

Craft in the Bay

*Uncommon
Beauty
Objects of Curiosity
and Wonder*



Uncommon Beauty

Objects of Curiosity and Wonder

Cabinets of curiosities were encyclopedic collections of objects - the forerunner of museum collections.

The cabinet of curiosity was seen as a microcosm, a theatre of the world and was often a wonderfully eclectic range of objects- made and found.

Uncommon Beauty – Objects of Curiosity and Wonder is a mixed exhibition which includes artists working in metal, ceramics, glass, textiles, natural materials, paper, print, bone and beeswax. The exhibition is a treasure trove of exquisite works which play with the idea of natural history artifacts, wunderkammer collections, the macro and micro. A collection of beautifully made objects, intriguing textures, materials and unusual forms; blurring lines between the real and the imagined; inviting the viewer to look closely, to question. Artists were selected for their ability to create an intriguing narrative in their use of materials and form. How they transcend the making of realistic, representational work and instead create their own form of magical realism.

*Verity
Pulford
Curator*



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Kate Bajic

Evernia Opal Brooch

British jeweller Kate Bajic has over 19 years of experience exhibiting and selling her work nationally and internationally. She lives and works in a rural village in North Leicestershire, focussing on nature, in particular different lichen species, as the main inspiration for her work. Kate handmakes her jewellery as limited edition or one-off pieces, designed to compliment each other, whilst being unique and individual. They highlight the beauty and preciousness of the intricate lichen forms that inspire them.





Jane Bevan

Ladders

Using all the familiar little treasures that she picks up on daily walks in Derbyshire, Jane Bevan creates objects, vessels and collage from found natural materials. It's the tiny details, irregularities and unexpected beauty of the smallest things that catch her eye, be it feathers, twigs or acorn cups. These are then stitched, tied or assembled into a collection of artworks which embrace and celebrate the natural world.

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Kirsti Brown

Holding Ancestors

This collection has been inspired by ancient artefacts discovered in the landscape and subsequently displayed in museums. Small vessels with markings inspired by neolithic carvings. Clay from the earth; refined porcelain, engineered black clay and a wild local clay from the field edges of Penarlâg form little groups contrasting in colour and texture. They can be used to soothe, reassure and calm especially if kept close and the warmth of the hand warms the fired clay.



Effie Burns

Casket

Effie's practice is fuelled by curiosity and chance encounters. She watches the seasons unfold and tries to capture the transient beauty of nature. The casting process preserves these natural objects at a precise moment in time. This library of foraged finds is the culmination of a years work. It forms an alternative diary of the pandemic. She enjoys working with the alchemic and ancient properties of glass to distil nature into something else.

Rima Day

Hiding Passion

Rima Day is inspired by nature and the human body and makes thread matrixes that resemble blood vessels, root systems, and tree vines. Since she worked as a seamstress for many years, thread for her is the element which connects the individual parts. Red thread symbolizes human connections in the Japanese culture that she grew up in. Perhaps the hanging threads in her work are her attempt to establish a connection with life.





Clarrie Flavell

The Shipwreck and the Sand Flea

Mixed media artist Clarrie Flavell lives and works on the north Wales coast. Combing our shoreline for its tumbled treasures, she collects the flotsam and jetsam which are swept under the seaweed between tides. They're seen as an ever changing array of gifts which inspire her jewellery and tableware.

Anne Gibbs

Moment in Time

Brought up in a household where 'make do and mend' was encouraged, Anne would often play with a tin of odd buttons, scraps of fabric or balls of wool. This instilled her love of putting disparate miniature items together and being imaginative with materials. For the works on display she has cast a seed pod, an inflated balloon, and a glass flask used in a science laboratory. She enjoys combining and collaging components to create one-off curious pieces.





