

# Jodie Carey: Guard

30 May - 23 August 2024

Opening reception | Thursday 30 May, 6-8pm

Exhibition talk | Friday 31 May, 12-1pm



*We infill plants with meaning for many reasons; they remind us of people we've loved or times in our lives. Guard seeks to remind us of the stubbornness of life, the human ability to evolve and adapt and ultimately our desire to survive.*

– Jodie Carey

Edel Assanti is pleased to present *Guard*, Jodie Carey's fifth solo exhibition at the gallery. A site-specific installation of 150 jesmonite sculptures mounted on steel supports stretches across the entirety of the two ground floor galleries, articulating a serpentine path through the space.

Carey produced her latest installation employing a technique called earth-casting: wrapping plants with cloth and thread, the artist created slender, delicate sculptures that are then pressed into the earth's surface to form a rudimentary mould. The wrapped plants are then removed, and jesmonite is poured into the remaining imprint in the soil. Pale in colour, the resulting sculptures reveal traces of fabric, leaves, stones, and roots with a hauntingly exquisite level of detail.

Exploring notions of ritual and mortality, the tall, elegant uprights evoke the timelessness of standing stone monuments or an army of sentinels, silently registering the passage of time. The subtle tonalities that result from Carey's distinc-

tive process emphasise the sculptures' faceted surfaces, revealing their elemental form whilst embodying a sense of impermanence.

Carey's recent work has explored culturally universal art-making methods including carving, weaving, and wall-drawing. Through revisiting age-old techniques, Carey's oeuvre emphasises the relationship between object making and commemoration, looking to the physical world as a repository of material memory. Diverting from the history of monumental sculpture, Carey's work belongs to a female British sculptural tradition that emphasises object-experience and materiality over image-making.

Choosing to work with fragile and ephemeral materials, her installations challenge the permanence and solidity traditionally associated with the medium. Flowers have been a recurring motif throughout Carey's practice. Earlier works comprised elaborate flower arrangements and bouquets unexpectedly fabricated out of newspapers that have been soaked or dusted with blood, bone or ash.

"Flowers are strongly linked to cultural identity and so quickly become synonymous with conflict and atrocity around the world", Carey notes. "Most recently the sunflower for Ukraine became an instantly recognisable symbol of support. But flowers have always grown amongst the dev-

astation of war. Poppies, carnations, forget-me-knots are all historically bound to conflict and remembrance. We think of these flowers beyond their seasons.”

Referring to soil as the skin of the earth, Carey’s interest in soil as a material is born out of its essential relationship to life and simultaneous ability to embody death. Its complex constitution combines minerals, water, air and the decaying matter of once-living things. In this way, *Guard* continues Carey’s engagement with concepts of entropy and time, emphasising the universal human urge to commemorate our lives by making an impression on our surroundings.

As part of London Gallery Weekend, Jodie Carey will be in conversation at Edel Assanti with Joseph Constable, Head of Exhibitions at the De La Warr Pavilion, on Friday 31 May, 12-1pm.

## Notes to Editors

### About Jodie Carey

Jodie Carey (b. 1981) studied at Goldsmiths College, completing an MA in Sculpture at The Royal College of Art in 2007. Recent solo exhibitions include *Beyond the Matrix*, 100 Bishopsgate, London, UK (2024); *Common Thread*, New Art Centre, Salisbury, UK (2020); *Sea*, The Foundling Museum, London, UK (2018); *Stand*, St Cyprian’s Clarence Gate, London, UK (2018); *Dark Night by Daylight*, Hå Gamle Prestegård, Nærbø, Norway (2014); *Shroud*, The Veterinary Anatomical Theatre, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany (2013); *Solomon’s Knot*, The New Art Gallery Walsall, Walsall, UK (2012) and *Somewhere, Nowhere*, Pump House Gallery, London, UK (2011). Group exhibitions include *Earthen*, The Artist’s Garden, London, UK (2024); *Mother Art Prize*, Zabudowicz Collection, London, UK (2023); *Sweep - Landskip*, Kinokino, Sandnes, Norway (2018); *The London Open*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2015); *Women to Watch 2015*, UK Friends of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, London, UK (2015) and *Freud and Eros: Love, Lust and Longing*, Freud Museum, London, UK (2014). Jodie Carey lives and works in Battle, East Sussex, UK.

### About Edel Assanti

Edel Assanti was founded in 2010 by Jeremy Epstein and Charlie Fellowes. Established in London, the gallery works with international artists whose practices engage with the social, cultural or political realities. Edel Assanti’s programme’s tendency towards interdisciplinary, research-led work demonstrates how artists are uniquely positioned to witness and distill the complex narratives that define our era.

Having been located in London’s Fitzrovia since 2014, in 2022 Edel Assanti opened 4,000 square foot gallery in a

renovated listed building on Little Titchfield Street. The gallery’s premises play host to a dynamic events programme in parallel to gallery exhibitions: talks, performances, screenings and live music. Edel Assanti’s digital presence encompasses a multi-chapter series of artist video interviews, alongside short films published to accompany exhibitions.

The gallery hosts an annual gallery residency, giving overseas colleagues an opportunity to present an exhibition in London. We also produce biannual expansive group presentations addressing subjects of cultural and societal urgency.

In 2021 Edel Assanti founded London Gallery Weekend (LGW), an annual celebration of London’s diverse gallery community bringing together 140 contemporary London galleries. Now in its third year, the gallery remains at LGW’s helm. Chief amongst LGW’s initiatives is an ambitious partnership with Art Fund enhancing the relationship between London’s galleries and regional museums across the UK, via a research focus group and a travel bursary scheme for regional curators.

### Contact Us

For further press information and high-res images please contact: [press@edelassanti.com](mailto:press@edelassanti.com)

### Social Media

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