

STAFFORDSHIRE ST

Press release / September 2023

Kirsty Badenoch with Tom Jeffreys

falling / fallen / felled

Thu 9 November – Sun 12 November 2023

Private view: Thu 9 November, 17:00-21:00

Forest floor picnic dinner: Sat 11 November, 19:00



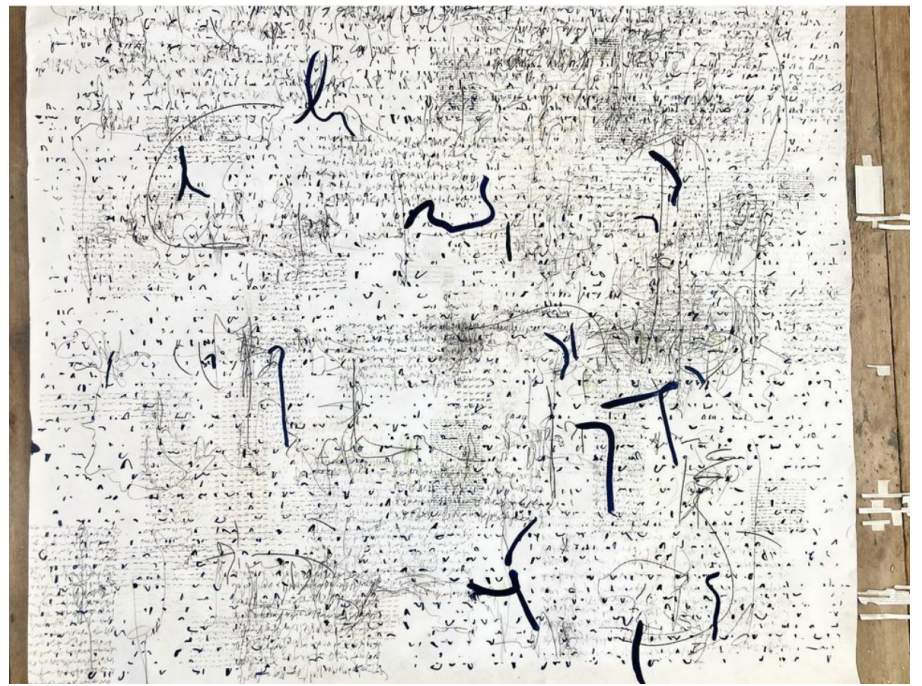
Forest studio, Beinn Eighe, April 2023. Photos: Kirsty Badenoch

falling / fallen / felled is a new exhibition by artist Kirsty Badenoch with writer Tom Jeffreys. This is the first exhibition to emerge from their ongoing collaboration that explores the overlapping languages of forests through experimental site-responsive approaches to walking, writing and drawing.

The exhibition showcases new work across large-scale drawing, paper-based sculptural installation, photography, text, sound, and a new collaboratively produced artist book. Together, these works address the ecological and political significance of ancient woodlands as sites of entanglement between multiple human and nonhuman bodies and voices.

In March and April 2023, Badenoch and Jeffreys spent time living and working across two sites of remnant ancient woodland in Scotland: Abernethy Forest in the Cairngorms and Beinn Eighe on the west coast, instituted as the UK's first ever national nature reserve by a government act in 1951. Subsequently subjected to shifting management strategies, and bordered by some of the largest privately owned estates in Scotland, Beinn Eighe crystallises many of the oldest and most pressing problems affecting how power (mis)shapes relationships between people and the land.

The majority of the works were produced near Beinn Eighe. There, Badenoch eschewed the celebrated landscapes of the nature reserve to set up an improvised studio without permission in a small privately owned forestry plantation. Working on large paper skins across the forest floor, Badenoch worked with a range of tools and materials, including branches, mosses, inks and artificial fertiliser. In a process designed to foreground the relinquishment of control, the drawings were left out, often overnight, to be subjected to chance processes of nonhuman agency: rain, gravity and the occasional hungry slug.



Forest studio and transcriptions, Beinn Eighe, April 2023. Photos: Kirsty Badenoch

The resulting works are abstracted engagements with urgent political questions, including property ownership, borders, access, extraction and resistance. In rethinking what might be meant by 'working the land', each piece is also a powerfully expressive response to the site and to personal memories and relations.

