

S - O - A

Birmingham School of Art

January Newsletter 2022

Happy new year everyone!

The new Semester is here - amazing how the academic year flies past so quickly. It feels like only yesterday we were saying welcome to our new students in the School of Art. It is good to be back and to have seen so many of you in the studios and workshops this week - the building is always better when everyone is around.

Within this newsletter we reflect on some of the outcomes of Semester 1 and the recent assessments. There is much to celebrate in the range of work that has been submitted over the past few weeks - from Foundations "Circles" to MA Social Practice projects. For our third year (level 6) students the achievements demonstrated in their major research projects offer a great deal to reflect on in the range of issues, ideas and theories interrogated and proposed. Well done everyone!

This Semester brings with it much to look forward to - a busy and exciting few months await. Across courses and levels there are a number of activities planned - from work in progress exhibitions, live projects, trips, guest lecturers and not forgetting the BA final year exhibitions (our first School of Art Degree Shows for three years!!). This month we share with you just a few of the forthcoming events that we, as a School of Art community, are engaged in for the rest of this academic year. We also have a range of academic developments planned for 2022 and beyond, Steve has agreed to update us in the next newsletter.... watch this space!

Here's to a good 2022!

Becky



Shajida Khanom



Liam Robunson



Becky McComb

S - O - A

Birmingham School of Art

Whats been happening at the School of Art:



Level 6 Fine Art Major Project Exhibition

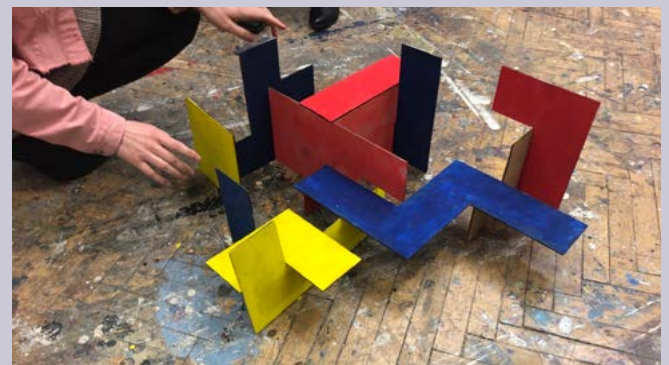
Third Year BA Fine Art students put on an exhibition of their Major Project submissions in G20 this week. The exhibition celebrated both the practice-based and the dissertation essays produced for the module. It was great to see such a range of research topics and methods employed and to showcase the outcomes to staff and students through the Night School event yesterday. Well done level 6 Fine Art, you did it!



Level 6 Art and Design Night School Work in Progress Exhibition



Level 6 Art and Design students started the semester with an exhibition for Night School. The students used the opportunity to experiment with their various 'making public' studios, BAAD Press, Media and Display. They will continue developing these over the semester in preparation for their graduate exhibition in June.





Grace Allen

Level 5 Fine Art Developing Practice

Displayed both in the Gallery and their studio in Margaret Street, L5 Fine Art students have recently presented work made in response to their Developing Practice module. This studio practice module encourages experimentation and in particular the development of work through use of the fantastic technical workshops that we have in Margaret. Some of the resulting work seen here, realised through mediums of Print Making, Sculpture, Painting, Textiles and Installation see students responding to the most important and significant issues facing their local and global communities, as well as more traditionally historical Fine Art subjects and personal themes. Environmentalism and Identity for some, memory, landscape and the process of making for others.



Lucy Starkey



Lily Marvin



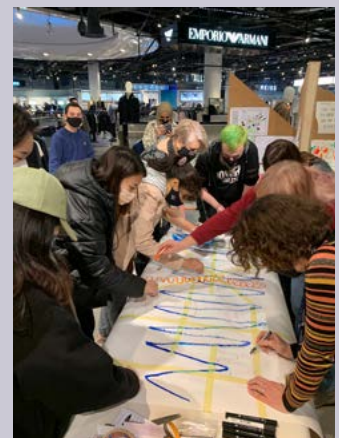
Maryam Aisha

Invisible Cities MA - Selfridges Live Project

MA Students from the Birmingham School of Art have been developing projects in response to Osman Yousefzada's installation Infinity Pattern 1 and Osman's letter to Birmingham. Taking Italo Calvino's seminal text Invisible Cities as an inspiration point, students have been exploring different narratives of the city.



