

Each Place Its Own Mind

17 January - 15 March 2025

Private View | Thursday 16 January, 6-8 pm



Each Place Its Own Mind, installation view, Edel Assanti, London, 2025. Photo: Tom Carter.

Mirtha Dermisache | Noémie Goudal | Sky Hopinka | Anna Hulačová | Marguerite Humeau
Bronwyn Katz | Kat Lyons | Yukultji Napangati | Emmanuel Van der Auwera

Each place its own mind, its own psyche.

Oak, madrone, Douglas fir, red-tailed hawk, serpentine in the sandstone, a certain scale to the topography, drenching rains in the winter, fog off-shore in the summer, salmon surging in the streams – all these together make up a particular state of mind, a place-specific intelligence shared by all the humans that dwell therein, but also by the coyotes yapping in those valleys, by the bobcats and the ferns and the spiders, by all beings who live and make their way in that zone. Each place its own psyche. Each sky its own blue.

David Abram, *The Spell of the Sensuous*, 1996

Edel Assanti is pleased to present *Each Place Its Own Mind*, an exhibition that participates in an ongoing collective reimagining of our relationship with the living world, rooted in revelations from indigenous knowledge, ecological research, literature, science, and artistic experimentation. Bringing together nine interdisciplinary artists, the exhibition comprises historic works alongside new commissions, spanning drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, installation and film.

The idea of human exceptionalism that distinguishes *culture* from *nature* is the intellectual foundation of the Enlightenment and present-day Western civilisation. It is by this point well understood that the cost of severing our profound bond to the living world – a process that may have progressively unfolded over hundreds if not thousands of years – was that the more-than-human world, together with its social representations, lost its meaning. In theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's words: "Enlightenment's program was the disenchantment of the world. It wanted to dispel myths, to overthrow phantasy with knowledge... The disenchantment of the world means the extirpation of animism."

Each Place Its Own Mind borrows its title from ecologist David Abram's 1996 book *The Spell of the Sensuous*, which traces the ways the human mind came to renounce its "sensory bearings" in the natural world, visualising a myriad of "lost" faculties that link the "inner, psychological world and the perceptual terrain that surrounds us."

Across four adjacent rooms, the exhibition offers windows onto distinct experiential perspectives, cultivating the notion that the "objective reality" of a particular place might not be quantifiable by scientific or philosophical

reasoning; instead, we may think of it as the sum of an interconnected web of experiences of people, animals, plants, micro-organisms, rocks, rivers, organic and geological systems that coexist in that space.

Abram suggests that civilisation began “isolating itself from the breathing earth” with the advent of phonetic formal writing systems. Taking inspiration from this theory, the exhibition’s point of departure is a sequence of late Argentinian artist **Mirtha Dermisache’s** 1970s asemic writing works: undecodable sequences of semi-pictorial lines, untethered to representation. Emblematic of the exhibition’s overall rhythm, each of Dermisache’s expressive works represent attempts to grasp an imagined, indeterminate new language, in recognition, in her own words, that “it’s not important what happens on a sheet of paper, the important thing is what happens within us.”

The exhibition continues with **Anna Hulačová’s** concrete busts, harbouring honeycomb interiors constructed by bees within each sculpture during swarming season. Embodying the ancient interconnection between our two species, they evoke a hybrid organism, whilst symbolising the permeable nature of body and consciousness. Explorations of mind continue in **Kat Lyons’** two paintings which channel the visceral emotional charge of the animal and botanical psyche.

Bronwyn Katz’s sculpture *//xū//nana (seeds of the sweet-thorn)*, 2024, is made of iron ore, rose quartz, and jasper. Katz presents the stones as ancestors, in a constellation-like arrangement of the stones further underscoring the interconnectedness of all things, inviting reflection on the cycle of giving and receiving that sustains both the land and its inhabitants. Close by, the optical formations of Aboriginal Australian artist **Yukultji Napangati’s** paintings mirror natural phenomena, linking Pintupi ancestral narratives and Dreamings to the landforms of her Country.

Marguerite Humeau’s sculpture *The Brewer*, 2023, sits in the centre of the room – a symbolically charged totem that adopts a dynamic spinning top form, drawn from an envisioned distant future. It harbours prized elements and products of the natural world, including honey, venom, yeast and Termitomyces cultures, as though it were a time capsule offering the key to ecological regeneration.

In the exhibition’s third room, **Noémie Goudal’s** *White Pulse*, 2023, photographic installation uses tromp l’œil illusions to visualise a theoretical layer of space that could exist within a “real” geographical site – a sense of place that cannot necessarily be seen or felt but may be thought to exist in theoretical or ethereal forms. Alongside this, **Emmanuel Van der Auwera’s** “VideoSculpture” returns to the theme of the unknowable trajectory of emergent technologies. Through a series of filters, we observe a semi-holographic film divided into two interconnected segments: a glitchy, AI-generated video of flocks of birds flying over

a lake is interspersed with highly realistic avatars reciting authentic testimonies of people who fell in love with AI chatbots. This imagery is overlaid with the voice of Caryn AI, a digital girlfriend bot, narrating conversations that touch on the complexities of parasocial relationships and digital loneliness.

Finally on the lower ground floor, **Sky Hopinka’s** film *Fainting Spells*, 2018, explores the intimate relationship between people, spiritual practice and place nurtured by the Ho-Chunk nation, via a mythical narrative about Xqwjaska, or Indian pipe plant.

The exhibition’s programme will include an in-conversation event on Wednesday 5 March 2025 between Bronwyn Katz and Kat Lyons, moderated by the author Daisy Hildyard.

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.

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 fifth 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

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