

Two shows celebrating new work and that of nonagenarian Frances Walker have their roots in Aberdeen's Peacock Visual Arts, writes Susan Mansfield



Frances Walker:a selection of print works from Peacock, 2010-2022 The Print Room, 252 Union Street, Aberdeen

Laura Aldridge: Lawnmower Jupiter Artland, near Edinburgh

Andrew Sim: two rainbows and a forest of plants and trees Jupiter Artland, near Edinburgh

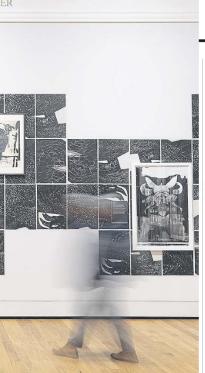






Spirit of Aberdeen

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with Carla Filipe's lizard skin screenprints making a kind of

with Caria ringes making a kind of wallpaper. Responding to the marginalia in the original manuscript, the artists have made a kind of celebration of marginality. Three of them have an interest in travelling communities. Delaine Le Bas, on the shortlist for this year's Turner Prize, who presents a reworking of the symbolism of the Medusa; French artist Joy Charpentier, who reimagines the rat as the protagonist of a punk utopia, and Pedro G Romero, whose work is part text, a freewheeling wander through ideas, places and history.

mand history.

Madrid-based Julio Jara
has made a series of arresting
images using donkey masks in

allation view of The No Installation view of The New Aberdeen Bestiary, main; detail from Antarctic Refuge Hut, 2000, by Frances Walker at The Print Room, Aberdeen. left; Laura Aldridge by her fountain at Jupiter Artland, right



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collaboration with the residents of the homeless shelter where he works, British-Nigerian Abdulrazaq Awofeso recalls the cockerel which used to wake him every morning in his Nigeria childhood, and Aberdeen-based Sadle Main takes on the unicorn and its role as the national animal of Scotland.

Frances Walker was one

Frances Walker was one of the Peacock's founder members, and continues her connection with the printmaking workshop into her nineties. A selection of her prints from the last 14 years is on show at Peacock's Print

ner nineues. A section or ner prints from the last I4 years is on show at Peacock's Print Room (252 Union Street), including works made during lockdown in socially distanced collaboration with the workshop technicians. Walker is a master and this show is an enduring pleasure, as we observe her delving into a range of printmaking processes to get the results she wants, whether the subject is a line drawing of rocks at Achmelvick or a sweep of ocean in saturated by the rearrier travels to the Antarctic and Svalbard, as well as long-term inspirations such as the Isle of Tiree.

Many of the works are in panoramic format: the wooden walkways across the bog at Finlaggan on Islay; the long curve of an Antarctic shore, complete with penguins; a wide sweep of coastline approaching cruden Bay which takes in several different weathers. But this skill with wide open spaces is matched by a work like Tiree Window' which glimpses a square of the outside world

from the dark interior of a

from the dark interior of a cottage.

Meanwhile, Jupiter Artland continues to offer artists opportunities to make ambitious work in its exhibition spaces as well as in the sculpture park. In the Steading Galleries, brilliantly turned into topsy-turry nightclub toilets last summer by Lindsey Mendick, Clasgow artist Laura Aldridge has created an immersive installation which includes ceramics, glass, fabric, film and sound.

The walls are an orangey yellow, the steps replaced with a bright pink ramp. Lighting is low, allowing her beautifully cerafted wall-mounted lamps—nests of plant-dyed fabrics with ceramic centres—a chance to shine. There are loveseats which viewers are invited to use, adorned with glass ornaments.

The show foregrounds the sensory over the intellectual response. It's also highly collaborative she worked with a textile dyer, a furniture make and a glass blower as well as with fellow artists Juliana Capes, Morwenna Kearsley and Sarah McPadyen to make the audio and film.

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It's an invitation to have a sensory experience and see where it takes you, an interior which is, in some way, about interiority. Meanwhile, in the garden, her fountain, through which water rushes and tinkles over a tower of giant ceramic small shells, both looks and sounds beautiful. You stay for a moment, then you move on. It's moment, then you move on. It's as profound and as ephemeral as that.

In the ballroom, Glasgow artist Andrew Sim - who is now based in New York-presents their largest show in Scotland to date. Sim makes large-scale paintings' using pastel on canvas, drawing on a personal lexicon of symbols which includes werewolves, rainbows, sunflowers and monkey-puzzle trees. In this show, yucca plants flower and multi-headed sunflowers and multi-headed sunflowers active and multi-headed sunflowers active and multi-headed sunflowers active and multi-headed sunflowers dazzle against the sunflower active active active sunflower faceting the sunflower fa

flower and multi-headed sunflowers dazzle against dark, starry skies. They represent specific plants the artist has encountered, making them points on an autobiographical journey as well as being symbols, though what they are symbolic of we can only guess. They have the kind offlat luminosity which makes one think of children's books. One picture shows a plaintive looking pink werewolf. Sim has done unicorns too, in the past, though there are none here. The ballroom, with its spendid rocco-style ceiling, feels like an awkward place for them. One partly blocks a window. The rainbow over the fireplace is deliberately hung too far to the right, messing with the head of anyone of a symmetrical disposition. Sim's work offers a stylised take on the natural world which the contemporary art market is currently falling over itself to collect, not unlike the painting of Nicola Party, who designed Jupiter Artland's ultra-cool cafe nearby. It's pleasant enough if you like a bit of iront natvete, they're kept very well hidden.

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