

A quarterly programme of exhibitions at the Contemporary Art Society's home showcasing the work of artists drawn from our Artist Membership as well as guest artists selected by curators from our wider membership. PROJECTS complements the mission of the Contemporary Art Society to bring the work of new artists to a wider audience.

Stephen Nelson

11 January — 28 March

British artist Stephen Nelson makes strange and highly personable objects and constructions, often playfully domestic and comedic, using a wide variety of salvaged materials selected for their colour, texture and character. Working with anything from sea worn plastic toys, clay pipes, wire, painted drift wood to cloth, carpet and leather, Nelson's sculptures have an improvised and makeshift attitude, forming part of a curious world of 'possible objects' which defy critical context by reaching out through their physicality.

Nelson's work juxtaposes poor and disposable materials — discarded toys, old carpet, string — with precious materials, such as Florentine gold leaf and bronze, all collected from his life through extensive travels as well as online. Just as Nelson uses 'high' and 'low' forms of activity to search and collect his materials so he does not position any one material as more important than another within his sculpture or assemblage. In this way his practise can be said to have strong links to Arte Povera and in particular, their intention to contrast the new and the old, between unprocessed and man-made elements, between primitive and consumer cultures in order to complicate our sense of the effects of time. The collected materials are like motifs or momentos from the artist's life, highly personal yet also referencing symbolic, especially totemic forms, specific yet ambiguous, resistant to linear narrative, leaving the viewer open to a range of familiar yet unfamiliar worlds.

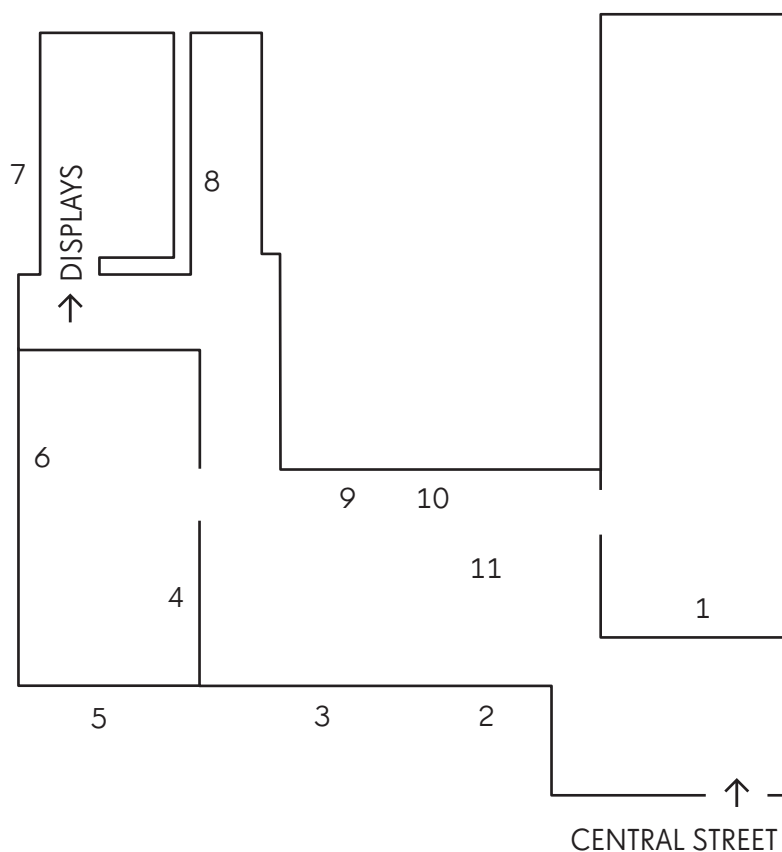
This display by Stephen Nelson forms a landscape of artefacts which inhabit the Contemporary Art Society, which both references and refuses the traditional display mechanisms of archaeological and ethnographic objects. The exhibition, while referencing history and topography, sing out of an unrecognisable time and place.

Stephen Nelson was born in Liverpool in 1961, and lives and works in London. He gained his BA in Fine Art at South Glamorgan Institute (1983), followed by a Masters in Fine Art at Birmingham University (1985). Solo exhibitions include, *It's a Soft Hard World*, Space Station Sixty Five, London (2008), *Tepuis*, Camden Arts Centre, London (1996), *Wax*, Adam Gallery, London (1994), *Bronze*, Mario Flecha Gallery, London (1993) and *Untitled*, Adam Gallery, London (1992). His numerous group exhibitions include *Students, Patients, Paupers*, St Phillips, LSE London (2011), *Rhizomatic*, Departure Gallery, London (2010), *Domestic*, Tannery Arts, London (2006), *Thy neighbours ox*, Space Station Sixty Five (2005) which he also curated and *100 Drawings*, Drawing Room, London (2003). In 1999 Nelson was appointed the Arts Council of England Helen Chadwick Fellow in Sculpture, during which period he developed a series of works about wolves that related to his time spent at the British School in Rome and at Oxford University.

Flash photography is prohibited in the space.

List of Works

- 1 *For Pino*, 2012, mixed media, 49 x 26.5 x 28.5cm
- 2 *Plane Cart*, 2012, wood and bronze, 28.5 x 14 x 6.5cm
- 3 *Fruit Face*, 2012, mixed media, 54.5 x 29 x 18 cm
- 4 *GG Scorpion*, 2012, mixed media, 44 x 51 x 25.5cm
- 5 *Garlik Darlic*, 2012, Florentine gold leaf on wood, 31 x 30.5 x 17cm
- 6 *Holy Family*, 2011–12, paint and wood, dimensions variable
- 7 *All the fish in Naples*, 2012, mixed media, dimensions variable
- 8 *For J.M.*, 2012, mixed media, 42 x 24 x 17 cm
- 9 *Presepe Legs*, 2012, mixed media, 31 x 26.5 x 17cm
- 10 *Modernist House*, 2011, mixed media, 22.5 x 10 x 5cm
- 11 *Untitled*, 2012, mixed media, 55 x 85 x 50cm



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Encouraging an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art by a wide audience and donating works by important and new artists to museums and public galleries across the UK.

The Contemporary Art Society is a national charity that encourages an appreciation and understanding of contemporary art in the UK. With the help of our members and supporters we raise funds to purchase works by new artists which we give to museums and public galleries where they are enjoyed by a national audience; we broker significant and rare works of art by important artists of the twentieth century for public collections through our networks of patrons and private collectors; we establish relationships to commission artworks and promote contemporary art in public spaces; and we devise programmes of displays, artist talks and educational events. Since 1910 we have donated over 8,000 works to museums and public galleries — from Bacon, Freud, Hepworth and Moore in their day through to the influential artists of our own times — championing new talent, supporting curators, and encouraging philanthropy and collecting in the UK.



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