing elements that are ambiguous and hint at a sense that something is not quite right. At the centre of this

composition we see a baffled man who looks up in bewilderment at what he has engendered. Benjamin Thomas Taylor presents us with a painting-by-numbers depiction of the word 'Happiness', ironically juxtaposed against the background of a picture-perfect green landscape. His work suggests atonement as we try to compensate for what we have now lost. Are we paying the price for man's insatiable quest for natural resources, globalisation and the destruction of the natural world in the pursuit of happiness? By now having to 'paint by numbers' to create an artificial version of paradise, have we lost the very soul of our world? It suggests a regret as we try to fill the void through a simulation of paradise, when it was there right in front of us all along.



Image: Benjamin Thomas Taylor  
'Happiness', 2017

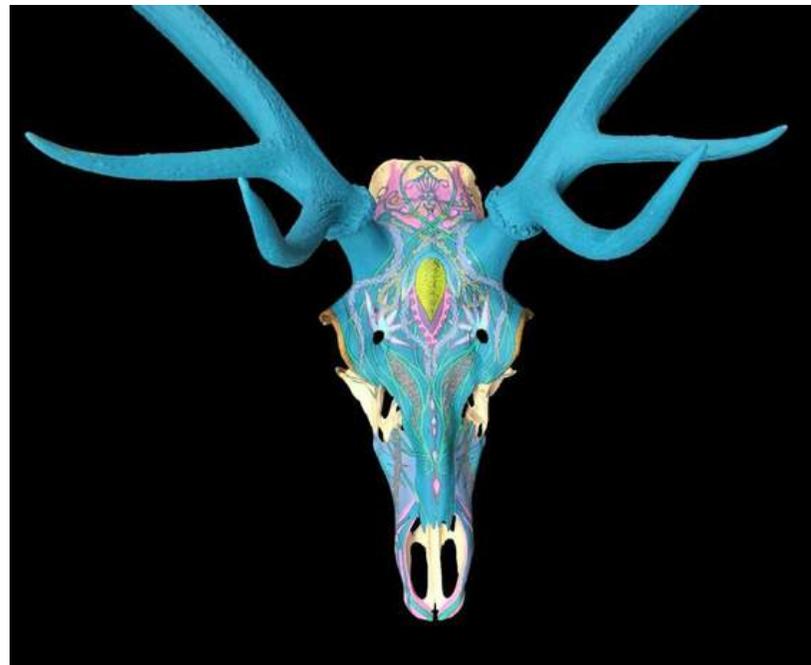
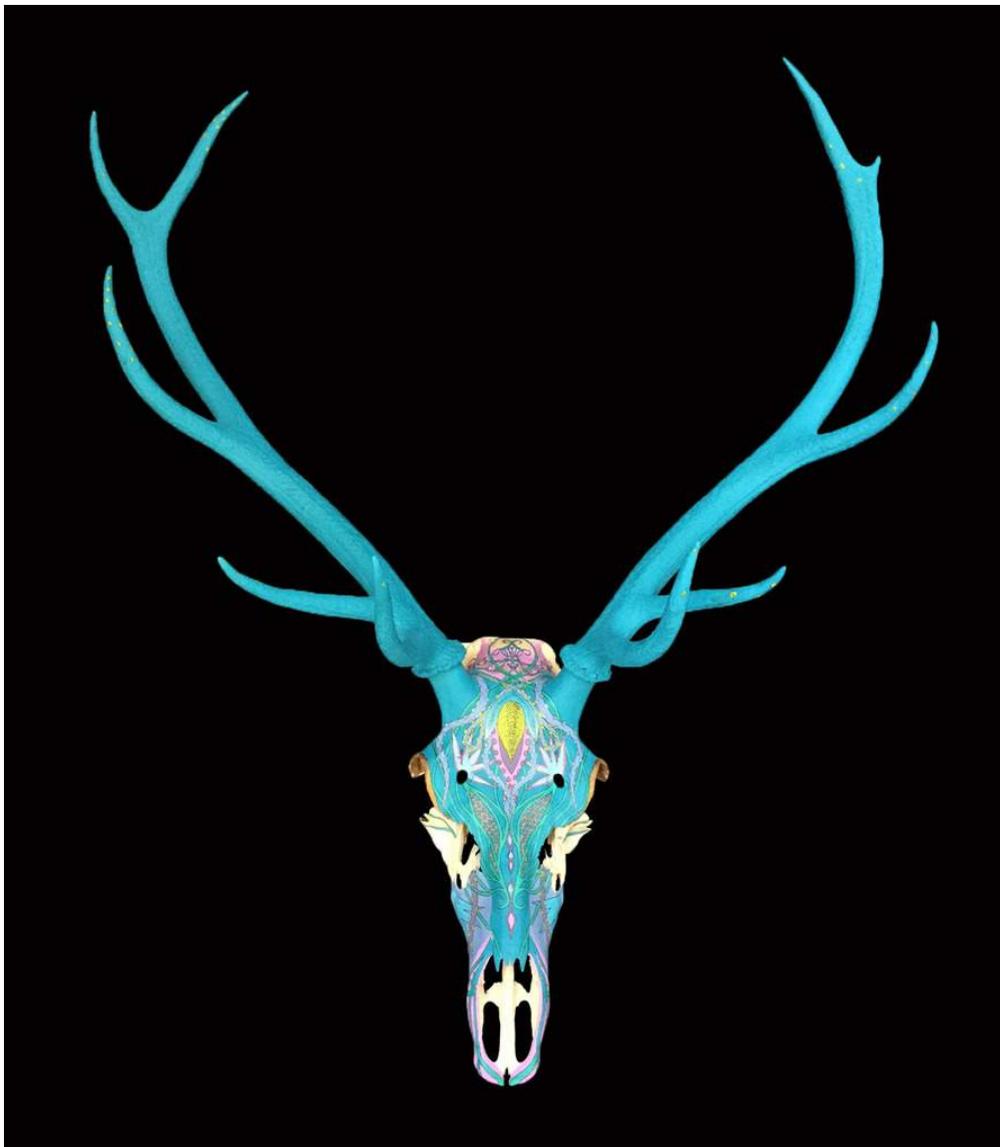
'After Eden' encourages a dialogue on the potential hazards and misgivings of the world we live in, and investigates the consequences of our actions in these deeply troubled times. On a voyage through the exuberance of nature and its infectious energy, these works also pose a valuable reminder of the temptations and risks that are ever present and ask that we be mindful that paradise can be lost.

