

FELSTEAD ART

CONTEMPORARY & MODERN

POLLY TOWNSEND

STATES OF WILDERNESS

EXPLORING THE FAR CORNERS OF THE WORLD

3RD JULY 2026 - 11TH SEPTEMBER 2026

PRIVATE VIEW 2ND JULY 2026

FELSTEAD ART | GRESHAM

2 GRESHAM STREET, LONDON, EC2V 7BX

Felstead Art is pleased to present *States of Wilderness*, a selected series of paintings showcasing Polly Townsend's sustained engagement with some of the world's most remote landscapes.

Inspired by expeditions and artist residencies across Antarctica, Kashmir, Kyrgyzstan, Death Valley, and the Badlands National Parks, these paintings reflect an enduring fascination with places that feel almost beyond reach, where immense scale and forces of nature shape both the landscape and our experience of it.

Working directly within the landscape, Townsend undertakes extended periods of travel to locations defined by their remoteness and environmental extremes. Mountain ranges, glaciers, deserts and ice fields emerge through richly textured surfaces. Preliminary works are made on-site in the form of sketches, photographs and written observations that then provide the starting point for paintings developed in the studio. Combining direct observation with memory and reflection, Townsend seeks to capture the experience of these environments rather than simply describe them.

Every painting remains deeply rooted in its place, exploring light, weather, texture and the shifting topography that continually shapes the natural world. The near absence of human presence heightens the sense of scale, with the occasional trace of human activity bringing the vastness of the landscape into sharp focus.

Central to Townsend's practice is an awareness of geological time and the changing nature of the landscape. Formations that appear permanent are revealed as places of transformation, shaped by erosion, movement, and time. Whether depicting vast ice shelves or expansive deserts, her paintings encourage a slower way of looking, revealing the complexity and quiet beauty of places that are often perceived as empty or inhospitable.

States of Wilderness brings together works produced over several years of exploration, revealing a correspondence between landscapes separated by thousands of miles, united through their scale, remoteness and continual transformation. Many of the landscapes represented are among the world's most environmentally significant and fragile, and this exhibition invites reflection on humanity's place within the natural world.

Polly Townsend: States of Wilderness is organised by Felstead Art and curated by Michael Wormack.

Specialising in modern and contemporary art and prints, Felstead Art works with both British and international artists, maintaining a particular focus on East London.

VISITOR INFORMATION



Felstead Art | Gresham
Mon - Fri: 9am-6pm
Sat - Sun: Closed
Nearest station: St. Paul's

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QR link for up-to-date information

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