

High Yield

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One hundred pairs of upturned wellington boots, sprouting from a field, examining the uncertain future of hill farming in Cumbria

The installation of one hundred pairs of upturned wellington boots scattered like germinating crops or partially buried figures across a field. The work examines the uncertain future of hill farming in the county as one of Cumbria's most iconic industries. The beautiful Lakeland landscape, so admired by tourists with its rolling pastures and dry stone walls, is in many ways a manmade one, the product of centuries of upland agricultural traditions. Now, with the industry seeing diminishing returns, the work's ambiguous title refers both to the yielding of many farms to the frosty financial winds blowing against them and also ironically to the low yields they can expect for their labours in the current economic climate. The upturned boots reference farms and farmers that have here quiet literally 'gone under'. Yet also - more hopefully perhaps - a future in which, given the right nurturing, the germination of new farms and new possibilities can be realised.