

C L O S E

LOOK OUT

A group exhibition exploring landscape across a century of change



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*Charlotte Keates, A Seed of Growth
Courtesy of the artist and CLOSE.*

12 September to 31 October 2026

Private view: Saturday 12 September, 2pm to 4pm

CLOSE, Hatch Beauchamp

Taunton TA3 6AE

Somerset, UK (August 2026): CLOSE reveals details of *LOOK OUT*, a group exhibition running from **12 September to 31 October 2026** at CLOSE's Somerset gallery. Bringing together artists of different generations, all living and working in Britain, the exhibition traces a century of artistic engagement with the land. Selected works by **Ivon Hitchens**

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(1893 to 1979) are shown alongside new and recent work by **Saad Qureshi, Magnus Hammick, David Abbott, Dien Berziga, Christabel Blackburn, Sarah Gillespie, Lee Johnson, Charlotte Keates, Rob Lyon, Katherine Perrins, Ged Quinn, Myrna Quiñonez** and **Harriet White**. Spanning painting, sculpture, drawing and installation, the exhibition reveals landscape as both a physical reality and a psychological space.



*Ivon Hitchens, oil on canvas, signed lower centre.
20 x 18 in / 50.8 x 45.7 cm. Provenance: the artist's estate.
Courtesy of CLOSE.*

At a moment when the world feels increasingly unstable, environmentally, politically and socially, our internal landscapes are also shifting. The certainty of familiar structures and beliefs is continually challenged, leaving many of us searching for points of connection and grounding. *Look Out* proposes that nature and the changing seasons remain among the few constants we can rely upon. Landscape, in all its forms, becomes a source of comfort, continuity and belonging, a place where we can orient ourselves amidst uncertainty.

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The exhibition includes selected works by **Ivon Hitchens**, one of the most influential British landscape painters of the twentieth century. Often regarded as a pioneer of modern landscape painting, Hitchens transformed the genre through immersive, rhythmic compositions that dissolved the boundaries between observation and sensation. His work shifted the emphasis from simply depicting a landscape to experiencing it, creating a legacy that continues to influence generations of artists. His presence establishes a historical foundation from which the exhibition unfolds, opening a dialogue across a century of artistic practice.



*Saad Qureshi, A Handful of Paradise, 2024.
Courtesy of the artist and CLOSE.*

At its core, and marking this year's Somerset Art Weeks Festival, *Look Out* is anchored by the work of **Saad Qureshi**, whose sculptures and imagined topographies occupy a space between memory, dream and invention. His landscapes are neither entirely real nor wholly imagined: they emerge from a deeply personal language of displacement, belonging and

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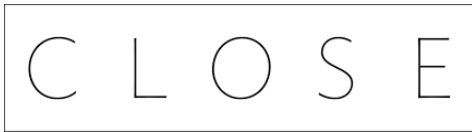
transformation. Alongside, **Magnus Hammick** presents paintings rooted in the Somerset landscape, where instinctive mark-making and close observation merge to create works that are both immediate and contemplative. Together, these artists establish a conversation between the external world and the landscapes we carry within ourselves.

Around this central dialogue, a constellation of voices unfolds, each approaching the landscape through different histories, experiences, and materials. Whether through painting, sculpture, drawing or installation, the artists in *Look Out* reveal landscape as a site of memory, imagination, migration, ecology and emotional connection. Some reflect on inherited relationships to land and place. Others consider movement, displacement and the changing nature of belonging. Material, gesture, colour and form become languages through which these ideas are explored, carrying traces of encounter, memory and lived experience.



Dien Berziga, Stone Wall (2026)
Courtesy the artist and CLOSE.

LOOK OUT reflects Somerset's rich artistic heritage while extending far beyond geographical boundaries. It draws connections between the local and the global, the



personal and the collective, the remembered and the imagined. The exhibition speaks to the vital role artists play in helping us navigate uncertainty, offering new ways of understanding our relationship to the environments we inhabit.