Jude Gill

Emerge

Jude Gill creates intricate porcelain pieces in response to collected plants, shells and natural objects. Her studio environment is a modern day Wunderkammer where tests, sketches and finished pieces sit alongside the curious forms that inspired them. Nature provides fascinating details. Using a microscope Jude explores the hidden intricacies of each form. By drawing, archiving and building responses in porcelain, she elevates the unseen creating a dialogue to inspire and inform the ever growing collection.

Andrea Haffner

Dome Sculpture

Andrea Haffner's work highlights the infinite small wonders in the natural world. Her resin-encased compositions incorporate found materials such as weathered lacy pod skeletons, driftwood, and dissected seeds. Andrea has an abiding interest in small containers, in the ways they can serve as both holders of precious objects and deliberate points of focus. Through the unique contained environments she creates, she invites viewers to enter small worlds that are at once novel and deeply familiar.



Laura Hart

Vanda Hookeriana

Inspired by the beauty and ingenuity of orchids Laura endeavours to recreate these incredible flowers as faithfully and authentically as possible, whilst imbuing them with her own artistic interpretation. Scaled up to around 30cm diameter, every bloom has unique colour variations and nuances; homage to the subtlety of evolutionary adaptation Laura combines several glass fusion techniques, involving several firings and hours of interstitial cold working processes. Emulating the delicate, ethereal translucency of flower petals, she recreates the living structure as it forms in nature, so that backlighting reveals every gossamer detail through the layers in a diffused spectral glow.





