

TUESDAY RIDDELL

MESSUMS LONDON
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MESSUMS LONDON



FOREST FLOOR

7 – 25 August 2019
Preview: Tuesday 6 August 6pm

Messums London

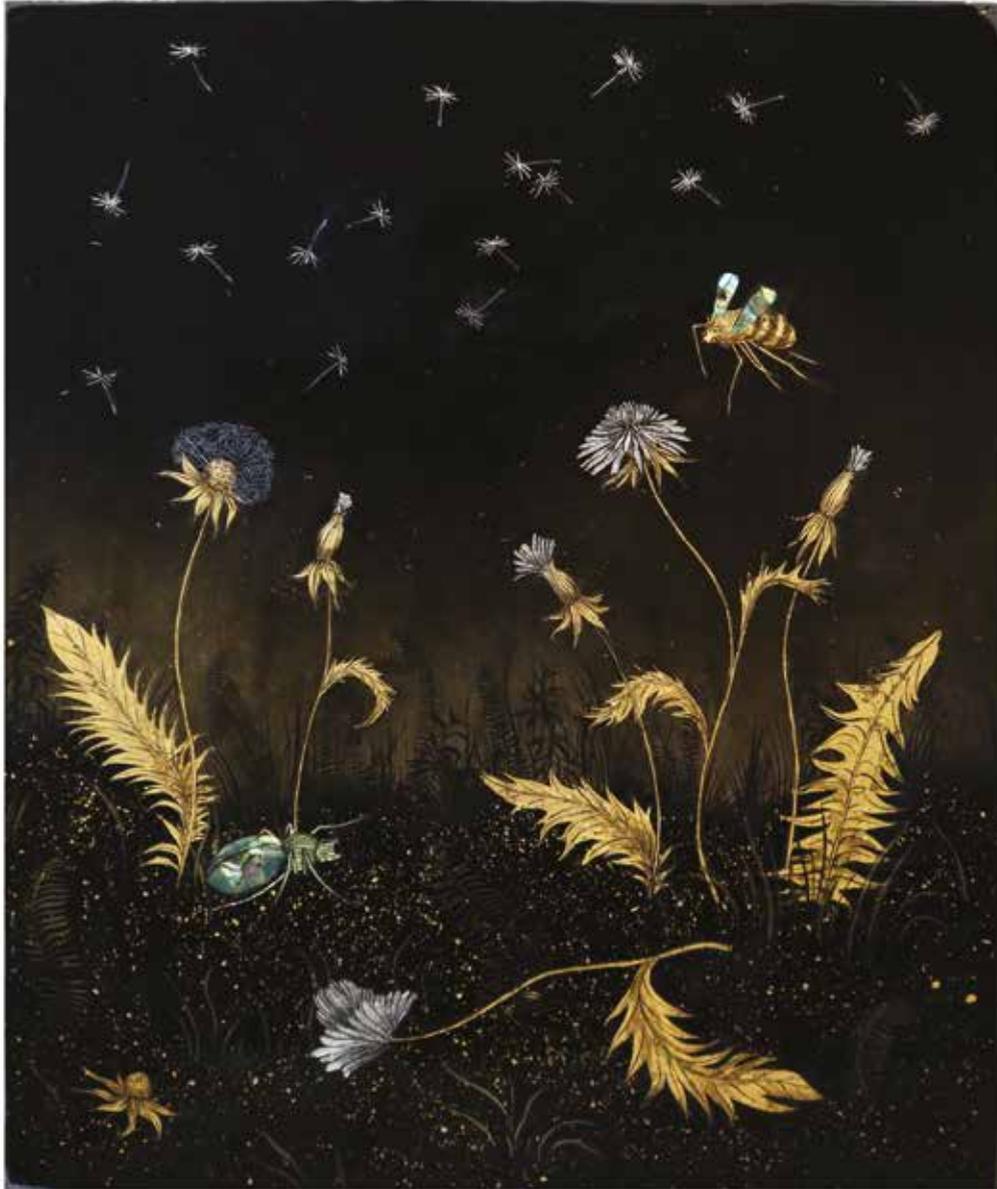
"The sky was clear – remarkably clear – and the twinkling of all the stars seemed to be but throbs of one body, timed by a common pulse"
Thomas Hardy, 'Far from the Madding Crowd'

Tuesday Riddell's work takes us down to the forest floor and a glorious insight into the world that captures her imagination, that ethereal nocturne where all cycles of life and death carry on with rarely a watchful eye.

However it is her craftsmanship, that under admired phrase of accolade, which provides us with a second and lasting pleasure. It was perhaps for that reason that our curator Catherine Milner's eye was arrested by Tuesday's work whilst on the beat of those venues where talent and originality are so sought but rarely found.

Tuesday's first show was in our Emerging Talents exhibition last November and then at the London Art fair this spring. It is with great pleasure that we welcome Tuesday to Cork Street for her debut show with Messums London.

Johnathan Messum



Fairy's Keys
 Japanning - Mother of Pearl, 23.5
 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold &
 silver powder, pigment and paint
 on European lacquered board
 25.5 x 20.5 cm

Catherine Milner in conversation with Tuesday Riddell

Catherine Milner: How do you start your day?

Tuesday Riddell: I usually have a coffee in my garden before I head to the studio, reading or just listening to a podcast. I'll photograph plants or take a video of bees and butterflies sometimes. I also arrange small dioramas, like composing pieces of plants and grass with snails and stones, arranged in a composition I might want to use in future works. Once in France I photographed a bright pink spider eating a butterfly! Nature scenes like that are very inspiring to me but I find rather a lot of interesting things like that occurring in my own garden, like recently a caterpillar being skinned alive by ants and a slug eating a worm. After a bit of quiet time having my coffee on the grass, it's off to the studio.

CM: What is your earliest memory of any painting?

TR: I remember very vividly seeing 'The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah' by John Martin at The Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle. As a child it felt absolutely huge and terrifying, probably because of that intensity I was completely absorbed by it. But my first memory of a painting was probably a printed replica of a JH Lynch's 'Nymph' painting that hung at my Grandad's house. As a 3-4 year old I remember thinking the forests looked magical and dark, but it makes sense that a child would highlight those aspects of the image.

