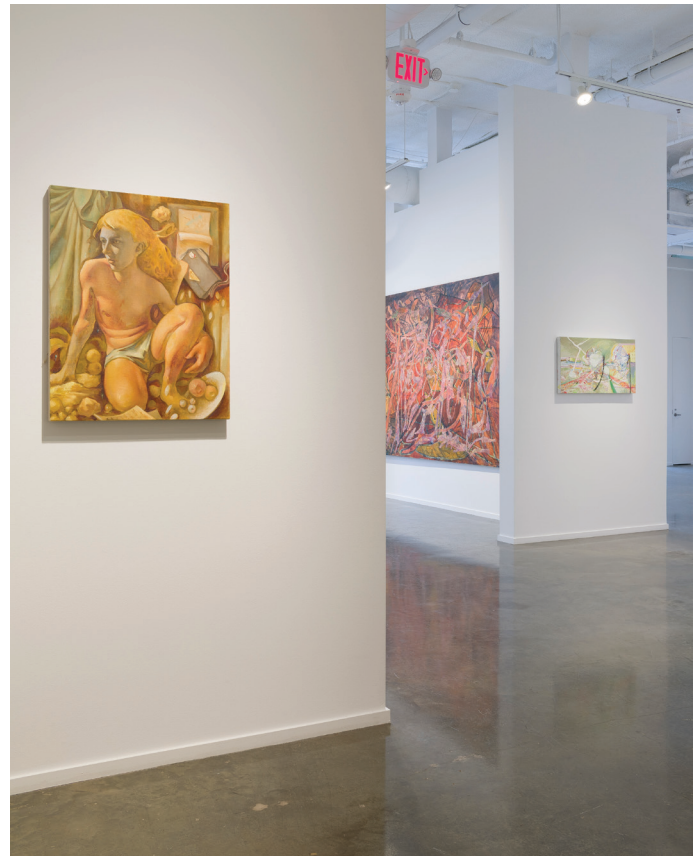




A Room Hung With Thoughts: British Painting Now installation views. Photograph by Evan Sheldon for Green Family Art Foundation. Courtesy of Adam Green Art Advisory.



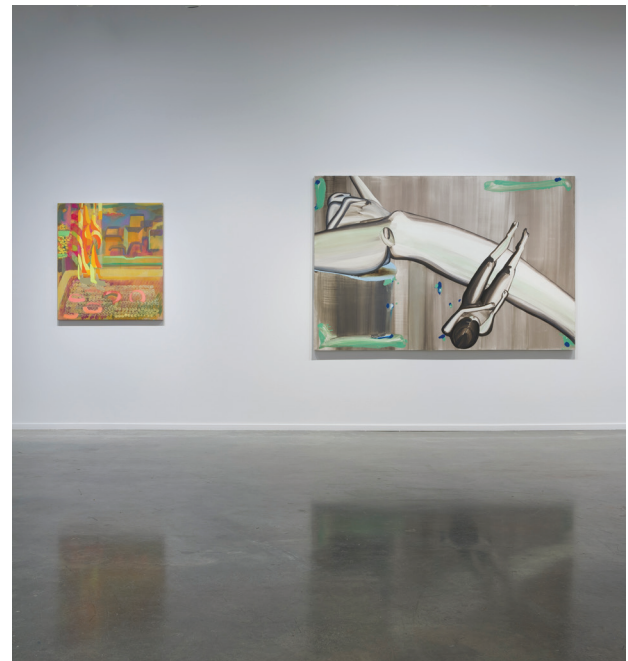
COLLECTED THOUGHTS

British Painting Now sees the work of 40 artists, born between the '60s and '90s, at the Green Family Art Foundation.

BY TERRI PROVENCAL

Light streamed through the Green Family Art Foundation on a mid-February morning on my private walkthrough with curator Tom Morton, who offered a glimpse into *A Room Hung With Thoughts: British Painting Now*. Sunrays played on Pam Evelyn's *Tin Coast*, a layered gestural abstract painting, the largest in the show, painted en plein air prior to her studio's completion; viewers can imagine themselves on an Athens hillside. Next to it, the demure *Tourkovounia* by Lewis Brander benefits from the pretty day; it's depicted in a brilliant turquoise subtly disrupted by a diffused sun behind clouds, adding richness to the horizon. Morton takes both paintings in. "Two nature paintings start us off."

