

## PRESS RELEASE

### SIMEON BARCLAY AND RENE MATIĆ PRESENT SOLO EXHIBITIONS AT SOUTH LONDON GALLERY THIS AUTUMN



Image Credits from L-R: *Motorway 12*. Photo by Simeon Barclay, 2020; *Rene in Fred Perry*, 2020. From the series *flags for countries that don't exist but bodies that do*, 2018 – ongoing.

- **Two British artists premier new works at the South London Gallery this autumn.**
- **Simeon Barclay explores ideas around legacy and masculinity, and the ways in which we navigate and perform identity based on cultural memory.**
- **Rene Matić looks at themes of race, class, trauma, spirituality and notions of ‘Britishness’, and uses the skinhead subculture to interrogate legacies of colonialism and their own diasporic identity.**

**Exhibition Dates: 23 September – 27 November 2022**

**Press Preview: Thursday 22 September, 9-11am**

This autumn the South London Gallery (SLG) presents two major solo exhibitions by British artists Simeon Barclay and Rene Matić. *In the Name of the Father* by Simeon Barclay will feature an installation of new works in the SLG’s Main Gallery that extend his enquiry into questions of legacy, identity and masculinity, through the lens of the father son relationship. In the Fire Station Gallery, *upon this rock* by Rene Matić considers the artist’s own complicated relationship with ‘Britishness’ and reflects on how racism and marginalisation can permeate through generations, eventually biting back at society. Both exhibitions are free and will run from the 23 September to 27 November 2022.

***In the Name of the Father* | Simeon Barclay**

**Main Gallery, South London Gallery, Free**

**Exhibition Dates:** 23 September – 27 November 2022

**Press Preview:** Thursday 22 September, 9-11am

The South London Gallery (SLG) presents a major solo exhibition by Simeon Barclay (b.1975) featuring an installation of new works in the Main Gallery. Known for his multimedia practice which incorporates sculpture, collage, neon, and moving image, Simeon Barclay explores the ways we navigate and perform identity based on cultural memory. His art is particularly engaged with aspects of aesthetics, and he often creates interventions in the architecture of gallery spaces through colour, light, and the use of industrial materials. His influences range from folk tales, fashion, and club culture, through to concepts of masculinity and the history of art.

***In the Name of the Father*** brings together a new body of works that extends Barclay's enquiry into questions of legacy, identity, and masculinity, through the lens of the father son relationship. Works in various media weave together multiple references to the personal, the social and the geographical as an attempt to understand and negotiate one's relationship to place. The history of Huddersfield's cloth industry and the artist's father's original trade as a tailor are both alluded to in a duo of bespoke grey felt suits, as is the wider history of urbanisation and migration in the town. Barclay's past employment as an industrial machinist has been a major influence in his artistic practice and a towering totem of containers hints at this, as well as being suggestive of the chimneys that remain a feature in Yorkshire's post-industrial landscape.

Barclay frequently meshes multiple cultural references into his works, playing on the degree to which our interpretation of art depends on the cultural perspectives we bring to the process. Works in the show nod to the artists Constantin Brancusi, Joseph Beuys and Alexander Calder, as well as to 'Johnny's' nightclub in Huddersfield, the British 1979 film, 'Scum', and 1960s Sci-Fi TV series, 'Thunderbirds'. Dream-like memories of Barclay's experiences are the triggers for the works brought together in this show, whilst the layering of additional references represent a process of filtering and re-remembering. The autobiographical content is undeniable and serves to draw out a much wider context, bringing into focus multiple issues around cultural barriers and relationships of power.

On Wednesday 16 November artist, archive curator and radical sex activist, **Ajamu X** (aka Master Aaab) will be in conversation with Simeon Barclay at the South London Gallery. Using words, sound and images, Ajamu and Barclay will explore the influence of their hometown of Huddersfield on their trajectories as artists. Barclay will also be in conversation with the writer and curator, Morgan Quaintance on Wednesday 26 October.

The exhibition is supported by Workplace.

*upon this rock* | **Rene Matic**

**Fire Station Gallery, South London Gallery, Free**

**Exhibition Dates:** 23 September – 27 November 2022

**Press Preview:** Thursday 22 September, 9-11am

*upon this rock* is a solo exhibition by British artist Rene Matic. It will continue their long-term interrogation of 'Britishness', exploring how the nation's past manifests in its present. The exhibition will also address themes of subculture, faith, and family.

A new installation of bronze and wood sculptures focuses on the figure of 'the crucified skinhead' – a long-standing symbol used to convey a sense of persecution and alienation. Matic's work frequently makes reference to the Skinhead movement, which originally emerged in the mid-1960s as a cultural exchange between Caribbean and white working-class communities. The exhibition will place subculture and spirituality in dialogue, positioning subculture as religion – as saviour or guide.