As founder of CLOSE and Co-Chair of Somerset Art Works, **Freeny Yianni** continues to champion a vision of art that is deeply rooted in place while remaining open to wider conversations about culture, ecology and community. She says: "Landscape is never simply what we see before us. It is what we remember, what we carry with us and what we hope for. In an era of continual change, the rhythms of nature remind us that transformation is not only inevitable but essential. The works in *Look Out* invite us to pause, reconnect with the world around us and find our place within it once more."

For media inquiries or further information, please contact:

Katy Wickremesinghe: katy@ktwlondon.com

Assistant: info@ktwlondon.com

High resolution images are available on request.

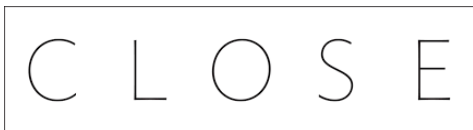
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PRESS IMAGES

The following images are available on request at high resolution, with credits lines as listed

CLOSE, founded by Freeny Yianni, is a distinctive contemporary art space rooted in the Somerset landscape, with an additional project space in Marylebone. Born from Yianni's deep commitment to working closely with artists, CLOSE has evolved into a vibrant hub for residencies, exhibitions and education, defined by curatorial sensitivity and a spirit of collaboration. The gallery works with both living artists and artist estates, offering a unique platform for thoughtful, long-form exhibitions that encourage deeper engagement. Its rural setting fosters a slower, more reflective rhythm, serving as an intentional counterpoint to the often-frenetic pace of the wider art world.

Guided by Yianni's extensive knowledge of contemporary art history, CLOSE forges connections between local communities and international voices, championing a broad range of artistic practices. Art at CLOSE is not confined to traditional walls; it extends into the gardens and surrounding landscape, inviting visitors to pause, reflect, and connect more deeply with the work and the environment.



CURATOR BIOGRAPHY

Freeny Yianni is a curator, storyteller and the founder of CLOSE, a place shaped as much by instinct as by intention. Set within a 17th-century house and estate in Somerset, CLOSE has grown into a quietly influential centre for contemporary art, one that privileges sensitivity, longevity and the deep, often unseen labour of nurturing artistic practice. Yianni, a Greek Cypriot who has lived most of her life in the UK, brings to her work a lived understanding of displacement, resilience and return. Art, for her, is always a vehicle for transformation.

Earlier this year, Yianni curated the Gilbert Bayes Award for the Royal Society of Sculptors, with the exhibition first held at TM Lighting before travelling to Wakefield, an opportunity to introduce sculpture to new contexts and audiences that continues to underpin her curatorial language. Alongside this, she serves as Co-Chair of Somerset Art Works, the charity behind Somerset Art Weeks, where her commitment extends beyond exhibition-making into advocacy. Her interest in the wellbeing, heritage and education strands of the charity's work places her at its heart as both guide and instigator.

CLOSE represents a focused roster of artists and estates, including The Estate of Jane Harris and The Estate of Grenville Davey, relationships that span over three decades and stand as testament to Yianni's enduring loyalty and belief in legacy. Alongside these, she works closely with artists such as Trish Morrissey, Simon Hitchens, Anna Mossman, Carali McCall, Katherine Perrins, Stewart Geddes and Toni Davey. Yianni keeps her circle intentionally lean, allowing for a depth of engagement that resists the transience of the market and instead prioritises continuity, dialogue and growth.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

David Abbott (b. 1981) grew up in Hertfordshire and studied art at James Madison University in Virginia before completing an MA in Multidisciplinary Printmaking at the University of the West of England in 2007. He uses paint, collage and drawing to explore landscape as the object of our projections and is drawn to folk song and lore and the way they locate people within a place. He lives and works in Bristol.

Dien Berziga (b. 2001, Beijing) is a Chinese-Italian artist based in London. His paintings explore individuality and the intimate stories found within urban landscapes, with three-dimensional printed frames inspired by architectural forms serving as extensions of the painted narrative. He holds a BA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins (2023).

C L O S E

Christabel Blackburn (b. 1986, London) read Classics at Newcastle University before studying figurative drawing in Florence and then painting at the London Atelier of Representational Art. She is an observer of solitary figures in cities and interiors, working in a pared-down language of colour, form and long shadow. She won Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year in 2020.

