



GRIMM is pleased to announce *The Fountain Overflows*, a group exhibition curated by Yates Norton at our London gallery.

Opening June 4 to coincide with London Gallery Weekend (June 5 - 7, 2026).

The exhibition presents a selection of works by Adam Farah-Saad, Anj Smith, Benjamin Orlow, Daisy Parris, Divina Southgate-Smith, Eburn Sodipo, Emmanuel Awuni, Francesca Mollett, Gabriella Boyd, Jesse Wine, Leon Scott-Engel, Rachel Kneebone, Ramin Rokni Hesam, Rebecca Ackroyd and Vivian Suter.

On the occasion of London Gallery Weekend, please join us for an exhibition walkthrough with curator Yates Norton at 12pm on Saturday 6 June, 2026.

In his *Proverbs of Hell*, the visionary poet and artist William Blake (1757 – 1827) wrote: “*the fountain overflows, the cistern contains.*” For Blake, the fountain symbolised exuberance and the generative, generous movement of relations shaped by imagination and love. Its baroque, gushing flow celebrated life beyond systems and categories, dogma and cynical rationalism. In counterpoint, the cistern (contained, still, rational) embodied at once the necessity of form, containment and preservation as well as repression and stasis.

Blake understood the necessity of both in life. We need cisterns as much as fountains: after all, when water scarcity is a genuine concern, cisterns are vital reservoirs for communities where water must be saved, as author Marina Warner once reminded me.

And yet, as in Blake’s time, we seem to be tipping the scales toward increasing categorisation and armoured individualism at the expense of the inherent profusion of life. In Blake’s philosophy of a vital, ever-flowing body and spirit, life’s continual movement exceeds any attempt to circumscribe and still it; indeed, for Blake, its restraint was death: “*Expect poison from standing water*”, he warned elsewhere.

This exhibition takes Blake as a poetic and philosophical companion in considering a number of artists whose works invite us to see and sense the world in all its ever-moving complexity. Like Blake, they remind us that we might better glimpse the depth of this rich, entangled fabric of life (of which we are but a small part) if we allow ourselves to perceive dynamically, beyond habit and custom.

In their works, bodies, landscapes, and materials are not merely a collection of things and resources, like some weighty repository of nouns, but presences and energies: a world of verbs and gerunds, always in a state of becoming and shifting.

In answer to this ever-changing world, the artists gathered here show us the importance of staying alive to fluid states of being. They share a sensibility of acute awareness of our interdependencies, understanding that life is not composed of isolated beings and bodies, but of relations, forces and affects that continually move between us. Blake often reminded us of this, observing how the pain of the smallest creature is not localised and individualised, but has consequences for the whole fabric of life: “*A robin redbreast in a cage / Puts all Heaven in a rage.*” Hurt begets hurt, just as joy and love can create the conditions for mutual flourishing.

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Echoing the Ubuntu wisdom 'I am because we are', Blake knew that all life is inherently intertwined. In *On Another's Sorrow*, a poem that is inscribed with a print of a sinuous tree, its branches signs of intertwined life, Blake wrote:

*Can I see a falling tear,  
And not feel my sorrows share,  
Can a father see his child,  
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd.*

*Can a mother sit and hear  
An infant groan an infant fear —  
No no never can it be.  
Never never can it be.*

Such radical sensitivity and receptivity doesn't make life easy. The too-muchness of living sensitively in this world, with its overflowing fountains as well as its distressing barrage of violence and suffering, is terrifying. Too often, it can lead us to collapse. But even – and especially – in the face of overwhelm, Blake encouraged us to create fearlessly. The desire to imagine and make that is inscribed in all of us – whether we are recognised as artists or not – Blake tells us, must be acted on; if not, such impulses metastasise as hurt and become twisted into (self-)destruction.

All the artists here have shown how something poetic might be gleaned from experience, from the most humble and gentle to the most extreme states of being. It is through this that we might then expand our imaginations and senses beyond the impoverishment they too often suffer as we grow up. Like Blake before them, they show that through this expanded state, we might better see how nothing is ever final or fixed, but instead remains open to continual

transformation and reimagining. As they show, identities are never end points, but contingent departure points; materials are never passively submitted to, but guide and inform our hands; landscapes do not stay still but reach up into the sky and down into the earth; oppression is never totalising, there are always spaces to introduce difference, possibility and dreaming; and, as we all know, our bodies leak, shift, twist, age and decompose; we are touched as much by the world as we touch it.

In this fluid and fiery life (you might see how watery forms and flame-reds run throughout many works), falling apart and recomposing is a necessary condition of life. But it is precisely by living to the limits of one's thoughts, feelings and senses that one glimpses more profoundly "*The Visions of Eternity*" which we have lost sight of with our "*narrowed perceptions*" that fix us "*into furrows of death*", as Blake wrote.

And so I hope that this exhibition is an encouragement to shift one's perception of the world, to see and sense it in all its intensity and mystery, however painful or comforting it may be. If there is one thing that poetry – a word we might use to encompass all forms of imaginative making – can do, it is this; to draw us out of mean-spirited perceptions, assumptions and attitudes and allow us, as Blake perhaps most famously said, "*To see a world in a grain of sand / And a heaven in a wild flower, / Hold infinity in the palm of your hand / And eternity in an hour.*"

With special thanks to all participating artists and their representing galleries.

Text by Yates Norton

## About the curator

Yates Norton is a curator and writer based in London (UK). He serves as Strategic and Curatorial Advisor to Knotenpunkt, an independent, non-profit, artist-centred initiative supporting research and creation across disciplines. He is also the curatorial lead for a forthcoming contemporary arts foundation, just a moment (jam), London (UK), which focuses on commissioning time-based works. Previously, he was curator at the Roberts Institute of Art (RIA), where he worked with the residency programme, commissioned new performances and curated exhibitions with the David and Indre Roberts Collection. Norton is committed to disability justice, collaborating closely with David Ruebain, the current Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Sussex (UK). Together, they have presented their work at various arts and educational settings, including the ICA and the Serpentine in London (UK). Educated at the University of Cambridge (UK), Harvard University (US), and the Courtauld Institute of Art (UK), Norton has guest lectured at both Boston and Cambridge Universities. He has written regularly on artists' practices and has published with Phaidon, The Chicago Review, Chisenhale Books and others.



Yates Norton, 2026 | Photo: Christa Holka

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