CM: How did you discover lacquerware?

TR: I discovered European lacquer when I was made Painter Stainer's Decorative Surface fellow

at the City & Guilds of London Art School in 2018. The Painter's Stainers Company as well as the City & Guilds Art School saw the need for the upkeep of traditional decorative techniques as the declining numbers of practitioners has resulted in the problem of these skills no longer being passed down the way they once were. I was introduced to Japanning by Hugi Hicyilmaz and instantly fell in love with the technique, as I observed that my style, when it comes to two dimensional surfaces, was acutely complemented by the aesthetic properties of the practice and I think it opened up a well of creativity and inspiration that I knew was there, but hadn't found how to use. Things just easily fell into place for me, it's like something just clicked and my work felt more defined and exciting.

CM: What is the quality you like the most about it?

TR: I would say the way the pieces subtly change with the light throughout the day. The best time to look at them perhaps is sunset because the richness of the gold reflects the vibrant orange tones of the sun, lighting up the details of the piece, giving them a warm and very beautiful shine. But I would have to say that my personal favourite is night time. The gold has an ethereal glow when it is dark. It looks almost paranormal. The depth of the black sharpens the contrast and the glow of the gold leaf, and makes each piece look like a polished gemstone.

CM: What is the biggest challenge?

TR: I find the biggest challenge is the incredibly laborious process of board prepping, with long

hours of sanding and trying to get the painted layers even. Each piece has up to 25-30 layers of lacquer, which need to be sanded between each layer to prevent the large raised lines of the brush. Some days it can become a rather meditative experience as you spend hours interacting and building up these surfaces, sensitive to different weathers, reacting to the atmosphere and even the marks left by the paintbrush affect the overall materiality of the final product... but I would be lying if I said it wasn't mostly tedious labour.

CM: What is the narrative you are trying to convey in the works?

TR: Historically Sottobosco paintings were often responses to scientific and philosophical discoveries of the time, which to me make the works very exciting, and it's certainly something I have in mind when approaching my own practice. My works intend to zoom into the insect level world like a magnifying glass, mirroring our own society, with so much harmony and beauty to be witnessed, as well as addressing issues about our environment, our role in it and even the philosophical dilemmas of having to face death and suffering. Art has often depicted the environment and time – my work addresses issues regarding the deterioration of flora and fauna reflective of our own current environmental crisis. So in my approach I depict birds and insects falling from the skies in a horror movie-esque way, showing the environmental conflict we currently face, but always in a fairy tale-like atmosphere, perhaps as a way to package my discourse in a visual language that is accessible and universally recognised, with visual references indicating a sense of nostalgia, literary storytelling and symbolically charged. I commonly emphasise certain elements in my compositions, such as plants, insects and fruits, historical symbols used within politics, science, technology, religion, folklore and literature that could take the meaning of a variety of different things, allowing the viewer to create their own stories.



CM: The scenes look very English or European but the technique is Japanese, historically, was there English lacquerware as well as that from the Far East, or are you the first English lacquer artist?

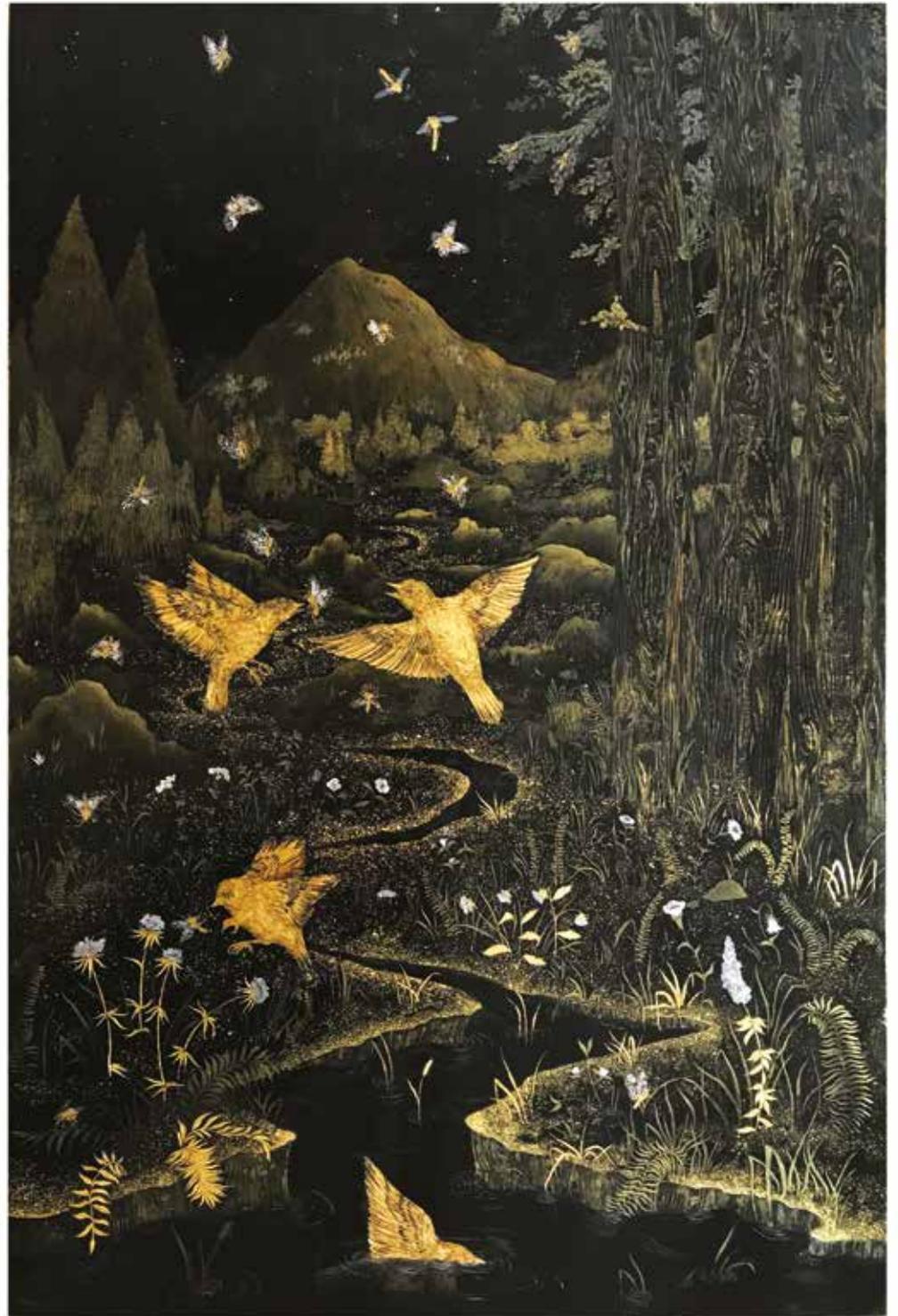
TR: Although the technique imitates Asian lacquer work, Japanning is a European technique which was brought to Britain during the 17th century to keep up with the demand for Asian lacquer work. Historically the English imitation lacquer work made was mimicking eastern themes or copying eastern designs, using European lacquer to replicate the characteristics of Asian products highly popular throughout Europe at the time. There was a book written called 'A Treatise of Japanning and Varnishing' by John Stalker and George Parker, which was filled with templates of images and recipes as a manual for people to use on the japanning technique. Today japanning is only practiced in conservation, which is why it is on the Radcliffe list of Endangered Crafts.

