

HAYWARD GALLERY

Press Release

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Images: Installation images [here](#); Images of works [here](#)

THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE EXHIBITION IN THE UK EXPLORING TREES AND FORESTS IN CONTEMPORARY ART OPENS AT HAYWARD GALLERY



(Clockwise from top left: Mariele Neudecker, *And Then the World Changed Colour: Breathing Yellow*, 2019, at *Among the Trees*, Hayward Gallery, 2020. © Mariele Neudecker 2020. Courtesy of Hayward Gallery. Photo: Linda Nylind; Ugo Rondinone, *cold moon*, 2011, at *Among the Trees*, Hayward Gallery, 2020. © Ugo Rondinone 2020. Courtesy of Hayward Gallery. Photo: Linda Nylind; Eija-Liisa Ahtila, *Horizontal - Vaakasuoja*, 2011, at *Among the Trees*, Hayward Gallery, 2020. © Crystal Eye, Helsinki, 2020. Courtesy of Hayward Gallery. Photo: Linda Nylind)

Among the Trees

4 March - 17 May 2020

Hayward Gallery

Among the Trees celebrates key works of art that reimagine how we think about trees and forests. Spanning the past 50 years, the exhibition brings together major works by 38 leading international artists from five different continents. As well as illuminating the beauty and visually arresting character of trees, *Among the Trees* invites us to consider trees as both symbols and living organisms. Timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the

exhibition explores how trees have shaped human civilisation and how they continue to play an indispensable role in our lives and imaginations.

Among the Trees covers an expansive and adventurous artistic terrain with works ranging from immersive video installations to life-sized sculptures; from large-scale paintings and drawings to intimate black-and-white photographs. Participating artists are: **Robert Adams**, **Eija-Liisa Ahtila**, **Yto Barrada**, **Johanna Calle**, **Gillian Carnegie**, **Tacita Dean**, **Peter Doig**, **Jimmie Durham**, **Kirsten Everberg**, **Anya Gallaccio**, **Simryn Gill**, **Rodney Graham**, **Shi Guowei**, **Hugh Hayden**, **Eva Jospin**, **Kazuo Kadonaga**, **William Kentridge**, **Toba Khedoori**, **Luisa Lambri**, **Myoung Ho Lee**, **Zoe Leonard**, **Robert Longo**, **Sally Mann**, **Steve McQueen**, **Jean-Luc Mylayne**, **Mariele Neudecker**, **Virginia Overton**, **Roxy Paine**, **Giuseppe Penone**, **Abel Rodríguez**, **Ugo Rondinone**, **George Shaw**, **Robert Smithson**, **Jennifer Steinkamp**, **Thomas Struth**, **Rachel Sussman**, **Pascale Marthine Tayou** and **Jeff Wall**.

The works in the exhibition take us on a journey of ideas and simultaneously transport us across the globe: visitors encounter images of Colombian rainforests, jungles in Japan, olive orchards in Israel, Scandinavian woods and an underground forest in South Africa. Incorporating distinctive and often surprising perspectives, the artists in the exhibition question our conventional representations of trees in order to forge new ways of understanding our crucial and multifaceted relationship with arboreal life.

Among the Trees is divided into three sections. In the first, visitors encounter images of trees and forests that call attention to characteristics of complexity and connectivity in nature, chiming with recent scientific discoveries about the “wood wide web” – the network of underground roots, fungi and bacteria that connects forest organisms. Like **Robert Longo**’s giant charcoal drawing of a massive tree, the works in this section dramatise the intricate architecture of branch and root systems. Along with a looming six-metre-high wooden sculpture by **Giuseppe Penone** and a 16-metre-long video portrait of a Finnish spruce by **Eija-Liisa Ahtila**, several of these works also remind us of how trees set our sense of scale.

The exhibition’s second section features works that play with the blurring line between our concepts of nature and culture. Artists such as photographer **Robert Adams** examine the impact of present-day human activity on nature, with industrial farming and the clearcutting of woodlands; others, like **Zoe Leonard**, consider how trees unexpectedly adapt to man-made urban milieus. In other works, trees appear as valuable sources of sustenance as well as objects of decor. Additionally, a number of artworks within this section cast trees as silent witnesses of forgotten histories: artist and film director **Steve McQueen**, for instance, presents a photograph, taken outside New Orleans, of an innocent-looking tree that was formerly used as a gallows for lynching black Americans.

