FRESTONIAN GALLERY

HANNAH BROWN

THE HOLLOW POND SERIES
@ THE ARMORY SHOW
7th-10th SEPTEMBER 2023
JAVITS CONVENTION CENTRE, 11th AVENUE

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Frestonian Gallery, London, is delighted to be exhibiting **Hannah Brown**'s latest body of work, the **Hollow Pond** series – a continuation of Brown's enduring interest in our relationship to nature, the psychology of landscape and what it means to use it as a subject in the 21st Century. In these paintings, Brown focuses exclusively on one small area of land in Epping Forest, East London. *Hollow Pond*, that the work takes its name from, refers to former gravel pits that were dug in the mid-19th century to create the surrounding roads in a rapidly expanding industrial London. In 1905, these pits were expanded into a single lake. This lake, lined by oak trees, has since evolved into a sanctuary for flora, fauna and for those who live nearby, including Brown.

Brown makes work about places that are familiar to her, and by revisiting these spaces over several seasons or years she discovers views that the casual observer might pass by. These sites gain significance not from their grandiosity but from the newfound attention they receive. Sometimes these sites are under direct threat of development *(Pedlarspool* series) or forever lost to it (*The field next to Tesco that is soon to be built on* series). Whereas more traditional landscape painting might seek to elevate a grand view, Brown finds her subject within the unexpected and untapped beauty of latent and liminal spaces.

The art historian Susan Owens writes, in her 2023 essay, that Brown*"…is a painter of the overlooked and the marginal; she honours the trees and hedges, leaves and branches of nowhere in particular with her close attention. But her paintings are about much more than detail. Each reverberates with a sense of enchantment, though whether benign or disturbing is hard to say. What is visible of sky glows with the kind of evocative, evanescent light that comes only at dawn or dusk. Her Hollow Pond paintings brim with elusive meanings and suggest both beginnings and endings, joy and melancholy. Empty of people, they are stage-sets before the play begins – or after it has ended…*

So how do we experience the natural world today, no longer in lockdown but against daily reports of ever-higher temperatures, floods and wild fires? In an oblique and lyrical way, Hannah addresses the question by valuing the local landscape, however scrubby and marginal. By connecting with nature, finding in it a source not only of anxiety but also of joy. By falling in love with hedgerows and leafy banks and communicating it through paint. Painting, after all, is but another word for feeling."

Hannah Brown (b. Salisbury, England 1977) is a graduate of Central St Martins and the Royal College of Art. Her work has been recently acquired by the State Collection of Ireland, V&A Museum (UK), Xiao Museum (China) & TIA Collection (USA) and private collections worldwide. Her work has recently been featured in the touring museum exhibition 'Arcadia for All' and the John Moores Painting Prize. She lives and works in London.