

MEANWHILE...

a programme of artist talks

Abingdon Studios in partnership with the Grundy Art Gallery, LeftCoast and Blackpool School of Arts present a programme of artist talks, exploring practice before, during and after...

Blackpool as a destination is closed, its work/leisure balance disturbed. Venues and organisations are all experiencing the impact of public programmes being closed/altered, in different ways.

So, in the meanwhile, we have collectively invited four guest artist speakers to share their work in whatever way they see fit. Supporting artists with time, space and money to share their current practice, simultaneously, *Meanwhile...* gives people a schedule to engage with artists, and a consistent date and time, becoming a home from home comfort for many.

Although each partner has a distinct oeuvre to date, the commonality between each is that of conversation. We each have a desire to stay and remain connected, through the promotion and support of artists, and to help each other explore solutions to understand the world through a new lens and multitude of perspectives.

Artist talk dates:

[Thursday 4 June, 2-3 pm: FRANCES DISLEY](#)
[Thursday 11 June, 2-3 pm: HELEN STRATFORD](#)
[Thursday 18 June, 2-3 pm: KERRY MORRISON](#)
[Thursday 25 June, 2-3 pm: LOUISE GIOVANELLI](#)
[Thursday 2 July, 2-3 pm: RESEARCH WEBINAR](#)

Booking*:

To book a place, please click directly on the date and speaker/event you wish to attend (you will be taken to Eventbrite). Once registered, you will receive a Zoom meeting link and password, via email, in advance of each talk booked.

***booking is essential**, as places are limited. These are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

About the artists:

FRANCES DISLEY

Disley lives and works in Liverpool with a studio at The Royal Standard and was a Liverpool Biennial Associate Artist (2016) and her work has recently become part of the Arts Council Collection.

For *Meanwhile...*, Frances will discuss her interest in the impact of ambient factors in formal art spaces, her passion for collaboration and desire for public interaction with works. She will give a playful introduction to some of the thinking behind recent works. Disley is constantly trying to find excuses to involve Star Trek and plants in her work so it is advised that if you have a house plant that you have it close at hand and also a drink of some sort to alleviate any dehydration caused by temporal anomalies. If nothing else she hopes this experience will offer a welcome distraction to your day.

Recent exhibitions, performances works and projects include, Solo exhibition at Bluecoat Liverpool "Pattern Buffer" (temporarily closed), which explores as with many of her previous installations, multi-sensory elements to create an environment that invites gallery visitors to make use of her art works, to pause and rest in comfort in the space, or share a hobby. Reference points include dominoes clubs, hair accessories as art, plants which survive from moisture in the air, and the Holodeck, a device from the Star Trek science fiction series in which participants engage with different virtual reality environments.

Recent Exhibitions, projects and performances include : Pattern Buffer, Bluecoat, Liverpool, 2019; Thumbs Up, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester, 2020; Crossings, Complex, Dublin, 2020; Cucumber Fell in the Sand, Humber Street Gallery, Hull, 2019; Tripleflex, Bluecoat, Liverpool, 2019; Solo Show, OUTPUT Gallery, Liverpool; 2019, Inner Landscapes, Hilbert Raum, Berlin, 2019; Residency - Activation #1 Turnpike Gallery, Leigh, 2019; We Are Where We Are, Baltic 39, Newcastle, 2018; RRR & R&R as part of At the Libraries, Sefton Libraries, 2018; Mustard Blanket; Grampian Hospital Arts Trust, Aberdeen, 2018; Abacus, Bluecoat, Liverpool; 2017

www.francesdisley.com

Instagram: @francesdisley

Twitter: @FranDisley

HELEN STRATFORD

Helen Stratford is a socially engaged artist with a background in architecture. Her practice spans performative workshops, site-specific interventions, video, speculative writing and discursive platforms. Her work, often encourages people to rediscover locations or places and to re-evaluate routines that are familiar to them by exploring them in new, critically creative ways.

For her talk, Stratford considers the following questions:

What do you do everyday?

How do you organise your daily life?

Is it productive?

Recently, while working with communities whose existence has been deemed without 'economic justification,' Helen has been exploring what makes a 'productive' life. Now, in these times of painful and anxious data, we seem under even more pressure to be productive.

