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THE APPLE TREE

Anderson Borba, Alexandria Tarver,
Aleksander Hardashnakov, Evelina Hägglund
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‘The Garden of Eden with the Fall of Man’, painted in 1615 by Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel, depicts Adam and Eve picking apples from a tree, deemed in the Bible as forbidden for human consumption. Exactly fifty years later, Isaac Newton was sitting in an orchard when an apple fell on his head and he formed his theory of gravity.

The sculptures and paintings in ‘The Apple Tree’ are made of materials in their rawest form: untreated, raw, without contrivance. In their assembled, carved and painted intrusions, Anderson Borba, Alexandria Tarver, Aleksander Hardashnakov and Evelina Hägglund take a broad, unfettered view of nature. To them, making art doesn’t require grandeur to serve a purpose and is much more graspable when made modestly, with tools in hand, accumulating or scraping away veils of detail in subtle and vehement gesture. You’ll notice marks on the surfaces with differing levels of finesse – some that are burnt or scraped at, others that have a softer, more delicately handled approach.

Their traditional techniques of making encourage close attention: in Hägglund’s towering steel rod and wire sculptures, the sprigs correspond to the abrasions on her graphite drawing; in Borba’s carvings, the rough flecks of pressure from his chisel make chapped textures onto the wood; in Tarver’s paintings of unfurled flowers the paint application is deft and smeared, pockets of light from undercoats peeping through the leaves – and in Hardashnakov’s drawings the landscape fades away behind mists of fog, the background peering into view, as each story unfolds into the next.

Trees appear across all four artists work, some that depict branches and flowers, others that are made from the trunk, carved anew. Each, under the apple tree of mystery.

Written by Ted Targett

