

ALISON WILDING RA

BY THE MARK - AND THE LINE BELOW THE LOAF

THE HEONG GALLERY AT DOWNING COLLEGE
14 JUNE TO 22 SEPTEMBER 2024

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The thing I like about drawings is that they can float. You don't think about gravity.

Alison Wilding RA is best known for her multimedia sculptures, admired internationally for their unexpected interplay between material, form, and space. What is less well known is her drawing practice, which has developed parallel to her sculpture practice across a career spanning over four decades. Sculptors' drawings are often marked by powerful forms that echo or accompany their sculptures in metal, stone, or wood. Wilding's drawings are unique in how they revel in the freedom and pleasure of the ink, paint, and collage on paper, rather than fight with the limitations created by flatness, fragility, and scale. Her drawings are not weighed down by the laws of the physical world, and Wilding uses them to explore what an object could never achieve. They are not drawings for sculpture; they are from another place entirely.

Wilding's drawings have in common with her sculpture is their imaginativeness and inscrutability. Wilding has often said that, with her work, 'what you see is what you get'. It would be more accurate to say that what you see is *all* you get from

Wilding: the artist steps back to give each viewer the opportunity to experience the works with minimal backstory or interpretation. Shapes and lines abut each other, pitched in a perfectly balanced battle between hard and soft, empty and full, hidden and obvious. Encountering an Alison Wilding drawing is an invitation to a divination, deriving individual meaning from fugitive forms. For Wilding herself, drawing is an exercise in revelation. She generally works in series, following ideas and forms where they lead her.

By the Mark - and the Line below the Loaf brings together series of drawings from the last 30 years alongside a new monumental drawing made for the exhibition. The exhibition is the most extensive exhibition of Wilding's drawings in a public gallery to date. It is accompanied by a display of small-scale sculpture, selected by the artist. A catalogue of Wilding's drawings, *ON PAPER*, will be published by Ridinghouse in Autumn 2024.

The exhibition is curated by Prerona Prasad, Curator, The Heong Gallery.

The Heong Gallery, Downing College, Cambridge CB2 1DQ
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About Alison Wilding RA

Born in 1948 in Blackburn, Alison Wilding was raised in Cambridgeshire before heading to art school in 1967. She studied at Nottingham College of Art, Ravensbourne College of Art and Design, and the Royal College of Art. Nominated twice for the Turner Prize (1988 and 1992), Wilding was elected to the Royal Academy of Arts in 2001. She was the Eranda Professor of Drawing at the Royal Academy Schools (2018-2024) and was Curator of the 2022 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. She has had solo shows at public galleries including Tate Britain (London), De La Warr Pavillion (Bexhill-on-Sea), Whitworth Art Gallery (Manchester), The Henry Moore Foundation Studio (Halifax), Ikon Gallery (Birmingham), and the Museum of Modern Art (New York). Public commissions by Wilding include *Swarm*, 2023 (1 Grosvenor Street, London), *Still Water*, 2018, National Memorial for British Victims of Terrorism Overseas (National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas), and *Migrant*, 2008 (Snape Maltings, Aldeburgh). Her work can be found in leading public collections in Britain and abroad, including Arts Council England, The British Council, The British Museum, Tate, and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Alison Wilding was represented by Karsten Schubert from 1987 to 2023, and drawings from Karsten Schubert's bequest to Whitworth Art Gallery (Manchester) are on show until January 2025. Alison Wilding is represented by Alison Jacques.

About The Heong Gallery

The Heong Gallery at Downing College opened in February 2016 as purpose-built public exhibition space for modern and contemporary art. Designed by Caruso St John Architects (RIBA Stirling Prize 2016), the Gallery won a RIBA East Award in 2017. It was inaugurated by alumnus Sir Alan Bowness (Modern Languages, 1950) and named after alumnus Alwyn Heong in recognition of his generous benefaction.

Dates: 14 June to 22 September 2024

Opening times: 12PM to 5PM Wednesdays to Sundays

Free Admission



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