

S - O - A

Birmingham School of Art

November Newsletter 2021

The final newsletter of 2021.... where has the year gone?!

I am sure many of you will agree that the return to; in-person teaching at Margaret Street, trips and gallery visits, physical exhibitions (both on and off site) and Night School, have this semester given us much to celebrate amidst a difficult context.

In reflecting on the past 10 weeks of Semester 1 (and indeed 2021 in its entirety), the turbulence and uncertainty that you, the School of Art community, have navigated with such resilience, energy and sense of possibility has been a consistent source of inspiration for us all. I hope the School of Art Newsletter serves in reminding us how much has been achieved, how strong this community is and how much pride is shared in celebrating each other's news.

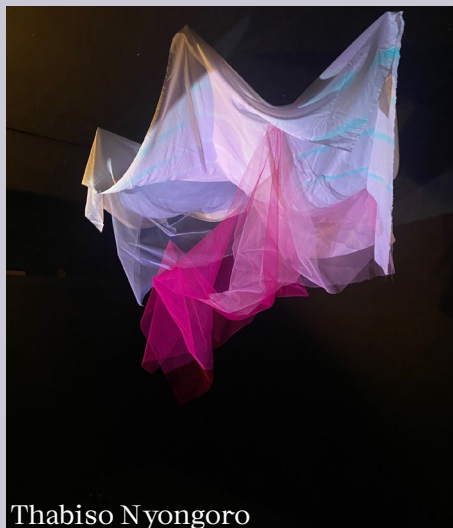
With the winter break fast approaching, this newsletter captures just a few of the many things that you have been getting up to in November (it has certainly been a busy month!). It also highlights some of the activities, opportunities and events that you can get involved in over the next few weeks.

I hope that everyone has a good (and productive!) holiday when it arrives. Whether you are spending some time making work, writing Major Project essays or CHC reports, relaxing or catching up with friends/ family. I look forwards to seeing you in 2022!

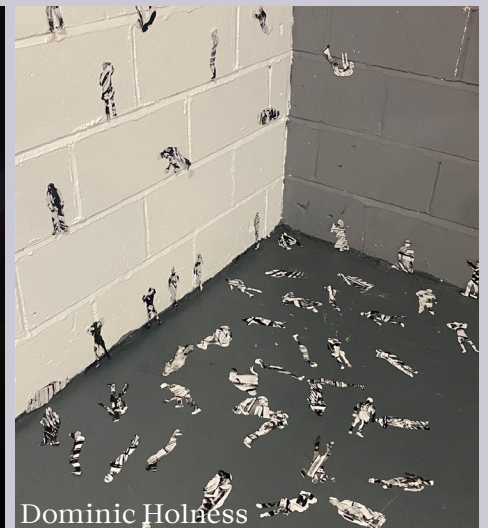
Becky



Sarah Priest



Thabiso Nyongoro



Dominic Holmes

Whats been happening at the School of Art:



Level 6 Fine Art Pop-Up Exhibition Vivid Projects

Third Year BA Fine Art students put on their first external exhibition *Tomorrows News* at Vivid Projects in Digbeth on the 16th November. The group rose to the occasion working together to curate the space, taking advantage of installation opportunities and navigating challenges! They produced an engaging show full of ideas! Well done everyone!



INTO THE G20 Exhibition Curated by Level 6 Art and Design



Howard Carlton

INTO THE is the first in a series of exhibitions at the School of Art, curated by students on BA Art and Design but featuring work from students throughout Margaret Street.

The current exhibition explores the topic of “into the”, a deliberately open-ended statement in order to explore new beginnings in a post-lockdown art school. The exhibition features the work of Henry Jones, Gugan Gill, Howard Carlton, Holly Day, K’Zhayha James, Olivia Smith, Xirui Zhao, Jacob Carter and Mary Nocher.



K’Zhayha James

Design for Performance Level 5 Archives

The Design for Performance L5 students are working on a live brief with the Archives Team at Parkside, to design concept proposals for an immersive exhibition inspired by their collection of the music magazine Melody Maker. We were lucky enough to visit the archive, and put on gloves to explore the collection that spans over sixty years from the very first publication in 1926. Melody Maker not only documents the developing trends in music, but also captures amazing developments in photography, graphic design, advertising, and fashion.



