

A Small Dent in the Air

Dates:

23.04.21 – 30.04.21; PV: 23.04.21 from 6pm

Location:

grovecollective.co for virtual reality

Participating Artists:

Lucie Gray

Shailee Mehta

Press Release

Grove Collective is pleased to present the upcoming two-person exhibition *A Small Dent in the Air*, featuring London-based artist Lucie Gray and Mumbai-based artist Shailee Mehta, on view online in virtual reality through the Grove Collective website. This is the first time these artists have shown together, and marks the first time Grove Collective has worked with both Gray and Mehta.

There is little of both Gray and Mehta's work that is not founded in the real; human forms populate their scenes, moving and posing in ways that are intimately familiar. However, both artists swiftly and firmly diverge from this worldly foundation, each rearranging reality in their own terms. For Gray, this rearrangement often takes the form of allegory, as lecherous cat figures and eroticised women breed an unsure tension. While the cats themselves evoke animalised phraseology – the monkey on one's back, the elephant in the room – the figures' ardent rapaciousness leaves them firm actors in Gray's work, symbols-cum-antagonists. In turn, Mehta's scenes lean more towards the mystical, her compositions suggesting the primeval: the viewer feels privy to a moment of discovery, one underscored by the vulnerability of the lack of that newfound knowledge.

And yet, as we grasp for the meaning in these works, both Gray and Mehta draw the viewer back to the human form and its barren truths: amid these

fantastical scenes, these humans must breathe, that breath itself only a *small dent in the air*.

It is this relationship to the body that acts as Grove Collective's thematic mooring; following a series of exhibitions that have placed a primacy on the body, this exhibition extends on these ideas while providing a means for further exploration. While the body proves a point of origin here, the concerns of Gray's and Mehta's work draw notions of the symbolic and mystical to the fore – far from relishing a "closed loop", co-Directors Jacob Barnes and Morgane Wagner have eagerly engaged new avenues for thought, inviting viewers to do the same.

For Editors

Lucie Gray is a Stoke Newington-based emerging artist who over the past year has begun to establish herself professionally. Her work tells stories of womanhood and the burdens - as well as joys - that the female body holds. Working on both wood and canvas, Lucie works to encapsulate female emotions, impulses and responses in their most brute forms. Intimacy, eroticism, despondency and lust are also common features in her works - as well as many wild cats. She has been featured by outlets such as IOTA Edit, Gurls Talk and Procrastinating.

Shailee Mehta completed her BFA at The Slade School of Fine Art in 2020. She has taken part in various group shows, including AIRGENTUM at the Hoja de Ruta Residency (Spain 2018), AucArt Exhibition and Sale (2020) and "IBGYBG" at the Function Suite (2020). Her most recent shows include the group exhibition "All Is Not Lost" at Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai (2020) and the solo show "In The Belly of A Slovenly Crow" at The Residence Gallery, London (2020). Mehta currently lives and works in Mumbai.

Grove Collective was founded in late 2020 by Morgane Wagner and Jacob Barnes. The gallery works to exhibit exciting work from around the world, making art from a diverse range of practitioners available to an equally diverse collector base.

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