



Theodore Ereira-Guyer, *Sleeping Lion ii*, 2024. Etching on plaster, dragon's blood, 86 cm x 200 cm x 16 cm.
Photograph: Lucid Plane. Courtesy of the Artist and Elizabeth Xi Bauer Gallery, London.

Theodore Ereira-Guyer

Sleeping Lions

Elizabeth Xi Bauer Gallery

27th September – 9th November 2024

Private View: 26th September 2024

Elizabeth Xi Bauer proudly presents *Sleeping Lions*, a solo exhibition of new works by **Theodore Ereira-Guyer**. This upcoming show focuses on an expansive body of work exploring innovative techniques and delving into themes surrounding memory and time.

Theodore Ereira-Guyer's process, largely etching on paper or plaster, involves a loss of information between the plate and the new surface, emulating the mechanism of memory. The medium is rooted in reproducibility, originally conceived as a tool to distribute information en masse. Instead, Ereira-Guyer creates unique works, whether one work printed per plate or a few, as each time, different aspects of the plate are accentuated, whereas others disappear, much like the fleeting and fading nature of time.

For this upcoming exhibition, a pond will be installed in the centre of the gallery. Fashioned in aluminium and filled with water, this pond will display a selection of portraits conceived by etching into plaster. Water will cascade from the eyes or the mouths of these works, evoking the action of crying or singing, respectively.

“There is a silence to the running of water, a timeless silence of fountains, of rivers running, tears of sadness and joy, and of songs repeated, and passed through time and generations - but I think my draw towards these acts of crying, and singing, is thinking about them as elementary acts, elementary parts of humanity and our lives as humans, of suffering and of overcoming”, explains Theodore Ereira-Guyer.

Further portraits from this series will be displayed throughout the exhibition space, like presences watching over. Ereira-Guyer draws inspiration from ancient death masks of historical figures, like the Tusculum portrait, and from antique books with portraits, as well as depictions of ordinary people. These faces appear familiar yet elusive; viewers naturally try to grasp their characters, sensing well-lived lives. However, these works represent faces across time, layered with history rather than fixed in a specific moment. The artist’s printing process, involving the buildup and removal of information, presents the barest essentials of a face, evoking the unreliability and incompleteness of memory.

Surrounding the pond will be etchings into plaster of tortoises and sleeping lions, alluding to a waterhole, an oasis, or perhaps even a mirage. For Ereira-Guyer, the tortoise is a metaphor for wisdom over time and the eternal. The artist thinks about sleeping lions as a dichotomy: a creature with enormous power and strength in a harmless, vulnerable form.

Etching into plaster works of forests and deserts will also be exhibited. For Ereira-Guyer, deserts evoke the qualities of the etching process. Deserts were seas and water sources, as is the etching from the plate; these vestiges of a bygone history are a trace of something that once was. Like fading frescoes, they remind the viewer of a more imagined glorious past yet take on a novel form.

Rather than paper through the printing press, the etchings into plaster works are created by applying a thick layer of wet plaster directly over the etched and inked plate. The plaster sets and dries, absorbing all the ink from the steel plate. These works instil a sense of excavating the past, analogous to ancient cave paintings and unearthed ruins, time-worn stone, akin to the sustained effects of acid rain. This is more discernible in the works created with no ink added to the plate, where the rust takes its place as the chief mark maker. Yet simultaneously, they have a contemporary feel due to Ereira-Guyer’s unique etching process and the qualities it engenders in the works.

Sleeping Lions will feature large bronze casts of faces that sit between figurative and abstraction. For Ereira-Guyer, bronze casting is another technique in which there is a transfer between surfaces. Throughout the stages of forming, moulding, pouring, and cooling, certain details are preserved while others are lost, mirroring the system of remembering. In this series, the artist has varied the treatment of the bronze works. Some he has polished so they are bright and shiny, while others in the series have been heat-treated, stimulating blue and green hues, like day and night, the sun and the moon. The works hold a mysterious eternal presence, like a spectre, evoking an ethereal aura.