They wrote their own ode to Birmingham by creating artworks, zines and undertook a collective drawing with Osman Yousefzada and workshops with the members of the public in the Birmingham Selfridges store earlier this month. In the Invisible Cities, Marco Polo talks through metaphor and symbols. In Invisible Cities Marco Polo conjures up cities of magical times for his host, the Chinese ruler Kublai Khan. The cities change from being settings to becoming characters— living, breathing characters. The role of storytelling and the relationship of the author to a reader is forefront here. In turn the Invisible Cities intervention will create an imaginative springboard for artists and audiences alike.



Design for Performance Level 6

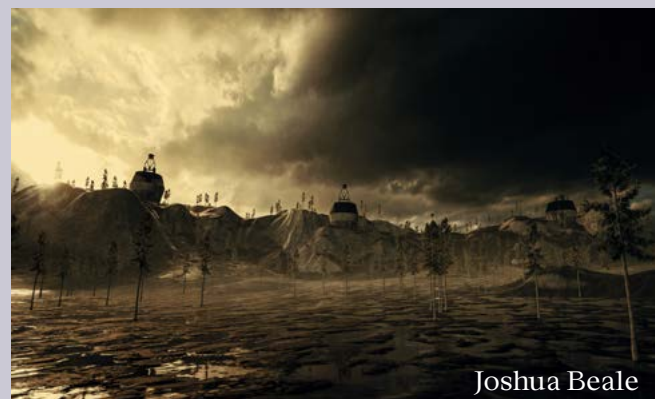
Level 6 DfP students have just completed their 60 credit Critical Practice module, requiring them to begin their final year by identifying their own individual areas of practice. This first semester has produced a solid platform of exploration and projects have been conceived in response to a variety of contemporary performance related possibilities. Examples have included a silent Edward Gorey Immersive Installation, TV production designs for the dystopian novel 'Wool' and visualisations of characters found in Milton's epic poem 'Paradise Lost'.



Victoria Charles

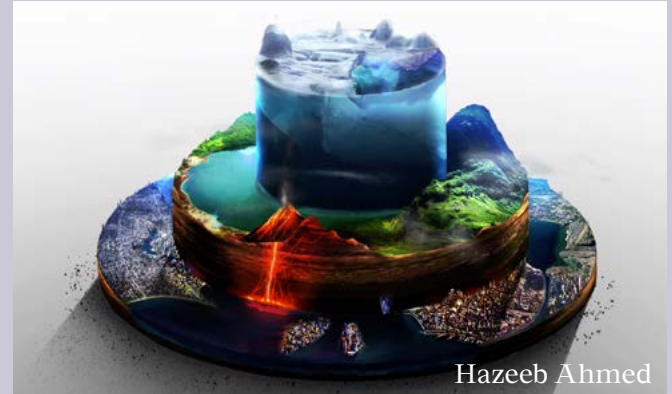


Theodore Denny



Joshua Beale

They are building on our ability to shout loudly through our work and may 'literally' make some noise!! Until then, the staff team (Jo, Jane and Paul) would like to leave you with some examples of completed ideas that grew from the 'Circle Project' and embraced speculation & interdisciplinary practice.



Hazeeb Ahmed



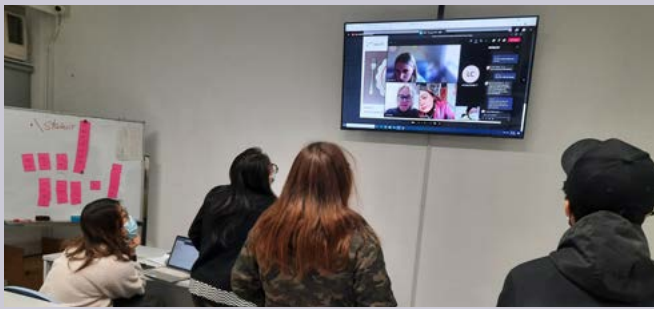
Liam Robinson



Sophie Jayes

Foundation news

The Foundation teams last entry in the News Letter left us on a cliff hanger with some great images of work in progress from Foundation Students showing at the School of Art, November Night School 2021. This year the Foundation cohort are charged and ready for action and looking forward to joining the next Night School event with new work and maybe sounds from the Foundation Course.