Joe Hogan

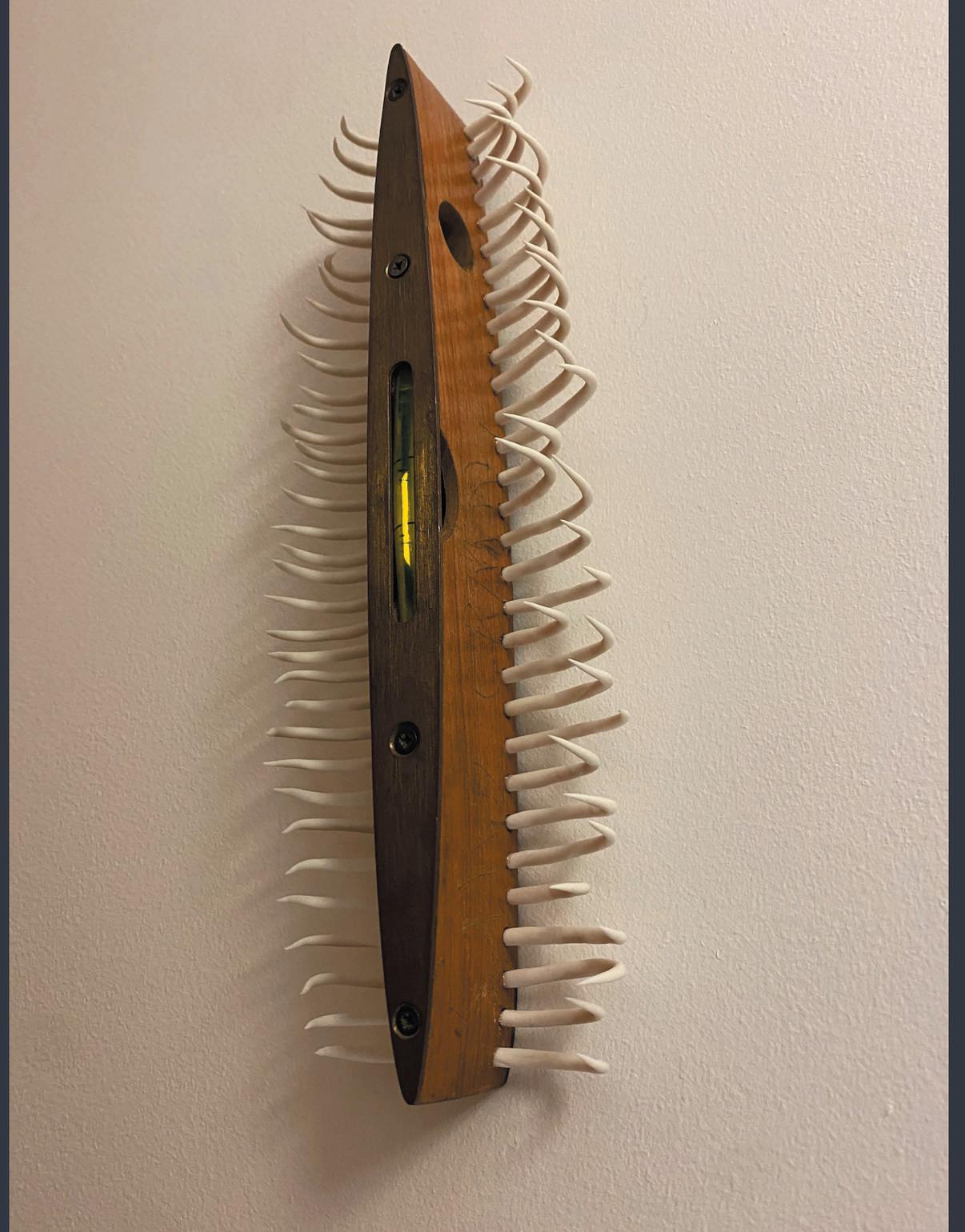
Lichen Nest

Joe Hogan started basketmaking in the late 1970's as the living tradition of Irish basketmaking was in decline. He has been making nests since 2008 using various types of materials gathered in the wild. This nest making stems from a desire to connect more deeply with the natural world and to highlight the steep decline in bird numbers over the last few decades. His work was shortlisted for the Loewe Craft Prize in 2018.

Ikuko Iwamoto

Equaliser

The idea of Ikuko's "Antique project" germinated in 2018 when she visited her hometown and found some old handmade tools that were created by her father. Each object she works with is handcrafted. It already has a unique shape that can be immediately associated with its usage. Ikuko aims to give birth to a new appearance by incorporating her ceramic pieces into them. It's a new collaborative work between herself and the antique object.



Monette Larsen

Tumbling Seascapes

Monette explores the idea that beauty in nature is linked to the recognition of underlying structures and patterns. Influenced by the structural mathematics of corals, Monette transforms a flexible crocheted hyperbolic plane into a wax shape. This shape is then carved and altered before being cast in glass. The Tumbling Seashape series uses the same repeated hyperbolic plane but explores how the making and casting process can create vastly different expressions. (Photo: Valerie Bernardini)