Part talk, part workshop, part live demonstration, Helen invites you to join a conversation about her practice, productivity and ways to bring everyday, yet personally unique, routines together with the measured ways that try to organise the spaces of our daily existence. A flow chart template will be sent to you in advance of the talk. You will need a paper/pen in whatever colours you fancy.

Recent activity includes, Members Show, Bloc Projects, Sheffield (2020); Between the Gallery & The Park, Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2020) and ongoing Social Art Publications, Social Art Network.

www.helenstratford.co.uk

Twitter: @Helen_Stratford

KERRY MORRISON

Morrison describes her practice as socio-environment art; a merging of social art practice with ecology. With an interdisciplinary and co-creation approach, social and environmental challenges within local contexts are examined, resulting in new, shared experiences, unfolding narratives and actions. Kerry is currently an associate artist at In-Situ, an embedded arts organisation based in Pendle, East Lancashire, which she co-founded in 2011.

Kerry is constantly intrigued by perceptions of nature within an urban landscape. What makes us value one thing over another? How do we decide what to conserve and what to eradicate? Where do our ideas of nature appreciation come from? How does this manifest in our towns and cities? And what are the social, cultural, and environmental implications of our nature preferences? These are just some of the questions the artist explores in their practice: through curious actions of investigation - performative happenings – in the urban landscape, and impromptu conversations.

For her talk, she will give an introduction to socio-environment art, followed by liminal space (Covid19 lockdown induced) thinking followed by a facilitated session around steps we can take to create the future we want: for us, as artists, for society and for the environment.

Her current project, Pendle Peat Pie, has been postponed due to Coronavirus and reschedule to commence in March 2021.

<https://www.in-situ.org.uk/peat-pie>

Twitter: @kerrymmorrison

LOUISE GIOVANELLI

Giovanelli has been drawing attention as a rising young painter for her delicate, luminous works, which inject vitality into historical subjects from the canon of Western art. Through interconnected series, Giovanelli weaves together visual clues surrounding a specific moment or event. Her subject matter is primarily chosen for its formal qualities and includes, staged photographs, film stills, classical sculpture, and architectural elements. Within each series, Giovanelli repeats her motifs and certain paintings appear nearly identical, excepting slight alterations of the composition, or tonality. Deftly manipulating light and form, her multivalent imagery reminds us that the classical foundations of painting remain sources of delight and innovation. Keenly attuned to the historical significance of painting as a medium and system of representation, her paintings challenge the eye by dissolving representation into carefully crafted textures and patterns. For Giovanelli, painting allows for a visual slowing-down, and beholding her works is akin to a meditative process.

Giovanelli lives and works in Frankfurt am Main (DE), where she is pursuing her Master's Degree at the Städelschule with professor Amy Sillman. Giovanelli earned a Bachelor's Degree at the Manchester School of Art, Manchester (UK) in 2015.

Recent solo exhibitions include include; Aerial Silk, GRIMM, New York, NY (US); Time Inside, Frutta Gallery, Rome (IT); Louise Giovanelli, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester (UK); Louise Giovanelli, Workplace Foundation, Gateshead (UK); A Throw to the Side, Warrington Museum and Art Gallery, Warrington (UK); Slow to Respond, Touchstones Gallery, Rochdale (UK); Hold your tongue, Louise Giovanelli and Pius Fox, Transition Gallery, London (UK). Giovanelli's work can be found in the collections of the UK Government; Sarow Gallery (DE), The University of Salford (UK); The Grundy Gallery (UK); Manchester Art Gallery (UK); Manchester School of Art (UK); the Warrington Museum and Art Gallery (UK) and a number of private collections.

www.louisegiovanelli.com

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RESEARCH WEBINAR

Blackpool School of Arts has instigated a new research group, broadly investigating socially engaged practice. This is to formalise and disseminate the research activities of staff and students around this topic.

For *Meanwhile...*, the school of arts will host a research webinar, designed to encourage links between the academic community at the college and the surrounding area and organisations of Blackpool, inviting your participation in this event.

The event will be an informal gathering of academics and creative practitioners/thinkers to discuss social engagement in creative practice, particularly under the current context of Covid-19. Each presenter/participant will have 5 minutes to present their research, followed by open group discussion. Research may be based on creative practice, academic research, or anecdotal reflection.

