

# Trailing Clouds of Glory

**Artists:** George Shaw, Theo Ellison  
**Preview:** Friday 27 September 6-9pm  
**Exhibition:** Saturday 28 September – Sunday 27 October  
**Times:** Friday Saturday Sunday 12-6pm  
**Finissage:** Sunday 27 September 2-5pm

Coleman is delighted to announce the start of the autumn programme with *Trailing Clouds of Glory*, a new exhibition featuring Theo Ellison and George Shaw.

Extending far beyond its 18th century origins, Romanticism's seductive push for nature over artifice, passion over reason, idealism over reality and nostalgia over progress, continues to feed into our Lacanian desires.

This exhibition digs into the enduring appeal of Romanticism as a poetic mode of thinking, exploring its ties to gothic kitsch, its resistance to irony and its uneasiness with emergent technology.

Drawing on their overlapping points of contact, both artists navigate their wavering attitudes towards the Romantic viewpoint, at once indulging and undercutting it. Shaw's self-portrait sees him answering nature's call in suburban woodland, his back-to-camera stance echoing Caspar David Friedrich's 'Wanderer above the Sea of Fog'. Ellison's animated bird skull voices absurdist narratives, testing the Byronic hero archetype outlined by the likes of Friedrich's wanderer.

The tactile glint of Shaw's Humbrol paint contrasts with Ellison's digital flatness, framing Romanticism's Luddite roots as a prelude to our anxieties around AI. Ellison's *Byronic Hero* includes an AI-mediated version of Michael Mann's *Miami Vice* (2006). Slowed down to 24 hours via newly-generated frames, the film's sincerity is magnified, teasing out dreamlike HD-ready vistas. In parallel, Shaw's *Native Land (Altered)* openly flirts with earnestness. Showing a heart symbol graffitied onto a large tree trunk, its layered enamel lustre forms a hazy memory.

Swaying between irony and sincerity, with works ranging across painting, print and video, this show reflects on Romanticism's evolving ability to lure us in whether through the sublime or the ridiculous.

Theo Ellison

See artist biographies overleaf

George Shaw (b. 1966, Coventry) uses Humbrol enamel paints, a medium traditionally used to colour Airfix model kits, to depict the locales, faded parks and terraced streets of English suburbia. In scenes often drawn from the Coventry estate where he grew up, his paintings exist at a temporal boundary caught between a moment just passed or still waiting to happen.

Shaw graduated from Sheffield Polytechnic in 1989 and the Royal College of Art, London in 1998. He was nominated for the Turner prize in 2011. He was the Associate Artist at the National Gallery in London from 2014 to 2016 culminating in his exhibition *My Back to Nature*. In 2018 he had a retrospective exhibition of his work at the Yale Centre for British Art in New Haven in the United States which toured to the Holbourne Museum in Bath in 2019. Over the last twenty five years Shaw has exhibited extensively in the UK and abroad most recently at The Box in Plymouth, Taiwan and Limerick City Art Gallery in Ireland. He will be showing new work at Anthony Wilkinson Gallery, London in November 2024.

Theo Ellison (b. 1990, London) uses video and text to tease out our vulnerability to romanticised narratives, exploring how they shape our relationships with nature, technology and nostalgia. Within that framework, these narratives are both indulged and undercut to test the boundaries between pathos and humour, observation and voyeurism, and nature and artifice.

Ellison received an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art in 2017. Recent exhibitions include; *Rolodex Propaganda*, Karst Gallery, Plymouth, UK, 2024; *In the Offing*, Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK, 2023; *Supersublime*, Giant Gallery, 2023; *CIRCA Class of 2022* screened at Piccadilly Lights, London, Limes, Berlin, K-Pop Square, Seoul, South Korea, Fed Square, Melbourne, Australia, 2022; *Lovely View, Way Out East*, London, 2022; *Ancient Mew, Conditions*, Croydon, UK, 2022; *The Football Art Prize*, toured at Touchstones Rochdale, Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens, UK, 2022; *NatureMax*, Giant Gallery, Bournemouth, 2022; *Sports Casual*, Palfrey, London, 2021.