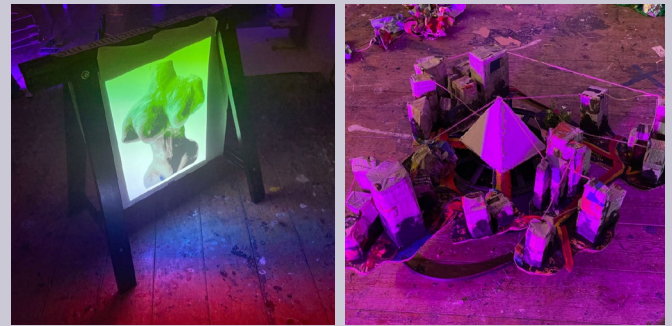
Level 4 Art and Design

Level 4 Art and Design students have been working on a mini-brief exploring the role of artist/designer as activist as part of their Art and Design Production Manual. It is one of our favourite projects that the students do in the first year and so often serves as an inspiration for the work they go on to make in level 5 and 6. Special thanks should go to Demitrios Karagotis (MA Art and Design Course Leader) for the original brief!



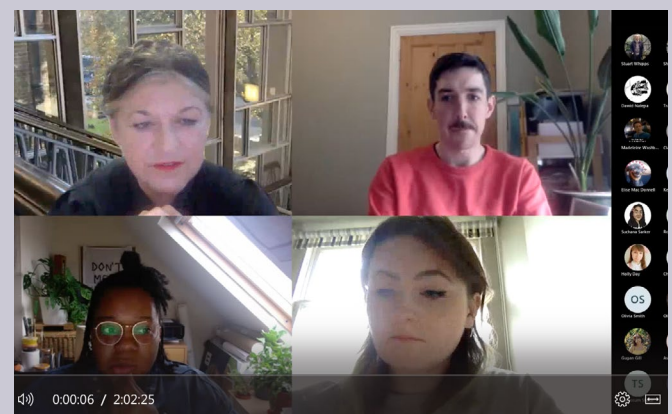
Leve 4 Fine Art: Tactile Tentacular

Within this mini-project, level 4 (group B) were this month tasked with creating a sculptural artwork which explored and responded to re-imagined existing relationships, boundaries and ecologies - to speculate on new forms, relationships and ideas that ask questions about the world around us. Examples of outcomes can be seen [here](#). Great work everyone!

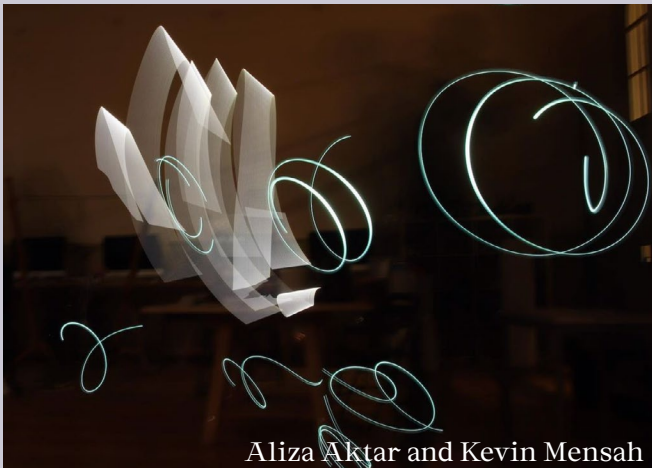


Level 6 Fine Art and Art and Design Professional Portfolio

Level 6 students have started the Professional Portfolio module and last week had the pleasure of hearing our invited speakers De'Anne Crooks, Emily Scarrott and Robin Kirkham (An Endless Supply) talk about their educational experiences. Esther Windsor chaired a lively and engaging discussion on the merits of studying for an MA. As the module progresses, we will be joined by a range of visiting practitioners who will share their experiences in the creative industries as our students develop their own three year post graduation plans. Our students will also make short films that will showcase their practices. Bethan Jayne's film from the last academic year is a wonderful example of what is possible. You can watch it [here](#).



