

(Un)Visible

by FOLD Art Collective

This exhibition explores ideas of the unseen and the hidden. The works are preoccupied with overlooked objects, individuals, stories and systems, and unnoticed moments in everyday life.

27-30 September 2024
Safehouse 1
139 Peckham Road SE15 3SN

FOLD Art Collective is a group of twelve women artists who have developed their art practices later in life, following other careers and responsibilities.

The independent work that the collective produces crosses many disciplines including: sculpture, painting, drawing, printmaking, textiles, film, and installation; and the artists' interests are wide-ranging. The artists in the collective are united by a shared sensitivity to materials, time and space; and by the depth of other experiences that each artist brings to her practice.

Established in 2021, the collective meets in person monthly to critique and encourage work in progress; and uses whatsapp as a collaborative forum to inspire, rage, laugh, cheer and galvanise.

FOLD Art Collective exists to generously give support, space and voice to the work of mid-life women artists who are often invisible in contemporary culture.

Follow us @foldartcollective

Abigail Elverd

Abigail's work is based on the hidden Allotment spaces within our communities. For years, living in West Ealing, she was not aware there was a site 5 minutes from her home, where she now grows her flowers and vegetables, as well as spending time creating art in her "She Shed" Art studio.

These spaces hold many stories of the people who inhabit them, also no longer just a space of the "Man Shed" but over the years has become a tranquil and creative space for many women too!

In *Plot 145*, Abigail used soil as a ground to set the scene and in homage to the land and all it conveys, before adding multiple layers of mixed medium that evokes the spirit of the space.

@abigailverd_artist

Bernadette Enright

Bernadette's work in (Un)Visible responds to the misbelief that Safehouse was used as a shelter for women escaping domestic violence. She aims to provide audience members with an alternative view of the statistical information around domestic violence against women. She has drawn from her professional experience working with those who have lived in households affected by domestic abuse and from governmental information freely available online.

two women: in the five days that FOLD art collective has booked the safehouse for our exhibition, statistically two women in the UK will be killed or commit suicide as a result of domestic violence. This piece aims to embody those deaths and to honour all women who lose their lives in this way.

177 women: In the twelve months from April 2022 – March 2023, 177 women died because of domestic violence. Each flower represents one woman and the small buds stand in place for those who will lose their lives from now until March.

[Domestic Homicides & Suspected Victim Suicides 2020-2023](#)

@artfledgling



Carmen Van Huisstede

Carmen's artistic practice focuses on recontextualising everyday objects to interrogate societal norms and implicit behavioural patterns. By examining these commonplace items, Carmen challenges viewers to reflect on their attitudes and anxieties, highlighting the profound influence of such objects on their lives.

Carmen considers that Hauntology and the Object in contemporary art offer a compelling reflection of our intricate relationship with time, memory, and history. Through physical objects, she evokes nostalgia, explores the spectral dimensions of the past, and critiques consumer culture. This artistic approach reveals that everyday objects are not mere inanimate entities but are imbued with historical significance, memory, and meaning, persistently influencing us in thought-provoking ways.

In the (Un)Visible exhibition at Safehouse 1, mundane objects are reimagined to provoke a reassessment of the everyday, serving as a critical lens to explore societal values, consumerism, and the essence of art.

@carmenart_vh
www.carmenart.co.uk

Cass Breen & Eleanor Street

Eleanor & Cass' first collaboration explores ideas of transparency in relation to materiality; the themes of invisibility, the hidden and the half-seen are explored through diaphanous layers, making what is visible dependent on the perspective of the viewer.

Cass Breen's practice is informed by cultural background and personal history. The work in this show is inspired by time spent on a residency in Newfoundland, referencing the barrenness of the bleak maritime landscape, the iciness of the sea and the disappeared cod fishing industry. Her choice of material guides the making process and is intrinsic to the interplay of form and idea.

Eleanor's practice explores the traces we leave in the landscape and the memories, experiences and objects that we take with us. She uses images of landscape which skirt the traditional notion of landscape art, focusing on what is underfoot or overlooked, rather than the scenic 'sublime'.

