

Meakin + Parsons x Hannah Payne

Press Release, 01/05/2023



Meakin + Parsons x Hannah Payne is delighted to announce *Crosswinds*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by British contemporary artist Barbara Nicholls, from 12 May – 10 June 2023.

Barbara Nicholls' monumental watercolour works emerge by manipulating the behaviour of pigment in ever-increasing quantities of water and wind. Founded on technical experimentation in painting and experiences in nature, Nicholls' immersive paintings recall ancient geology, organic forms, and the movement of water and sediment, using pools of vibrant colour.

Nicholls' practice is inspired by time spent experiencing nature in remote places, particularly walking in the Peak District near to her studio, observing the elements of the landscape and nature in the English countryside. Nicholls' paintings echo elemental movements of the landscape, the shapes and tones observed in the earth, water, and weather.

In *Crosswinds*, Nicholls considers the changing direction of winds in nature and in landscape. Nicholls comments: "*In most of the works in the exhibition there is paint entering from all sides, from the four edges and these are like winds blowing in from different directions and creating turbulence in the central area of the works. I am also referring to the local winds, the breezes that I aimed across the works using fans in the studio when I made the work.*"

Wind and the elements are considered more generally within the paintings; *Rebe*/winds made by buildings or land masses breaking up laminar winds and causing turbulence, erosion of rocks over thousands of years by winds, or trees set in a particular direction by the prevailing wind. She is also thinking metaphorically about how the word crosswinds implies something we have to deal with which is unusual; Something coming from the side that we have to make adjustments for in order to carry on in our planned direction.

The title of the exhibition refers to the artist's recent reading on the subject of 'The Crosswinds Rule' in Tristan Gooley's book *The Secret World of Weather* (first published by Sceptre in 2021). The cross-winds rule is the important signal that bad weather often follows when clouds are seen moving 'at right angles' to those at another level. Gooley explains the crosswinds rule with a literary demonstration found in Thomas Hardy's *Far From The Madding Crowd*:

The night had a sinister aspect. A heated breeze from the south slowly fanned the summits of lofty objects, and in the sky dashes of buoyant clouds were sailing in a course at right angles to that of another stratum, neither of them in the direction of the breeze below... Thunder was imminent, and, taking some secondary appearances into consideration, it was likely to be followed by one of the lengthened rains which mark the close of the dry weather for the season.

Barbara Nicholls studied at Goldsmiths College for a BA Fine Art (1982-86), University of East London MFA (1996-98) and Practice Based Doctorate in Fine Art (2000-06).

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Notes to Editors

Image: Barbara Nicholls, detail, *Untitled*, 2023, 109 x 90 cm. Watercolour on 638 gsm HP Saunders Waterford

Barbara Nicholls | Crosswinds

12 May- 10 June, 2023. Private View: Friday 12 May 6 – 8 pm.

Location: Meakin + Parsons x Hannah Payne, 16 North Parade Avenue, Oxford, OX2 6LX
Gallery open times: Tuesday – Friday 10 am – 6 pm, Saturdays 10 am – 4 pm. Sunday - Monday, closed.

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About Barbara Nicholls

Barbara Nicholls studied at Goldsmiths College for a BA Fine Art (1982-86), University of East London MFA (1996-98) and Practice Based Doctorate in Fine Art (2000-06).

Barbara Nicholls has exhibited in the UK and internationally including at Patrick Heide Contemporary Art, UK (2022), The Jetty Museum Windermere, UK (2022), JGM Gallery London, UK (2020 & 2019), Aleph Contemporary, UK (2020), The Turnpike, Leigh, UK (2019) Städtisches Museum Galerie, Wesel, Germany (2019,) The New Art Gallery Walsall, UK (2017), Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery NSW, Australia (2017), Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Germany (2015), Griffin Gallery London, UK (2013), Tourhaus Romberg Park, Dortmund, Germany (2013), Emerson Gallery, Berlin, Germany (2013), Dok25a, Düsseldorf, Germany (2012), Projektraum-bahnhof25, Kleve, Germany

(2012), KARST, Plymouth, UK (2012) Pavillon am Milchhof Berlin, Germany (2011), APT Gallery London, UK (2008), Imperial War Museum, London, UK (2002).

Barbara Nicholls has held several residencies including Stiftung zur Förderung zeitgenössischer Kunst, Weidingen, Germany (2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017 and 2016) The Turnpike, Leigh UK (2019) Mungo National Park NSW, Australia (2016) Telpost, Millingen ann Rijn, Netherlands (2016 and 2013), Colart, London, UK (2012) ArToll, Bedburg-Hau, Germany (2014, 2012 and 2010), Ateliergemeinschaft, Milchhof e.V. Berlin, Germany (2009) and Porto Alegre with the British Council, Brazil (1994).

Barbara Nicholls has been the recipient of a number of bursaries and awards including grants from the Arts Council England and the British Council. Her work is held in the collection of Museum Kurhaus Kleve Germany, The New Art Gallery Walsall UK, Wilhelm Kaiser Museum Germany and private collections in UK, France, USA and Iran.

About Meakin + Parsons x Hannah Payne

Presenting a programme of exhibitions including exceptional emerging contemporary, mid-career and established artists, alongside Modern British art, the gallery space in Oxford includes an artist studio for an artist residency. Expanding on their space in West Oxfordshire established by owners Ben Parsons and Lucy Meakin in 2018, the new space sees the addition of a new partner to the gallery: Hannah Payne of The Art Five to present emerging contemporary artists as part of the gallery programme of exhibitions. Lucy Meakin continues to lead their advisory service, helping private clients with building and managing their collections, and Ben Parsons' focus is on the modern and contemporary programme alongside the gallery's strong secondary market activity.

Ben Parsons spent nearly 10 years as director of Karsten Schubert who represented Bridget Riley, Alison Wilding, Robert Holyhead, Ann-Marie James amongst others before joining LA gallery Kayne Griffin Corcoran as Sales director in 2013. After returning to the UK in 2015 Ben has worked as a private dealer and consultant until opening the doors of Meakin + Parsons in West Oxfordshire in 2018, working with Christopher Brooks, Ham Darroch, Robert Holyhead, Bridget Riley, Emily Wolfe, Ann-Marie James, Toby Twiss and Robin Walden.

Lucy Meakin has over 22 years' experience working in the art world. She was a specialist in Impressionist & Modern Art at Sotheby's London, and also worked in sales at several blue-chip galleries including Timothy Taylor Gallery in London, and Michael Reid in Sydney, Australia. For the last 12 years Lucy has run a thriving private art advisory business, building collections for private and corporate clients in the UK and overseas.
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Hannah Payne has a background of 20 years in the art and cultural sector. After setting up The Art Five in 2020, a platform presenting contemporary art exhibitions and programming championing emerging contemporary artists, Hannah joined Meakin + Parsons as a Partner in 2022. Hannah's background includes positions at leading institutions Blenheim Palace, Royal Academy of Arts, and Olympia International Art & Antiques Fairs. Hannah was Director of the Art Programme at TM Lighting Gallery, London for 4 years, before moving into the commercial gallery sector as a Director at Zuleika Gallery (Oxford and London), and consulting for Aleph Contemporary, London. Most recently Hannah consults as Programme Curator for London Art Fair (2021-23). Hannah is on the Advisory Board of UAL's *Made in Arts London*, and a member of the *Association of Women in the Arts*. theartfive.com