

HALCYON GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

**WILD LIFE
AT
HALCYON GALLERY
24 BRUTON STREET, LONDON W1
7 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER 2010**



Cheetah running by Kim Donaldson

On 7 August 2010, *Wild Life* will open at Halcyon Gallery, 24 Bruton Street, London W1. It brings together an outstanding collection of contemporary art depicting the natural world. Wildlife of the tropics predominates, but the indigenous peoples and landscapes of those regions are also represented. The exhibition will comprise around 35 works by Kim Donaldson, Alan Hunt, Brian Jarvi, Andy Ellis, Simon Gudgeon, Michael Jackson and Steve Winterburn.

In recent years, the popularity of natural art has increased, as issues of conservation of habitats, sustainable ways of controlling animal populations and preservation of species, all put at risk as a consequence of human activity, are brought to the forefront of today's society. Powerfully echoing these themes, the artists featured in this exhibition lead us on our own journey of natural exploration around the globe.

Having grown up in Africa, Kim Donaldson has a particular affinity for its wildlife and the immense landscapes of the continent. In his hands, a drama unfurls from threatening cloudscapes, winter grasslands or leafless baobab trees; the animals do not take second place but, rather, gain from the drama that

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encircles them. His art is distinctive for its use of pastels, brimming with mellow tones and giving a sense that it is painted using the very soil of Africa.

A naturalist-painter with a wealth of experience, Alan M. Hunt has been called the 'silver-haired godfather of wildlife art' and he has helped many younger artists during the course of his career. Journeying throughout the world in his quest to paint the dramas of animal behaviour, he embeds them within the natural environment, observed with the knowledge of a zoologist and the poetic perception of an artist. With a keen awareness of the texture of reality, he paints a King penguin moulting, the light playing across its fluffy feathers, or a group bemused by snowflakes. In the tropics, his tigers prowl or fight; young cheetahs rest in the shade and dramatic zebra canvases follow the migration across the Serengeti plains. Hunt's paintings reveal his understanding of ecology and his vision of the relationship between animal and habitat.

Brian Jarvi is another artist who particularly focuses on African wildlife, creating evocative paintings that document the drama of daily survival: zebras ambushed by a lean lioness; a herd of elephants kicking up a dust storm; hippos plunging into the Mara River. Many canvases are almost impressionistic, playing with light and shade across grassland or sunlight filtering through haze.

Birds dominate the canvases of Andrew Ellis; flying above sparse vegetation or gliding over rippled water. A goldfinch confronts us from a thistle, a hoopoe from a rocky perch, and puffins huddle together on Skomer Island; all are depicted with anatomical perfection. Recent trips to the Middle East have resulted in a series of works depicting mammals of the region.

An artist with a passion for observing creatures in the wild and working for their conservation, Simon Gudgeon sculpts elegant, tactile bronzes of swans and swallows, ravens and pelicans. Catching ostriches advancing or otters chasing fish, he captures motion in flowing, abstracted forms with contemporary grace and power.

Michael Jackson takes his inspiration from the wild animals of India, Borneo's tropical forests and Africa's savannah as well as the wild creatures of Britain. Passionate about conserving flora and fauna, he depicts his subjects with intense precision.

Steve Winterburn has travelled widely to research the animals of Australia, Barbados, Peru and east Africa. His finely worked bronzes, which he not only creates but also casts and finishes himself, have an intrinsic

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dynamism that conveys the gait of a camel or the power behind a cheetah's spring. Wolves' coats and elephants' hide are heavily textured, the horns of an oryx awesome.

Human beings have always depicted the natural world, and the hope must be that the continuance of natural art will help ensure the survival of the diverse species of our planet.

Press information:

For further press information or high resolution images for publication please contact Anna Kirrage at Halcyon Gallery on 020 7647 8327 or akirrage@halcyongallery.com

Notes to Editors:

The exhibition runs in conjunction with Sporting Life at Halcyon Gallery at 29 New Bond Street.

Halcyon Gallery

Situated in the heart of Mayfair, London, Halcyon Gallery's magnificent five-storey flagship gallery at 24 Bruton Street opened in 2008, joining the original gallery at 29 New Bond Street. Both spaces hold important exhibitions of work by modern and contemporary masters throughout the year. For further information please visit: www.halcyongallery.com

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Nearest tube: Green Park
Free entry

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IMAGES



Carachyl Lynx by Andy Ellis



Portrait of Africa by Alan Hunt



Hunt Club by Brian Jarvi