I have not come across anyone so far using the technique as an art form but maybe I've just not heard of them yet. I know people who know how to do the technique and have tried to look for others that share the practice in a fine art context but I've been unsuccessful!

CM: If money and time were no objects, what kind of work would you make?

TR: I would like to make something immersive, where you feel like you're completely in a world like Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Mirrored rooms. If they weren't as beautiful as they already are I would like to do it in a cathedral like St. Paul's, Santa Maria del Fiore or Notre Dame where I could fill the walls with forest scenes and the whole ceiling would be birds in the night sky, the inside of the domes japanned with images of the planets orbiting around a huge golden sun like a planetarium.

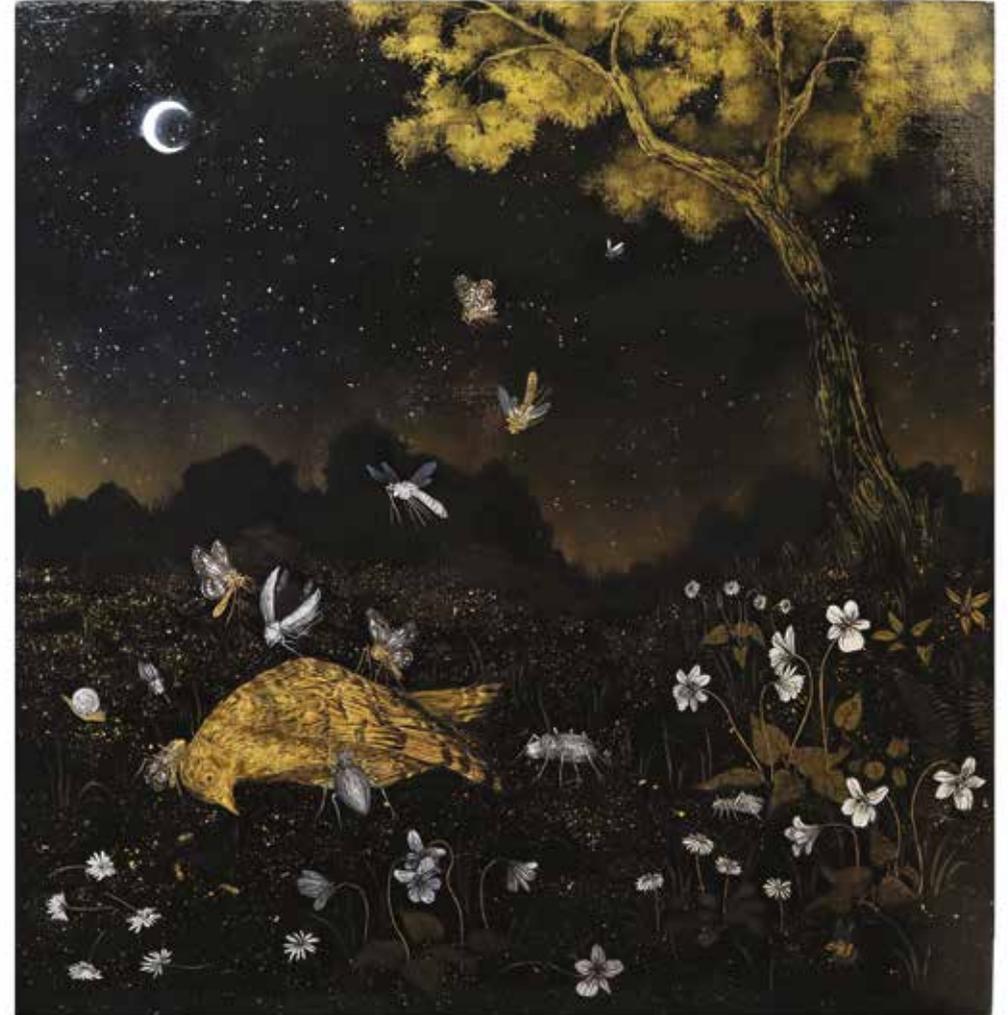




Bird in Stream
Japanning - 23.5 karat
gold leaf, silver leaf, gold
& silver powder, pigment
and paint on European
lacquered board
91 x 60 cm



