

Susan Hobbs



Kevin Yates

***Invited:* Sara Maston**

Toronto, ON – **Opening 26 November and running until 23 January 2021** the gallery is pleased to present work by Kevin Yates and Sara Maston.

Ideas for Yates' new body of work began after a series of events in the artist's personal life over three years ago. Simple sayings began to resonate as warning signs during this time. *Hold Your Horses*, and *Cool Your Jets*, set the stage to heed open ended warnings, and acts as reminders of different era's sayings: to slow down/shut down/shut up or keep it in/try and keep it together. The charred surface of the work both sets up a sense of tragedy, while also through its silky black carbon surface and fine cracked texture seduce its viewer and masks those same warnings.

Kevin Yates has invited Sara Maston to share the exhibition space in the new project series *Invited*. He was initially drawn to her paintings for the contrasting appearance to his jet-black sculpture. Colours can be muted and bright, with subjects both soft and in focus. You can become lost in the romance of them. Spending longer with her paintings you begin to realize that they present barriers to both the subject and the act of representation. It was the earlier work, *Meri Looking Away*, which most literally represents this. An intimate close up of a pet budgie with its back towards the viewer offers us its beauty and vulnerability, but the awkwardness of the bird's stance, and its position within the frame pushes us back out into a space of longing. This subtle aspect relates to areas of

interest to Kevin beyond any crossovers of subjects or materials and echo an awareness of the limits of representation and understanding.

Throughout the spring and summer, as Maston's dependence on online platforms intensified with the pandemic, so too did a specific longing: to dig a hole. This desire stemmed from a visceral urge to smell different kinds of roots and feel the cool/damp/granular material of the earth. Her friend, who is trained in archaeology, taught her how to dig a very precise hole. The structure of the hole was what intrigued Maston, but not for excavation or collection purposes. Nested systems are sometimes perceptible, as a mushroom coming up overnight in the cooler fall season, and other times operating in silent interrelationships as in networks of invisible fungi irrigating the roots of trees. A simple hole will suffice in allowing closer proximity to what we oftentimes overlook: multiple lifeworlds beneath our feet operating in parallel to our own sensibilities and to one another.

Kevin Yates was born in Owen Sound, Ontario in 1974. He has had solo exhibitions at Robert McLaughlin Gallery (Oshawa), Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery (Owen Sound), Artspeak (Vancouver), YZ Artists' Outlet (Toronto), ODD Gallery (Dawson City, Yukon), Rodman Hall Art Centre (St. Catharines, Ontario) among others. Recently his work was included in *It is What it is* at the National Gallery of Canada. As well, he has previously participated in group exhibitions at Jordan Schnitzer Museum (Eugene), The University Galleries at Illinois State University (Chicago), Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (Halifax), Hallwalls (Buffalo) and Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. He currently lives in Owen Sound, Ontario and is a faculty member in the department of Visual Arts at York University.

Sara Maston is an interdisciplinary artist who explores alternative forms of knowledge found in the vantage point of animals such as insects, single-celled organisms, domestic horses, birds and rodents. Often in ceramics, paintings, and textile installations, her work visually renders parallel lifeworlds that are indicative of a distant ancestor's sense of physicality or distinct rhythm of nature. Maston holds an MFA from York University and is pursuing a degree in Information Science at the University of Toronto with a specialization in Environmental Studies that focuses on sustainable, decolonial methods of archiving the knowledge of more-than-human beings. She has previously exhibited her work at the Gardiner Museum (Toronto), Idea | Exchange (Cambridge), Xpace Cultural Centre (Toronto), and the Fofa Gallery (Montreal).

Susan Hobbs Gallery is open to the public Thursday to Saturday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and by prearranged appointment. The gallery is located at 137 Tecumseth Street, Toronto.

For more information about this exhibition or the Susan Hobbs Gallery, please give us a call at (416) 504.3699 or visit www.susanhobbs.com.