WILDER

XANTHE BURDETT
Artist Focus

This collection of paintings is inspired by symbols and tales of metamorphosis, where the human and non-human become entangled: stories like Daphne and Apollo and the many other myths of women being transfigured into trees in acts of violence or self-protection, artefacts like the 'Green Man' foliate heads of pagan origin that adorn British churches, the life and work of Hildegard of Bingen, the twelfth-century polymath, mystic and visionary. Painted in oil on primed hand-made paper, the intricate brush work and transparent glazes layer history, place and memory into paintings where strange figures gaze back.

Xanthe Burdett (b. 1995) is an artist from Devon living and working in London. Her practice is led by painting but also encompasses drawing and installation. She graduated from MA Painting at the Royal College of Art in 2024 and has previously exhibited work with Arusha Gallery, Sarah Kravitz Gallery and Blue Shop Gallery. She is currently an artist in residence on the West Residency in Notting Hill and has upcoming shows with Salford Museum and Wilder Gallery. She has work in the Soho collection and the Soho House collection and was the winner of the De Laszlo Foundation Young Artist Prize.

WG: Your connection to the natural world, in particular to woodlands is evident and integral to your practice. Could you please share more about this?

XB: I've spent a lot of time reading literature and theory that contextualises why I'm so interested in woodland as a site for painting layered visions of myth, history and folklore. But at the heart of it, my connection to the woods was felt long before I began to understand its cultural context. It was the bark on my feet as I climbed a tree, the pang of unease as a story came a little too close to the surface. The woods of these early imaginings were the woodlands that fringed Dartmoor in South Devon, temperate rainforests dripping with mosses, lichen and ferns. This connection to place, to its folklore, is the surface on which I build my practice. Painting is a way to layer these stories and memories to open a portal to the woods where the old gods linger. To engage with the natural world in a way that doesn't pastoralize landscape as Rebecca Tamás puts it in her essay on Green: 'not the impossibly pure space of "wilderness" or the controlled beauty of "Landscape" but the human and nonhuman intertwined, bursting out of each other with discomfort, joy, pleasure'.

WG: Who are the women in the three portraits?

XB: When I was starting to research these works I had just finished my MA and was feeling the weight of endings and what a future as a painter might look like. For the final group trip with the RCA we went to the conservation studios at the Tate Britain and then to see the show *Now You See Us: Women Artists in Britain 1520-1920*. The three portraits are referencing paintings in that show - some self-portraits and some society miniatures. The painting *Only Known Work* was inspired by the portrait of Mary Grace (died c.1799), an incredibly accomplished artist whose self-portrait holding a palette and brushes looks out at the viewer, claiming her position as a painter. The wall text quite casually mentioned that this astonishing painting was her only known work. I obsessed over the idea of all her lost and misattributed paintings - of how her work was disregarded for so long and how a legacy we are now trying to piece together has been eroded by time. I made these tangled portraits thinking about women artists, lost paintings and tales of metamorphosis.

WG: You are currently an artist in residence at Studio West Residency. What does an average studio day look and feel like? What do you listen to when you work?

XB: The residency has been amazing. It's three months in a beautiful gallery space in the heart of Notting Hill with an open studio at the end of November. I like to get into the studio early and look at the work from the day before and the unfinished pieces in the studio. I work on lots of paintings at the same time and sometimes a piece will be unresolved for months. I move the work around constantly, putting it in different lights, next to other paintings, upside down. Something eventually will make it click and then I'll work on it intensely. I'll work on several paintings or drawings in a day - I'll paint a passage and move to something else and then when I come back to the first painting I can see it with fresh eyes again. Lots doesn't make it through that process - I'll wipe out a whole day's work if I need to.

I choose music that sets the tone for the kind of work I'm doing. Recently I've been listening a lot to Nadine Shah, Fever Ray and Baxter Dury if I need energy and King Creosote or Nilüfer Yanya if I want to focus. Sometimes when the work I'm doing is very detailed and focused I just need silence so I can disappear into the process of it.