Decay
Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
25.5 x 25.5 cm

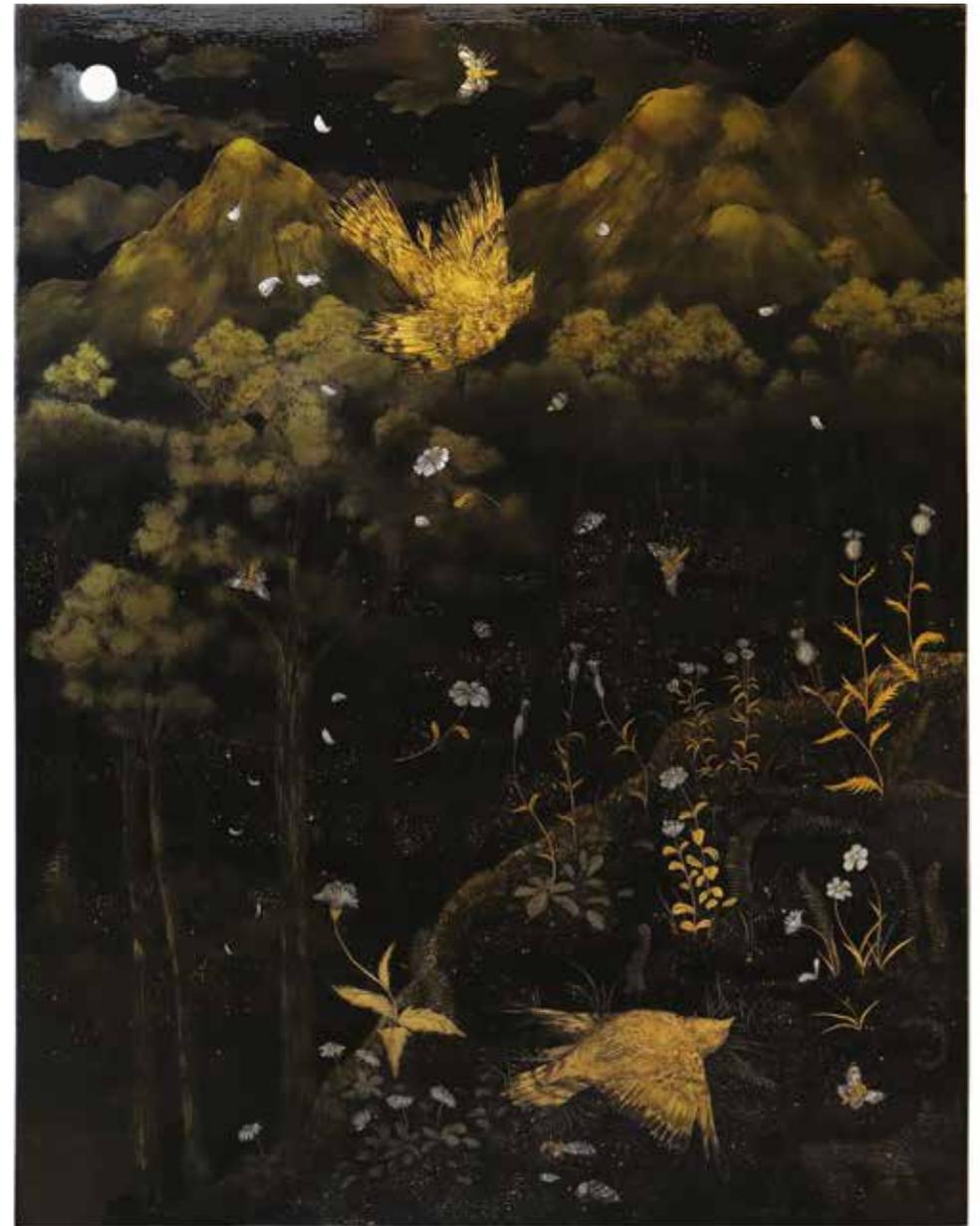


Starry Sky
Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
40 x 40 cm



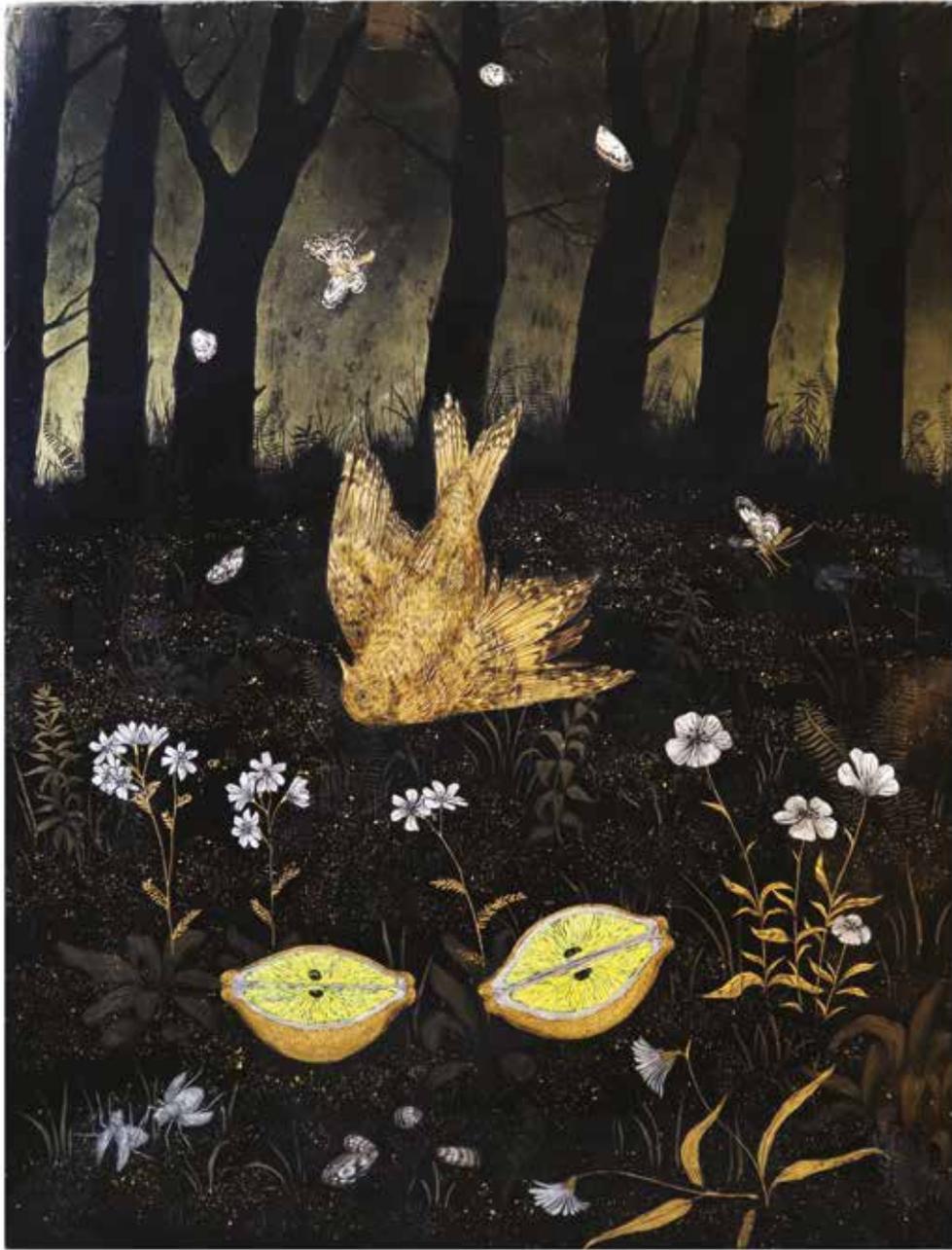
Mother of Pearl Moths

Japanning - Mother of Pearl, 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
25.5 x 20.5 cm