Level 6 Fine Art- Hong Kong / UK Group Tutorials

Level 6 Fine Art Students from Margaret Street and our SHAPE (Hong Kong) programmes came together to share ideas, research and work in progress in group tutorials. This pre-Semester 2 exchange offered a valuable opportunity to explore the international context of making and communicating concepts.



S-O-A Video - Level 5 Art and Design

Last week students from Art and Design worked with School of Art alumni, Tony McClure in producing a new video that showcases the incredible diversity of work that our students make in the workshop with our invaluable technical team. Canaan Brown, Isabella York, Sophia Dall'Aglio and Toby Hawkins spent a few days planning and shooting a arrange of activities as a part of the work placement module they have just started.



MA - Social Practices in the Visual Arts

This option module has concluded and celebrates the diversity of socially conscious projects which included; A collaboration with women's groups to respond to women's safety in the public sphere in the midst of recent events that shook the nation. An activist project that brought together the voices of Afghan women who are fighting for their right to free speech. An online Zoom symposium that brought together musicians from around the world to discuss challenges in developing as a musician in an ever-growing techno-centred and monopolised industry. A collaboration with a men's hockey team to address the stigma of men coming forward to speak out about their mental health. and an archival project that explores Birmingham's past music venues and their contribution to the city through personal interviews, DJ music performance, zine making and sculpture.



**DISC JOCKEYS
TORY RUIE
POLITICS OF RAVE
SENSORY
EXPERIENCES
AND LISTENING TO
REPETITIVE BEATS**

COMMENTS FROM AN ANONYMOUS RAVER

A collection of comments from an anonymous contributor who visited The Que Club during the mid-90s. They discuss the politics surrounding rave culture, specific memories from inside the club, the music, the people, the mindset and the relationship with fashion, culture and spaces.

Level 6 Fine Art trip
British Art Show 9
Wolverhampton



Third year Fine Art students this week visited the [British Art Show 9](#). They were given a tour of the Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Wolverhampton School of Art in exploring the wide range of works on show. The visit provided thought provoking conversations around display, curation, material and process decisions - informing the development of the students practice (and planning) as they work towards their degree show in June.



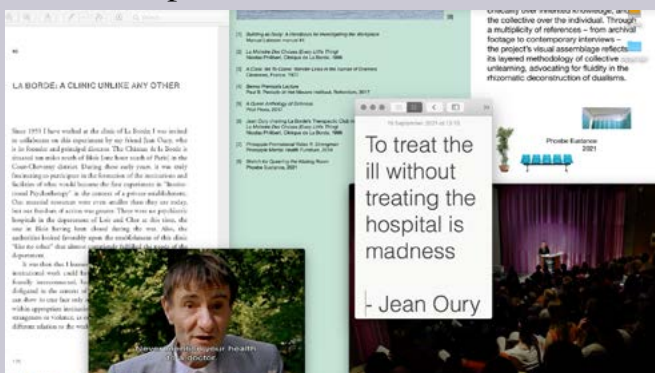
Wednesday Lunchtime Staff Talks
Gareth Proskourine-Barnett

As part of our program of staff talks, Gareth Proskourine-Barnett this week gave a talk about his current research which explores the ghost of a building that no longer exists and what this might say about the future. You can read more about Gareth's research [here](#) and if you are a BCU student or member of staff you can watch his talk back [here](#).



PhD Student News
New GABB PhD - Pheobe Eustance

We are happy to welcome our new Gertrude Aston Bowater Bequest (GABB) PhD Award holder to the School of Art. Pheobe Eustance joins us at the end of this month for their practice-based PhD entitled "A queer enquiry into embodied encounters of contemporary NHS mental health care through artistic practice". Supervised by Catherine Baker and Lisa Metherell in the School and Emma Craddock from BCU's School of Nursing and Midwifery, Pheobe will be working with arts and mental health charity [Hospital Rooms](#) on this exciting project. You can find out more about their PhD plans [here](#).



