



St James Blossom, acrylic on panel, 120 x 60 cm

BENJAMIN RHODES ART is very pleased to present

Edward Durdey

Ritual Landscapes: 2020–2024

Paintings and Relief Carvings

7th March–3rd May, 2024

Opening Preview Thursday 7th March, 2024 • 6pm–8.30pm

Daytime Reception Saturday 23th March, 2024 • 2pm–7pm

Continues to 3rd May 2024 • Wednesday to Saturday, 12pm–6pm • Closed Bank Holiday weekends

‘To enter a wood is to pass into a different world in which we ourselves are transformed. Where you travel to find yourself by paradoxically getting lost.’

From *Wildwood: A Journey Through Trees*, Roger Deakin

The walk to my studio, which is a stone’s throw from a 13th Century Village Church constructed in green sandstone, begins along a narrow pavement on a busy main road. I then turn away from the speeding traffic into another world; along footpaths, across fields, past a palette-shaped pond circled by trees, and through a wood over a chalk stream alongside a 16th century Holm Oak. The leaves of the tree were used by the Ancient Greeks to tell the future and to crown the honoured, the wood used by the Romans to make cartwheels. All of this is tempered by the continuous sound of the M1 motorway and the distant sight of a huge Amazon warehouse complex.

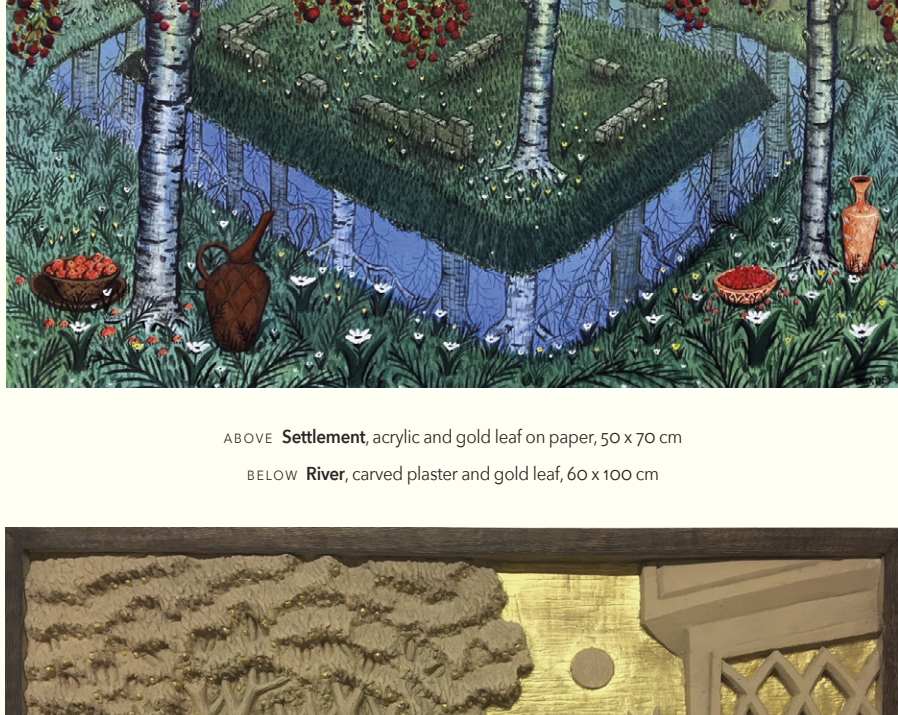
I am inspired by regular visits to Neolithic and Bronze age ritual sites such as Avebury, Arbor Low, Mên-an-Tol, and the Rollright Stones. Painting and carving is for me a ritual activity towards a timeless, silently contemplative world of enacted ceremonies imbued with human presence.

The curved, widescreen paintings sometimes containing carved elements, use burnt orange grounds and initial broad brush strokes discover the painting’s direction. My work in specialist decoration is mirrored in the small marks and meditative repetition, particularly with the leaves of the trees.

Trees symbolise growth, death, rebirth and an axis of the world linked with earth, air and water. The cypress trees indicate transition towards new possibilities and are also formal devices. The pathways point the viewer into the space and the quest for discovery. The carvings in builders finishing plaster evolve through the making process, they feature architectural elements as well as vessels with fruits—these are informed by early Greek bas-reliefs and highlighted in gold leaf.

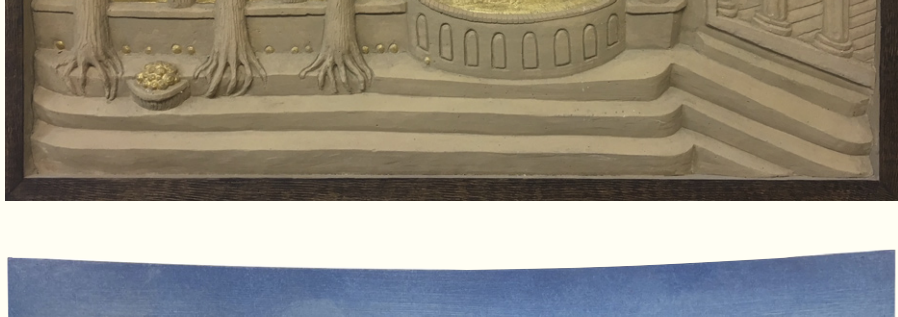
Ritual landscapes are my attempt to focus on an interior world away from the proliferating uncertainties and instabilities of the present.

Edward Durdey, Bedfordshire



ABOVE **Settlement**, acrylic and gold leaf on paper, 50 x 70 cm

BELOW **River**, carved plaster and gold leaf, 60 x 100 cm



ABOVE **Blue Tree**, acrylic and collage on curved panel, 70 x 120 cm

BELOW **Blue Door**, acrylic on curved panel, 70 x 120 cm



BELOW **Oranges and Lemons**, acrylic on panel, 120 x 60 cm



BENJAMIN RHODES ARTS

62 OLD NICHOL STREET, LONDON E2 7HP

WEDNESDAY–SATURDAY, 12PM–6PM

benjamin@benjaminrhodes.co.uk

INSTAGRAM: @benjaminrhodes_art

www.benjaminrhodes.co.uk