

KATE MACGARRY

Matt Bryans

12 November – 18 December 2021

Kate MacGarry is pleased to announce a solo exhibition by British artist Matt Bryans. The exhibition consists of two new installations of hand-carved birch, elm, oak and spruce from Norway, where the artist lives. These new works are a natural development from Bryans' earlier process of erasing sheets of newspaper and carving bricks: methodically eroding a surface to reveal something new.

The organic wooden forms in Bryans' installation are burls and fungi, which the artist collects while foraging along the Sandbekk river in Sokndal, and the surrounding area near his home. Burls are tumorous bulges produced by trees in response to disease, infection and insects: nature's attempt to isolate the infected area by growing thicker, similar to flesh forming scar tissue. The bark is stripped away by Bryans to reveal the twisted, smooth and tangled protrusions that lie beneath. This excavation reveals the process of growth and time. The revealed wood is denser and stronger and known as 'wild wood': in the past it was used to make cups, bowls and even drums.

From poetic erasures of discarded newspaper to carving and revealing contorted wood, Bryans' approach to making art is intimate and tactile: methodically collecting, examining and repurposing that which might otherwise be forgotten or discarded. The process of revealing unforeseen properties creates meaning, lifted from the process of decay and transformation into something precious.

Matt Bryans was born in 1977 in Croydon, England. He lives and works in Norway. Bryans was recently included in the group show *From the Balcony – A Look at the Regional Art Scene* at Stavanger Art Museum, Norway (2020). He has had solo shows at Treignac Projet, Limousin, France (2017); Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen, Norway (2014); Chapter Gallery, Cardiff, UK; SFCamerawork San Francisco, USA (2011); Atlanta Center of Contemporary Art, Atlanta, USA (2006); MMD Museum Dhondt-Dhaenes, Deurle, Belgium (2005); Salon 94, New York, USA (2005). Bryans' work has been included in group exhibitions *Auto fictions – Contemporary drawing*, Wilhelm-Hack Museum, Ludwigshafen, Germany (2018); *Manifesta 12*, Palazzo Campofranco, Palermo, Italy (2017); *Contemporary Drawing Prize*, Fondation d'art Contemporain Daniel et Florence Guerlain, Centre Pompidou, Galerie d'Art Graphique, Paris, France (2017); *Guerlain Donation*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2013); *FlowerCastle*, Sculpture Garden Kasteel Keukenhof, Lisse, The Netherlands (2013), *Stray Alchemists*, UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China (2008); *Recent Acquisitions*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, U.S.A (2005); *Pin-Up: Contemporary Collage and Drawing*, Tate Modern, London, UK (2004) amongst others.