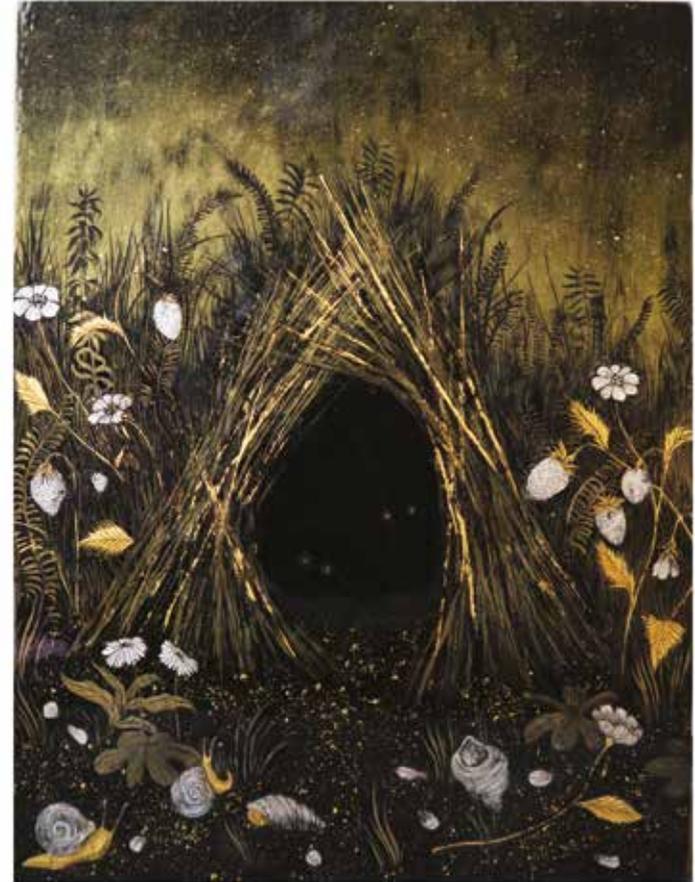
Falling Birds

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
76 x 60 cm



Lemons

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
50.5 x 40.5 cm

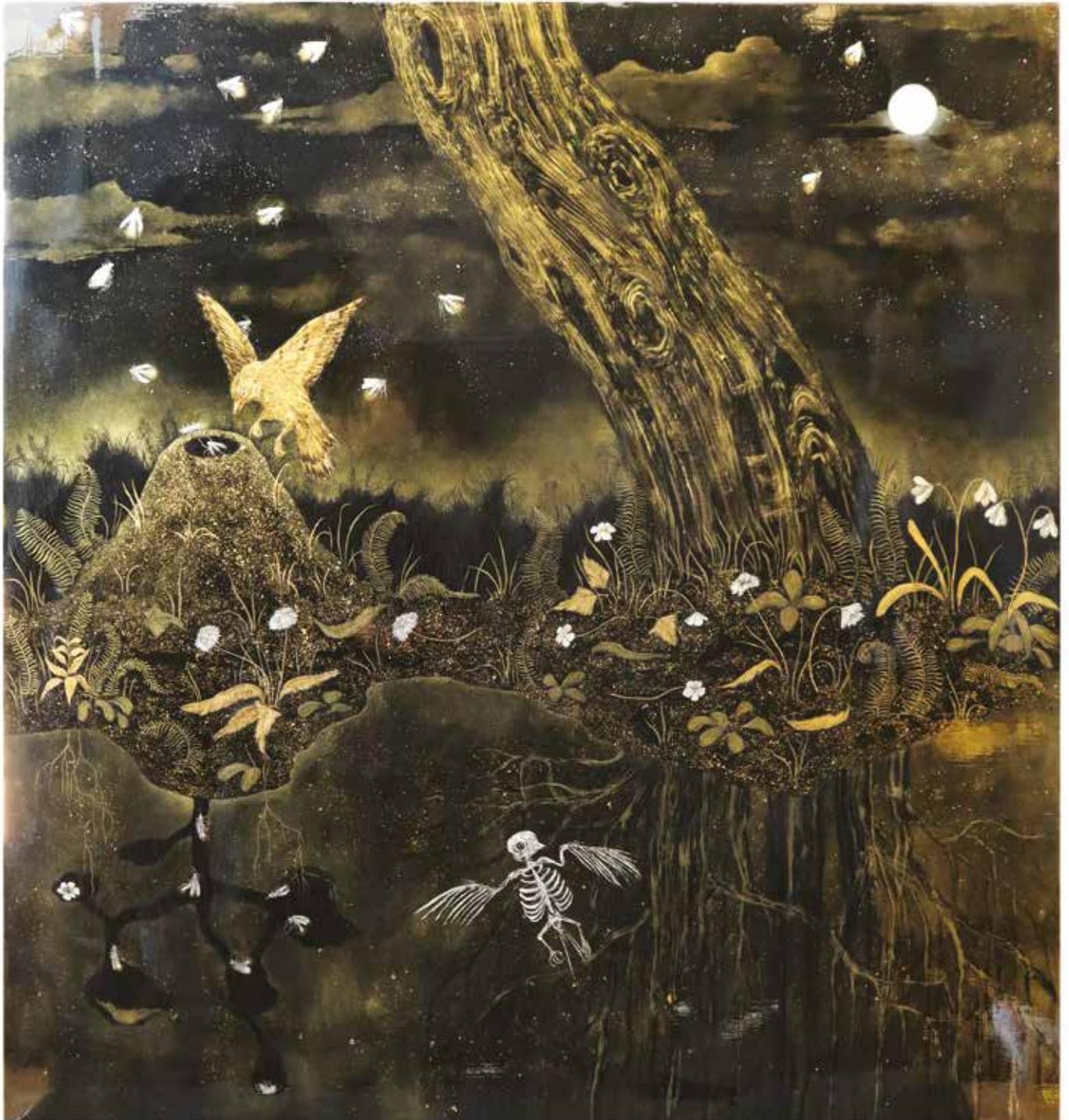


Nest