In the final section of *Among the Trees*, artists explore the theme of time. Reflecting seasonal changes and with life spans that far exceed our own, trees have long served in art as symbols for invoking mortality. **Ugo Rondinone**’s sculpture of an ancient olive tree, cast in aluminium from moulds of a living specimen, stand as twisted memorials of condensed time. Colour photographs by **Rachel Sussman** document some of the world’s most ancient trees, including a 9,500-year-old spruce in northern Sweden, while **Jennifer Steinkamp**’s

15-metre-long animated video projection places us in the midst of a birch forest as it cycles through the four seasons.

Ralph Rugoff, Director, Hayward Gallery says: “At a moment when the destruction of the world’s forests is accelerating at a record pace, *Among the Trees* brings together the work of leading international artists who urge us to think about the essential roles that trees and forests play in our lives and psyches. Hopefully visitors leave the exhibition with a renewed sense of appreciation for both the beauty and complexity of these indispensable organisms.”

Among the Trees is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue featuring a curatorial overview by Ralph Rugoff, individual artist texts, an original essay by writer and critic Jeffrey Kastner exploring the representation of trees in art and a text by philosopher Matteo Pasquinelli looking at the tree as a cultural symbol. Alongside the exhibition there is an extensive public talks programme featuring several of the exhibition artists including George Shaw, Johanna Calle, Mariele Neudecker, as well as lectures and performances by authors, artists and authorities on climate change.

Among the Trees is curated by Ralph Rugoff, Director, Hayward Gallery.

The exhibition is generously supported by Pro Helvetia.

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For further press information and high res images please contact:

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Find details of the full Hayward Gallery 2020 visual arts programme [HERE](#)

Listings information:

Among the Trees

4 March - 17 May 2020

Hayward Gallery, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX

Prices: From £10. Concessions available and members go free.

Link to *Among The Trees* web page [HERE](#)

Elsewhere onsite:

Celebrating Southbank Centre’s Urban Trees

Did you know that London is home to 8.3 million trees and 8.6 million people? According to the UK’s Forestry Commission, that makes it the world’s biggest urban forest. To celebrate *Among the Trees*, and to draw attention to trees that live alongside us in our cities, we commissioned poets, artists and tree specialists to write about some of the trees that grow near Southbank Centre. Look out for their texts on our London plane trees, black locusts and one-leaved ash.

Family Tree Trail

This Easter (4 – 19 April), pick up a Family Tree Trail designed by illustrator Jane Porter and set off on an adventure to discover the different trees on our site. Available from the Hayward Gallery Foyer.

Artist talks and discussions

The Oldest Living Things in the World

Tuesday 24 March 2020, Level 5 Function Room, Royal Festival Hall, 7pm, £7.50

Find out about some of the world's oldest forms of life from artist **Rachel Sussman**, who spent a decade travelling the world and photographing them. Funding provided by the United States Government.

Edgelands: George Shaw & Patrick Langley

Wednesday 1 April, Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion, Hayward Gallery, 7pm, £7.50

Artist **George Shaw** and writer and novelist **Patrick Langley** discuss the landscapes that inform their work.

The Sublime Forest: Mariele Neudecker & Pontus Kyander

Monday 27 April, Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion, Hayward Gallery, 7pm, £7.50

Artist **Mariele Neudecker** discusses her atmospheric sculptures featuring submerged forests and landscapes with **Pontus Kyander**.

Contested Territories: Johanna Calle & Ros Gray

Wednesday 13 May, Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion, Hayward Gallery, 7pm, £7.50

A conversation between artist **Johanna Calle** and **Ros Gray** of Goldsmiths, University of London exploring environmental politics, social justice, and land rights in Colombia, where Calle lives and works.

