

29 Feb – 09 Mar 2024

WHAT AM I DOING HERE... : TRAVELSCAPES

Opening reception: Thu 29 Feb, 6-8pm

Artists:

Hawazin Alotaibi, Stuart Dodds, Joe Fox, Georgina Gratrix, Timothy Hyman, Vivienne Koorland, Nina Milner, Myles Oxenford, Tobit Roche, Caspar Giorgio Williams

- The exhibition will be held at 34 Bourdon Street, London, W1K 3PR Wednesday to Saturday, 2-6pm or by appointment.



In 2024, Belmacz and Isaac Benigson Special Projects will present *What am I doing Here...: Travelscapes*, an exhibition inspired by a question of travel and landscape, and the changes that occur during the alteration of location. The title *What am I Doing Here* is an allusion to Bruce Chatwin's collection of essays, and his last published work in his lifetime. Bernard Levin, the infamous and revered columnist and broadcaster, said we travel because we think somewhere over the next hill there is still mystery, there is still something to be found that has not yet been found. We travel abroad for the same reason we travel inward, for the mystery we hope to find. To travel may be better than to arrive. This presentation of paintings will bring together artists and friends to examine notions of introspective thought, pilgrimage, walking, exploration, voyage and counter feelings of tourism, the sinister and the sunburnt.

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This exhibition was born out of a conversation during Isaac Benigson's visit to Mexico City, to attend Georgina Gratrix's 2023 presentation of paintings. He began thinking about how artists record their travels. The exhibition's basis is rooted in the two foremost travellers in his scrapbook of references, Bruce Chatwin, the extraordinary thinker and writer and the fictional film character, the journalist, David Locke, from Michelangelo Antonioni's *The Passenger*, from 1975. In London, *What am I doing Here...: Travelscapes*, has been realised through further conversations and with the support of numerous agential friends; including Julia Muggenburg, whose ongoing dialogue has helped form the tenues of the thinking explored here, and a special thanks to Silka Rittson Thomas.

Hawazin Alotaibi (b. 1993, Wisconsin, USA) lives and works in London. She studied painting at the University of the Arts London before completing her masters at the Royal College of Art, London in 2021.

Stuart Dodds (b. 1995, Hermanus, South Africa) is a multimedia artist. Opting to forego a formal arts education he developed his practice alongside his artistic peers in and around Cape Town.

Joe Fox (b. 1995, London, UK) graduated from The Royal Drawing School in 2019. He lives and works in London.

Georgina Gratrix (b. 1982, Mexico City, Mexico) grew up in Durban, South Africa. She studied painting at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, where she graduated in 2005.

Timothy Hyman (b. 1946, Hove, UK) is a Royal Academician. Between 1963 and 1967 he studied at the Slade School of Fine Art. In 2007 he won the National Portrait Gallery's Travel Award. He lives and works in London.

Vivienne Koorland (b. 1957, South Africa) graduated from the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town in 1977. Subsequently, she travelled through Europe, studying at the Universität der Künste (Berlin) and Ecole des Beaux-arts (Paris) before completing her MFA at Columbia University (New York) in 1984. Koorland lives and works in New York City.

Nina Milner (b. 1988, South Africa) is currently studying at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town. She is the caretaker of a historic apartment building in central Cape Town.

Myles Oxenford (b. 1977, Plymouth, UK) lives and works in rural Cornwall. He first studied at the Leith School of Art, Edinburgh before completing his studies at Falmouth College of Art in 2000.

Tobit Roche (b. 1954, Manchester, UK) spent his childhood in Hong Kong, Canada and India. After studying at the Ontario College of Art, Canada, he lived for a year in Sussex, UK, working with Charleston's collection of artworks made by Duncan Grant. Tobit subsequently completed his studies at the Camberwell School of Art, London.

Caspar Giorgio Williams (b. 1993, London, UK) is an Anglo-Italian watercolourist, curator and art professional. He lives and works in London.

Belmacz is a contemporary art gallery and showroom based in central London. The gallery focuses on supporting artists to grow their practice; working with them to develop specific solo exhibitions and projects, as well as by re-contextualising their work through renowned group exhibitions. Belmacz's showroom is a space dedicated to displaying Julia Muggenburg's jewellery.

Founded in 2000 by Julia Muggenburg, 'Belmacz' is a composite name: combining the male adjective 'bel' (from the French for beautiful), 'maximum,' and 'cz' (from the Slavic alphabet). With a further reference to the iconic 20th century jeweller Suzanne Belperron, 'Belmacz' alludes to Muggenburg's founding vision for the gallery as well as her expansive design practice.

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