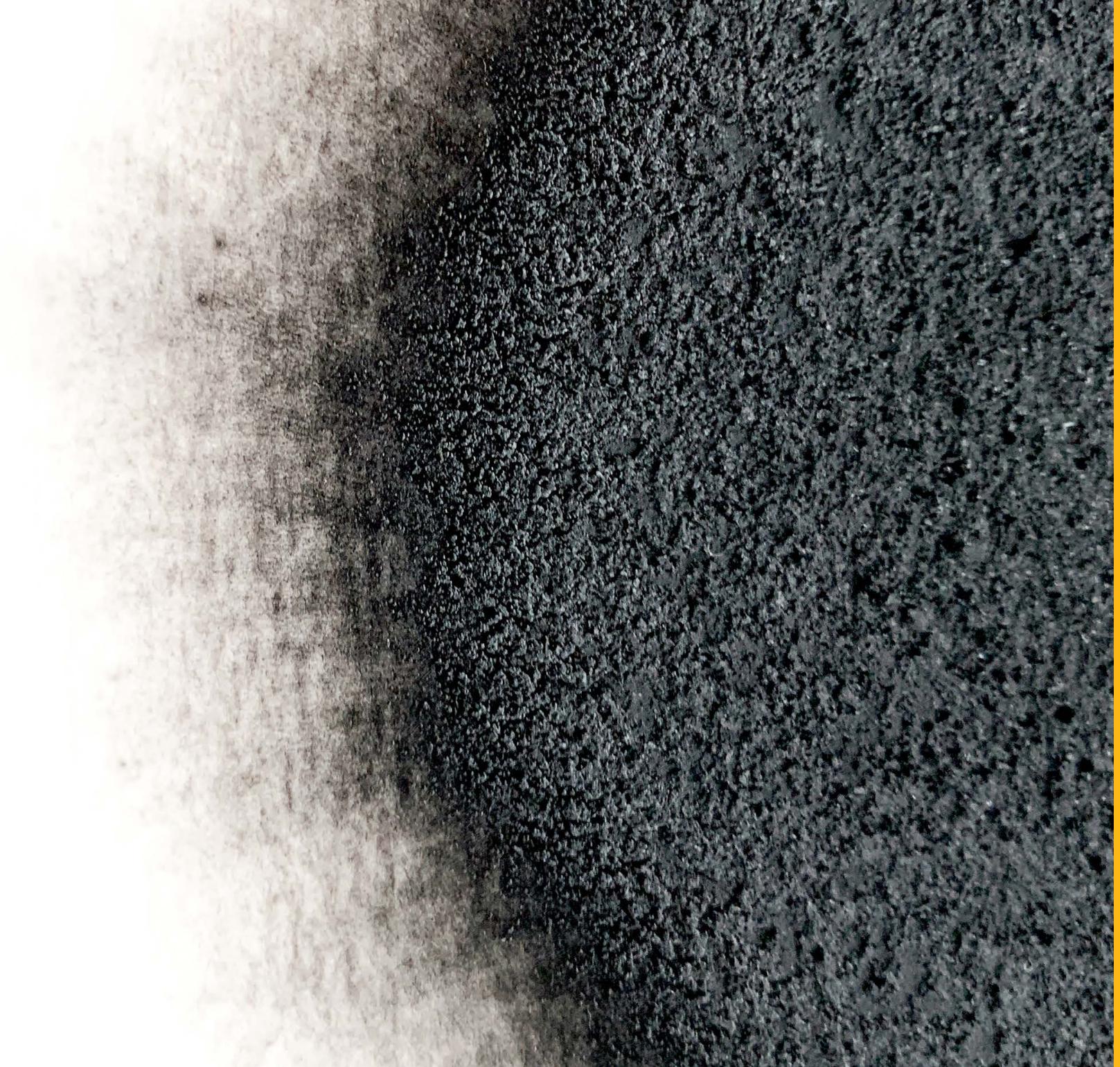
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Molly Macleod

Coal

This body of work explores the Pembrokeshire coastline and countryside through the use of raw materials sourced directly from the landscape. Challenging our exploitation of natural resources and exploring the possibilities of our material futures. Focussing on the unexpected yet familiar topography of nature and how it can mirror the patterns and biological structures of the human body. How can we reframe our relationship with our landscape and our use of its material resources?



Kate Mccgwire

I Am Lost

A London-based artist who spent her childhood on the Norfolk Broads. MccGwire's early memories of this distinct landscape, dominated by its wetlands, serpentine waterways and the wildlife that lives along the region's waters, form the foundations of her practice, which is inspired by the cycles, patterns and dualities of nature. MccGwire graduated from the Royal College of Art with an MA in Sculpture in 2004 and a BFA from the University College for the Creative Arts, Farnham in 2001.

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Junko Mori

Organism Pinecone

Junko's work consists of multiples of individually forged steel or other metals, and the subtle difference of each piece results from hand hammering. No piece is individually planned but becomes fully formed within the making and thinking process. Repeating little accidents, like a mutation of cells, the final accumulation of units emerges within this process of evolution. The uncontrollable beauty is the core of her concept.





