

**Bricks Gallery is proud to present:
A Mother's Garden
A solo exhibition by Galina Munroe**

After experiencing the emotional strain of living alone in rural France amidst multiple COVID-lockdowns, Galina Munroe noticed a new interest in floral motifs developing throughout her practice. Envisioning the bright canopy-like petals she found herself painting as beacons of hope during an otherwise intense and isolated period, Munroe has continued to explore this floral world after moving back to the UK to be closer to her family.

The link between homecoming, community-building and the cultivation of gardens is one that is well-established in the history of humanity. Originating in the transition from nomadic lifestyles to a more sedentary way of existence, horticulture has long been an important way of symbolising shared responsibility and a sense of belonging. In many respects, the works in *A Mother's Garden* directly respond to this social history and feel as grounded in ideas of inclusivity as they do in aiming towards nurturing a wider community.

These are accessible paintings; Galina Munroe invites the viewer's attention with vibrant brush strokes and her bold and concentrated approach towards form and composition. In the past, the artist has conceptualised her visual language as being akin to spatial games that invite the viewer to direct their attention inwards as they respond to the painted visual stimuli she presents. Often making subtle references to the artist's own introverted personality, Munroe's paintings navigate between alluring appearance and the internal space of quiet reflection that informs their creation.

And indeed the works included in *A Mother's Garden* feel particularly personal. In works like *La petite jonquille* (2020) and *Pink Tulip* (2020), Munroe depicts the flowers that her mother has planted at their home in Norfolk. Having returned to this family sphere to live and work, Munroe is often accompanied by her mother in the studio or spends time with her in the garden talking about the plants and helping to care for them. The artist speaks of this experience as an injection of affection and nurturing into her existence and this same sense of exuberant life force is visible in these new gestural compositions. Interested in the connection between flora and ideas of the maternal, Munroe seems to ask us to consider: what does it mean to mother a painting?

In addition to the floral motifs that appear in this show, several of the works like *Chaise du jardin au petit matin* (2020) and *Chaise du jardin au soleil* (2020) situate the viewer inside the peaceful environment of Munroe's imagined garden in a different way. Depicting details from her parent's garden furniture, here the viewer moves from an abstract conversation about gardening and community to the actual site of social engagement. We are positioned on a chair with the artist, accompanying one another even if we sit in silence, relaxing and recharging.

Another way that Munroe compounds this effect is through her use of a uniquely tactile approach to surface preparation. Instead of stretching a singular piece of fabric across a wooden frame, Munroe collages various fabric fragments together in a way that often suggests the sort of image that will be painted over them. The artist likens the appearance of these squares to the patio slabs where people gather in her parents' garden and sees the backdrop these provide to her painting in the same way these slabs provide a social foundation to the garden.

Emerging from a two-year period of isolation and then re-union and inflected by feelings of love, grief and solitude, the works in this exhibition feel intimate just as they do invitational. If *A Mother's Garden* is a safe space where Munroe can develop hopeful images in private, it is also a space of mutual growth where we are invited to join her and flourish together.

Galina Munroe (b. 1993) received her MFA from Central St. Martins. Recent exhibitions include: "Origin" at Delphian Gallery (London UK, 2021), "PUZZLE" at Roman Sviridov (Brugherio IT, 2021), "TWENTYFOUR II" at Bricks Gallery (Copenhagen DK, 2020), "To Emerge in a Different Place" at PIERMARQ* (Sydney AU, 2020). The artist lives and works in Norfolk, United Kingdom.