

Susan Hobbs

Sara Maston

- 1988 born in Tkaronto/Toronto
2013 B.F.A, Concordia University, Montréal
2018 M.F.A., York University, Toronto

Selected Exhibitions

- 2020 *Hop the Twig*, Hearth, Toronto
2019 *XVK Now Wave*, Flux Factory, New York City
 Envoi, Sibling Gallery, Toronto
 Tout ce qui arrive, arrive dans les verbes, Studio Rialto, Montréal
 Feast in the East Installation, Animating Toronto's Parks - Prarie Drive Park, Toronto
2018 *(*8:8:8*)* ♡ “*Triple Happiness*”, Idea | Exchange, Cambridge
 An Observable Collapse Towards Another, Xpace Cultural Centre, Toronto
 Long Winter, hosted by Tranzac Club, Toronto
 An Animal Among Animals, Special Projects Gallery York University, Toronto
 真实的人生 *Life Of The True*, Martin Goya Business, Hangzhou
 Encountering of Picture Plans, Allison Milne, Toronto
2017 *Fresh Paint/New Construction*, Art Mur, Montréal
 Y+XVK, Y+ Contemporary, Toronto
 XVK On Big, Jouez Performance Art Projects, Toronto
 $\circ\circ\circ\circ\circ$ *cutecuteride8*, Special Projects Gallery, York University, Toronto
2016 *Fresh Constructions*, Katzman Contemporary with YTB Gallery, Toronto
2014 *30 Under 30*, Gardiner Museum, Toronto
 Dialogue, Dragon Academy Roundtable Residency, Toronto
2013 *Combine*, Fofa Gallery, Montreal
 Fine Arts Graduating Students Exhibition, VAV Gallery, Montréal
2011 *In Success We Find Failure/In Failure We Find Success*, Redbird Gallery, Montréal
 Material Flux, Galerie Rye, Montréal
2010 *The Box Project*, ARPRIM, Montréal

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Sara Maston's paintings present similarly lush imagery. Filled with flowering plants and washes of colour, the hazy spaces aim to embody the speculative viewpoints of their inhuman insect and animal inhabitants. Maston's investment in this theme relates to an interest in challenging the hierarchy of human vision through the production of a sensitivity to the multiple levels in which our environment can be understood and experienced. In her own words, painting "is a way to reinstate my relationship to memory, subjectivity, and a connection to the environment outside of the ubiquitous technological interfaces within our anthropocentric global infrastructure."¹ This is exemplified within the work *Eyes that See in the Dark*, where Maston has produced a projective sonar-based encounter with a human on an immersive scale. A foggy shape in the center of the composition hints to a redacted human presence that remains compositionally secondary to the translucent elements fluttering within the canvas. Unlike *The Blue Marble* photograph functioning on its intoxicating claim to the real, Maston's paintings are inventive representations untethered from the rules of interaction between light and lens. As an act of storytelling, they prompt an expanded sense of self that seeks to function as a humbling reminder of the individual limits of our perception.

-Rowan Lynch, *An Observable Collapse Towards Another*, Xpace Cultural Centre, 2018

¹Sara Maston, Xpace submission, 2018



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FRESH CONSTRUCTIONS

Tau Lewis, Sara Maston, Callum Schuster and Luke Siemens explore the materiality of the built environment, and the fragments of wilderness folded into our daily life. Fresh Constructions is a selection of work by four emerging artists that use both natural and manufactured materials to speak to the state of “nature” in an urban setting.

As humans, the need to incorporate nature into our built environment leads to a processing and refining of “natural” imagery and materials — churning lime into cement, petroleum into resin, and tigers into cats. Imagine an ecologist conducting a study of ecological diversity in your neighbourhood — how many cats, goldfish, peace lilies, and cacti would they find ... how have they come to be here?

This exhibition features materials and imagery that question the authenticity of the dichotomy conflated between the manufactured and the “natural.” It investigates how our domesticated environment, including plants and animals, assert their influence over us, rather than how we assert our influence over them.

The chipboard, pot plant, the resin cactus, the psychedelic budgerigar, the preserved rose fragments; how do artists in an urban environment work with those reprocessed materials and images? In this exhibition, our built environment is overgrown with organize elements.

The dichotomy between the human-made and the natural constantly is being eroded. Inescapably intertwined from the products and habits of our domestic lives, we seek escape through an experience of “nature.” This exhibition asks: where does the wilderness end and the “human-made” ecosystem begin?

- MarjanVerstappen and Humboldt Magnussen

Fresh Constructions, Katzman Contemporary, Toronto, 2016

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Envoi at Sibling Gallery

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Enlivening the exhibition with colour and action are two pieces by Sara Maston, which dominate the small gallery space in scale. A large linen sheet hangs from the ceiling which has been dyed a deep indigo blue. Small white diamonds are scattered across the surface. Bright stars against the unfathomable mystery of a night sky.

On the cement floor beneath it is a piece called *Ground*, an enchanting 4x8 foot painting, acrylic on linen. I could look at this painting for ages. Forms glowing in layered washes of jean blue, rust, mossy green, and white. The shadow of a large bird soaring overhead. The glistening, unusually long outline of a snake wriggling its way through tall grasses. These are moments of representational clarity, reflecting the heightened attention created by the motion of things in one's visual field. The rest of the piece is more abstract and suggestive, conveying a peripheral sense of the landscape's gentle movement and texture, like the feeling of wind or the sound of rustling leaves. Irregular spots and splotches, porcelain white, feel like the sparkling of the sun off a lively stream. The surface of the piece is flat, but the way Maston has layered her paint gives the work a compelling depth and luminosity.

To me, the painting offers a lesson on how to use one's perception to experience the natural world in new or forgotten ways: how to sink into the landscape through one's senses, to understand it by dissolving into it. In its envisioning of the perspectives of animals and, as she puts it, "parallel lifeworlds that are indicative of a distant ancestor's sense of physicality or distinct rhythm of nature"¹, her work reminds me of Kiki Smith's (one of my favourites). I really appreciate these synergetic acts of imagination, intuition, and craft. I think they encourage empathy.

-Izzy Mink, *Indoor Reccess*, 2019

¹Sara Maston. *Artist Statement*, 2019.

<https://www.indoorreccessblog.com/post/envoi-at-sibling-gallery>

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