



VENICE FELLOWS 2024

PROFILE BOOK

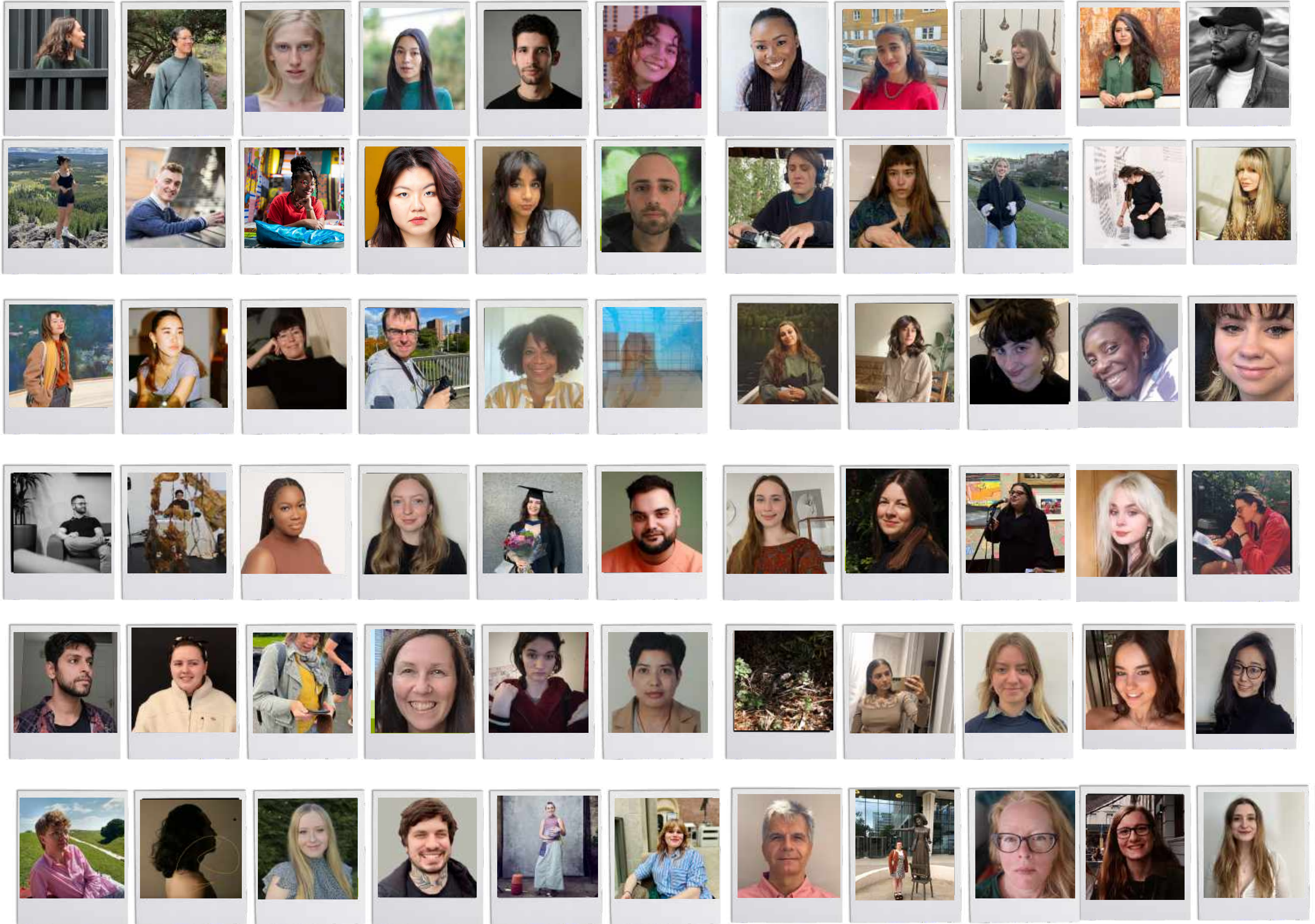


The Venice Fellowships Programme

The British Council is proud to introduce our Venice Fellowships Programme, a scheme which activates and enriches our world-renowned exhibitions at the Venice Biennale. The Fellowships Programme is a key part of the British Council's presence in Venice, supporting the exhibition programme as well as being a platform for the development of new creative careers and future leaders. The Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for emerging creatives to represent the UK on an international level whilst broadening their perspective, making connections and developing their creative practice.