Other news / coming soon:

Friday Artist Talks and Wednesday Staff Talks are back!



As with Semester 1, throughout Semester 2 each Wednesday lunchtime (1-2pm on Teams) staff from across the School of Art will give talks about their practice, research and recent projects. Coming up we have talks from [Cathy Wade](#) (02/02), [Anthony Downey](#) (09/02) and [Demitrios Kargotis](#) (23/02) to look forwards to.

Friday Artist Talk 1 -28/01 -Verity Birt



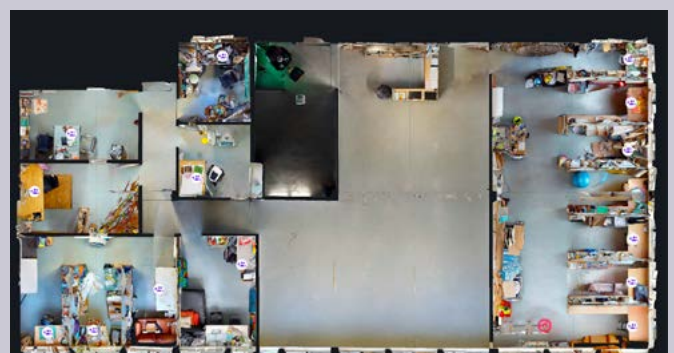
The Friday artist lunchtime lectures also return this Semester (1-2pm Teams). We begin with a talk from [Verity Birt](#) (*In Dark Derision* pictured above). Birt is a current PhD practice-based researcher at Northumbria. Her work aims to create meaningful intimacies between each-other and the more-than-human world.

This is a lecture to watch if you're interested in intersectional feminism, philosophy, history, literature, archaeology, geology and ecology!

Level 5 Fine Art Work in Progress Exhibition - Stryx Gallery 24/02 5-7pm



Next month second year BA Fine Art students will be testing work in progress in a gallery context through an external group exhibition at Stryx Gallery in Digbeth. The opening will take place on Thursday 24th February from 5-7pm - we hope you will join us to celebrate with the group! This second year event is the first of two BA Fine Art exhibitions this Semester as third year students will also rise to the challenge of realising outcomes at Stryx in March... watch this space for more information!



Eastside Projects

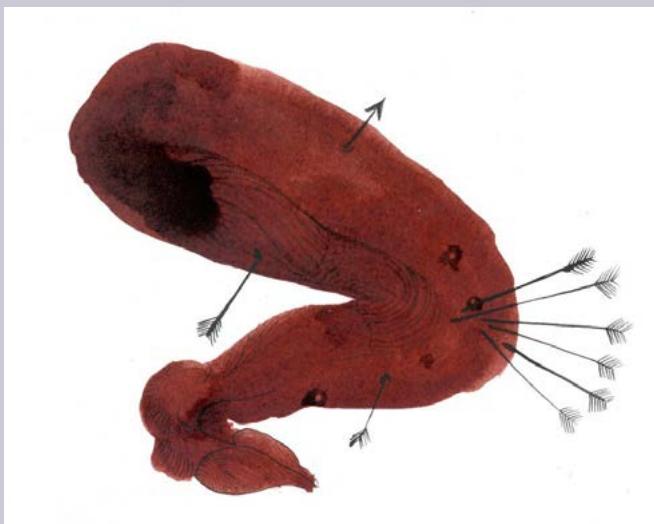
Eastside Projects:

Emii Alrai - *The Courtship of Giants*

05/02 - 16/04

Deep within Eastside Projects Emii Alrai is creating a world where medieval hunting traps meet museological dioramas.