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
20.5 x 25.5 cm

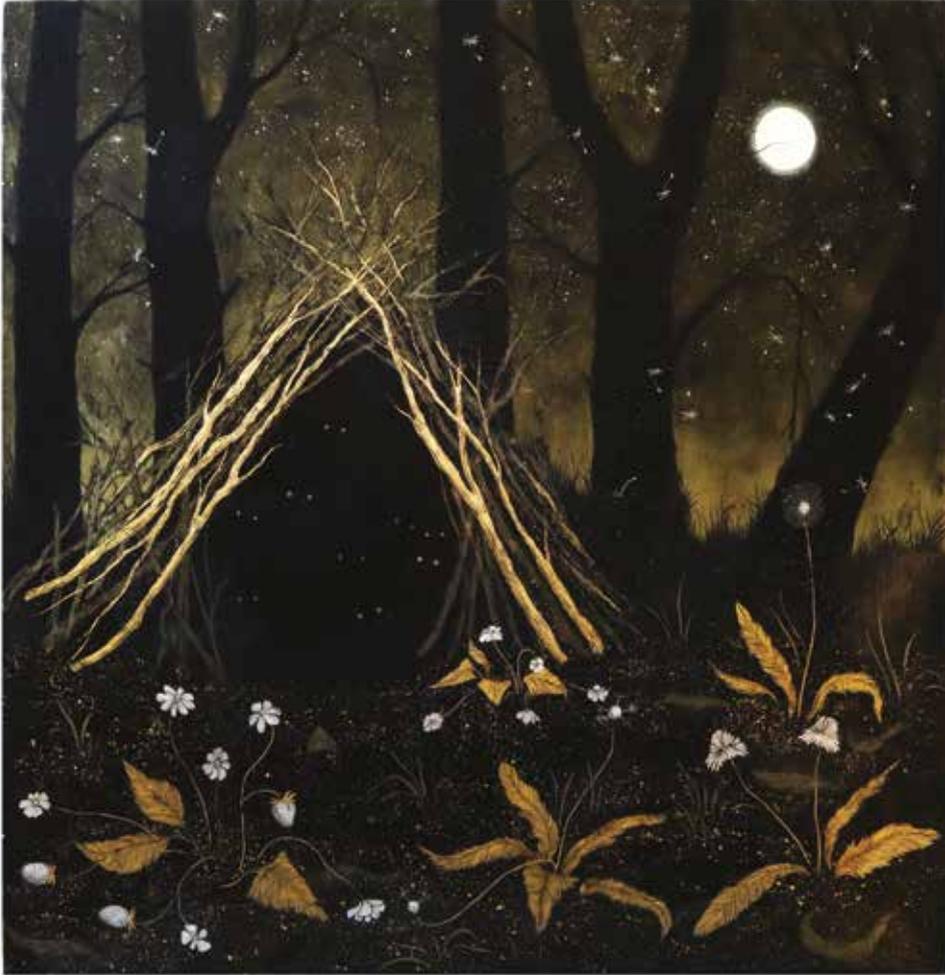


Black Lake
Japanning – 23.5 karat gold
leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver
powder, pigment and paint on
European lacquered board
121 x 91 cm



