

EN
press release

Guy Allott
Men with pipes
January 20 – February 24, 2024

Wednesday – Saturday 12 – 6 pm
and by appointment

Opening: Friday, January 19, 6 – 9 pm
The artist will be present

Preview: Friday, January 19, 10 am – 6 pm



@guy_allott @mountains_berlin
#guyallott #portraits #menwithpipes #smoke #arthistory #chemsex

Mountains is pleased to announce the solo exhibition *Men with pipes* by London-based artist Guy Allott. The exhibition premieres the whole suite of 13 anonymous portraits of people from the world of chemsex.

***Men with pipes* is the artist's second solo exhibition with Mountains. Guy Allott's past exhibitions include Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin; Whitechapel Gallery, London; MAC VAL, Vitry-sur-Seine/Paris; a. o.**

Works by Guy Allott are in the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Zabłudowicz Collection, London; UBS Art Collection, a. o.

About the exhibition

Guy Allott is a London-based artist known for his captivating and thought provoking artworks. With a focus on exploring societal issues and subcultures, Allott's work often challenges conventional perceptions and sparks meaningful conversations.

Men with pipes serves as a powerful visual exploration of the multifaceted subculture of chemsex, capturing both the allure and the darker aspects that accompany it. Through his masterful brushstrokes and keen artistic vision, Guy Allott invites viewers to delve into the complex nuances of this evolving social landscape.

The inspiration for the *Men with pipes* series comes from a long history of depicting smokers in art, and especially the iconology of smoking in the pre-modern and modern era, with Van Gogh, Picasso, Cézanne, and Munch as the genesis for this painting project. "It was a period when oral and genital satisfactions became confounded, and desire blended with hostility" (Dolores Mitchell). Yet Allott's *Men with pipes* have to be seen in a contemporary context. If you look at their glass pipes, they are obviously tied to drug use, and as we learn from the artist, more specifically to sexualised drug use, also known as chemsex. In the last decades chemsex has become an established practice among gay subcultures (especially in London and Berlin), to enhance sexual experiences with other men.

As the taboo topics surrounding sexuality and recreational drugs come together and inform Guy Allott's concept of portraiture, he aims to preserve anonymity whilst giving a voice to people from an underground scene, and ultimately raising awareness of this phenomenon. In the context of the gallery's recent group show

Unputdownable, the artist wrote: "My friend Simon Watney had emailed and suggested I read some things including the obituary of David Stuart (1967–2022) which I was pleased to do since he was a HIV activist and global campaigner to help reduce the risks of chemsex on the gay community, and who were ultimately the very people I had made imagined portraits of over the last few years."

In the exhibition, the suite of portraits is complemented by a small number of canvases made at the same time as the *Men with pipes*, as well as *The Side Door* from the artist's previous exhibition at Mountains which acts as a baton between the two shows.

Guy Allott

Guy Allott (1972, Hexham, England) studied at the Royal College of Art and lives and works in London, UK. He is a painter, sculptor, printmaker and ceramicist who draws from science fiction and landscape painting to create works that are fantastic and playful. At the same time he remains somewhat apart from these genres themselves, satirising and twisting their tropes. His first solo exhibition at Mountains in 2021, for instance, is conceived as a kind of painterly spin-off on Mary Shelley's 1818 Gothic novel *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*.

Guy Allott is most often shown in solo and group exhibitions in the UK, but has also had numerous exhibitions in Germany, the US and elsewhere. Notable exhibitions include Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin, DE); Whitechapel Gallery (London, UK); The Drawing Room (London, UK); Zabłudowicz Collection (The Library of Babel, curated by Anna-Catharina Gebbers, London, UK); François Ghebaly/Chung King Project (Los Angeles, USA); MAC VAL (Vitry-sur-Seine/Paris, FR).

Works by Guy Allott are in the collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum and the British Library in London, the Zabłudowicz Collection, the UBS Art Collection, the Fidelity Art Collection, and many other public, private, and corporate collections.

For a detailed CV of the artist please contact the gallery.

Mountains

Mountains is a gallery for contemporary art located at Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz in Berlin and was founded in August 2019. Mountains currently represents twelve international artists of different ages, including up-and-coming young positions, but also aims to re-contextualize older or previously little-recognized artists. The exhibition programme is complemented by publications, fair participations and events; in 2022 the gallery took part for the first time in ART COLOGNE.

Contacts

For further information and images please contact the gallery.

email: info@mountains.gallery

phone/text/WhatsApp:

Klaus-R. Voss +49 151 506 586 77

Markus Summerer +49 171 90 13 691