Sarah Gillespie (b. 1963) studied at the Atelier Neo-Medici in Paris and read Fine Art at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, Oxford. She works from South Devon in mezzotint and drawing, most recently on British moths and on the wetlands of Slapton Ley. She was elected to the Royal West of England Academy in 2016, and her work is held by the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum.

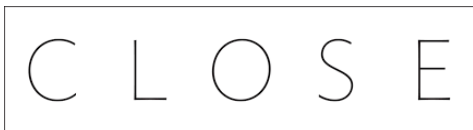
Magnus Hammick (b. 1971) graduated from Oxford University and emerged as one of the key figures in the Young British Art movement in the 1990s, with work included in Sensation at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1997. He is also an environmentalist and entrepreneur, and balances this with a painting practice focused on nature and his relationship to it.

Ivon Hitchens (1893 to 1979) was born in London and studied at St John's Wood School of Art and the Royal Academy Schools. A founding member of the Seven and Five Society, he moved to Lavington Common near Petworth in 1940 after his London studio was bombed, and the surrounding Sussex woodland became his subject for the next forty years. He represented Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1956 and was appointed CBE in 1958. His work is held by Tate and the Courtauld.

Lee Johnson was born in Wiltshire and has lived and worked in London since 2000, following an MA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins in 2001. He was selected for the John Moores Painting Prize in 2010 and won the inaugural Lido Stores Open in Margate in 2021. His work is held by Kettle's Yard, Soho House and University of the Arts London.

Charlotte Keates (b. 1990) paints architectural interiors and landscapes shaped by the utopian ideals of mid-century modernism, drawing on architects including Frank Lloyd Wright and Buckminster Fuller. Shifting perspectives lend her compositions a quiet disorientation, closer to a dreamed déjà vu than to a record. She has exhibited with Arusha Gallery since 2016.

Rob Lyon (b. 1982, Lancashire) is a self-taught painter living and working in West Sussex. He paints the South Downs, where he spent his childhood and to which he returned as an



adult, though the works are imagined rather than observed landscapes. Extending Paul Nash's idea of *genius loci*, he has developed a visual lexicon of dots, dashes, triangles and crosses. He is represented by Hales, London.

Katherine Perrins (b. 1983, London) completed an MA in Fine Art with Distinction at City and Guilds of London Art School in 2017, following a first-class BA at Falmouth College of Arts. She has twice been artist in residence at CLOSE and has shown there regularly, most recently in *Sunny Side Up* in 2025. She was selected for the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 2022.

Ged Quinn (b. 1963, Liverpool) studied at the Ruskin School of Art, the Slade School of Fine Art, the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf and the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam, and lives and works in Cornwall. His paintings set landscapes in the vein of Claude Lorrain against fragments of history, art history and mythology. Solo exhibitions include Tate St Ives and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. He is represented by Stephen Friedman Gallery.

Myrna Quiñonez (b. 1987, Los Mochis, Sinaloa) graduated from Guanajuato University in 2011 and lives and works in Bristol. Her paintings approach landscape as something synthesised rather than transcribed, working between the picturesque tradition and the distance of memory and migration. Solo exhibitions include *The Horizon Pulled Me Close* at BEERS London in 2024.

Saad Qureshi (b. 1986, Bewal, Pakistan) was raised in Bradford and lives and works between London and Oxford. He studied at Oxford Brookes University and took an MFA in Painting at the Slade School of Fine Art in 2010. He constructs what he calls *mindscapes*, drawn from his own and others' memories. Recent solo exhibitions include Yorkshire Sculpture Park, where he has been a trustee since 2021.

Harriet White (b. 1979, Taunton) studied at Falmouth Art College and then Bath Spa University College, graduating in Fine Art in 2001, and lives and works in Bristol. She paints at large scale from her own photographs, holding a tension between photographic precision and looser, more painterly handling, with her subject shifting in recent years from portraiture to forest landscapes. She exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 2023.