# NICK ARCHER



EDEN  
2017  
OIL AND GOLD DUST  
ON CANVAS  
168 X 132 CM

# LAUREN BAKER



SPIRIT VINE OF THE  
AMAZON  
2016  
RED DEER SKULL AND  
ACRYLIC PAINT  
80 X 50 X 30 CM



EQUILIBRIUM  
WOOD AND ACRYLIC ON CANVAS  
94 X 40 X 7 CM EACH (DIPTYCH)

# ANOUSKA BECKWITH



ENTWINED WITH THE  
BIRDS OF HOPE  
2016  
60 X 90 CM  
EDITION OF 3



AURA  
2016  
MIXED MEDIA  
50 X 75 CM  
EDITION OF 3

# ORLANDA BROOM



BLUE TELEGRAPH HILL  
2016  
ACRYLIC AND RESIN ON  
CANVAS  
100 X 100 CM



SKELETON SPRIGS  
2016  
ACRYLIC AND RESIN ON  
CANVAS  
100 CM DIAMETER

# TING CHENG



HELLO HELLO  
2016  
FUJI CRYSTAL ARCHIVE  
MATT PRINT MOUNTED  
ON ALUMINIUM &  
DIBOND WITH SUBFRAME  
EDITION OF 5  
59.4 X 84.1 CM

