

# Birmingham School of Art

## April Newsletter

April is always a busy time of year at the School of Art! Following the spring vacation, it has been great to see so many of you using Margaret Street as a site for experimenting with materials, processes and techniques and as a place to think through making; utilising the resources to realise ideas in both the studios and workshops. Thank you all for being so responsible in taking lateral flow tests, wearing masks and ensuring social distancing has been maintained; it has meant we can all work together in a safe and productive way.

Over the past few weeks, for Foundation students, the studios have become sites of performance and participation through exciting *drawing movement* workshops. *Collaborative projects* across BA Fine Art and BA Art and Design have seen Level 4 students effectively working together online in order to navigate the development of a group project outcome. At Level 5 *live projects* and *work placements* have prompted students to consider their relationship to contexts outside of Margaret Street. Level 6 students have been focused on producing work for their *final projects* and for MA students the launch of the *Gertrude Aston Bowater live projects* has seen the development of a range of interesting projects which will take place across the 5 postgraduate courses over the coming months. I look forwards to featuring the outcomes of the semester 2 work in the next newsletter which will be a May/ June edition (coming to you post-assessments in mid-June!)

Best wishes

Becky

Rebecca Court  
Head of Undergraduate Studies  
Birmingham School of Art

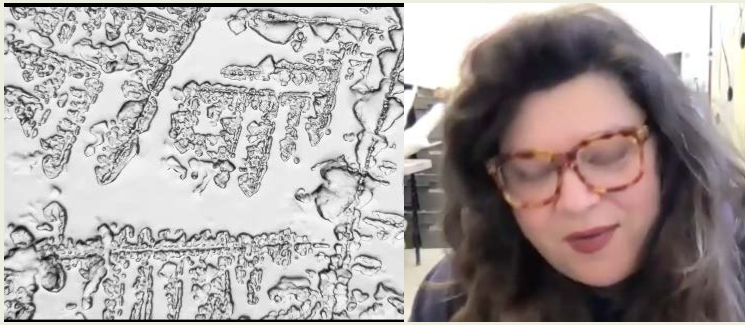
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## What's been happening at the School of Art:

### MA: Gertrude Aston Bowater Live Projects

This year the MA courses have been recipients of the Gertrude Aston Bowater Award and are currently developing a series of distinct live projects that reflect each of the MA programmes ambitions and interests. We are incredibly excited about these and look forwards to showing you the outcomes soon!





## School of Art Artist Talks Programme

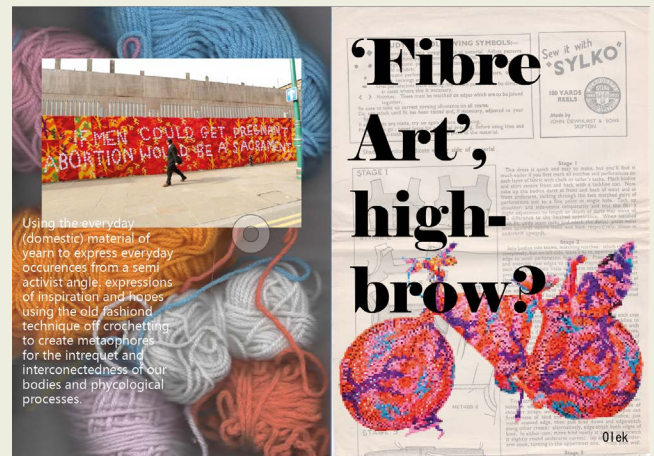
The School of Art Artist Talks Programme, which takes place at lunch time on Fridays, has continued to give us the opportunity to hear from a range of speakers. Recently we were lucky to have Turner Prize winner Tai Shani (top left) join us to discuss her multidisciplinary practice comprising performance, film, photography and installation which revolve around experimental narrative texts. Last week we were joined by artist, educator and curator Kevin Hunt (bottom left) who discussed ways we can meaningfully connect with artworks online; exploring strategies for working digitally to engage audiences. Join the [School of Art Artist Talks Teams group](#) to see a recording of these brilliant talks.



