

Electric Fall

Lewis Davidson

DES
BAINS

27 June - 6 September, 2025

Private View: 26 June, 18:00 - 20:00

Tendre, in French —to stretch— is the root of the word *tent*. It also gave us *tentative*, meaning a tryout, an attempt to make something real. How far can we stretch this thing before it gives in— before it snaps? Luckily, we can use a few pegs to fix ourselves to the ground, to stay pitched to the earth. Where does it come from, this urgent need to hold onto something, anything? so we don't fly off in the wind? Most tents — those independent, portable habitats — are built on the engineering principle of pre-stressed flexible frameworks: designed to live and serve under all the pressure we place on them. Most of us would probably collapse under such a demand for flexibility. But they hold themselves up. They bend obediently.

Despite the success of brands like Decathlon, the rise of glamping sites, or sites like Mina in Saudi Arabia—where 2.5 million people live in air-conditioned tents — some might still associate tents with nomadic populations. Kazakh and Kyrgyz nomadic people craft *kurak korpe* — patchwork quilts assembled from fabric scraps into geometric patterns. Here, instead, Davidson assembles fragile plastic bags that he gathers from the street of London. No communal yurt here, no warm domesticity — he works alone, wandering to find leftovers of urban life. In contrast with the city's endless appetite, he constructs speculative architectures of refusal and retreat. But where does this idea come from — to wrap ourselves in plastic the moment we reach nature? What is this thin, flashy membrane meant to shield us from?

To the wolf, the orange tent is no flame on the hillside — it's a dull blot of strange material, out of sync with the shifting tones of rock and trees. It doesn't glow; it disturbs. Morning comes at last. Some embers in the bonfire still crackle. It is time to climb the mountain. Our shed is unnecessary now — like a disposable cup. We had shelter for one night; we can leave it behind.

Text by Noam Alon

Lewis Davidson

(b.1990) lives in and works in London.

Spanning Sculpture, Animation, Sound, Photography and Installation, his practice engages with the overlooked and unassuming parts that make up the mundane fabric of the everyday. Working directly with found objects, he develops particular processes to transform the identity of subjects and their ties to value, purpose and place. His practise plays a balance between engagement and escapism from the contemporary world.

Davidson holds an MFA (Sculpture) from the Slade (2017-19), with the addition of the Felix Slade Scholarship and Deans Bursary. Upon graduation he was awarded the Almacantar Studio Award (2019) and placed on the Deans List of Academic Excellence at UCL.

Solo and Duo Exhibitions include *KUNST-Stoff* (St. Gallen, Switzerland, 2023) *Shallow Haunts* (Kupfer, London, 2023), *CLICKERS* (Xxijrahii, London, 2022), *In from the Cold* (The Stone Space, London, 2021) and *Season of Fire from the Passenger Seat* (Raw Labs, London, 2020).

Exhibitions include *The Naming of Parts* (Arbeit Studios, Tower Hamlets, London, 2025), *Mecánica Vegetal Vol. 7: aproximaciones matéricas denture de Una fábrica*, Guadalajara 90210 (Mexico City, Mexico, 2025), *Wailing Moon* (Staffordshire Street Studios, London, 2023), *Forms without Forms* (Asylum Studios, 2022), Manchester Contemporary Art Fair (with Xxijrahii, 2021), *Echo System* (Thameside Studio Gallery, London, 2021), *GARGLE* (Bow Arts, London, 2020), *Holiday* (ARCADE, London, 2018), *Catch of the Year* (DIENSTGEBÄUDE, Zürich, 2017) and *The Observer Effect* (GEMAK, The Hague, 2015).