

RYAN HEWETT
THE GARDEN

29 June - 28 July 2018

UNIT LONDON TO LAUNCH NEW MAYFAIR FLAGSHIP GALLERY
WITH INAUGURAL SOLO EXHIBITION FROM SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST RYAN HEWETT



Ryan Hewett, *Untitled*, 2018

Unit London is pleased to announce the launch of their new 6000 sq. foot gallery space at 3 Hanover Square, London, in June 2018. The former Citibank property covers two expansive exhibition floors and will form a new central London flagship to house the gallery's growing primary artist roster, in addition to a wider mix of creative collaborations and interdisciplinary cultural events. The inaugural exhibition, 'The Garden', by South African artist Ryan Hewett will feature an entirely new series of brightly-saturated oil paintings, drawing on continued notions of fantasy and surrealism.

Unit London was founded in 2013 by Joe Kennedy and Jonny Burt in a pop-up space in Chiswick, later moving to Soho and Covent Garden, where the gallery will continue to manage a satellite space. With neither originating from a formal gallery background, Unit London remains firmly committed to its core principles that art should be celebrated, inclusive and undivided. The culturally-engaged brand was born from a genuine desire to create an accessible platform for bold, innovative and experimental artists, forging links with likeminded international audiences through pioneering digital approaches to art.

"In a fast-paced digital age where art is bought, sold and accessed increasingly through online channels, it may seem counterintuitive to be opening a prominent new physical gallery space in the heart of London. However, we believe that the future of the industry is in a seamless union of online and offline models, and this approach signals our intent to establish our artists and the Unit London brand as a leading London gallery. We are thrilled to open our inaugural show in Mayfair with this much-anticipated body of work from one of the most innovative young painters working today".

- Joe Kennedy and Jonny Burt, Co-Founders, Unit London

Unit London continues to provide a distinctive platform for artists who possess unique and inimitable talent, regardless of their background, status or commercial reputation. South African artist, Ryan Hewett is emblematic of the gallery's ethos, representing an exciting new wave of contemporary painters who remain firmly committed to exploring the traditional medium.

For 'The Garden', Ryan Hewett's third solo exhibition with Unit London, the artist has incorporated a myriad of geometric structures, depicting abstract figurative forms and isolated environments, drawing from human experience and the natural world. The eponymous hero piece, 'The Garden', lends its name to the title of the exhibition and can be viewed as a starting point for the artist's evolving exploration of multi-dimensional landscapes and complex layering. The new body of work retains the heavily vigorous textural quality of Hewett's distinctive earlier practice, alongside a juxtaposition of flattened angular shapes that draws the viewers' focus back to the materiality and technique of traditional painting.

The forthcoming exhibition signals a transition towards more ambitious large-scale painting thanks, in part, to Hewett's move to a new studio space in his hometown of Cape Town in September 2017. The Garden is 2 x 3 m, the largest the artist has worked on to date, taking six months to complete.

Hewett has had three sell out shows with Unit London and his work can be found in private collections internationally, including collections in South Africa, Dubai, Los Angeles, Zurich, Miami, London, New York and Riyadh. He is locally represented by the Barnard Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa.

NOTES TO EDITORS

RYAN HEWETT

Renowned for his brooding and evocative paintings, for South African born Hewett, the portrait is not about capturing an external likeness of a subject; but rather creating a portal to the inner journey of self-exploration. He relies principally on the free-flowing processes of memory and creative imagination.

According to esteemed writer and art critic Edward Lucie-Smith, Hewett's pictures "appear on the painted surface in the form of extraordinary apparitions, present yet not present. The vigorous marks of the brush reveal them, yet at the same time conceal them." Going on to label him as "one of South Africa's most distinguished painters today – we become part of the work, engaged by the act of looking."

Hewett's techniques have evolved from tightly wrought pencil drawings into the looser, layered richly hued surfaces of his present work. In his more recent landscape work we see the artist taking a bold leap of faith, exploring gradients of colour and moving away from the realm of portraiture for which he is widely known. The heavy, impasto brushwork appears in stark contrast to the smooth, flat textures divided up across the canvas. Hewett's restless desire to keep developing has led him to bring a sense of order to his previously chaotic approach. A bold new mark making can be seen in his use of clean lines and solid blocks of colour, each carefully calculated to hold a perfect weight.

Ryan Hewett's held his first solo exhibition, "Untitled", with Unit London in April 2015 and has since shown in numerous Fairs and gallery exhibitions, including Barnard Gallery, Cape Town; Volta, New York City; Honolulu Museum of Art, Hawaii.



Ryan Hewett in his Cape Town studio, 2018

UNIT LONDON

Unit London remains firmly committed to its core principles that art should be celebrated, inclusive and undivided. Founded in 2013, Unit London was born from an innate desire to break down the barriers of elitism and create new innovative pathways into the contemporary art world, recognised for its pioneering approach to digital media and role in expanding and diversifying audiences using new technologies.

Since its inception, Unit London has strived to provide a unique and experimental platform for the world's most distinctive emerging talent, showcasing their work to a culturally curious audience across the globe.

Exhibition	Ryan Hewett: <i>The Garden</i>
VIP & Press View	Tuesday, 26 June 2018
Private View	Thursday 28 June 2018
Dates	29 June - 28 July 2018

For all press enquiries and future partnership opportunities please contact:
Katy Wickremesinghe, KTW London: katy@ktwlondon.com | Laura Cook, KTW London: laura@ktwlondon.com