## Level 6 BA Art and Design Process Books

Level 6 Art and Design students have been working hard, focussing on their final major projects and the 'Making Public' programme which includes their own publishing house, a radio station and an online TV channel. New content is being published regularly so please follow their Instagram (@baaad\_21) for updates.

Just like last year, the students are working on their own 'Process Book' which will document their thinking and making. These publications are a great way to demonstrate the breadth and rigour of work students are undertaking in these challenging times. We have seen some great examples so far such as this one from Georgia Hewlett (top right) which uses layering to explore her personal relationship to textiles and knitting and this example from Serena Roadh (bottom right) which explores her quest to make the perfect roti.





## Level 4 Collaborative Project BA Fine Art and Art and Design

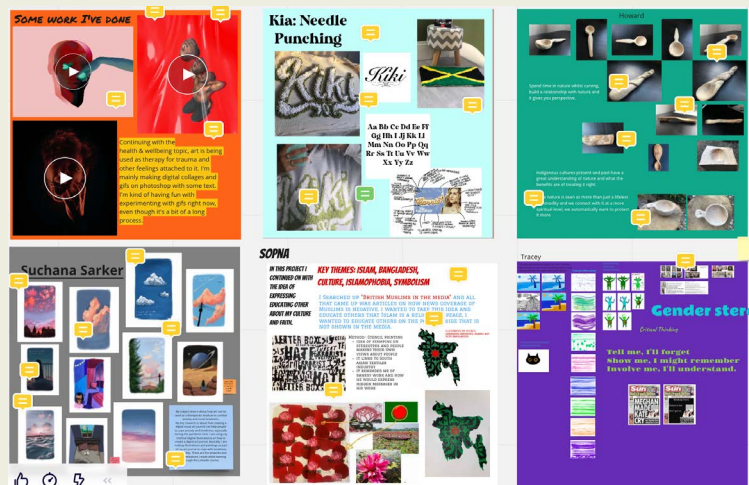
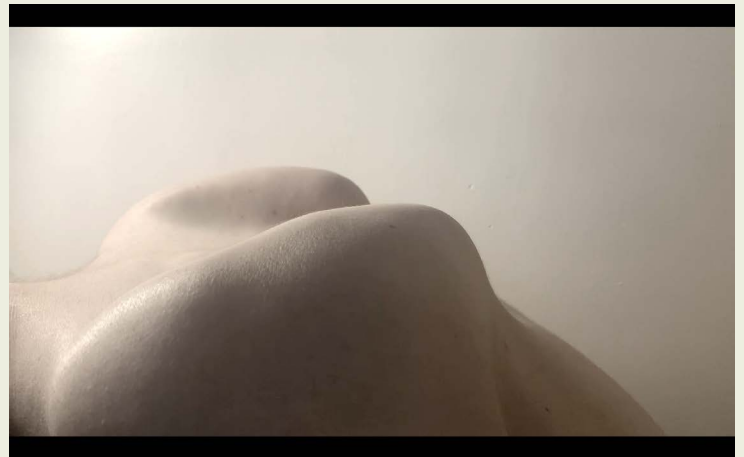
At the end of April, we see the conclusion of 12 weeks of cross-course collaboration. Each group has created a 'model space' consisting of an imaginary gallery design and curated exhibition. We have many geodesic domes, an anchored platform at sea and a subterranean horror house. We have exhibitions that consist of sensory and inclusive installations, effectively employing sound, colour and light, and spaces that focus on ecology and environmental issues.

The groups, with wonderfully distinctive names such as Dog in Distress, Sadboy, and Mapl-X, have each worked hard and have clearly been considerate of everyone's ideas and contributions. We can reflect on the knowledge that collaboration is a challenge, though rewarding, and develops highly relevant skills for the future.



## Level 5 Live Projects BA Fine Art and Art and Design

The second year Live Projects are well underway as our students are continuing to work in partnership with Sofia Niazi, Eastside Projects, Wheatley Fellow Harun Morrison and with support from Flat Pack Film Festival. The projects are varied and see our students publishing, curating, educating and making work public in a variety of ways over the coming weeks. As ever, the module is a way for us all to think about practice as it relates to conditions in the world. Pictured right, Work in progress, Howard Carlton for BAAAD Pictures.