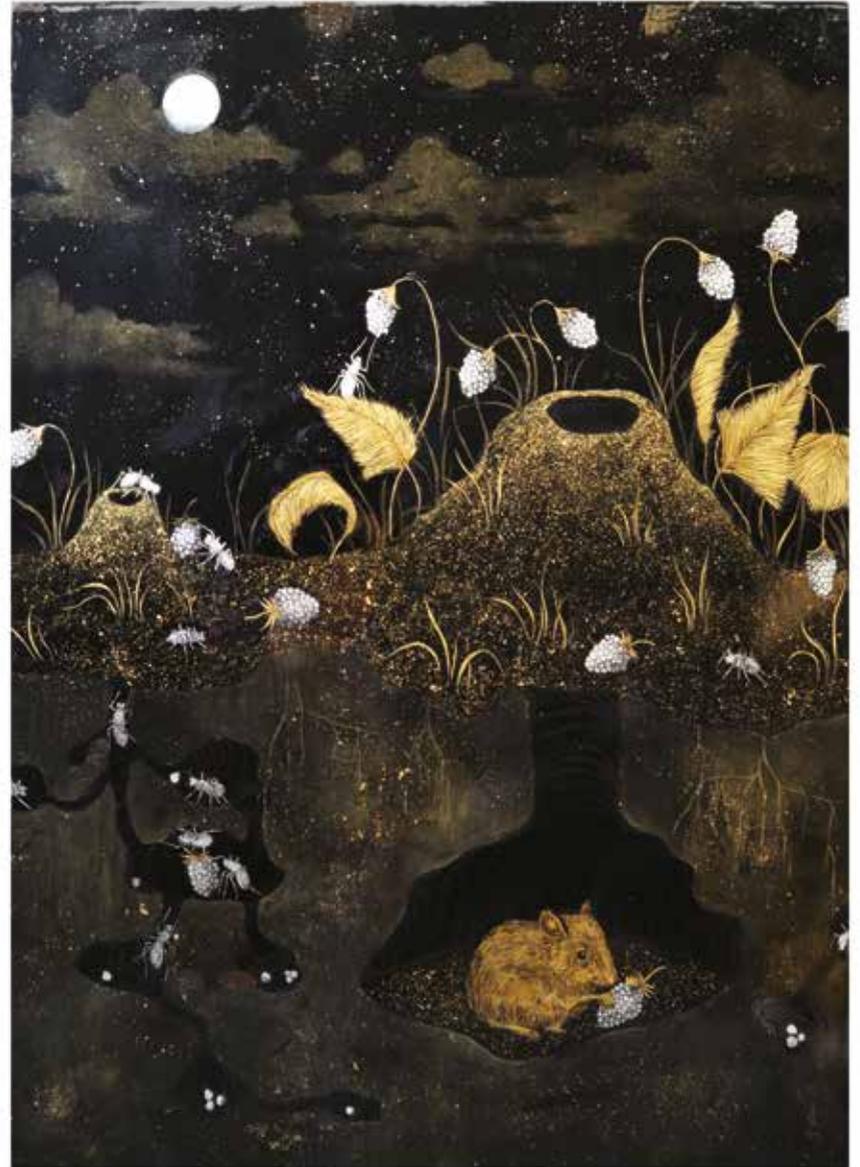
Natural History

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
91 x 91 cm



Dandelion Woods

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
51 x 51 cm



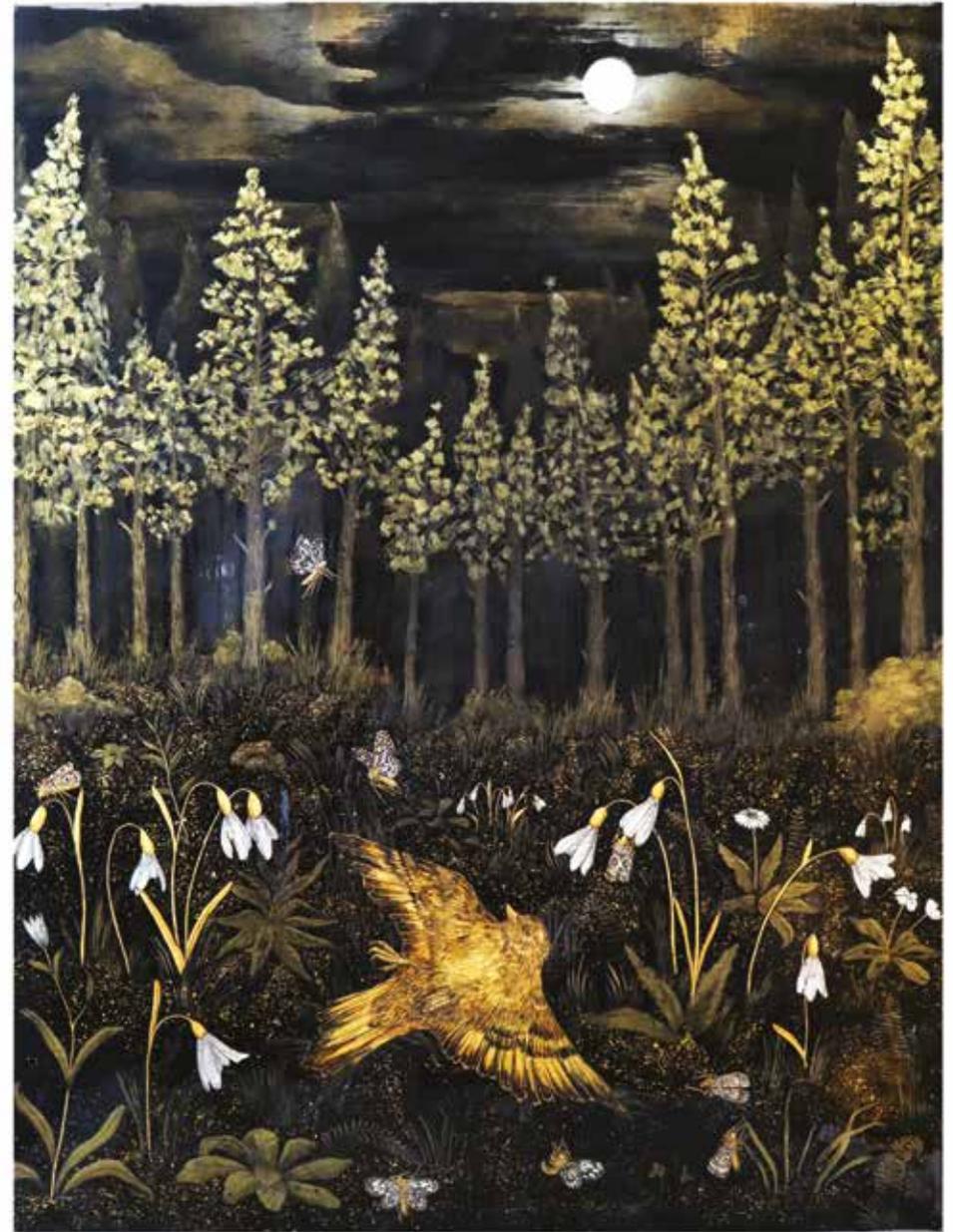
Burrow

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
40.5 x 31 cm



Insects feasting on Apple

Japañning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
25 x 20 cm



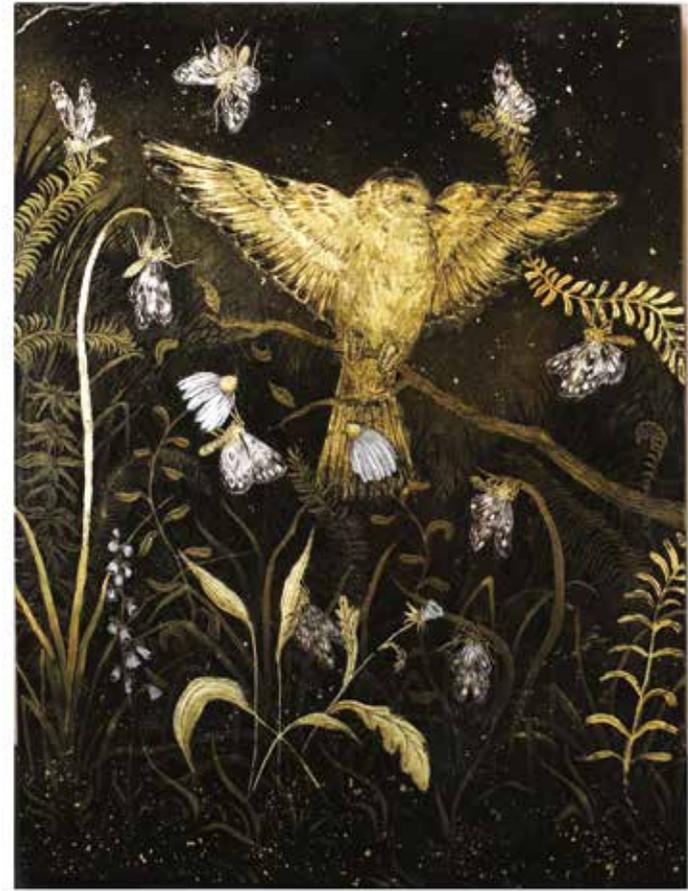
Falling from the Stars

Japañning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
51 x 40 cm



Golden Snake

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
15 x 15 cm



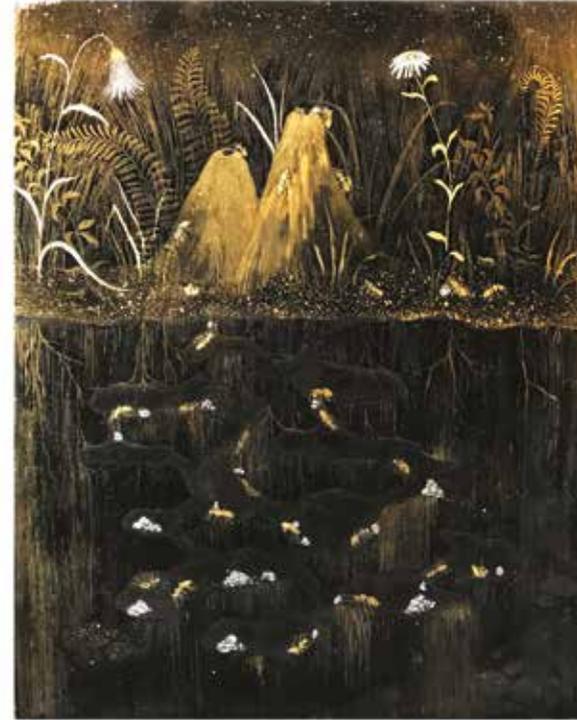
Sottobosco

Japanning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
25 x 20 cm



Spider eating a Butterfly

Japaaning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
61 x 51 cm



Ant Nest

Japaaning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
25 x 20 cm



Bower

Japaaning - 23.5 karat gold leaf, silver leaf, gold & silver powder, pigment and paint on European lacquered board
20.5 x 20.5 cm



Fairy's Keys
25.5 x 20.5 cm
£2,850



Bird in Stream
91 x 60 cm
£8,850



Decay
25.5 x 25.5 cm
£2,850



Starry Sky
40 x 40 cm
£3,950



Mother of Pearl Moths
25.5 x 20.5 cm
£2,850



Falling Birds
76 x 80 cm
£7,500



Lemons
50.5 x 40.5 cm
£4,500



Nest
20.5 x 25.5 cm
£2,850



Black Lake
121 x 91 cm
£9,850



Natural History
91 x 91 cm
£6,850



Dandelion Woods
51 x 51 cm
£4,850



Burrow
40.5 x 31 cm
£3,850



Insects feasting on Apple
20 x 25 cm
£2,850



Falling from the Stars
51 x 40 cm
£4,500



Golden Snake