The exhibition will premiere a new film work centring on the figure of Matic's father, Paul. Also featured are new images from the artist's ongoing photography series entitled *flags for countries that don't exist but bodies that do* (2018 – ongoing). This series is a personal diary documenting Matic's community and family (chosen and otherwise), as well as being a portrait and deconstruction of contemporary Britain.

On 25 November Irish-Nigerian broadcaster, author and academic **Emma Dabiri** will be in conversation with artist Rene Matic. Dabiri's work focusses on race as seen through the prism of class, capitalism and colonialism.

The new film work that will premier in this exhibition was originally commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella for *BEYOND*.

For further information on both exhibitions, along with details of the accompanying events programme and ticket sales please visit [southlondongallery.org](http://southlondongallery.org).

## ENDS

For further press information, images and interviews please contact Charlotte Wittesaele at Sutton: [CharlotteW@suttoncomms.com](mailto:CharlotteW@suttoncomms.com) | +44 (0)20 7183 3577

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

#### **Addresses**

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65–67 Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UH

South London Gallery, Fire Station  
82 Peckham Road, London, SE15 5LQ

#### **Opening Hours**

The Gallery is open Tue – Fri 11am-6pm, Sat and Sun 11am-6pm.

Late opening: every Wed and last Fri of the month until 9pm.

Free entry, all welcome.

[www.southlondongallery.org](http://www.southlondongallery.org)

## Social Media

Twitter: [@SLG\\_artupdates](#)

Instagram: [@southlondongallery](#)

Facebook: [South London Gallery](#)

## About Simeon Barclay

Simeon Barclay (b. 1975, in Huddersfield, UK) received his BA from Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds in 2010 and an MFA from Goldsmiths College, London in 2014. Barclay is a member of the Arts Council Acquisition Committee since 2021 and a member of the advisory committee for the Freelands Foundation since 2018, and in 2020 he was selected to be included in the British Art Show 9.

He has exhibited both nationally and internationally including at Southbank Centre, Tate Britain, South London Gallery, London; Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool; Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Workplace Foundation, Gateshead; Holden Gallery, Manchester; The Tetley, Leeds; Cubitt Gallery, London; The Bluecoat, Liverpool; Jerwood Space, London; Galerie Lisa Kandhofer, Vienna; Rodolphe Janssen, Brussels; Arcadia Missa, New York and W139, Amsterdam. His work is in the Arts Council Collection, London; Zabłudowicz Collection, London; Manchester Art Gallery and Whitworth Art Gallery collection, Manchester.

## About Rene Matic

Rene Matic (b. 1997, Peterborough) is an artist, writer and poet based in London. Their work brings together themes of post-blackness, glitch feminism and subcultural theory in a meeting place they describe as rude(ness) – to interrupt and exist in/between. Matic takes their departure point from dance and music movements such as Northern soul, Ska and 2-Tone, using them as sites to queer and re-imagine the intimacies between West Indian and white working-class culture in Britain.

Recent solo exhibitions include *in spite of, instead of*, Quench Gallery, Margate, UK (2022), *flags for countries that don't exist but bodies that do*, Arcadia Missa, London, UK (2021), *Born British Die British*, VITRINE Gallery, London, UK (2021). Recent group exhibitions include *Crowd Control*, High Art, Arles, FR (2022); *Queerdirect*, Sadie Coles HQ, London, UK (2022); *Arcadia*, Bold Tendencies, London, UK (2021); *Bloomberg New Contemporaries*, South London Gallery, London, UK (2021) and *Friends and Friends of Friends*, Schlossmuseum, Linz, AT (2020). Matic's work is in several prominent collections including Tate, London, UK; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, FR; UK Government Art Collection, London, UK; Martin Parr Foundation, Bristol, UK.

## About the South London Gallery

The South London Gallery (SLG) was founded in the 19th century by philanthropist William Rossiter to 'bring art to the people of south London'. Today the gallery comprises its original site at 65 Peckham Road; the Fire Station which opened to the public in 2018; Art Block, a space for local children and families on Sceaux Gardens Estate and two permanent gardens.

The SLG has an international reputation for its contemporary art exhibitions by established, mid-career and younger artists and programme of film and performance events. It's highly regarded, free education programme includes a peer-led young people's forum; family workshops; artist-led projects and commissions on local housing estates; and a BBC Children in Need-funded programme for looked after children.

The South London Gallery is a registered charity and raises more than half of its income from trusts and foundations, sponsors and fundraising events. Its core funders are Arts Council England, Freelands Foundation and Southwark Council.



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