## Level 5 BA Art and Design Studio Miro

In this module, as well as learning a new skill, we're also thinking about what useful art is, what function it can have for the viewer or user. L5 A&D students are making user guides that will not only teach a reader how to make something but also why they should bother and how they can put that thing to good use. We're using Miro as a studio space to share works and share comments and thoughts with each other. These outcomes are available to view [here](#).

## Level 5 and 6 BA Fine Art

On their return to the building Level 5 and 6 Fine Art students have been making good use of the F01 and F02 studio spaces which they share. In level 5 students have been experimenting with ideas and developing their research documents for their *Extending Practice* module. In level 6 students have been considering the resolution of their ideas using the spaces to test and record work ahead of their *Practice and Professional Presentation* submissions at the beginning of June. It is great to see the studios active and well utilised and to see such ambitious outcomes emerging!



## ADM5000 Work Placements BA Fine Art and BA Art and Design

The aim of this module is for students to develop their industry, sector and transferable skills by completing a 70-hour work placement, or an alternative project that investigates a work sector of interest. As regards work placements, Kristof Hetenyi, for example, is currently helping Joseph Leckie Academy to design a community memorial garden commemorating the School's recently deceased headteacher. Fabiana Rocha Martins Simoes, who is undertaking a remote placement at Walsall Art Gallery, is researching Anj Smith's exhibition to devise online resources and a template for recording equal opportunities. Students on the alternative project have opted to, for example, investigate the challenges faced by the HE-sector due to Covid-19, a career as a professional photographer, the requirements / demands of working within the lingerie design sector, the automotive industry or as an art therapist.





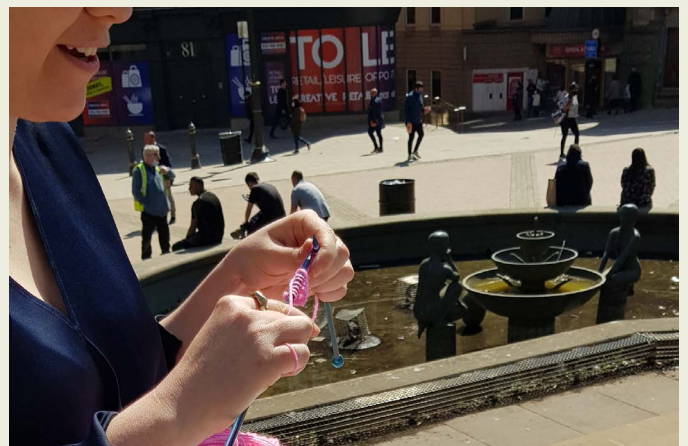
## Foundation

With only a few weeks left in the year Foundation students have their heads down and are working hard to tweak the final stages of their work. Studio participation has been key had it has been great to continue to work with Jim O'raw our student teacher. Thanks to our visitors: Michela Regellin (@Michelahoops), who performed as part of a drawing workshop looking at markmaking in response to movement. Thanks to Michela for four great sessions. Kate Brinkworth (katebrinkworth.com), Artist and Painter who invited us into her studio space, via TEAMS, to talk about her current work followed by a technical Q & A with insider information on the trials and tribulations of running your own business during lockdown. Thanks Kate.



## Knit Club

Knit Club ventures out and wanders large across the city - well not quite but this week we did take our first steps outside and joined the Floozy in the Jacousey for our knitting catch up. We are inching nearer to forming a future project and would be interested in broadening our Margaret Street knit group. Keep an eye out for updates via Moodle.





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## Other news:

### School of Art Workshop Access

Workshop access is now available to all practice-based students from Monday to Friday on a booking only basis via the [Moodle Technical Page](#). On Monday, Thursday and Friday evenings Graduate Monitors are available to support with workshops, machinery, and projects in the following areas: Printmaking, Textiles, Sound & Video, Woodworking, Metalworking, Plaster casting and sculpture.

