

**PRESS RELEASE**

**RACHEL LUMSDEN: TWICE UPON A TIME**

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**WILDE | BASEL**

Rachel Lumsden is in the driver seat, her artistic vision both unconventional and confidently untethered from prevailing trends and expectations. Through her work as an artist, author, and lecturer, she continues to carve her own path, challenging the status quo. Wilde Gallery presents Lumsden's new and recent paintings for the first time in Basel, showcasing the British-Swiss artist's distinctive vision.

Lumsden's work embodies a dynamic interplay between the ordinary and the surreal, masterfully blending figurative and abstract elements to create scenes that evoke both contemplation and emotional intensity. Her compositions juxtapose vibrant, expressive color palettes with subdued, dreamlike backgrounds, inviting viewers into spaces where reality and imagination coexist. Themes of isolation, movement, and human interaction with nature and urban environments recur throughout her work, symbolizing deeper explorations of identity, memory, and the human condition. Her use of bold textures and forms, combined with fragmented or fluid settings, imbues each piece with a compelling tension and harmony, offering a deeply reflective experience. The small works in the exhibition provide intimate glimpses into Lumsden's varied subjects, from modes of transportation to animal figures and interior spaces.

The exhibition opens with the commanding "12 o'clock High" (2024). Painted from the driver's perspective, a road extends toward a large, luminous moon. The curve of the road and uneven lines create a sense of movement and uncertainty, evoking a dreamlike sequence. This painting places viewers on the edge of reality, as they navigate both literal and metaphorical landscapes. The strong use of perspective and surreal elements suggests more than a straightforward depiction of a drive—it's a journey through complex psychological terrain. A vintage car contrasts with modern satellite technology, while the exhibition title "Twice Upon a Time" cleverly subverts the familiar phrase "Once Upon a Time," suggesting an event more immediate and recurring rather than distant and singular.

This delicate balance pervades the exhibition. In "Crawl-space" (2023), two paintings flank a heavy wooden wardrobe. Swirling, smoky elements contrast with solid, geometric tiles, creating a fragmented, surreal space that seems to exist outside of time. The wardrobe introduces an anchor of permanence and history, engaging in dialogue with the abstract, fluid figures—a conversation between tradition and contemporary uncertainty. Lumsden's brushwork remains consistently expressive, with sketch-like textures suggesting perpetual motion. Her surroundings blend natural and imagined features, with color palettes ranging from the muted tones seen in the central gallery's three large works to the vibrant hues of "Zephyr" (2024) and "Root and Branch" (2023).

Throughout her oeuvre, flora, fauna, and fantastical creatures weave through ephemeral backdrops. Figures recline in dense foliage, creating immersive atmospheres of contemplative solitude. Even mechanical objects take on new meaning in her paintings, floating in a menagerie of vibrant color and fluid brushstrokes.

In "Broadband" (2024), Lumsden transforms a car—typically a symbol of movement—into a static element, suspended in time. The energy of the sky bursting with giant butterflies dwarfs both the vehicle and the mundane world below, compelling viewers to contemplate the mysteries unfolding above. This masterful manipulation of familiar objects exemplifies Lumsden's ability to transcend the ordinary, creating works that resist easy categorization.

Rachel Lumsden creates a world where the familiar and the extraordinary dance in perpetual motion. Through her distinctive visual language, she transforms everyday scenes into portals of possibility, inviting us to question our relationship with reality itself. Her exhibition at Wilde is not merely a collection of paintings—it's an invitation to journey through the spaces between certainty and dreams, where each brushstroke challenges our perception of what is possible in contemporary art.