

ALMA PEARL

Between the Acts

30 January – 14 March 2026

Private View: Friday, 30 January, 6-8pm

She had been awakened by the birds. How they sang! attacking the dawn like so many choir boys attacking an iced cake. Forced to listen, she had stretched for her favourite reading – an Outline of History – and had spent the hours between three and five thinking of rhododendron forests in Piccadilly; when the entire continent, not then she understood, divided by a channel, was all one; populated, she understood, by elephant-bodied, seal-necked, heaving, surging, slowly writhing, and, she supposed, barking monsters; the iguanodon, the mammoth, and the mastodon; from whom presumably, she thought, jerking the window open, we descend.

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Alma Pearl is pleased to present *Between the Acts*, a group show featuring works by Lyndon Barrois Jr. (b. 1983, USA), Terence Birch (b. 1982, United Kingdom), Margarita Gluzberg (b. 1968, Soviet Union), Maya Gurung-Russell Campbell (b. 2000, United Kingdom), Simon Moretti (b. 1974, United Kingdom), Maria-Cristina Onea (b. 1999, Romania), and Jhonatan Pulido (b. 1988, Colombia).

The exhibition takes its title from Virginia Woolf's posthumous novel *Between the Acts*, which unfolds around the staging of a village pageant on the eve of the Second World War. In Woolf's text, the phrase refers both to the literal intervals between scenes and to the play-within-the-play enacted through the actions of the novel's characters, while also evoking a broader historical suspension: a moment poised between wars. Metaphors ripple through the novel: the elegant flight of birds, poised and refined, hints at times at the ominous transformation into bombers; gestures toward art, histories, and relationships – fleeting, imagined, or deeply felt – intertwine; rehearsals accumulate like echoes, sustaining meaning in the delicate spaces between action and pause.

Drawing on this ambiguity, while at times referencing elements within the novel, *Between the Acts* considers artistic practice as a site of pause and recalibration – a temporal and material suspension in which histories and locations are revisited, reworked, and held in tension. The exhibition foregrounds the performative and narrative capacities of art, emphasising the pause within the creative process as a space for reflection, one that resonates across both personal and collective histories. Some works turn to the past as a persistent force, shaping a present increasingly defined by uncertainty and rupture – marked by resource extraction, and enduring legacies of conflict and displacement – while others locate meaning in processes of transformation, becoming, and reimagining.

In Maya Gurung-Russell Campbell's *Tricolour Standard* (2026), process is inseparable from material history. Deconstructed and dyed Union Jack and St George's flags are knotted with rope, cotton, jute fibre, and military surplus materials, functioning as markers of movement, location, and contested identity. Through acts of binding and transformation, the work treats the past as something materially reconfigured rather than symbolically preserved.

Lyndon Barrois Jr.'s *Trunk Show (after Henry Van de Velde & Hergé)* (2025) reflects on histories of resource extraction and their influence on artistic form. Positioned within a broader narrative-driven practice, the work reframes style as a byproduct of material circulation and colonial economies, presenting the object as a fragment within an ongoing script.

Simon Moretti's work in neon *entr'acte* (2022) introduces a deliberate interruption into the exhibition. Drawing on the legacy of 1970s conceptual art—particularly the text-based works of Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner—the piece foregrounds the interval itself as a site pregnant with meaning. Like these artists, Moretti uses language not simply as a caption but as the material of the artwork itself. The title also echoes Francis Picabia's 1924 film *Entr'acte*, a Dadaist interlude designed to disrupt narrative continuity.

Jhonatan Pulido's *Ebanisteria* (2025) revisits the streets of rural Colombia, shaped by histories of civil unrest and social fracture. Evoking gestures of repair and reconstruction, the work extends beyond the personal to implicate the collective body — a recurring concern within Pulido's practice. Acts of making amends are materially manifest in the many strata of the painting—the subtle *pentimenti* that trace layers of both memory and longing.

Margarita Gluzberg's *Green Influence 1960/2020 Mix* (2023) assembles historical pastel colour palettes sourced from the United States and Eastern Europe, producing a constellation of visual echoes extended across time. The piece functions as a form of temporal transmission, collapsing historical distance into a continuous exchange between the reanimation of a past complete with its projective and imagined futures.

In *New Leg at Roehampton (Soldier Receiving an Artificial Leg 1915)* (2026), a ceramic sculpture paired with a blunted paper stump—first conceived during research at the Henry Moore Institute and later developed while in residency at The Art House in Wakefield—Terence Birch stages the disabled and debilitated body, masculinity, and aesthetic prejudice in order to question where self-worth might reside. Grounded in extensive photographic archival research at Roehampton Hospital—the site where modern prosthetics were developed in the

UK in the aftermath of the First World War—Birch was drawn to images focusing on the relationship between patient and prosthetist, depicting scenes of plaster casting and the fitting of prosthetic legs, themselves sculptural processes.

Maria-Cristina Onea's sound and slide-projection installation *Not All Birds Have Feathers* examines humanity's long-standing fascination with flight, tracing the fragile boundary between reverence and conquest, emulation and control. The work unfolds in a liminal space that shifts between time and place, drawing on personal histories of migration and belonging to form a meditation on aspiration, freedom, and the weight of technological ambition. Accompanying the image carousel is an edited version of *Lonesome Town* by Ricky Nelson: 'Maybe down in *Lonesome Town*, I can learn to forget.' quotes the song, underscoring the work's tension between longing and loss.

Across the exhibition, the works resist singular readings, emphasising materiality and process while holding open a space of reflection. Positioned between conjunctures—historical, political, and perceptual—*Between the Acts* attends to the generative potential of a reflective pause as precursor to action.

1. **Maya Gurung-Russell Campbell**
Tricolour Standard, 2026
Jute, cotton, chandelier hooks
235 x 350 x 190 cm
2. **Simon Moretti**
entr'acte, 2022
Neon, cables, transformer
13 x 62 x 6 cm
Edition of 3 + 1 AP
3. **Lyndon Barrois Jr.**
Trunk Show (after Henry Van de Velde & Hergé), 2025
Oil on Belgian Linen, artist frame
82 x 74 cm
4. **Jhonatan Pulido**
Ebanisteria, 2025-2026
Acrylic, oil, spray paint and colour pencil on canvas
240 x 192 cm
5. **Margarita Gluzberg**
Green Influence 1960/2020 Mix, 2023
Pastel, graphite and colour pencil on canvas
217 x 156 cm
6. **Margarita Gluzberg**
Remnants Bin, 2025
Colour pencils on paper mounted on aluminium panel
77 x 56 cm

- Canal Side Entrance
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7. **Terence Birch**
New Leg at Roehampton (Soldier Receiving an Artificial Leg 1915), 2026
Bisque-fired ceramic, oxide, paper stump, pastel, and metal plinth
137 x 35 x 38 cm
 8. **Terence Birch**
New Leg at Roehampton (Man from General Hospital No. 3, Rahway, N.J.), 2026
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 cm
 9. **Maria-Cristina Onea**
Not All Birds Have Feathers, 2025-2026
Audio-Visual installation
Analogue projector, 35mm positive slides, steel plate, fabric straps, sound
Dimensions Variable