Foundation: Circle Project

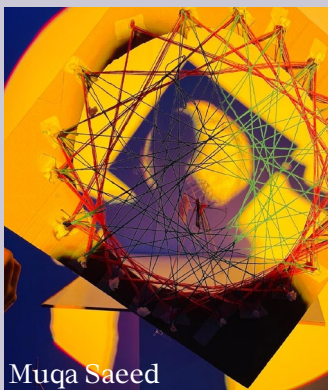


Aliza Akhtar and Kevin Mensah

The Circle Project does of course look at literal circles that surround us because – frankly – it is impossible not to, but we are also taking a deeper dive into alternative perspectives to look at cycles in life, climate, environment, within the body, through movement and connection, community bubbles, music and other. This is a project that allows broad research influences to drop by at any point causing reversals, questions and problems that need to be solved!

These images are works in progress that are snap shots from workshops designed to kick start alternative ways of thinking. We are looking at kinetics, light, shadow, sound and colour with additional introduction to WGSN Colour forecasting.

Workshops included; 3D line and shadow drawing, drawing to sound, drawing with light, visions from the cycene (which was priceless, remarkable and revealing! Thanks Paul Lander). Thank you to our Studio Assistants Jess Ingram and Taiba Akhtar – Fabulous to work with you..... Keep an eye out for our debut at Night School on November 30th 2021.



Muqa Saeed



Salima Ahmed

MA Art and Design: Katherine Howes Luck Vs Logic

Foamboard, glue, screen-prints. Inspired by research into our rich history of gaming and cards, Katherine Howes's sculpture raises questions about our political system and playing 'the game of politics'. The card tower mysteriously survives toppling. Is the glue that keeps it together the good of the people; volunteering, working tirelessly, showing grit and determination in the face of adversity? Or is the tower of Boris Johnsons held up by money and support of lobbyists, big business and the media. How and when will the tower collapse?



Katherine Howes

MAAEP visit to De'Anne Crooks A Tale or Two at New Art Gallery Walsall.

MA Arts and Education students spent a November morning talking about narratives and pedagogies with course alumni De'Anne Crooks. Their [residency at New Art Gallery Walsall](#) explores Caribbean tales, more familiarly known as "old wives tales", using them as a springboard for investigation into a wider conversation around the validity, comfort and history of these tales across different cultures.





MA Contemporary Arts China

MACAC students have been busy engaging and studying debates and practices in contemporary art in China and exploring the School of Art facilities and Birmingham museums and galleries. Students also visited Frieze Art Fair and exhibitions in our partner organisation Troy House Art Foundation in London. Now we all look forward to our end of term pre-Christmas dinner celebration in Chinatown, with karaoke singing included!

Social Media Take-Over Thursdays

For those of you who are social media (particularly Instagram) users/ followers you may have noticed that each Thursday students have been taking over the School of Art Social Media accounts (Instagram: [@Birmingham_School_of_Art](#), Twitter: [@margaretstreet](#), Facebook: [BCU Birmingham School of Art](#)). Thank you to everyone who has participated in these so far. If anyone else is interested in getting involved, please contact [Rebecca](#).



MA Fine Art

MA Fine Art is delighted to introduce the Mike Holland and Gertrude Ashton Bowater recipients for 2021 -22. We are looking forward to the interesting work that they will make over the next year.

The Mike Holland bursary offers financial support towards the MA Fine Art course fees. Mike Holland was a painter and former Head of Fine Art, at Birmingham School of Art. This year's bursary was awarded to [Gemma Moore](#).



Gemma Moore

Gertrude Aston Bowater was a student at the School of Art in the 1940s and over her long life she had a passion for art. As a result of this she requested in her will that her family create a bequest from her estate that would provide financial support for a successful applicant to the full time MA courses. [Ryan Asbury](#) progressed from the BA Fine Art course at the School of Art and is this year's Gertrude Aston Bowater recipient.



Ryan Asbury

PhD Student News

Newly enrolled postgraduate researcher **Roo Dhissou** worked with **Rankin and Water Aid** to raise awareness for world toilet day on 19th November. Her design for *Best Seat in the House*, raises awareness of the millions of people who don't have access to a decent toilet. Her toilet is complete with a bottle to wash your bottom and a squatting seat, Roo says of the work "I think it's important to add to cultural systems rather than replacing them entirely".