15 x 15 cm
£1,850



Sottobosco
25 x 20 cm
£2,850



Spider eating a Butterfly
61 x 51 cm
£5,250



Ant Nest
25 x 20 cm
£2,850



Bower
20.5 x 20.5 cm
£2,500

All works are framed
Prices are inclusive of VAT
enquiries@messumslondon.com

28 Cork Street, Mayfair,
London W1S 3NG
0207 437 5545



Education

BA Hons Fine Art Painting –
2012- 2015 - City & Guilds of
London Art School
Painter-Stainers Decorative
Surface Fellowship 2018

Exhibitions

March 2019
'Darlings of the Underground'
DATEAGLE ART, Subsidiary
Projects, London

February 2019

'Paint: The Seen,
The Unseen and the Imagined',
Messums Wiltshire

January 2019

London Art Fair,
Business Design Centre, London

December 2018

The Violet Hour Group Show,
Notting Hill, London

November 2018

'Emerging Talents: Tuesday
Riddell', Messums Wiltshire

September 2018

End of Fellowship Show,
City & Guilds MA Show, London

May 2018

Contemporary Young Artist
award exhibit, The Biscuit
Factory, Newcastle

May 2018

London Craft Week

April 2018

Belfiore 9, London

March 2018

Group Show, Picnic,
Subsidiary Projects, London

May 2017

Viktor Wynd's Museum of
Curiosities, The Last
Tuesday Society

Awards , Fellowships, Residencies

Painter-Stainers company
Decorative and Fine Arts Society
Exhibition Artist in Residence
2019

Honorary Freeman of the
worshipful company of
Painter-Stainers 2019

Cockpit Arts / Raddcliffe Craft
Development Award 2019

Painter-Stainer Decorative
Surface Fellowship 2018

Slaughterhouse Print Prize 2015

Interviews, Articles

Country Life –
'Remember their names'
Best of British Issue, June 2019

Financial Times –
How to Spend it,
November 2018