

**HAUSER & WIRTH**  
SOMERSET

Press Release

**Soil Culture: Young Shoots**

**Hauser & Wirth Somerset, The Maltings**  
**15 November 2015 – 3 January 2016**  
**Opening: Saturday 14 November, 3 – 5 pm**



Between August 2014 and June 2015, the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW) supported 12 Soil Culture artist residencies across the South West, each aimed at encouraging an exploration of the importance of soil. 'Soil Culture: Young Shoots' presents the results of these residencies and is part of a wider programme that will tour to host galleries and organisations in the region, including The Maltings at Hauser & Wirth Somerset.

Working in partnership with a diverse range of organisations, the residencies provided dedicated time for experimentation, research and the development of new work as well as unparalleled access to facilities, expertise and unique working contexts. The briefs, developed in collaboration with each host organisation, were distinct and wide-ranging. They included invitations to explore the role of soil in carbon sequestration, peat in national parks in the South West, the production of soil, soil from an holistic and ecological perspective and soil cultivation.

Hauser & Wirth Somerset hosted Karen Guthrie's residency in October 2014 and are pleased to present the results of her time spent in Somerset this November. During her residency, Guthrie worked closely with Hauser & Wirth staff, especially those working on Durslade Farm and Oudolf Field. A key meeting was with Saskia Majoram, a florist, medicinal herbalist and gardener. Guthrie was interested in how her work could embody the essence of a place without being visible. She wanted to capture the intrinsic qualities of soil, to find out what happens when earth is distilled instead of the usual plant or organic material and to discover what soil really 'smells' like. Borrowing Saskia's copper still, Guthrie distilled

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some sub-soil sourced from the grounds. The result was a colourless, pungent and enigmatic liquid, which is presented in 'Soil Culture: Young Shoots', together with the distillation still.

Other residencies included Anton Burdakov's 'Soil Map' at the Eden Project, Cornwall. Anton was invited to reengage Eden's diverse audience with the many facets and functions of soil. Anton created a mobile sculptural unit based on the molecular structure of china clay, mined in the quarry on which the Eden Project is built. During his residency, the structure functioned as a tool for engagement, display and research – a 'Soil Map'. It was gradually populated with stories, images and artefacts that emerged from a unique dialogue with the Eden community.

London-based practice, Something & Son were selected for a residency at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The starting point for their residency was the EU's categorisation of soil as a non-renewable source, and that according to many scientists there are as few as 50 harvests left in some parts of the world. Something & Son created their own 'Soil Lab', to explore what soil really is by attempting to make it from scratch. They copied and accelerated complex systems that take place in nature, using reassembled machines, which are presented in the touring exhibition.

Various residencies took a more performative or responsive approach, such as Anne-Marie Culhane's 'Singing to the Trees' at the University of Exeter. Anne-Marie commissioned poet, James Crowden and musician Tim Hill to work with her and student volunteers to create a Wassail event in response to a young orchard on campus. Similarly, Canadian artist, Sarah Ciurysek staged a site-specific walk during her time at Daylesford Organic Farm. The work was initially presented during their summer festival on 16 May 2015, including eight audio tracks featuring recordings of people speaking about their relationship with soil.

'Soil Culture: Young Shoots' will run 15 November 2015 – 3 January 2016 at The Maltings studio space in Bruton, open Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am – 4 pm.

### **Artist Residencies and Host Organisations**

Anne-Marie Culhane, Residency at University of Exeter

Anton Burdakov, Residency at the Eden Project, Cornwall

Debra Solomon, Residency at Schumacher College, Dartington

Jonny Briggs, Residency at White Moose, Barnstaple

Karen Guthrie, Residency at Hauser & Wirth Somerset

Karen Francesca Wydler, Residency at Hannahs at Seale-Hayne

Lisa Hirmer / Dodo Lab, Residency at Peninsula Arts, Plymouth University

Marissa Lee Benedict, Residency at the Environment and Sustainability Institute, University of Exeter

Paul Chaney, Residency at Kestle Barton, Helston, Cornwall

Sarah Ciurysek, Residency at Daylesford Organic Farm, Cotswolds

Sophie Mason and Simon Brown, Commission at Dolphin Primary School, Bristol

Something & Son, Residency at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Touchstone Collaborations, Residency at Blue Finger Alliance

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### About The Maltings

Hauser & Wirth Somerset's exhibition programme is accompanied by an active artists' residency scheme. Artists are invited to spend an extended period of time in Bruton, based at The Maltings studio space in the centre of the town, in order to draw inspiration from Durslade Farm, the local culture and the surrounding landscape. The residency programme has no prescribed outcomes, instead it encourages artists to integrate with the local community, fostering a dialogue about their work, contemporary art and culture within everyday life.

Björn and Oddur Roth were the first artists to be invited to work in the newly renovated studio space. During their residency, they focused on creating a fully-functioning, site-specific bar that now forms an integral part of the Roth Bar & Grill. Pilot residencies in 2012 and 2013 included Hauser & Wirth artists Pipilotti Rist and Guillermo Kuitca, followed by Mark Wallinger and Karen Guthrie that took over the studios from July to October 2014.

### About CCANW

The Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World is a leader in the arts and ecology movement, based at the University of Exeter. CCANW delivers a local programme at its small cafe-gallery and a wider programme through partnerships across the South West.

As society has become increasingly concerned over its changing relationship with nature, there has been a growing need for a dedicated exploration of these issues. Through exhibitions, talks, and artist residencies CCANW aims to create the platform to discuss these issues through which new understandings of the natural world can develop; using contemporary art that explores social, environmental and scientific issues.

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#### Hauser & Wirth Somerset

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Exhibition opening hours:  
Saturday – Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm

[www.hauserwirthsomerset.com](http://www.hauserwirthsomerset.com)

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