Roo Dhissou

Postgraduate researcher Jonnie Turpie was recently awarded a commission for the **Magistrates Association, 2020 Vision: 100 Years of Justice Exhibition**. Jonnie focused on the 'Race and Criminal Justice' element of the Exhibition with two drawn and silkscreen printed portraits of magistrates from the West Midlands Bench: Sue Marwa JP, the first and longest-serving Magistrate from an ethnic background and Carlton Williams JP, the youngest-serving Magistrate who is also from a mixed-race background.



Jonnie Turpie



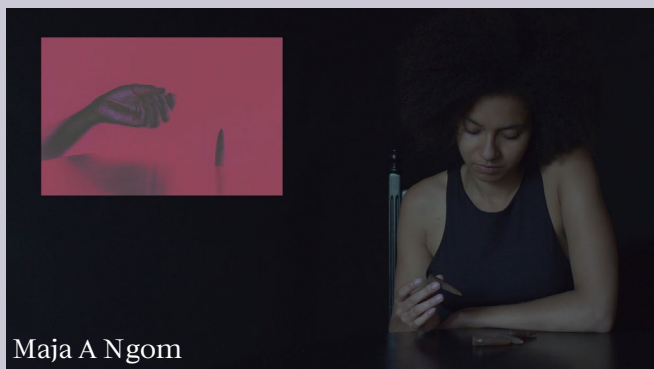
Rebecca Court



John Wigley

Wednesday Staff Talks Friday Artist Lectures

The Wednesday Staff Talks and the Friday Artist Lunchtime Lectures have continued to offer an insight into a range of practices. Since the last newsletter we have heard from **Rebecca Court**, **Lee Hewett**, **John Wigley**, **Caitlin Kiely** and **Maja A Ngom**. This Friday we have Wheatley Fellow Joey Holder's talk to look forwards. You can watch it on Teams [here](#).



Maja A Ngom



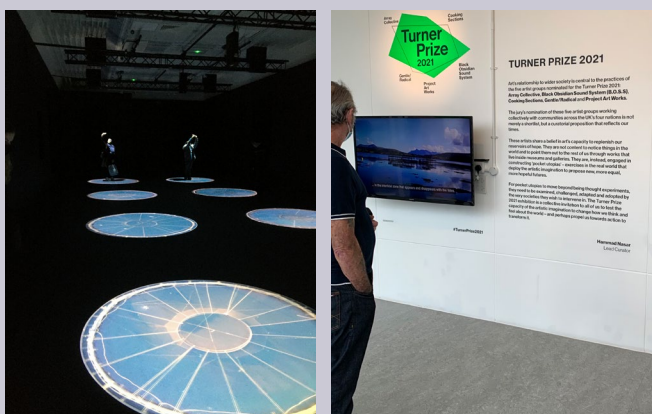
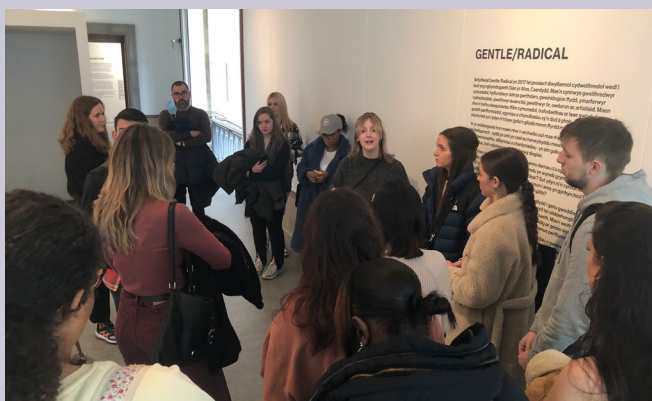
Caitlin Kiely

