

pipe|ine



Ald Hyll (detail), 2023

Gabriel Kidd: *I've Always Kept a Unicorn*
8 - 28 January, 2023

Manchester-based artist Gabriel Kidd is inspired by the queerness of figures from fairy-tale and folklore, often returning to the stories of myth and legend as they explore the formation of Queer identity. Gathering pieces of ephemera, grass, stone and bark from the Saddleworth Moor north of Manchester, Kidd makes assemblages, textiles and drawings that exist somewhere between the fantastical and the real.

Kidd's practice centres upon the notion of collecting and the building of worlds. The exhibition, 'I've Always Kept a Unicorn' comprises a selection of work focused on landmarks within an imagined world. Kidd is interested in 'queerness' as a force outside of sexuality alone, a presence which inhabits a physical space including objects, landscapes and people, where even the hills might have a sense for being queer. As part of this experience, Kidd reflects on their own personal queerness and the landscape it was formulated within.

For Kidd, this imagined world begins with a soil where nothing can grow. An installation of fabric angels, agents of information and phallic in shape, bestow seeds, rocks and grass, releasing their loads and encouraging growth. Kidd's canvases, which are naturally dyed and delicately sewn, individually respond to myths by departing from and affirming their original meaning. They hold a space somewhere between fantasy and markers of Kidd's own encounters of the valley. Kidd considers the full spectrum of the landscape, from the magnificent slopes and crests of the hills reminiscent of bodies, to the journey of a snail through a great forest to find and kiss the spine of a creature. Unicorn horns likened to fallen angels, and tales of giants, create a world firmly developed in its conception but steeped in queer goings on. Through this expansive exploration of queer identity in the rural space, Kidd creates a tangible relationship between ourselves and the world around us.

Gabriel Kidd (b. 1999) lives and works in Manchester. They earned their undergraduate degree in Fine Art from the Manchester School of Art in 2021 and in the same year completed a placement at the Cyprus College of Arts in Lemba. Kidd has been included in several group shows in Manchester and had their first solo exhibition in 2022 at the artist-run space PS Mirabel. Kidd currently features in the Bloomberg New Contemporaries exhibition on view at the South London Gallery until March 2023.

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