OH MY BABY

2011

FUJI CRYSTAL ARCHIVE MATT

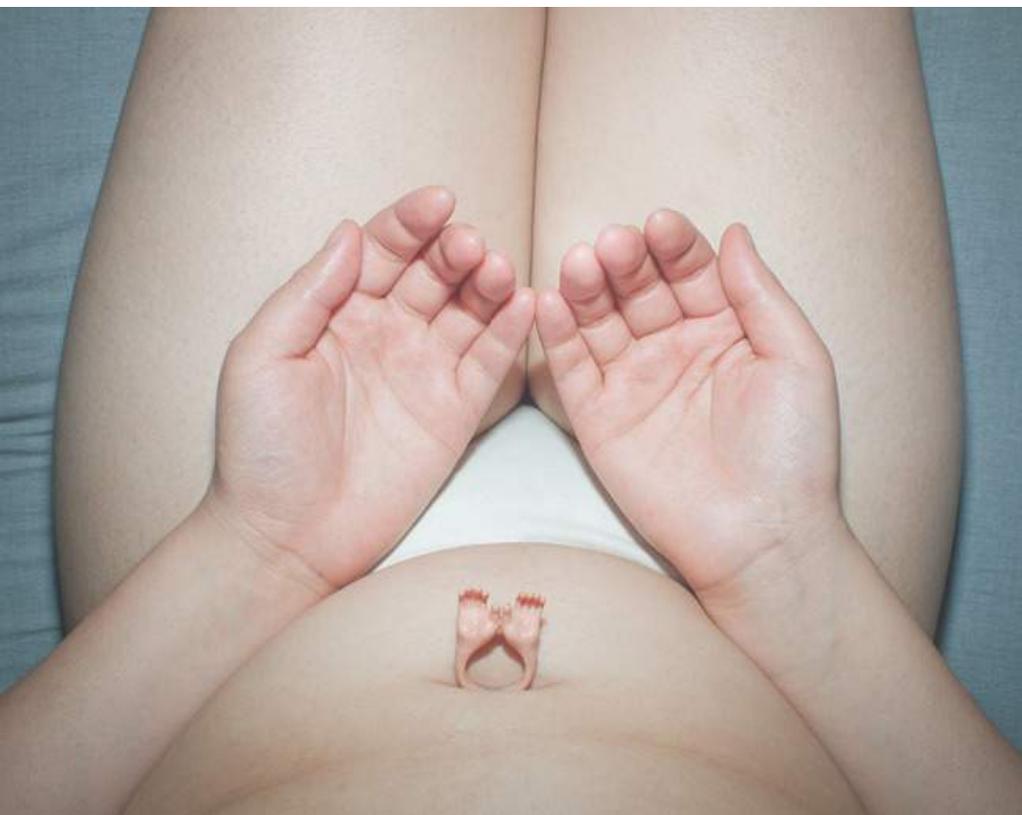
PRINT MOUNTED ON

ALUMINIUM & DIBOND WITH

SUBFRAME

EDITION OF 5

40.6 X 50.8 CM



WHAT'S UP PLANT? #4

2014

FUJI CRYSTAL ARCHIVE MATT PRINT  
MOUNTED ON ALUMINIUM & DIBOND WITH

SUBFRAME, EDITION OF 5

40.6 X 30.4 CM



I am your follower

I AM YOUR F(O)L(L)OWER  
2016  
NEON  
EDITION OF 3  
31 X 88 CM

# KAMOLPAN CHOTVICHAI



YEARS OF PAIN

2016

HAND-CUT C PRINT ON  
CANVAS

105 X 79 CM

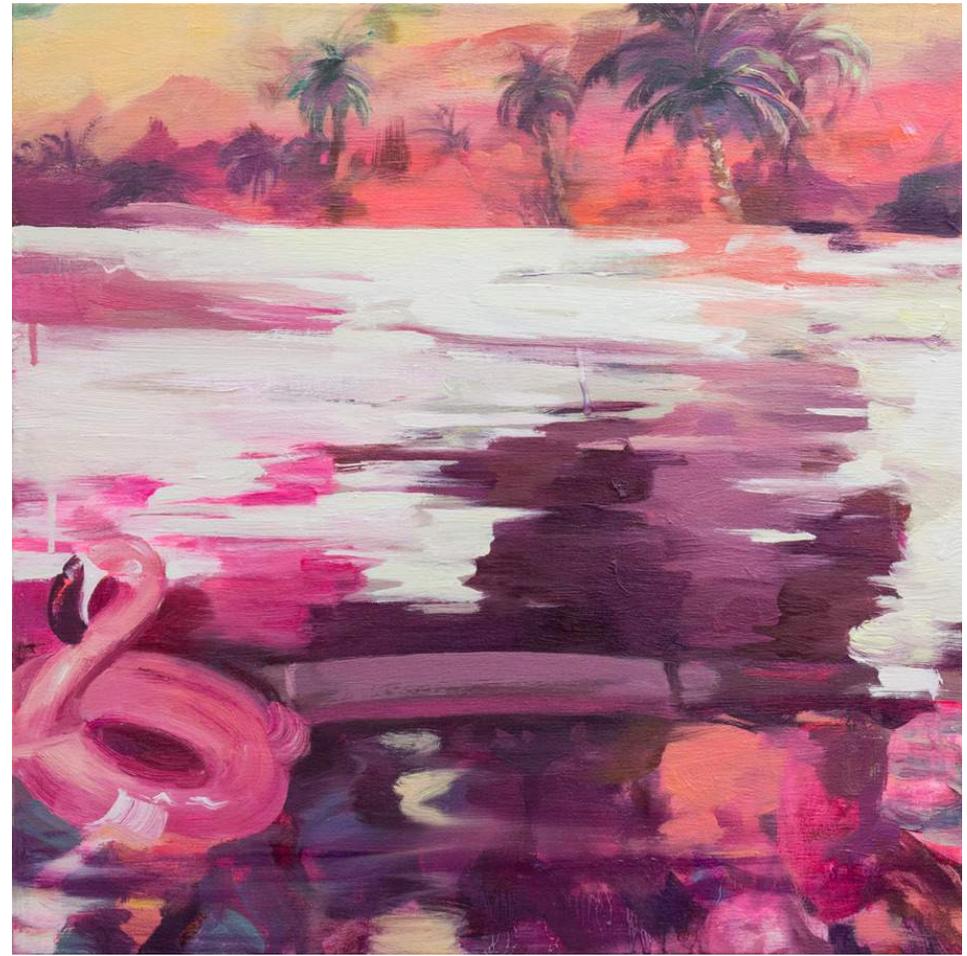