The project builds on pre-existing bodies of individual research. Jeffreys' book *The White Birch* (Little, Brown, 2021) includes several sections that explore the significance of ancient taiga landscapes in relation to Russian art, literature and national identity. In 2022, Badenoch spent time in Canada, researching and making work in the country's extant boreal forests.

Coinciding with the exhibition is the publication of *To an island in a loch on an island in a loch*, a collaborative artist book that includes drawings, photography, contextual project information and a mythological forest tale, "before this this river becomes an ocean": the ballad of Gida and Lutea.

A second chapter of the exhibition is planned for Edinburgh, Scotland in February 2024.

The project has received support from the Architecture Research Fund, UCL Bartlett School of Architecture, 2022.

Notes to editors

Press contact

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Kirsty Badenoch with Tom Jeffreys, *falling / fallen / felled*

Thu 8 November – Sun 12 November

Exhibition opening times:

Thu: 12:00-21:00

Fri: 12:00-20:00

Sat & Sun: 12:00-18:00

Staffordshire St, 47 Staffordshire Street, London SE15 5TJ

Transport: 12 minute walk from Queens Road Peckham or Peckham Rye

www.staffordshirest.com

Staffordshire St is an independent project space in Peckham, south east London. The venue facilitates arts and cultural events and provides affordable studios for artists, makers and designers. More information on upcoming events via info@staffordshirest.com or [@staffordshirest](https://www.instagram.com/staffordshirest)

Publication: *To an island in a loch on an island in a loch*

About Kirsty Badenoch

Kirsty Badenoch is an artist, architect and researcher. Her work explores ecological justice through interdisciplinary, experimental and alchemic site-based projects. With a particular interest in fragile and disturbed landscapes, Badenoch has made work in response to freshly born volcanoes, inner-city industrial sites, primaeval forests, polluted rivers and semi-submerged islands. Badenoch develops participatory methods to foreground more-than-human agency, open-ended collaboration, indeterminacy and messiness. Her work inhabits the expanded field of drawing, encompassing multiple modes of mark-making, sculptural installation, field recording, performance, workshops, writing and collaborative events.

Solo exhibitions and projects include: *Stockpile Garden* (with UCL Biochemical Engineering), Barking Riverside Foreshore, London (2023); *Riparian Score*, The River Lea / Microscope, London (2022); *The Garden Transcripts*, Kyoto / Omved Gardens, London (2021); *EBB\\ //FLOW*, Buddenbrooks Gallery, Copenhagen (2018); and *Aqua Fluxus*, Arts, Letters and Numbers, Albany New York (2017). Group exhibitions include: *A Meeting with Eldfell*, Safnahús Vestmannaeyja, Iceland (2023); and *Cartographies of the Imagination* (as curator and artist), Omved Gardens (2021). Talks and workshops include: *Granby Square*, Granby Winter Garden / The University of Liverpool (2023); *Dirty Drawings*, University of Kent Istanbul (2023); *Creative Enquiry*, University of Sheffield (2023); and *Un-choreographing the Drawing*, UQAM, Montreal (2022).

Badenoch also teaches at The Bartlett, UCL and is Associate Director and Head of Research at Periscope.

About Tom Jeffreys

Tom Jeffreys is a writer and editor focusing primarily on contemporary art. He is especially interested in work that engages with ecological concerns. He is the author of two books: *The White Birch: a Russian Reflection* (Little, Brown, 2021) and *Signal Failure: London to Birmingham, HS2 on foot* (Influx Press, 2017).

His writing has appeared in a variety of publications, including *Apollo*, *Artforum*, *Art Monthly*, *ArtReview*, *Country Walking*, *e-flux Criticism*, *Frieze*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *Monocle*, *New Scientist* and *The World of Interiors*. Jeffreys also contributes essays and other texts to exhibition publications for museums and galleries including: Arts Territory, Cample Line, The Common Guild, Sir John Soane's Museum, Talbot Rice Gallery and University College London. In 2013, he founded *The Learned Pig*, an online magazine of art and the nonhuman. He lives in Edinburgh and is represented by Zoe Ross at United Agents.

About Staffordshire St

Staffordshire St is an independent project space in Peckham, south east London. Having launched its public programme in 2022, the venue facilitates arts and cultural events and provides affordable studios for artists, makers and designers. Before being established as an art gallery, Staffordshire St was built as a Methodist Hall and then served for many years as a community centre. Staffordshire St aims to build on the established record of these histories, opening up again to the neighbourhood and developing a welcoming interdisciplinary arts space.