You can book to access the workshops between the following times:

Monday : 10:00 - 20:00

Tuesday: 10:00 - 17:00

Wednesday: 10:00 - 17:00

Thursday: 10:00 - 20:00

Friday: 10:00 - 19:00

We have also welcomed Dan Sailsbury to the Technical team. Dan will be supporting the 3D area.



### School of Art Library Open!

Good news! from the 19th of April BCU Library and Learning resource services changed meaning that the School of Art is back open on a Monday and Thursday from 9am to 5pm. You do not need to book access the School of Art library or to collect reservations, although you may have to queue due to social distancing measures. You can also book to access the Curzon Library which is open 24/7. Full details on this news available [here](#).



## Zoom and the Aesthetics of Now.

Exploring zoom, mediated performance, play and the politics of self-representation.

Friday 30th April 1pm - 2:30pm

This is a practice-based workshop led by Harold Offeh that will explore the possibilities and strategies that have emerged from the restrictions of having to work and socialise via corporatized video conferencing platforms like Zoom, Teams and Skype. The workshop will draw comparisons with Rosalind E Krauss's seminal and often cited essay *Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism* (1976). After almost a year of mediated contact, a vocabulary of gestures, actions and approaches is emerging from artist's use of zoom and other platforms. But what characterises these approaches? Dialogue, collaboration, community or alienation, paranoia and loneliness? The session is open to anyone who wants to play. The aim of the session is not to create zoom based art, but to open up a space of speculation, research and play that will hopefully feed into ongoing research interests. [Join here.](#)



## IAMBCU AWARDS

The I AM BCU Awards celebrate the exceptional staff and students at BCU. Previously known as the Extra Mile Awards, the awards and categories have been revamped for 2021, to recognise the contribution of staff and students across the University in what has been an exceptional year, and to give focus to the BCU community. The deadline for nominations is Sunday 9 May 2021. The awards will take place at a ceremony in June. More information available [here.](#)

## Ikon for Artists Art Sale

On Monday 17 May Ikon reopens after lockdown, devoting its galleries to an exhibition of artworks for sale by over 250 Birmingham artists. A number of these artists are alumni from Birmingham School of Art. The works featured were selected through an open call, inviting Birmingham-based artists to submit one artwork with a value of up to £1,000. There was no curatorial selection process and no submission fee. The works are exhibited in the order applications were received. You can book to see the work on show [here.](#)

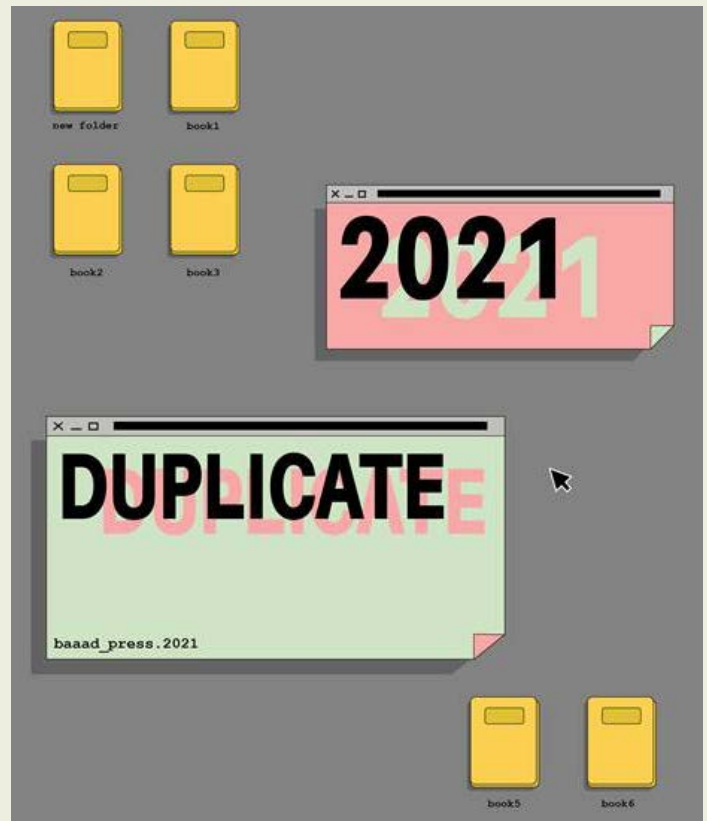




## Duplicate 2021: Publishing in a Pandemic Saturday 8th May

Duplicate is going to be a little bit different this year. Instead of a normal book fair, we are hosting a one-day artist book and self-publishing event, featuring a guest panel discussing their experiences of publishing in a pandemic followed by a publishing workshop organised by BAAAD Press.

