

# IONE & MANN

JANA EMBUREY

*all things are full of gods.*

Exhibition Dates: 26 April – 23 May 2024

Preview: 25 April 6-8 pm



IONE & MANN is thrilled to present “*all things are full of gods.*”, a solo exhibition by Jana Emburey (b. 1979, Bratislava).

Borrowing its title from a quote attributed to Thales of Miletus, an Ancient Greek pre-Socratic philosopher and one of the earliest proponents of unity of substance, the exhibition celebrates life, renewal and the unbreakable link between nature, humanity and the cosmos.

Employing a language that is simultaneously reductive and complex, Jana’s work builds on a timeless iconography of symbols that trace patterns, concepts and concerns that reside deeply within the human psyche.

Rather than a quest for origins, atonement or spiritual enlightenment, the exhibition offers a quiet meditation on contrasts and an affirming celebration of oneness and the sanctity of life.

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Using a meticulous technique involving thousands of tiny ink circles or cells, individually hand-drawn on Japanese Kōzo paper stretched on board, Jana Emburey creates intricate compositions that reference the building blocks of all living organisms, the incredible detail of nature and the infinite fabric of the universe.

The interplay between micro and macro elements present in the works is not easy to grasp at one glance. They quietly demand that the gaze linger, a closer inspection, to be experienced from different vantage points. The tiny cells, each perfect and complete in their own right, are also an integral part of something bigger.

As we make our way around the exhibition, we trace shapes and forms that are recognisable as explorations of the main axes of the human experience. Serving as a counterpoint to Emburey’s meticulously composed monochromatic works, we find colourful, more abstract expressions echoing the landscapes where these explorations occur, be it in nature or within us.

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Alongside what feels like an immersive experience of the night sky or the vastness of space, we come across a loose spiral, a shape that is abundant in nature; it is also at the heart of our galaxy, in the helix of our DNA, an archetypal symbol of cosmic energy, consciousness and growth. Fractal-like repetitive patterns hint at veins, branches or breasts, referencing the flow of vital energy/ qi, nourishment and support. Then we encounter a shape that is unmistakably ovoid, a primeval embryonic form from which everything emerges. One of the world's first religious symbols, the egg, alludes to creation, birth, resurrection or, in some traditions, servitude, sacrifice and mourning.

The imagery that arises from Emburey's work is predominantly based on her daily interactions with nature in the Scottish Highlands. There is an underlying sense of reverence for the world as she encounters it, but she keeps the experience rooted in the tangible. *All is One*, 2024, a sculpture made from eggshells, serves as a reminder of that and an ode to the paradoxical nature of all life.

Emburey sees no separation between the different processes she employs when making; she approaches it mindfully, as an expression of a state of consciousness, likening it to meditation alternating between single point focus and an expansive state of flow. She welcomes playful exploration and an element of chance but she always begins with intention, not least in the choice of her materials (Kōzo paper is incredibly light-weight but exceptionally strong and durable, in many ways similar to egg shells). She considers the intention and the experience of the process inextricably linked with the experience of the viewers as they interact with her work; she also considers feeling more important than seeing and seeking more important than finding. It is irrelevant who came first and if the egg contains the offspring of gods or mortals<sup>2</sup>. Emburey reverently grounds the divine and elevates the mundane by offering a quiet and confident meditation on contrasts and the sanctity of life itself.

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## ABOUT:

**Jana Emburey** (b. 1979, Bratislava, Slovakia) is an artist living and working in Cairngorms National Park in the heart of the Scottish Highlands.

She studied at the Academy of Arts & Crafts in Bratislava (1993-1997) and Leeds Metropolitan University (2012).

Following a solo presentation at Lyth Arts Centre in 2013, her work has been exhibited in the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh, the Royal Glasgow Institute, Inverness Museum & Art Gallery and in exhibitions across the UK and internationally. In 2016 she was elected a professional member of the Society of Scottish Artists.

Recent exhibitions include: Then and Now: 100 Years of Visual Arts Scotland, RSA, Edinburgh (2024); HERE at IONE & MANN (2023); Inaugural Exhibition Browns Gallery, Inverness (2022), Elemental (solo) & Gallery, Edinburgh (2022); Shared Perspectives, Inverness Museum & Art Gallery (2022), RSA Annual Exhibition, Edinburgh (2021), Silent Traces, IONE & MANN (2021).

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## IONE & MANN

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 6 Conduit Street, London W1S 2XE

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Friday 11 am - 6 pm, Saturday 12-4 pm and by appointment.

For additional information, images, or interview access to the artist please contact us at: [info@ioneandmann.com](mailto:info@ioneandmann.com)

Website: [www.ioneandmann.com](http://www.ioneandmann.com) | Instagram: @ioneandmann

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### Notes:

1. The quote all things are full of gods "πάντα πλήρη θεῶν εἶναι" is attributed to Thales by Aristotle in *On the Soul* (Greek: Περὶ Ψυχῆς; Latin: *De Anima*) written c. 350 BC.

2. Reference to the myth of Leda and the Swan

3. Image: Detail from *Vessels*, 2024 © Jana Emburey Courtesy of IONE & MANN