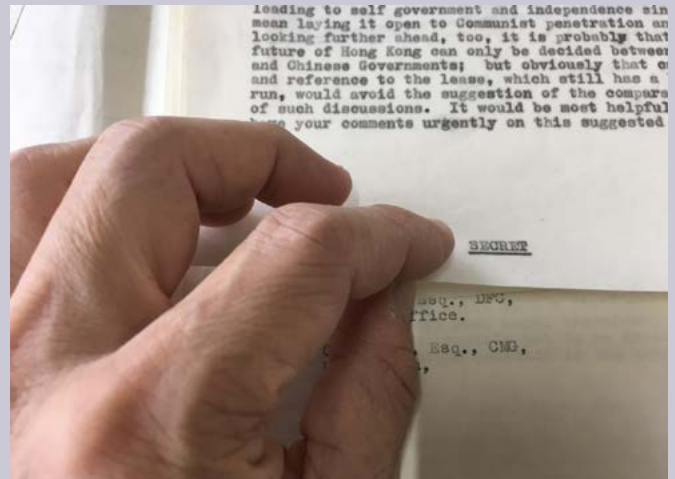
A large maze-like structure is taking over the main gallery, a lure of corridors and dead ends punctuated by giant wounded sculptures held captive on metal armatures. Traditional willow weaving techniques reimaged in cardboard and plaster walls create an immersive environment ready to entrap and ensnare. Steel arrows pierce walls and sculptures alike, quarrels and quivers anchoring limb like objects in space, conjuring images of fallen knights, hunted animals, the coveted bodies hit by Cupid, and referring to the romanticised violence of the museum – reminding us that the processes of long-ing, hunting, capture and collecting are underpinned by long bloody histories of conflict and colonisation. Go check it out!



MA Contemporary Arts China + CCVA Artist Talk: Leung Chi Wo 01/02 3-5pm, SOA

You are all invited to the talk that Hong Kong artist Leung Chi Wo will give next week on Tuesday 1 February, 3-5pm, at the Lecture Theatre in the School of Art.

Leung Chi Wo is the co-founder of Para Site, an independent, non-profit art space in Hong Kong. He has exhibited globally, including in the Hong Kong pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2001. He just completed an artist residency at Delfina Foundation in London and will come to the School of Art to present his last project exploring the declassified documents from the 1940s to 1980s of the UK government on the “future of Hong Kong”, at that time a British colony. For more information click [here](#).



Wednesday Workshop Technical Skills Sessions

This Semester, on Wednesday mornings the Technical Team will be running skills sessions across each of the workshops in the School of Art. These sessions are open to students from all levels and courses and provide an opportunity to learn more about specific processes and techniques. From canvas stretching with Charlie and aluminium bowl forming with Dan to mould making and casting with Gay there is a wide-range of exciting skills sessions on offer. To find out more information and to book click [here](#).



National Association

NAFAE for
Fine Art

Education

Making Communities and Making with Communities

BA Fine Art is pleased to be partnering with the National Association for Fine Art Education (NAFAE) to host their annual conference on the 29th of April. The conference, will investigate, the ways in which educators and fine art practitioners make communities and make with communities in fostering democratic cultures of being with and working with others for individual, collective, cultural, civic, social and environmental gain.

The Birmingham School of Art, provides a provocative home for this idea of making communities and making with communities as this years theme. Since its rapid growth in the eighteenth century, Birmingham has long celebrated the diversity of its craft, manufacturing and cultural heritage. As a centre for the anti-industrialist Arts and Crafts movement and heavily influenced by pre-Raphaelitism, Birmingham, the 'Workshop of the World', is a city which holds a complex place in the history of British Art. In keeping with the city's motto of 'forward' the courses delivered at the school support the notion of a School for Birmingham, working with communities to create symbiotic relationships with the city and its diverse population. For more information click [here](#).

School Rep news

"Hi, happy New Year everyone! As semester two gets under way we want to remind course reps or any student at the SOA, that we are here to feedback and chat to any time - there is no need to wait for scheduled meetings with us. We are here to help! We also want to take this time to

celebrate the successes of semester one: the scrap store and common room have been reinstalled. We hope this helps with art supplies and to build back a sense of community across levels post Covid. Feedback about sometimes feeling disconnected from other campuses was noted and after speaking with the Vice President of the student voice, they created a stall in the foyer with the student union. Going forward we plan on making this a more regular event at the SOA. Finally, thank you again for the feedback and conversations had in semester one, see you in semester two and at Night School!" Nikol [@nicole_ign](#) and Inés [@inesl_art](#)



Thank you for feeding!

If you have any news you would like to share in the February School of Art Newsletter, please get in touch before the 20.02.22: rebecca.court@bcu.ac.uk