Research group coordinator: Tracey Eastham
Contact: tracey.eastham@blackpool.ac.uk

About the organisations:

ABINGDON STUDIOS

Abingdon Studios is the only independent contemporary artist studio provision in the heart of Blackpool Town Centre. Focussed as a site of production and development for artists in such a way as to bridge the gap between gallery and education and how people experience and or participate in the development of contemporary practice by the coast.

Abingdon is a recognised a-n artist led Hot 100 space and a current recipient of the ACE Emergency Fund to continue to provide packages of support to artists, giving time, space and money to progress new thinking and continue to take risks.

Abingdon is currently part of the GUILD programme, a collection of 20 artist led organisations across the UK and is developing a new Seaside Curators and Artist Network; launching a second iteration of WORK/LEISURE, residency scheme; and due to deliver The Coast is Queer, a new residency model and safe space supporting young LGBTQIA+ artists in the UK.

www.abingdonstudios.org.uk

Instagram: @abingdonstudios_projectspace

Twitter: @abingdonstudios

BLACKPOOL SCHOOL OF ARTS

Blackpool School of Arts teaches divergent thinking; practical skills and digital competencies for the future. A creative community of practice, it embraces the potential for cross-curricular working whilst retaining the specialisms of discrete disciplines. The ethos of the School rests on three pillars - Community; Connectivity and Process.

Blackpool School of Arts (founded in 1939) is part of the continuing tradition of Art School education in the United Kingdom which grew out of a desire to improve the prosperity of the nation by training and educating people in the industrial; decorative and creative arts. Its roots go back to the nineteenth century and events like Prince Albert's patronage of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Albert with Henry Cole founded the V&A to educate artists and designers and this was followed by subsequent organisations like W.R.Lethaby's Design for Industries Association (DIA). Simultaneously the entertainment industries were developing conservatoires. All of these aimed to increase trade and wealth through the arts and production of good looking, well designed; well made goods and experiences. In the 21st Century economic prosperity remains at the heart of the Creative Industries which is the fastest growing sector of the British economy and Blackpool's School of Arts continues this mission.

www.blackpool.ac.uk/school-of-arts

Instagram: @blackpool.school.of.arts

Twitter: @BplSchoolofArts

GRUNDY ART GALLERY

Grundy Art Gallery was founded in 1911 by the brothers John and Cuthbert Grundy, and has been at the centre of cultural and artistic life in the town for over 100 years. It began with the ambition to show the best art of the day to the people of Blackpool, and this sentiment remains at the heart of what we do today as a leading contemporary art gallery in the North West.

The Grundy aims to inspire audiences through an ambitious and varied year-round exhibitions programme that draws on the unique and invigorating context and heritage of Blackpool, for instance exploring the space between contemporary art, entertainment and popular culture.

Recent exhibitions have featured works by celebrated and critically acclaimed artists including Martin Creed, Brian Griffiths, David Hockney, Pierre Huyghe, Heather Phillipson, Susan Philipsz and Matt Stokes. The gallery has a growing national and international profile and has recently worked with key partners such as LeftCoast in Blackpool, and other institutions such as BALTIC, the British Council and the Hayward Gallery.

The gallery is part of Blackpool Council's Arts Service and is an Accredited Museum. It also receives funding from Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation and from the John Ellerman Foundation.

www.grundyartgallery.com

Instagram: @grundyartgallery

Twitter: @GrundyBlackpool

LEFTCOAST

LeftCoast is a programme of arts, culture and creative activity happening across Blackpool and Wyre on the Fylde Coast. Their vision is that Blackpool and Wyre is strengthened by communities that share their talents, feel connected to each other and are confident to 'have a say' in the matters that effect their daily lives.

LeftCoast are all about creating amazing art on your doorstep. From jaw-dropping spectacle to intimate experiences in your neighbourhood. In the process we hope to inspire and support creatives who live, work and study here.

LeftCoast is part of the Creative People and Places programme funded by Arts Council England and working with a consortium of partners including Blackpool Coastal Housing, Blackpool Council and Wyre Borough Council.

www.leftcoast.org.uk

Instagram: @leftcoastuk

Twitter: @leftcoastuk