

TAYLOE PIGGOTT GALLERY

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TAYLOE PIGGOTT GALLERY ANNOUNCES *MARKS ON THE WALL*
AN EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS AND SCULPTURE BY NICOLA HICKS

Exhibition Dates: 9 June – 30 July 2023

JACKSON HOLE, WYOMING – TAYLOE PIGGOTT GALLERY is pleased to present *Marks on the Wall*, a solo exhibition of work by London born and based artist Nicola Hicks, on view June 9th through July 30th, 2023. An opening reception will be held on Friday, June 9th, from 5 - 7 pm. All are welcome to attend. Nicola Hicks will visit the gallery this July. Events to be announced.

Marks on the Wall presents a selection of straw and plaster sculptures with two-dimensional backdrops as well as a selection of charcoal drawings, depicting gallant, humanized animals, both familiar and mythic. Hicks captures the transcendental power of beings with an extraordinary intensity that eclipses mere visual fact or scientific anatomy. Elephants, bears, swans, dogs, or Minotaurs, Hicks' art radiates an archaic energy and is far more a spiritual study of life- human, animal or otherwise- than a formal study of animals.

Avoiding the romantic, descriptive, or simply anthropomorphic depictions of animals that have dominated figurative *animalier* art of the past, Hicks, in feverish acts of unselfconscious intuition, first internalizes and then decisively tackles the essential essence of the animals she captures. Hicks not only studies animals by looking, but also by feeling. She explores what it feels like to be, what it means to be, each animal: she internalizes the slinky, tentative glide of a fox, the sagging weight and deliberate gait of an elephant and the aloof yet confident bearing of a family dog. Her practice is rooted in her empathy for the creatures she creates, resulting in works that elicit a visceral response in addition to visual recognition. Hicks is far less interested in her work closely resembling a particular animal; rather, she wants the figure to *be* that animal in essence and spirit.

Hicks' artistic practice has long prioritized methods for lessening the gap between thought and making. In her large-scale drawings, constructed from quickly tearing off craft paper in large sheets, and drawing with charcoal, chalk, and pastel, she is able to swiftly, subconsciously and confidently unleash the figure bursting through her imagination. Some parts of these animals are left unfinished, as Hicks is unconcerned with those elements not integral to the figure's essence. She creates her three-dimensional work in a similar nature through a unique sculpting process that involves plaster and straw. There is straw strewn about Hick's studio (she has always surrounded herself with animals), which she continually gathers and mixes with plaster to quickly erect a figure. Due to the delicate nature of her chosen materials, the final sculpture is often cast in bronze. These sculptures appear as if walking up out of the earth from which they came, powerful, fleshly and noble. *Marks on the Wall* showcases select sculptures with backdrops drawn by Hicks, lending some of her latest sculptures their own environs. The result is an immersive experience in both two and three dimensions.

Nicola Hicks was born in London in 1960 and studied at Chelsea School of Art and the Royal College of Art. The daughter of two artists, Hicks, grew up producing art. She became an established presence among the artists of her generation at the young age of 25. In 1995, Hicks was awarded an MBE for her contribution to the visual arts. Hicks' sculptures and drawings have been presented in numerous international museums and galleries. Hicks has completed several public commissions, including large-scale sculptures at Schoenthal Monastery, Langenbruck, Switzerland and in Battersea Park, London.

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Solo exhibitions include Flowers Gallery, London and New York City; St Paul's Cathedral, London; Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, United States; and Tayloe Piggott Gallery, Jackson Hole, United States, among others. Hicks' work was included in *The Universal Addressability of Dumb Things*, curated by Mark Leckey, as part of the Hayward Touring series at venues across the UK during 2013. Hicks' work can be found in the collections of the Tate Gallery in London, the Hakone Open Air Museum in Kanagawa, Japan, and the Castle Museum in Norwich, Contemporary Art Society, Government Art Collection, and the National Museum of Wildlife Art, among many others. In 2023, Hicks was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Sculptors. Hicks lives and works in London.



Nicola Hicks, *Little Dear*, 2023, plaster and straw with charcoal on paper backdrop, 28 x 28 x 14 inches



Nicola Hicks, *Relic No. 2*, 2023, plaster and straw, 29 x 28 x 24 inches



Nicola Hicks, *Saying Hello*, 2023, charcoal and pastel on paper, 80 x 132 inches

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Specializing in modern and contemporary art, Tayloe Piggott Gallery expresses a sharp appreciation for exceptional aesthetic vision. Based in Jackson, Wyoming, the gallery showcases sophisticated, unique artworks in a modern setting. Always interested in artistic discovery, the gallery expanded to create The Project Space: a collaborative place for the local and global community to share ideas, showcase work, host events, and expand artistic concepts. Mindful and thought-provoking, Tayloe Piggott Gallery aims to enrich cultural dialogue by bringing remarkable artists into an already flourishing arts community.

From first time buyers to seasoned collectors, our gallery assists a wide range of clients with the intricacies of collecting contemporary art. Our staff has the knowledge and expertise to facilitate art acquisitions, advise collection management, and curate the interiors of private spaces.

Media contact: Katie Franklin Cohn, katie@tayloepiggottgallery.com