In 2024 and in partnership with over 40 UK Higher Education Institutions and pioneering creative enterprises, we have together recruited, selected and are now supporting 66 Fellows. Our Fellows represent the UK at the British Pavilion during John Akomfrah's exhibition, *Listening All Night to the Rain*, at the 60th International Art Exhibition from 20 April – 24 November 2024. Curated by Tarini Malik, Shane Akeroyd Associate Curator of the British Pavilion, the work explores post-colonialism, environmental devastation and the politics of aesthetics. It is Akomfrah's boldest and most ambitious commission to date.

The Fellowships Programme enables creative students and professionals to spend a month in Venice during the world's most important art and architecture biennials. As exhibition ambassadors at the British Pavilion, the Fellows enrich and activate Akomfrah's piece, engaging with visiting members of the public and creating moments of intercultural dialogue and connection. Alongside this practical experience, Fellows have the opportunity to develop their own research or practical creative projects and use the Biennale as a platform for artistic, scholarly, and professional development. Through these contributions, often created in new collaborations with one another, our Fellows elevate the Pavilion to an important reference point for universities, artists, and creative organisations around the world.



2024 Venice Fellowship Partners

Our 66 Fellows are artists, curators, critics, public educators, mental health professionals, entrepreneurs, philosophers, international relations scholars, climate activists, a peace negotiator and a data scientist. In past and present life chapters, they have worked at Ikea, Disney World, the Yellowstone National Park, as a flight attendant, and in at least 84 cafes, shops, and restaurants, and as many art galleries.

Over 65% of our Fellows have previously faced barriers to the arts and economic opportunity because of race, class, homelessness, upbringing, disability, ethnicity, gender and/or nationality. The group hail from over 20 nations, some are well-travelled and others have yet to leave the UK until now. 44% of our Fellows attended UK state schools for their secondary education, and a further 24% undertook secondary education overseas. Between them they are Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, and Atheists, while almost one-third have no religion.

Today, as previous 'foreigners everywhere', they together prepare to represent the UK at the Britain Pavilion and welcome international visitors to *Listening All Night To The Rain* in the spirit of collaboration and intercultural camaraderie.

2024 Venice Fellowship Partners

We are pleased to call over 40 organisations from the UK our Fellowship Partners, including both returning and new creative enterprises and Higher Education Institutions.

In collaboration with these universities and arts organisations, and with our partner M+B Studios in Venice, the British Council is offering emerging creative professionals and students the opportunity to spend a month in Venice conducting independent research, mediating the British Pavilion exhibition, and fostering collaborative, intercultural connections.

Each of our Partners is committed to forging creative, academic and professional pathways for a more inclusive, representative and creative workforce. Collectively, and on the Venice stage, our shared efforts become even more powerful.