In an adjacent gallery Mary Ramsden's *io* presents a rich purple palette across an epic canvas with bursts of volcanic orange tangled within. *Io* is one of Jupiter's moons, named after a mortal woman's love affair with Zeus, who transformed her into a heifer. Pitying her, the earth goddess Gaia gave *Io* a violet to eat.



Four young artists arrive to see their work shown among British art stars Tracey Emin, Cecily Brown, and others. London-born and -based, Elinor Stanley says of her *Long Parting*, 2024, "Often my paintings have two figures and they kind of cut against each other; they are pretty unaware of each other." Of the extended leg and the smaller nude figure adrift across the canvas, she describes, "I'm interested in trying to have this sense of an uneven kind of bias, of lurch, and gaze, and the sense of more than one perspective and more than one sense of direction." Brush marks in muted shades of green add painterly



whim. Stanley and Francesca Mollett, who was there for this show and her solo show at The Warehouse, are good friends. Mollett's *Restful Sleep*, 2024, will awaken when the sun moves toward the gallery where it hangs.

Jake Grewal, another London artist, says *Me Outside Myself*, 2024, was painted after a relationship ended. "I feel like often in relationships you are faced with your own shadow," he says of the two figures embraced—or perhaps just one figure looking in a mirror. "The darkness of that. Stuff comes up you have to confront. My work is always about confrontation of self." Grewal will be in a three-person show this summer at Bortolami Gallery in New York. Hurvin Anderson, also in the show, gave Grewal a tutorial at the Royal Drawing School, says he admires *Barbershop Series: Short Back and Sides*, from 2009, installed next to Ramsden's *io*.

Tom Morton joins the conversation and informs that Anderson was compelled to paint the same barbershop from his Birmingham birthplace in an examination of memory and identity of Britain's Black Caribbean community. In this painting, the mirrors are void of reflection, two empty chairs appear recently vacated, damp towels draped over the arms, hair scattered across the floor.

Nearby, Lisa Brice's *Untitled*, 2020, shows a woman holding paintbrushes, peering into what could be a mirror or a Dorianesque canvas of herself. "Is it a reflection or is it a painted image?" muses Morton. The demonic likeness depicted in a brilliant-blue hue bleeds into the legs of the figure looking at it. "It's one of my favorite Brice paintings," Morton says.

Adjacent to Anderson's work, *Turks & Caicos PVR M*, 2021, by Alvaro Barrington, hangs in its wood artist's frame backed by metal shutters. "Barrington draws very heavily on his own personal histories," says Morton. He was born to Grenadian and Haitian parents and is now based in London, a graduate of the Slade School of Fine Art. "The shuttering has a double reference. It's a very popular building material in certain parts of the Caribbean." A boldly painted hibiscus echoes the climate. "He tells wonderful stories about being a teenager in New York. He'd ride the trains all night, and he would emerge from the subway just before the shops opened and look at the shuttered

buildings and think about a new pair of jeans he might buy," Morton offers.

While Michael Raedecker, whose mesmeric *momentumizer*, 2024, hangs in the center gallery, is one of the more mature artists included, around the corner Fischer Mustin's *Done, damned*, 2024, is rendered by the youngest artist shown. He is here and on his first trip to the US. "Fischer is interested in early renaissance art like Botticelli. There's a lot to work out here. Is there almost this sense of turning to stone?" And what of the Prada bag sporting a Hello Kitty patch?

Of the exhibition title, *A Room Hung With Thoughts*, attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, Morton considers: "It's a strange, strange, quote. I've never been able to find proof that Reynolds actually said this. The earliest reference is from an Irish magazine, which was published 50 years after his death, but it feels like something he would have said." He adds that "The show had its genesis to think through an exhibition concept at the invitation of the Greens. They have wonderful British paintings in their collection." As to *British Painting Now*, Morton says, "Claiming art Britishness is such an odd concept." There are 23 languages spoken in Kingsland, so he says he's "claiming artists as British in a very light touch. They all have that point of connection, whether it's birth, education, or residence." **P**