Talks and events inspired by *Among the Trees* and climate change:

Eco-anxiety: How To Cope with a Changing World

Monday 6 April 2020, 7.15pm, Southbank Centre's Purcell Room, £15

Executive editor of Vice UK **Zing Tsjeng** chairs this panel talk with climate and mental health specialists who will discuss the newly coined term 'Eco-anxiety', anxiety arising from feelings of hopelessness surrounding climate change, and offer advice on how to cope with anxiety and stay informed in the climate change movement.

House on Fire: Young People on Climate Change

Thursday 16 April 2020, 7pm, Southbank Centre's Purcell Room, £7

Leading young voices on the climate emergency, **Dara McAnulty**, **Yetunde Kehinde** and **Anna Taylor** reflect on a year of unprecedented growth in youth activism and discuss the work that they are doing to raise awareness about the future of the planet.

David Wallace Wells: The Uninhabitable Earth

Wednesday 8 April 2020, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall, £15 – £25

In a London exclusive event, **David Wallace-Wells** discusses his global best-seller *The Uninhabitable Earth*, a book that sparked an unprecedented debate about how we should be talking about the planetary threat from climate change.

Resist: Decolonising Climate Conversations

Thursday 19 March 2020, 8pm, Southbank Centre's Purcell Room, £12

Activist and co-founder of *Working On Our Power* **Guppi Bola** reflects on the theme of 'decolonising climate conversations' with a panel of environmental activists speakers.

Leaving the City: Poets on Trees

Wednesday 22 April, Hayward Gallery, 8pm and 8.30pm, £15

Ten poets including **L Kiew**, **Mona Arshi** and **Seán Hewitt** come together to present poems in response to *Among the Trees*.

Other Events:

National Poetry Library Lates

Wednesday 25 March, Dan Graham Waterloo Sunset Pavilion, Hayward Gallery, 8pm, £10

Join poets including **Anna Selby** for an evening of poetry inspired by the natural world.

Relaxed Hour: Among the Trees

Tuesday 31 March, Hayward Gallery, 3pm

A relaxed and calm environment for visitors with access requirements. For more information and to book, email customerrelations@southbankcentre.co.uk or call 020 3879 9555.

Walking Tour: Southbank Centre Trees

Saturday 16 May, Meet at Hayward Gallery, 12 midday, £5

Join writer and artist Paul Wood for a walking tour exploring the history and significance of trees growing near Hayward Gallery.

Hayward Gallery opening times:

11am – 7pm every day except Tuesdays when the gallery is closed.

Late night opening on Thursdays until 9pm

Tickets and further information: Tickets on sale (Southbank Centre Members free)

www.southbankcentre.co.uk / 020 3879 9555

Twitter: [@haywardgallery](https://twitter.com/haywardgallery)

Instagram: [@Hayward.Gallery](https://www.instagram.com/Hayward.Gallery)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/haywardgallery/

Catalogue:

Hayward Gallery Publishing

Paperback

176 pages

240 x 190 mm

100 colour illustrations

ISBN 9781855323669

Special exhibition price £22.99 (RRP £24.99)

Complimentary press tickets:

Journalists planning to cover the exhibition will receive one complimentary ticket on presentation of their NUJ, AICA or business cards at the Hayward Gallery box office. Journalists without press accreditation who would like to cover Hayward exhibitions can contact the Southbank Centre press office to arrange a ticket.

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Hayward Gallery

Hayward Gallery, part of Southbank Centre, has a long history of presenting work by the world's most adventurous and innovative artists including major solo shows by both emerging and established artists and dynamic group exhibitions. They include those by Bridget Riley, Martin Creed, Antony Gormley, Tracey Emin, Andy Warhol, Ed Ruscha, Jeremy Deller, Anish Kapoor, René Magritte, Francis Bacon and David Shrigley, as well as influential group exhibitions such as *Africa Remix*, *Light Show*, *Psycho Buildings* and *Space Shifters*. Opened by Her Majesty, The Queen in July 1968, the gallery is one of the few remaining buildings of its style. The Brutalist building was designed by a

group of young architects, including Dennis Crompton, Warren Chalk and Ron Herron and is named after Sir Isaac Hayward, a former leader of the London County Council.

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre and one of the UK's top five visitor attractions, occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).

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