

## Must-See: Stepping Into Goshka Macuga's Cave

The artist's latest show at Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE, London, intertwines myth with history and memory  
by Katie Abbott

Ethereal rock formations sprout from the floor and ceiling in Goshka Macuga's 'Born from Stone'. Glimmering stalagmites and stalactites made from clay and resin, they transform the London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE into a surreal cave, inviting us to explore its layers of history.



'Goshka Macuga: Born From Stone', 2024, installation view.  
Courtesy: London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE; photograph: © Marcus Leith

While Macuga's installation builds on her longstanding interest in grottoes and caves as subject matter and motif, the location of this exhibition lends the theme a deeper significance. Directly below the show lies the Mithraeum, the relic of an ancient Roman temple dedicated to the god Mithras, which survived heavy bombing during World War 2. Macuga's serene geological sculptures are contrasted with the visceral imagery of a number of paintings loaned by the Imperial War Museum, which depict scenes of man-made horrors during the war; a London haunted by towering flames and destroyed buildings. In Priscilla Thornycroft's particularly powerful *Runaway Horse in an Air-Raid Alarm, London, Autumn (1939)*, a blood-soaked horse impales itself on a railing in terror. Blending history with myth, the painting draws a parallel with the practice of animal sacrifice in the Mithras mythology. We are invited to reflect on our legacies of violence and the brutality we inflict upon the natural world.



'Goshka Macuga: Born From Stone', 2024, installation view.  
Courtesy: London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE; photograph: © Marcus Leith

Despite these stark reminders of warfare, Macuga's show feels like a sanctuary. It offers a meditative space, echoing the spiritual dimension that caves occupied in Mithraism. The dialogue between *'Born from Stone'* and the Mithraeum confronts the scarred histories we inherit, while allowing us to contemplate our world's present struggles. It is remarkable that the ancient relic endured both the long passage of time and sudden acts of violent destruction; alongside Macuga's installation, it serves as a reminder of mankind's resilience in the face of disharmony. This is a site of memory – of untethered violence, but also of survival and renewal. The interplay of the two spaces ultimately challenges us to grapple with our collective history, and to grasp what we must do to keep moving forward.

Goshka Macuga's *'Born from Stone'* is on view at London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE until 18 January

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