@eleanor__street @cass.breen
www.eleanorstreet.net www.cassbreenart.com

Clare Nicholson

Clare Nicholson presents oil paintings that reveal the unseen layers of the natural landscapes. By using delicate, thin layers of oil, she invites viewers to look beyond the obvious, capturing the hidden depths of nature. Her technique, with its soft edges and subtle shifts in value, reflects the elusive beauty of natural elements that often go unnoticed. Through the process of layering, Clare unveils concealed landscapes within the visible scene, suggesting that there is always more beneath the surface.

@clare_nicholson_prints_

Jane Hughes

Jane is a contemporary painter who works from an eclectic array of source materials to tell alternative stories of women obscured, invisible or absent from history, placing them back in the frame. Metamorphosed and reimagined, Jane's paintings direct our attention to women's interior world and vulnerabilities and raises questions about where power resides and who has agency.

Taking visual cues from historical eras and referencing the language of film, Jane stages each painting to create the Mis-en-scene, to make the invisible visible.

The Triptych Jane is showing at the Safehouse is painted on a discarded wallpaper trestle table. The focus of the paintings is on the place of artifice and the mask of make-up which women adorn in order to make themselves acceptable and visible. Jane explores how beauty products are adopted as tools of conformity in which ideals of female physical embodiment and concepts of 'perfect' femininity are actualized.

@hughes.jane60

www.janehughesart.com

Jess Blandford

Jess' abstract paintings celebrate the mundane, messy and often invisible work of family life. Jess uses the visual language of abstract expressionism with its connotations of machismo and high cultural value; and she playfully applies a contemporary feminist lens.

Jess' preoccupation with the repetitive, intimate, complex and unpaid labour of care (emptying the dishwasher, managing diaries, soothing to sleep, finding the right socks), asserts the hidden value of the physical, emotional and mental loads which underpin global economies and our everyday lives.

Upstairs at Safehouse, Jess is showing a series of small paintings exploring 'worry work' (a constant low-level anxious concern for the wellbeing of your family that demands preparedness). It is disproportionately carried by mothers and often dismissed or used as a comedic trope. Downstairs a large painting on unstretched canvas titled 'Hypervigilant' can be found slumped in a corner, as if wrung out and overwhelmed.

@jessblandford

www.jessblandford.com

Katherine Rose

Katherine Rose works across film, performance, textiles and mixed media installation. Weaving these disciplines together to question, understand and record the histories, memories and complexities of the relationships that shape us. Drawing from research into the practices of women artists and traditions of women's craft work is central to her development of ideas and processes, and provides a framework for giving a voice to the often unspoken rules and roles imposed on us by society. Katherine Rose enjoys pushing materials and processes to their limits, and establishing and exploring connections and tensions in her work.

SAFE/TY is a new and ongoing project and exploration of what these two words mean. What makes us feel safe? How do we create safety? It is about the boundaries we place around us in order to protect ourselves, and the safe breathing spaces between the places in which we exist.

@katherinerose360

YouTube @katherinerose365

Marina Nasso-Beard

Marina's work explores the interplay between connection and disconnection, informed by themes of personal history, migration, memory, and loss. She aims to highlight the sublime in both mundane and exceptional moments.

A trip to Elephant & Castle to attend Morley College inspired Marina's work in this show. It is a record of her attempt to process her experiences of this journey and the expectation of a new adventure.

The pieces together represent an acceptance; giving herself permission to make work which resonates with her perception of events. The installation reflects how her environment, the sounds and thoughts of the day merge into a world of colour, shape and sound which are recorded on her phone. The dimensions of the paintings on glass echo that of a mobile device. The structures of the work allude to an urban environment, buildings under construction and modes of transport as well as the mobile devices which form an essential part of the memory.

@mmiabear

www.MarinaNasso-Beard.com

Nell Martin

Nell Martin is a multimedia artist. She works with clay, metal, textiles, acrylics and watercolours.

She has travelled extensively and her art reflects her emotional response to what she sees, often painting en plein air and sometimes from memory.

For this exhibition she is showing two paintings, both inspired by nature and landscape. Nell captures her sense of wonder and the joy of exploring unfamiliar places, both in "Tuscan dream" and "Japanese secret".

