

## Press Release

### Lucy Dodd

*The Return: Works from the North Sea*

February 12–April 5, 2025

Public Reception: February 11, 6–8pm

Sprüth Magers, Berlin

**Sprüth Magers**

Lucy Dodd's new paintings mobilise material, colour and shape to explore both personal as well as universal roots and reflections, culminating in a sense of self-unfolding. Monika Sprüth and Philomene Magers are pleased to present the solo show *The Return: Works from the North Sea* at the Berlin gallery, which follows its counterpart, *The End*, staged at The Ranch in Montauk, from November 9 to December 20, 2024. The two exhibitions reflect the artist's recent move from upstate New York to the Scottish countryside. Working outdoors, she produced two cathartic groups of works that are a true display of place, time and setting. Using mostly unconventional pigments derived from nature and her immediate surroundings, Dodd traces the passage of time and an energetic shift that is echoed in the colours and spirit of the at times frenetic landscapes composed of spills, drops and stains.

Installed upright among the painted works in both shows, the colossal sculpture *Rising Rooted* (2024) is a tree trunk the artist found in the forest surrounding her former home and studio in the US. The anthropomorphised tree acts as a bridge between the two exhibitions, having made the pilgrimage from Long Island across the Atlantic Ocean to Berlin. Felling the tree was not taken lightly and was carried out only after consulting with the Indigenous people of the land. With its two perfectly parallel branches and unified trunk at the top, the work nods to an uprooted family history as well as reconnection to nature, life and oneself.

In her artistic practice, Dodd employs a semiotic approach to colour, where each pigment serves as a powerful symbol within compositions and is often created or sourced by the artist herself. The body of work on view at Sprüth Magers is anchored in her choice of bluish-green copper ink, evoking the colour of the North Sea during a phytoplankton bloom as well as an American icon of independence, the Statue of Liberty. Traces of yellow are achieved with a gorse flower essence, a diluted infusion prepared from a spiny, yellow-flowered plant that has traditionally been used as a remedy for hopelessness. Brown imprints of seaweed and traces of ochre stones found at the seashore are created through exposure to the elements and are complemented by the application of brighter tones made from organic and mineral materials such as cochineal, butterfly pea powder, berries, and hematite, among others.

Upon entering, the viewer is presented with two large-scale paintings, *Activate Galactic Origin* (2024) and *Between Scylla and Charybdis* (2024), which form a sort of spatial passage. Walking through it sets in motion a metaphorical rite of passage, a personal process that one must undergo to emerge on the other side. In the exhibition, this progression brings the viewer to *Hope* (2024) and *Tide Pool/Clearing* (2024), before unfolding in the main gallery space with *The Plunge* (2024) – a deep dive into Dodd's oceanic universe. Created from one large piece of canvas and then cut into various sizes and shapes, the paintings disperse into the exhibition space to expand the view in all directions and beyond. Installed prominently in the centre of the opposite gallery wall is *Becoming Butterfly* (2025), a recurring motif in Dodd's oeuvre and a universal symbol of transformation.

Together the works provide a reflection on the cycle of life and nature. Ushering in a new phase in Dodd's practice, they evoke a sense of evolution born from boundless freedom and liberation.

Lucy Dodd (\*1981, New York) lives and works in Scotland. She completed studies at Art Center College of Design, CA (2004), and Bard College, New York (2011). Selected solo shows include Sprüth Magers, Los Angeles (2022), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2016), Power Station, Dallas (2016), Rubell Family Collection, Miami (2014) and Pro Choice, Vienna (2010). Recent group shows and performances include those at Sprüth Magers, Berlin (2016), Armada, Milan (2015), The Kitchen, New York (2015) with Sergei Tchernepnin, and Church of Saint Luke and Saint Matthew, New York (2012).

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