Ereira-Guyer's rigorous process harnesses an array of techniques. The artist often builds layers on the etching plate, subtracts them, and then layers once again. The various applications of acid corrode through the chemical reaction with exposed metal, a natural home for ink. On occasion, his usage of protective varnish on the plate fosters undulating highlights and details when the works react to light, as these areas print with no ink; we see the image through its negative. The artist frequently welcomes and encourages rust from oxidation on the metal plate, an important part of his printing method, creating haptic layers full of texture. Ereira-Guyer constantly experiments and relishes any serendipity that arises. What remains are traces of prior mark-making and history. The erosion and decay within his process paralleling the entropy of life.

Ereira-Guyer continually pushes the boundaries of print: these include large-scale works, hand-stitching etchings on paper to fabrics, and adding various materials to the etchings—stones, gum arabic, and thousands of pins, for instance. The artist constantly drives his work into new realms of possibilities. Through this exhibition, he will continue his endeavours to push his practice even further.

This exhibition will be accompanied by a printed exhibition publication featuring an essay by Tom Jeffreys.

Theodore Ereira-Guyer and Elizabeth Xi Bauer would like to thank Katrin Hanusch from the Foundry Make Touch, and Oliver Kilby from Squared Framing, for their support with this exhibition.

Notes to Editors

Theodore Ereira-Guyer (born 1990, London, UK) lives and works between London, UK, and Lisbon, Portugal.

Ereira-Guyer studied at Central St. Martins, London, in 2011. He was awarded the WIP Prize in 2013, from the Royal College of Art, London, graduating with an MA in Print, in 2014. The same year, he was awarded the Helen Chadwick Award for multidisciplinary artists.

Ereira-Guyer's work has been included in exhibitions worldwide, including the Palazzo Pesaro Papafava, Italy, as part of the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019. His works are included in international private and public collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the British Museum, London; The Lookout Collection, London; Royal College of Art Archive, London; Tate Special Collections and Tate Archive, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon, Portugal; and the Yale Center for British Art, Connecticut. In 2023, the Millennium BCP Foundation, Lisbon, and MACAM – Museu de Arte Contemporânea Armando Martins, Lisbon, acquired works by Ereira-Guyer for their permanent collections.

The Thicket, in 2022, was Ereira-Guyer's first solo exhibition at Elizabeth Xi Bauer Gallery. In the same year, The Bridge Project, São Paulo, showcased *Time Lapse*, a selection of works by Theodore Ereira-Guyer created in Brazil and Europe. Theodore Ereira-Guyer and Sam Llewellyn-Jones: *Unwinding*, presented by Elizabeth Xi Bauer and Umbigo Magazine, opened

at Galeria Sá da Costa, Lisbon, in 2023. Additionally, in 2023, Ereira-Guyer exhibited in a collaboration between The Bridge Project and Elizabeth Xi Bauer in both Brussels and São Paulo.

In 2023, Elizabeth Xi Bauer presented *Phantom Dance*, an exhibition of works by Ereira-Guyer and Thiago Barbalho. This exhibition included multiple double-sided stacks of large format etchings by Ereira-Guyer which were installed so that they hung from the Gallery ceiling to form a false wall.

Elizabeth Xi Bauer presents *Theodore Ereira-Guyer: Sleeping Lions*, which will run from 27th September – 9th November 2024, open Wednesday through to Saturday, 12 – 6 pm or by appointment. A Private View will be held on 26th September 2024, 6 – 8 pm, in the artist's presence. The artist will be available for interviews.

A Dropbox with additional press material can be found here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/30zragb6z7f6lpn2z48qj/APmjeXED0QnTKQPsZSB65uM?rlkey=ajmj95e0sukluhoy966bp97be&st=v3q70zj0&dl=0>

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