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Exhibition Essay

by Lucy Nicholson

The exhibition “(Un)Visible” at Safehouse 1 brings together eleven members from the FOLD Art Collective to present a poignant exploration of the unseen and the hidden. The works are preoccupied with overlooked objects, individuals, stories and systems. The title “(Un)Visible” was inspired by terms like *unseen*, *hidden*, *unnoticed* and *overlooked*, making it fitting that the show centres on the unnoticed moments of everyday life. Ludwig Wittgenstein remarked: “The aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity.” This idea lies at the heart of the exhibition, where each artist seeks to uncover what is hidden in plain sight.

Over half a century ago, Yves Klein’s groundbreaking public display of invisible art invited audiences to consider what he called “immaterial pictorial sensibility.” Since then, artists have been fascinated by the invisible and the hidden, encouraging viewers to pay attention in ways beyond mere observation. The FOLD Art Collective continues this tradition, urging viewers to reflect on how perception is shaped by cultural conditioning, personal history and unconscious assumptions. Historically, artists have explored the interplay between the seen and unseen, frequently using this dichotomy to address social and political issues. While many exhibitions rightly highlight pressing global or socio-political themes, “(Un)Visible” challenges us to recognize the profundity in the mundane. The collective’s decision to spotlight these unnoticed moments offers a

fresh perspective on the hidden aspects of our everyday existence.

The exhibition takes place in Safehouse 1, a neighbouring space to Safehouse 2, both derelict Victorian terraced houses. These structures, stripped down to their utilitarian frameworks, reflect the exhibition’s themes. Their bare walls reveal faint traces of the houses’ history—multigenerational stories hinted at but never fully told. The space itself becomes a metaphor for the exhibition’s focus on uncovering layers, both literal and metaphorical, of what lies beneath the surface. Inviting the viewer to reflect on the way that personal perspective affects what we see in – and take from – any given situation, Eleanor Street and Cass Breen’s poetic collaboration echoes the layers of history that Safehouse 1 encompasses.

In its rooms, the artworks are charged with a new resonance. Jess Blandford’s series of paintings delves into the invisible labour involved in family life—commonly referred to as the “mental load.” True to the exhibition’s theme, a visitor may or may not notice a slumped canvas in the corner, intentionally positioned to reflect the unseen weight of these emotional burdens. Clare Nicholson’s oil paintings similarly invite viewers to look beyond the obvious. Through thin layers of paint and soft edges, she unveils the hidden depths of nature, emphasising the often-unnoticed beauty within landscapes. Abigail Elverd’s work is based on the hidden allotment spaces

within our communities. In her abstract piece “Plot 145” she uses soil as the ground to set the scene in homage to the land and all it conveys before adding multiple layers of mixed medium to evoke the spirit of the space and the many stories of the people who inhabit them. Nell Martin explores overlooked details in nature in her two pieces, in contrast to Marina Nasso-Beard whose work aims to highlight the sublime in mundane urban experiences informed by themes of personal history, migration, memory and loss.

Other artists take up the notion of the hidden in different ways. For example, Bernadette Enright’s powerful work on domestic abuse confronts societal blind spots. Continuing the theme of safety, Katherine Rose provides us with a film and installation with a focus on the boundaries we place around us in order to protect ourselves, and the safe breathing spaces between the places in which we exist, which are often taken for granted. Carmen Van Huisstede reimagines everyday objects to prompt a reassessment of consumerism and societal values, while Jane Hughes paintings direct our attention to women’s interior world and vulnerabilities and raise questions about where power resides and who has agency. Her Triptych “and all the pretty maids are fit to be seen” addresses the mask of make-up which women adorn in order to make themselves acceptable and visible.

Together, the artworks in “(Un)Visible” engage with the unseen and the hidden from multiple perspectives, both literal and conceptual. The FOLD Art Collective, through their diverse works, peel back layers of societal and personal conditioning, urging viewers to reconsider what they overlook in their

everyday experiences. In doing so, the exhibition not only reveals the hidden but also underscores how much of what we take for granted—objects, stories, individuals—deserves closer attention.

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