

# Oliver Smart

## *Suspending Motion*

10 June - 30 July

Walthamstow Wetlands

This summer, Oliver Smart will present a solo exhibition of his kinetic sculptures in a display which explores life and living movement. Through precision and active geometry his work creates conversations about the role of the scientific in the creation of the poetic.

*Suspending Motion* will be Smart's second solo exhibition, following *Imago - A Dragonfly in Motion* at Circus Gallery in Marylebone in 2019. In this show he presented his mechanical puppet of a dragonfly based on meticulous study and observation from life alongside the prototypes that preceded its creation. *Suspending Motion* is a new body of work which covers the artist's transition over the last eight years from figurative representations of the natural world, including *Dragonfly Imago. 2019* to abstract, non-figurative articulations as in *Phoenix. 2022* (pictured).



Smart's studio is situated on the periphery of Walthamstow Wetlands, which he walks through most days, observing its abundant nature. The venue's setting - a Victorian-Era Engine House in the Wetlands - epitomises an uneasy relationship between an industrial past and the regeneration of nature. This tension is an ongoing source of fascination for the artist who describes how he "*uses the vernacular of the industrial to investigate the forms and mechanisms present in nature.*"

Alongside the figurative and non-figurative sculpture and prototypes, the exhibition includes a selection of paper sketches, poetry and .CAD drawings that have been essential to the creation of this work.

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**ENDS**

NOTES TO EDITORS

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## LISTINGS INFORMATION

- Address: 2 Forest Road Walthamstow, London N17 9NH
- Opening Times: 9:30 - 17:00 daily
- Nearest station: The main entrance is on Ferry Lane/Forest Road, a ten-minute walk from Tottenham Hale and Blackhorse Road stations (Victoria line).
- Access: The Engine House and main concrete pathway through the site are accessible for wheelchair users and those with walking difficulties.

## ABOUT OLIVER SMART

Oliver's work is poetic in the exploration of the scientific, and scientific in the creation of the poetic. Free of the diktats of utility or purpose, he creates expressive form through precision and active geometry, playing with the artistic choices which can bring an accurate mechanism slightly out of balance, forever in search of its equilibrium. Drawing on the wildness of his Aotearoa/NZ childhood, the solace and solitude to be found in the natural world where nothing is ever without movement, however long the timescale, 'nature' is an ever-present touchpoint for his kinetic sculptures.

Oliver's previous solo exhibition in 2019 *Imago - A dragonfly in motion* at Circus Gallery in Marylebone was part of the official London Design Festival programme which included a panel discussion focused on the collaboration potential between art and science. His collaborations include a presentation of work in Design Basel in 2017 following a 3 year collaboration towards a mechanical responsive butterfly with Artist Dominic Harris . His most recent collaborative project was with Ingrid Pollard on the creation of 3 large kinetic artworks for her retrospective exhibition *Carbon Slowly Turning*. This exhibition has been shortlisted for the Turner Prize 2022 and been given a ☆☆☆☆ star [review in the Guardian](#).

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## ABOUT WALTHAMSTOW WETLANDS

Walthamstow Wetlands is a 211-hectare site comprising ten reservoirs that provide drinking water for London and which are internationally recognised for their importance for migrating birds. The Victorian-era Engine House hosts a visitor centre with a café, shop, interactive displays, viewing platform, toilets, and art installations.

Walthamstow Wetlands is part of the Walthamstow Reservoirs Site of Special Scientific Interest, and the Lee Valley Special Protection Area, Ramsar site of international importance, and Lee Valley Walthamstow Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.