

Press Release



GERALD MOORE
GALLERY

at Eltham College

Press-gang

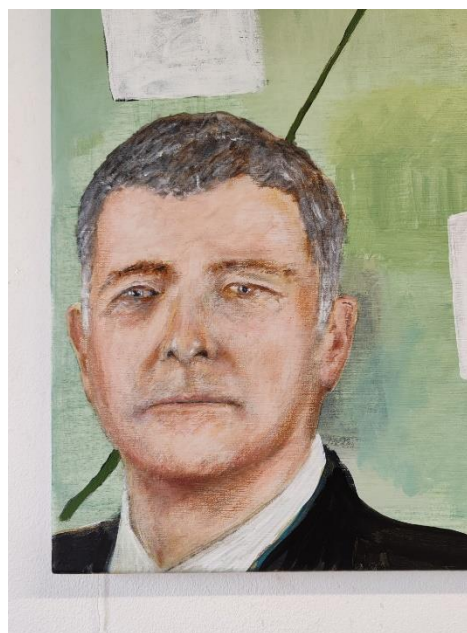
22nd April – 18th May 2024

Private View: Thursday 25th April 6 – 8pm

Artist: Luke Burton

**Open to public Saturday 10am-4pm or by
appointment**

**Gerald Moore Gallery, Mottingham Ln,
London, SE9 4RW**



Untitled by Luke Burton

Image: Luke Burton

The **Gerald Moore Gallery** is delighted to present ***Press-gang***, a solo exhibition featuring recent artworks by **Luke Burton**, current **Artist-in residence** at **Eltham College**.

Press-gang runs from **22nd April – 18th May 2024** with the **private view** on **Thursday 25th April, 6 – 8pm**.

The exhibition brings together paintings, collage, vitreous enamels, and sculpture that explore the experiences of play, pressure, anger, and release. This work also expands on Burton's interest in the decorative as a mediator between the political and aesthetic spheres.

Burton has used the exhibition as an opportunity to reflect on the specific circumstances of the residency and the idiosyncratic nature of working within a school and the role of the artist 'in-resident' when, in fact, Burton lives in Westminster and commutes to the college in the outskirts of London by train. This reversal of the traditional commute prompted questions around the nature of access to and from the city itself as well as to questions around housing and work security.

The exhibition title, *Press-gang*, conveys Burton's interest in wordplay and how the mutability of language can suggest layers of meaning. We see this with the use of crosswords, a trope that runs through the exhibition and serves as a metaphor for the relationship between language and art, blending abstract, geometric, and decorative forms to communicate a coded visual language. The title *Press-gang* itself refers to the historical practice of impressment, whereby men were forcibly conscripted into the navy or army via physical and verbal intimidation. The title also conjures up ideas around the national media or 'press' and points to the literal flower press in the exhibition, which is used as both a tool and artwork. Another reference is to the erstwhile Children's TV programme, *Press Gang*, in which a group of teenagers run a print newspaper every day before school. The term, then, evokes a heady mix of military history, violence and bullying behaviour, Victorian floral decorative practices, and children being given the agency to 'play' at being adults within a school environment. A

series of portraits of male senior civil servants also act as a kind of gang, peering out, often disembodied and floating, from the colour-field grounds of the paintings.

An enormous painting of a lanyard points to the disproportionate importance of these handheld objects in work culture, whilst making a comically literal blockade within the gallery space.

Lanyards, before their ubiquity as an object and symbol of institutional, state and corporate security, were traditionally a length of (frequently decorated) strapping that attached a sword or pistol to its owner.

Press-gang corrals a diverse range of cultural and historical references into a discussion on play - both in language, in education, and the political dimensions of taking play seriously or as is frequently the case, not seriously enough.

The Gerald Moore Gallery is open to the public every **Saturday 10am - 4pm** or by appointment.

Luke Burton (b. 1983, London) studied at Chelsea College of Art and Design, BA, London (2002 - 2005) and MA at the Royal College of Art, London (2011-2013). Recent selected solo and group exhibitions include: *Father Tongue*, *Why Not Gallery*, Tblisi, Georgia (2023); *20*, Union Gallery, London (2023); Lotte Art Fair, Gallery Woong, Busan, South Korea (2023); Open Studios, British School at Rome, Rome (2023); Girton College, Cambridge University, Cambridge (2022); *Solo Show*, OOF Gallery, London (2022); Art-O-Rama, Bosse and Baum, Marseille, France (2022); *Stand with Ukraine*, Hales Gallery, London (2022); *Capital Spring Returns*, Gallery Woong, Seoul (2022); *BLOB*, TJ Boulting, London (2022); *The Dinner Table*, San Mei Gallery (2021); *The Artist Oracle*, White Crypt Project Space, London (2021); *Art Asia*, Gallery Woong, Seoul (2020); *Impossible Weather*, Bosse & Baum, London (2020); Off-site, Bosse & Baum x Sid Motion Gallery, London (2020); Milton Keynes Art Centre, Milton Keynes (2020); KIAF, Gallery Woong, Seoul (2020); *Podium Sales*, Picnic Gallery, London (2019); *CAMEO*, A-dash, Athens (2019); *Out of Office*, PADA, Lisbon (2019); *Outlines Roughly the Size of a Suit*, with Victor Seaward, Union Gallery, London (2019); *P is for Portrait*, Pitt Studio, Worcester Art Centre (2019); *The Lotus Eaters*, Aindrea Contemporary, London (2018); *Becoming Sweet New Styles*, Bosse & Baum, London (2018); *Sweep / Landskip*, Kinokino Kunstal, Stavanger, Norway (2018); Granpalazzo, Ariccia, Rome (2017); Print Department, Division of Labour, London (2017); *Waves*, Turf Projects, London (2017). Luke Burton has completed the following selected residencies: Abbey Fellowship, British School at Rome, Rome, Italy (2023); Alkinois, Athens, Greece (2022); Girton College, Cambridge University (2020); A-DASH, Athens, Greece (2019) among others. Luke Burton is currently on a residency at Eltham College, London.

The **Gerald Moore Gallery** is a young centre for modern and contemporary art with learning at its heart. Opened in April 2012, in Mottingham, the gallery is uniquely set within the grounds of Eltham College and is a valuable resource for the students and the local community. The gallery has gained momentum hosting some exciting exhibitions including works by Matisse, Louise Bourgeois, and Cornelia Parker, whilst supporting emerging local artists. In unison with the exhibitions, the gallery's outreach programme works with local community groups, teachers, and schools, creating lasting relationships with our locality. Gerald Moore Gallery was made possible with the foresight and generosity of Old Elthamian, Dr Gerald Moore, many of whose works are archived at the gallery and who has a permanent exhibition on display.

For more information, images, and interview requests, or to attend the Private View

please contact: Haf Anuar at info@geraldmooregallery.org

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Untitled by Luke Burton

Image: Luke Burton