WG: Would you say your process is intuitive? Please share more about what your creative process is like?

XB: I sometimes think I have a clear idea of what a painting will be when I begin and then in the process of making it it always evolves and becomes something else. I used to find this really overwhelming - like my paintings took on a life of their own and wouldn't let me make the changes I had planned. But I've learnt to trust this intuition and see where it takes me - often I'll begin with a semi-abstract background guided by a few key references or ideas. For example, for the Artist Focus works I wanted the colours and light to speak to high summer - to the deep green of the leaves and the high pale blue skies of Italian renaissance paintings.

WG: Could you kindly share more about your connection to your nominated charity and why you have selected it?

XB: I have worked with Create for a couple of years as a facilitator. It's a great joy to see the impact of art in real time. How important it is for people to draw, paint and sculpt in a community setting.

ROLNIK
Kapusta

XANTHE BURDETT

Green Woman
2024
Oil on Khadi handmade rag paper
21.5 x 15 cm

£525 excluding taxes

£630 including vat

20% of sales donated to Create charity

XANTHE BURDETT

There Will Be Stories Of An Ancient Kind
2024
Oil on Khadi handmade rag paper
21.5 x 15 cm

£525 excluding taxes

£630 including vat

20% of sales donated to Create charity

XANTHE BURDETT

Only Known Work
2024
Oil on Khadi handmade rag paper
21.5 x 15 cm

£525 excluding taxes

£630 including vat

20% of sales donated to Create charity

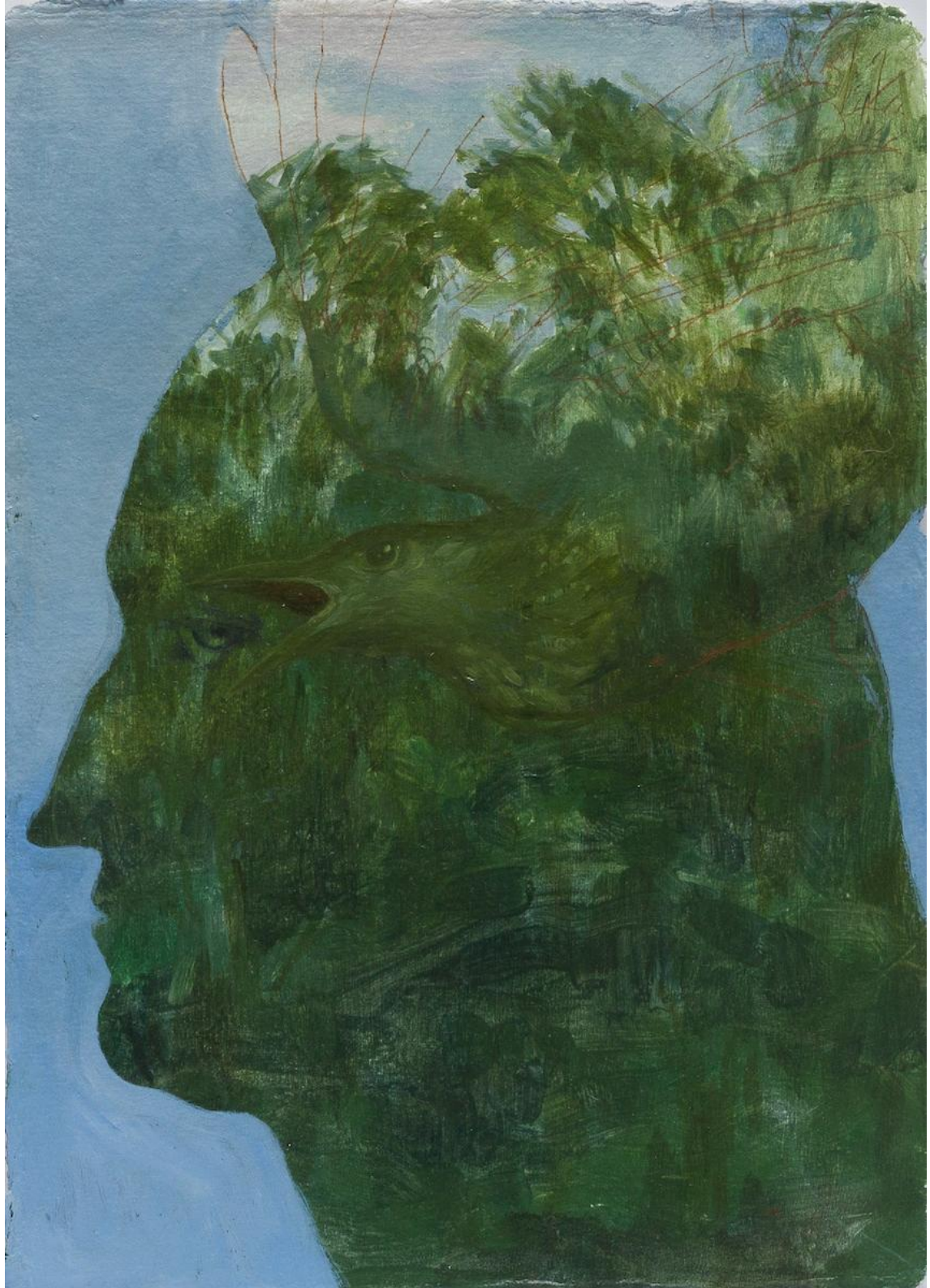
XANTHE BURDETT

Plucked
2024
Oil on Khadi handmade rag paper
21.5 x 15 cm

£525 excluding taxes

£630 including vat

20% of sales donated to Create charity



XANTHE BURDETT

And The Fates Answered
2024
Oil on Khadi handmade rag paper
21.5 x 15 cm

£525 excluding taxes

£630 including vat

20% of sales donated to Create charity

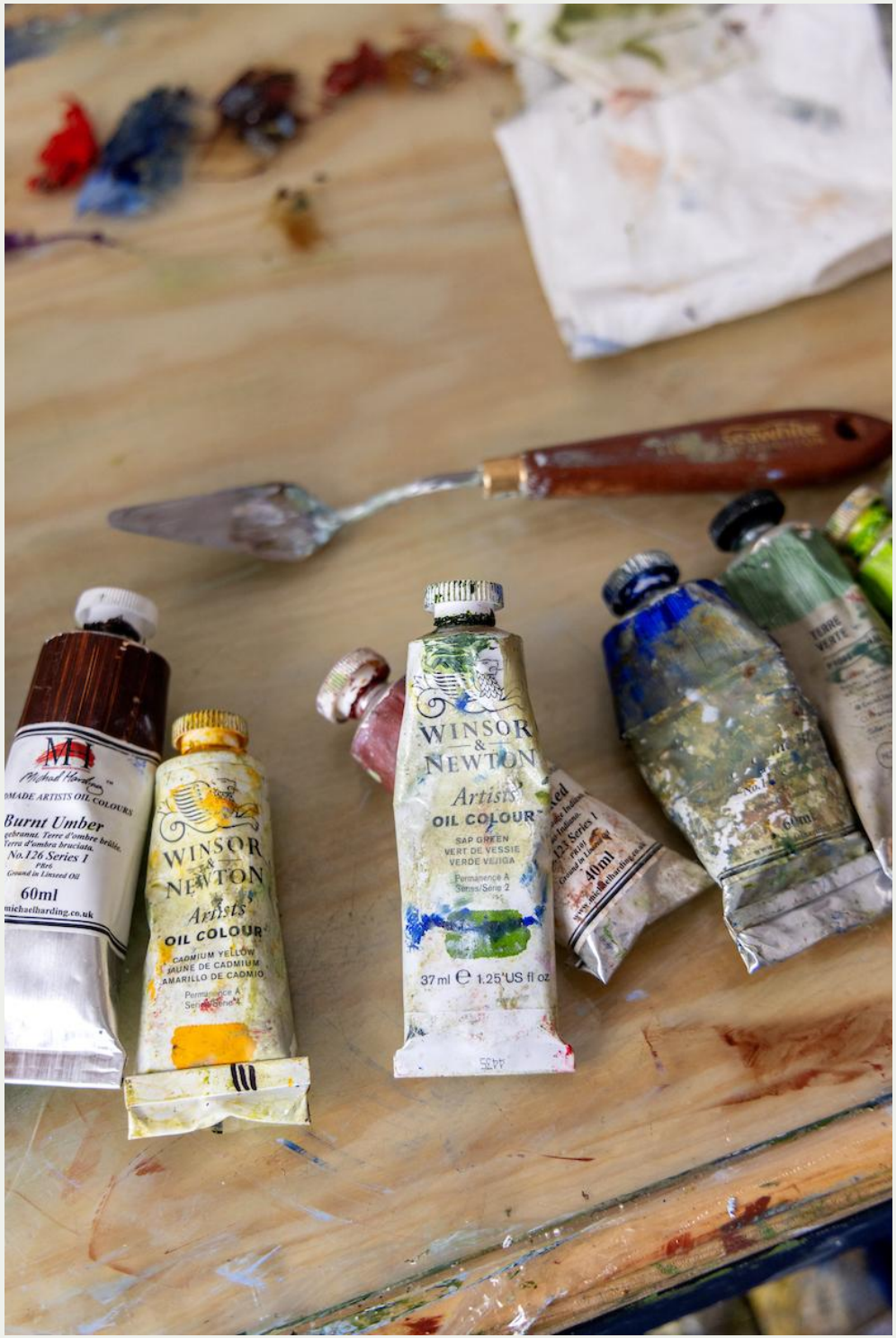
XANTHE BURDETT

Viriditas
2024
Oil on Khadi handmade rag paper
30 x 21.5 cm

£650 excluding taxes

£780 including vat

20% of sales donated to Create charity


Burnt Umber
No.126 Series 1
60ml
WINSOR & NEWTON
Artists' OIL COLOUR
CADMIUM YELLOW
JAUNE DE CADMIUM
AMARILLO DE CADMIO
WINSOR & NEWTON
Artists' OIL COLOUR
SAP GREEN
VERT DE VESSIE
VERDE VEJIGA
37 ml e 1.25 US fl oz
40ml

Education

Royal College of Art (2023 - 2024)

University of Cambridge (2015 - 2018)

Upcoming

2024 Salford Museum, Omnipotence of a Dream

2024 Wilder Gallery, Artist Focus

2024 Studio West, West Residency open studios

Select Group Exhibitions:

2024 Post Human VI - group show curated by Tobias Ross-Southall

2024 Liliya Gallery, Within and Without

2024 The Royal College of Art, MA Degree Show

2024 Sarah Kravitz Gallery, The Unwritten Script

2024 Stop and Smell the Roses - group show curated by Juliet Wilson

2024 Art on a Postcard, International Women's Day Auction

2024 Arusha Gallery, Palimpsestic Impressions

2023 Blue Shop Cottage, Works on Paper 5

2023 Jackson's Painting Prize exhibition, Bankside Gallery

2022 Cynthia Corbett Gallery, Young Masters Art Prize

2022 Blue Shop Cottage, Works on Paper 4

2021 Royal Academy of Art Summer Exhibition

2020 Mall Galleries, Royal Institute of Oil Painters

Awards and Residencies

2024 Studio West - West Residency

2023 De Laszlo Foundation Young Artist Award - Winner

2023 Jacksons Painting Prize - Shortlisted

2022 De Laszlo Foundation Young Artist Award - Highly Commended

OWN ART

Wilder Gallery partners with Own Art, enabling art buyers from the UK to acquire work between £100 - £25,000 over a 10 month interest free period. The artwork is delivered immediately and available to enjoy before the first instalment is paid. If you would like to purchase with Own Art or find out more please email Michelle info@wilder.gallery .

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