Level 4 and 6 Art and Design + Level 5 Fine Art Coventry Trips



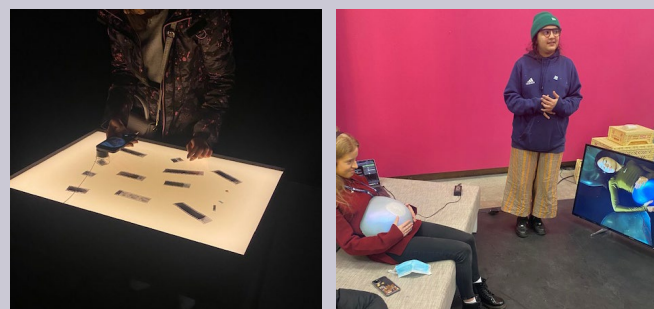
Level 6 Art and Design enjoyed a trip to The Herbert Museum for a curators tour of the Turner Prize with Alice O'Rourke. They also found time to visit the Heather and Ivan Morrison terrazzo tables and benches designed as part of the city of culture celebrations.

On the same day they were joined in Coventry by Level 4 Art and Design and Level 5 Fine Art also visiting the Turner Prize and the Biennial! Level 4 and Level 6 Fine Art students have their visits to look forwards to next month!

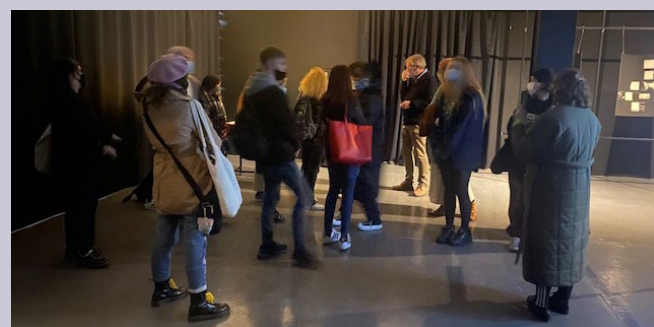


Level 4 Fine Art Grand Union and Eastside Projects visits

Level 4 BA Fine Art students made their first group trip to Digbeth this month to visit **Grand Union** and **Eastside Projects**.



Grand Union Programme Director and Curator Kim McAleese spoke to the students about the current show **Heads and Tails** by Phyllis Christopher. Kim spoke to us about the process of working with Phyllis in developing the show and talked to us about Phyllis's amazing archive of analogue negatives and 16mm films. Her images taken from her personal connections and surrounding queer community depict lesbian pleasure, sex positivity and political movements. Eastside Project curator Yas Lime then talked to us about the exhibition **Woven Tongue** and the selection of works which reflect Yas's Turkish Cypriot heritage. Directors Gavin Wade and Ruth Claxton also spoke to us about the exhibition **Loop** co-curated by Harold Offeh; constituted by actions and gestures choreographed and defined by body, space, walls, floor etc.



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Other news / coming soon:

Night School: Tuesday 30th November



Night School returns for November, this time open to the public! Come along on Tuesday (30th) 6-8pm to enjoy a cocktail, see student work in progress exhibitions, film screenings and more!

Betsy Bradley Ikon Exhibition and SoA Friday Lecture

Birmingham School of Art Alumni **Betsy Bradley** (MA Fine Art 2018), has a show, **Chasing Rainbows**, opening at **Ikon Gallery** on the 3rd December. Betsy will also be joining us for our **Friday Artist lecture series** on the 10th December!



Betsy Bradley



Mit Jai Inn

BA Fine Art Level 5 project with Ikon

In the spirit of artist Mit Jai Inn's 'Mantra', Second year BA Fine Art students have been invited by **Ikon Gallery** to receive the 'gift' of a section of his silver installation, **Midlands Dwelling**. Divided into paintings, students will then propose new functions for the works in their homes, before sharing the results in photography and video with Mit, Ikon Gallery and at the next Night School!

ArtsLab* Journal

Birmingham Institute of Creative Arts ArtsLab Journal

As part of the **ArtsLab** initiative, we will be introducing an interdisciplinary and open-access research journal with contributions from students (both under and post-graduate) and staff across the institute. Issue 1 of the **ArtsLab** journal, out in spring 2022, will have the broad theme of 'Inclusive Futures'. To submit work for consideration please email a short summary to bica.artslab@gmail.com
Deadline 21.02.22

School Rep news

“Hi! It’s your school reps Nikol and Inés! Semester 1 has gone so fast! We’ve been working hard at introducing ourselves to the student union, other faculties and of course everyone at the School of Art. Also, we’ve been getting our head around the acronyms that BCU love... We have had our first SSFF or Student Staff Feedback Forum (what did we say about acronyms?!) for BA Fine Art and Art & Design. The SSFF was a great example of the feedback opportunities that the School of Art create for us as students. As well as this we are and have been available via Instagram [@nicole_ign](#) and [@inesl_art](#) to chat anything and everything. Have a lovely winter break and see you in semester 2!”