# PEIHANG HUANG



THE BOYS  
2017  
OIL ON CANVAS  
120 X 120 CM



MIRAGE I  
2017  
OIL ON CANVAS  
70 X 70 CM



MIRAGE II  
2017  
OIL ON CANVAS  
70 X 70 CM

# MARC QUINN



KATE MOSS WITH  
ORCHID  
ACRYLIC ON TEMPERA  
PANEL WITH RESIN  
FLOWER  
46.2 X 36.2 X 9.8 CM

# TOM SHEDDEN



ARMADILLO

2013

ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

60 X 70 CM

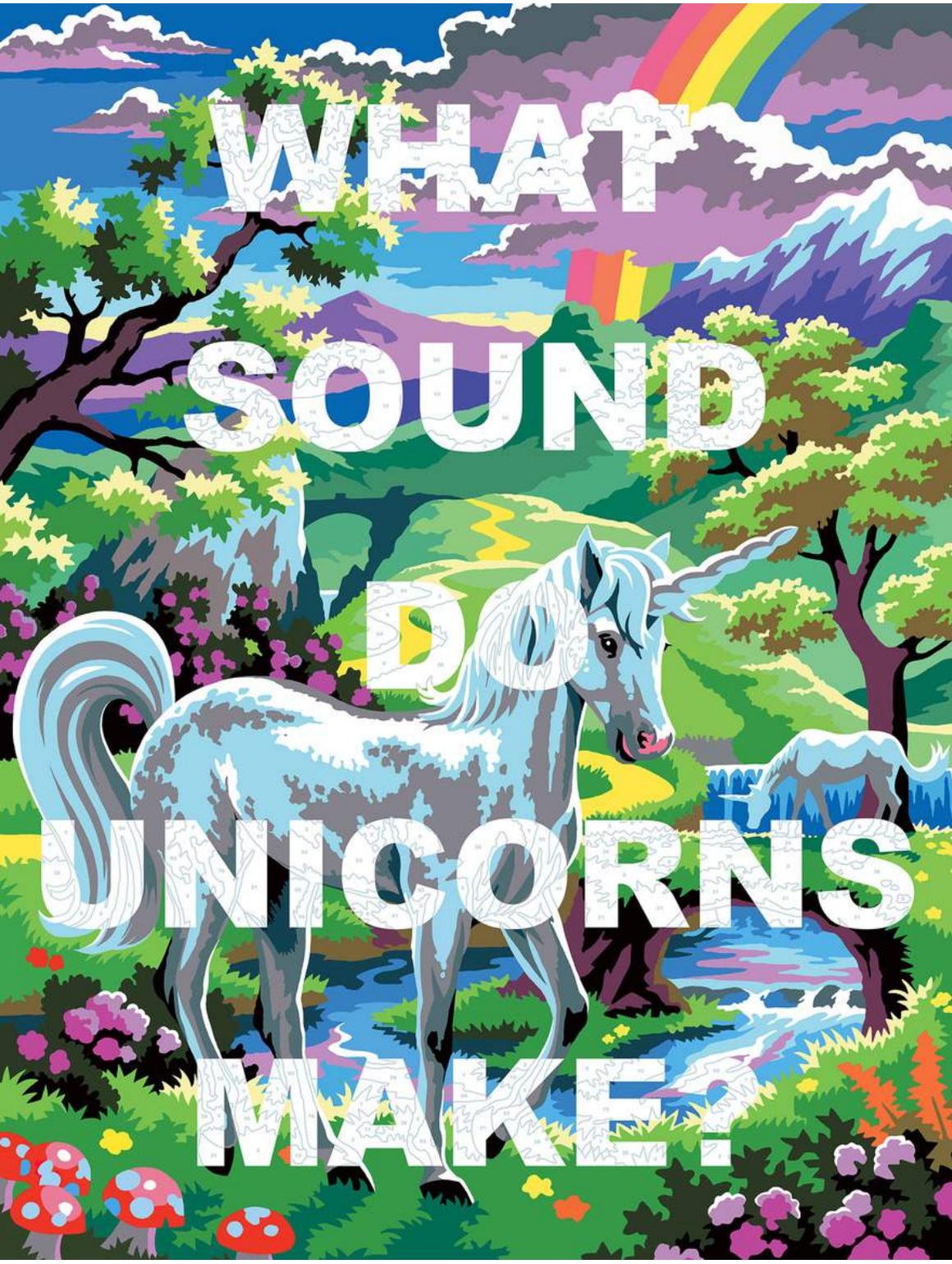


ADRIFT  
2014  
OIL ON CANVAS  
90 X 75 CM

# BENJAMIN T TAYLOR



HAPPINESS  
2017  
ENAMEL GLOSS PAINT  
ON CANVAS  
90 X 110 CM



WHAT SOUND DO  
UNICORNS MAKE?  
2018  
ENAMEL GLOSS PAINT  
ON CANVAS  
130 X 100 CM

# JANE WARD



AFTER EDEN  
2018  
ARCHIVAL DIGITAL  
PRINT ON CANVAS  
WITH DISSOLVED  
INK  
90 X 120 CM

# TAWAN WATTUYA



THAWEESAK  
2015  
WATERCOLOR ON  
HAND-MADE BAMBOO  
PAPER  
125 X 149 CM

# KRISTJANA WILLIAMS



BLUE WORLD  
2014  
HAND-CUT PAPER  
COLLAGE  
84 X 119 CM



ALL ARTWORKS ARE AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE

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