You can register to attend [here](#).



## Student Success Advisor news

Here is what the SSAs have coming up:

Every Thursday at 1pm [Creative Yoga](#) with our very own SSA instructor and BCU Fine art alumna Ioana

Creative Arts Studio. Wednesdays every Fortnight at 4pm. The SSA's have now created a Teams channel you can join to share your creative projects and chat and collaborate with other minds alike. Every Wednesday fortnight we host a teams call where we have chats and play some games such as scribbler. [To join the team click here](#).

[Wellbeing Wednesday](#). De-clutter & Donate. Tips & hacks to spring clean spaces, store items and donate unused items. 12th May from 13:00-14:00. The mental health and wellbeing team will also be doing an anxiety management workshop on [20th May 1-2pm which you can join here](#).

Also, to remind you of the supportive resources available on the [SSAs Moodle page](#) which includes information how to book an appointment with our School of Art Student Success Advisor Miriam Bruton.

**Your Student Success Advisors**

**ADM Student Success Advisors**

**Contact your Student Success Advisors**

**Miriam Bruton**  
Email Address: [Miriam.Bruton@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Miriam.Bruton@bcu.ac.uk)  
Phone Number: 07874395715



## School Rep news

### You Said We Did: Keeping you in the Loop

News from the Student Feedback Forums:

*You asked for:* Clarity of assessment and marking processes and rubrics:

*We are:* arranging refresher module briefings to discuss this with you all (this have either happened or are happening)

*You asked for:* Library access and more workshop access

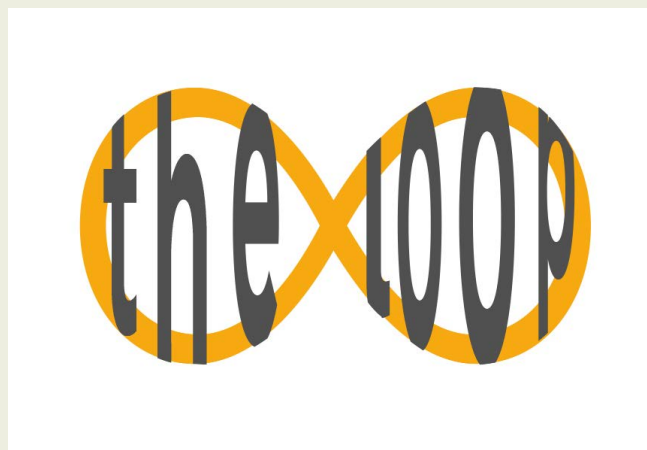
*We did:* Opened the library on a Monday and Thursday and opened up workshop bookings each day across courses and level

*You asked for:* more artists talks

*We did:* arranged a School of Art lecture series (Fridays 1pm)

*You asked for:* an overview of staff office hours

*We did:* circulated a list of the office hours for all staff



## Eastside Projects

Will Fredo

ONLINE Studio Visit

Thursday 13th May 2021

1 - 2pm

Join Eastside Projects for an online studio visit with Will Fredo in conversation with Candice Nembhard. The conversation will focus on words and performance relating to Will's current practice alongside their work in development for the forthcoming LOOP exhibition at Eastside Projects in the autumn. Studio Visits offer an informal opportunity to gain an insight into the working practices of artists and an early introduction to work you will be able to see in the gallery in the future. Listen, watch and ask questions as artists talk about ideas they are developing, what they are making and how they are making it. [Book here.](#)

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The next School of Art newsletter will be a combined May/ June edition to capture and celebrate the end of Semester 2 assessment outcomes! It will be circulated in mid-June. If you have any news or events you would like included in this next newsletter please email: [rebecca.court@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:rebecca.court@bcu.ac.uk)