Anthony Downey Care, Contagion and Community Autograph, London

Professor Anthony Downey wrote a text for the exhibition [Care, Contagion and Community](#) at [Autograph](#) in London. Anthony will also publish a volume of text he edited, [Shona Illingworth Topologies of Air](#) in January 2022.



A welcome message from new Wheatley Fellow Joey Holder

“I’m very excited to be joining the school in as the new Wheatley Fellow. I am planning to be on campus as much as possible from Mon-Weds each week, working from the Attic studio and F11 ; please feel free to drop in and say hello! My art practice research spans themes including conspiracy, belief and narrative across online networks, regarding the future of science, medicine, biology and human-machine interactions. I make constructed environments that respond directly to contemporary, real world events through immersive, multimedia installations. I have worked with computational geneticists, marine biologists, behavioural psychologists & investigative journalists where my work has addressed themes including future farming, synthetic biology and deep sea ecosystems. I also run [Chaos Magic](#), a project space based in Nottingham and [SPUR](#) a virtual residency platform (both of which supports young artists and graduates). Can’t wait to get started and meet you all!” Joey



CCVA Conference: Transcultural Curation and the Post-Covid World 2-3/12

The Centre for Chinese Visual Arts (CCVA) annual conference is organised by Dr Nuria Querol and Prof Joshua Jiang and focuses on the significance of transcultural curation, both before and after the Covid-19 pandemic. You can find out more information and register to attend [here](#).

Theo Reeves-Evison Radar: *Seed Casino*

Theo Reeves-Evison, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at Birmingham School of Art, whose research focuses on the critical imbrications of art, ecology and speculation led an event at the University of Loughborough; *Seed Casino*. The event represented a conclusion to his research residency there and involved two croupiers, blackjack, roulette and several kilograms of seeds!



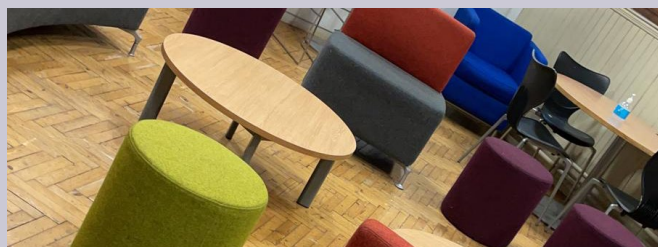
Rose and Frank Short, Tate Britain

Rosemarie Short, our Head of Course Oversight, recently had an appointment at the Tate Britain to view some works done by one of her ancestors, Sir **Frank Short** - he was an etcher who was eventually inducted into the Royal Academy for his works. Originally from Stourbridge!



The Social Space is back!

In case you haven't seen it... the SOA social space has been reinstated in G07!



Eastside Projects

Eastside Projects: Symposium New Possibilities for Performance: Saturday 4th December (online)

This event explores what is at stake in experiencing performance? How is this experience mediated, live and direct in close physical contact or mediated and transmitted via technology and screens? What does it mean to make performance, now in a pandemic and post-pandemic world? Where is performance made and shown, and by whose authorship?

Hosted by artist Harold Offeh, guests include Barak adé Soleil artist and Director of Live Art Development Agency, Joe Moran choreographer and director of Dance Art Foundation, Louise O'Kelly curator and founder of Block Universe, Lucie Mirkova, Head of Artistic Programmes at DanceXchange, and SERAFINE1369 dancer and artist. You can book [here](#) and find out more about what's on at Eastside Projects [here](#).



Thank you for reading!

Due to the winter break the next newsletter will be published at the end of January 2022. If you have any news you would like to share in the January School of Art Newsletter, please get in touch before the 20.01.22: rebecca.court@bcu.ac.uk