Verity Pulford

For the Love of Small Things

Verity Pulford is a glass artist living and working in rural North Wales. Verity likes to combine techniques- cast, pate de verre, kilnformed, painted, etched and also found natural materials in her work. She plays with ideas of magical realism- creating her own forms inspired by or combining different plants and organisms. She is fascinated by the cataloguing of nature - natural history artifacts, early cyanotypes, x-rays, microscopic images of the human body and botanical drawings. (Photo: Stephen Heaton)

Romilly Saumarez Smith

Sea Fan

Alongside her work as a jeweller, Romilly Saumarez Smith makes objects, including boxes (she was a finalist in the Woman's Hour Craft awards in 2018). In the same year, she exhibited 'Thimbellumare' at Make Hauser & Wirth in Bruton - a collection of metal detected thimbles - and in 2020, she showed her project 'Treehandles' there. More recently, she has been working on ammonites and fossils and showed her Ancient Coral Tree in the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition 2022. She sees this work as being in the tradition of Renaissance goldsmiths who embellished conch shells and the like.





Andrea Spencer

Irish Moss

Uncommon beauty - found in the liminal space, where land and water meld and amid the tidal traces, which replenish the landscape of the strandline and signify renewal. It is this, a place of chaos, constant change, markers of time and shifting sands that inspires my work. Observing the edges where human nature and the natural world fuse, I endeavour to disclose the fragile, complex, complicated systems and structures common to many life forms.

Nancy Sutcliffe

Bee

Nancy Sutcliffe has a background in design and worked as a medical illustrator in London. After moving to rural Herefordshire, she discovered glass engraving and set up her studio there. Nancy has a restless creativity which has led to years of experimentation with gold leaf and paint and how it might be applied to engraved glass. This has produced a diverse range of work, the latest iteration being the verre églomisé artworks.



Annette Marie Townsend

The Collector

My work lies at the intersection of art and science. It is an exploration of our relationship with nature from an urban perspective, focusing on the desire to collect, organise, study and ultimately protect the natural world. At first glance it appears to be an observation of delicate intricate beauty, executed with forensic detail, but underneath this surface perfection there are powerful tales of scientific discovery, and the deeper darker stories of personal human experience.



Emily Stubbs

Vessels

Through my work I explore the playful relationship between form and surface decoration. The vessel is my primary interest, created by building and collaging slabs of textured clay together. Drawing inspiration from my 2D paper collages and sketches I translate this process into clay, building up layer upon layer of slips and glazes. The finished vessels have a similar graphic quality to them, with bold colour, strong line and intuitive mark making.



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Louis Thompson & Pratibha Mistry

Ten Green Bottles

Adapted from the well-known nursery rhyme, these bottles reflect a metaphor of life - the passing of time towards the end of time. The ethereal entities captured within denote precious moments: pleasure, pain and missed exchanges. Time holds still for no person, a sensory presence in the background of our existence. Life endures and past moments can never be re-lived; the bottles are stills from a time that has passed.



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Emma Witter

Gloria

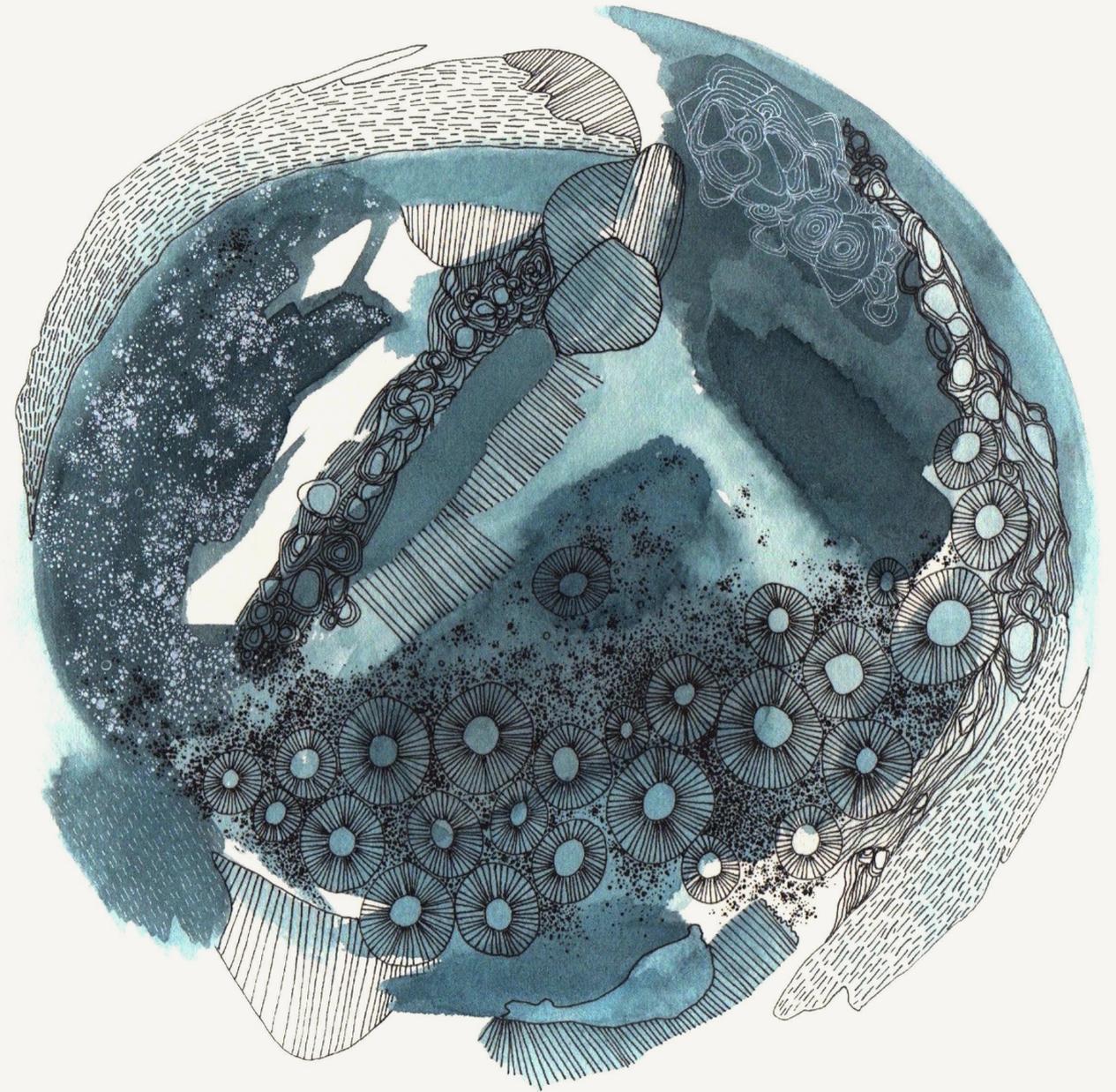
Emma Witter is fascinated by discarded objects and 'non art' materials. She transforms tiny animal bones through a ritualistic process of gathering, boiling, bleaching, drying, categorising and painstakingly assembling into intricate biomorphic forms. The pieces are surprisingly delicate, feminine and full of light, often held together and embellished with fine brass wire. Witter's special alchemy elevates forgotten debris and prompts our imagination. The work invites us to reconsider our macabre associations with bone and appreciate its generous, versatile properties and wide availability as an industrial byproduct.



Louise Ann Wright

Petri Dish series

Fascinated by spreading organic structures such as lichen, fungi and mould, Louise investigates minute details in sketchbooks. These studies evolve into paintings using multiple layers of watercolour and ink. The petri dish series explore patterns, which organically grow and spread across the surface. Each piece contains a small part of Louise's natural landscape, present in the unique and handmade pigments foraged and grown within her surroundings.





Anastassia Zamaraeva

Pile of Teeth

For Anastassia, the draw of clay is in its innate ability to connect us to our unconscious and past experiences of touch. Her work, led by intuition and a sense of play, explores the multifaceted experience of being human; with all its melancholy, discomfort and humour. The forms that arise are often anthropomorphic and encourage the viewer to draw on their own experience to make meaning of the work.



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Uncommon Beauty

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