New Contemporaries



SCOTTISH
CONTEMPORARY
ART
NETWORK



2024 Venice Fellowship Partners

Anglia Ruskin University

Arts & Homelessness International*

Arts University Bournemouth

Arts University Plymouth

Birkbeck, University of London

Birmingham City University

Bradford 2025 City of Culture*

Coventry University

Durham University*

Glasgow School of Art*

Invisible Dust / University College London*

King's College London*

Liverpool John Moores University*

London Metropolitan University

Manchester Metropolitan University

New Contemporaries

Newcastle University

Northumbria University*

Outer Spaces*

Outside In*

Proposition Studios*

Queen's University Belfast – Sonic Arts Research Centre

Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN)*

SOAS, University of London

Teesside University

The Collective Makers*

The Lowry, Salford

Touchstones Rochdale*

UAL Decolonising Arts Institute*

University for the Creative Arts*

University of Bradford*

University of Exeter

University of Leicester

University of Liverpool

University of St Andrews*

University of the Arts London

UWE Bristol

Venture Arts*

Winchester School of Art*

York St John University*

**= New Partner in 2024*

Underlined = creative enterprise

2024 Venice Fellowship Fellows

Fellow	Travel Group	Partner
Oluwatoniloba Adebajo	8	Kings College London
Riz Ali	1	Touchstones Rochdale
Mrs Blues	3	London Met
Viktorie Brezinova	6	University for the Creative Arts (Creative Industries)
Yi Chen	7	University for the Creative Arts (Creative Industries)
Melanie Colbey	6	Newcastle University
Martha Dean	5	Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton
Sara Downham-Lotto	8	University of Bradford
Caterina Edrich	3	Birmingham City University
Bethany-Rose Edford	2	University of Leicester
Youssef ElNahas	3	University for the Creative Arts (Photography)
Syeda Faiza Faiq	2	Teesside University
Carlos Ferrara	7	SOAS, University of London
Jack Fry	4	Durham University
Julia Fry	2	Outside In
Sofia Maria Geraci	6	Manchester Metropolitan University
Thomas Gibbs	3	The University of St Andrews

Fellows are presented by travel group in the pages to follow

Fellow	Travel Group	Partner
Isaac Gibson	1	Queen's University Belfast (SARC: Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Sound and Music)
Nell Hardy	8	Arts & Homelessness International
Marilyn Henderson	8	Outside In
Danielle Hewitt	5	UCL / Invisible Dust
Emeli Hewitt	7	Venture Arts
Alice Holmes	3	Liverpool School of Architecture
Hannah Hornby	3	University of the West of England
Lily Horton	7	York St John
Anna Jane Houghton	1	Liverpool John Moores
Rachel Hutchison	5	SCAN
Mila Januszova	1	Manchester Metropolitan University
Simran Junaid	8	King's College London
Nazima Kalita	8	Northumbria University
Hannah Kemp-Welch	5	London College of Communication
Xiaoyi Liu	5	Anglia Ruskin University
Celeste Aurora MacLeod-Brown	2	Glasgow School of Art
Simone Marconi	4	University of West of England

2024 Venice Fellowship Fellows cont.

Fellow	Travel Group	Partner
Shaniece Martin	7	Coventry University
Naho Matsud	7	Northumbria University
Caitlin McHugh	7	Teesside University
Laszlo Molnar	5	London Metropolitan University
Michael Nash	7	Venture Arts
Millie Nicholson	3	Newcastle University
Lisa Ogyntonyinbo	4	Arts & Homelessness International
Mariam Osmani	6	Durham University
Isabella Paxton	6	Arts University Bournemouth
Amber Potts	5	University of Liverpool (School of Architecture)
Harmeet Rahal	2	New Contemporaries
Kelly Rappleye	4	Glasgow School of Art
Millicent Sanders	2	Bradford Culture Company (Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture)
Simran Kaur Sanghera	6	University of Exeter
Maria Sayoka Ayoma	5	Arts University Bournemouth
Tahir Shah	8	Bradford Culture Company (Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture)
Caitlin Magda Shepherd	8	UAL Decolonizing Arts Institute

Fellow	Travel Group	Partner
Yu Shi	3	UAL Decolonising Arts Institute
Cylena Simonds	4	Arts University Plymouth
Ray Sims	4	London College of Communication, UAL
Anna Smith	2	Liverpool John Moores
Isabella So	4	The Lowry
Marcio Junji Sono	1	Birkbeck University of London
Alkestid Sterjo	1	University of Bradford
Sabrina Sudol	4	University of Exeter
Siriya Suriyanon	1	SCAN
Ekine Tamunotonye	1	The Collective Makers
Olubkunola Tijani	7	Birmingham City University
Amy Townsend-Lowcock	6	The Lowry
Siena Venturino-Malcherczyk	4	Proposition Studios
Saffron Woods	6	Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton
Lezhi Zhang	6	LCC/University of the Arts London

- Group 1 - 13 April - 14 May 2024

Group 2 - 12 May - 11 June 2024

Group 3 - 9 June - 9 July 2024
- Group 4 - 7 July - 6 August 2024

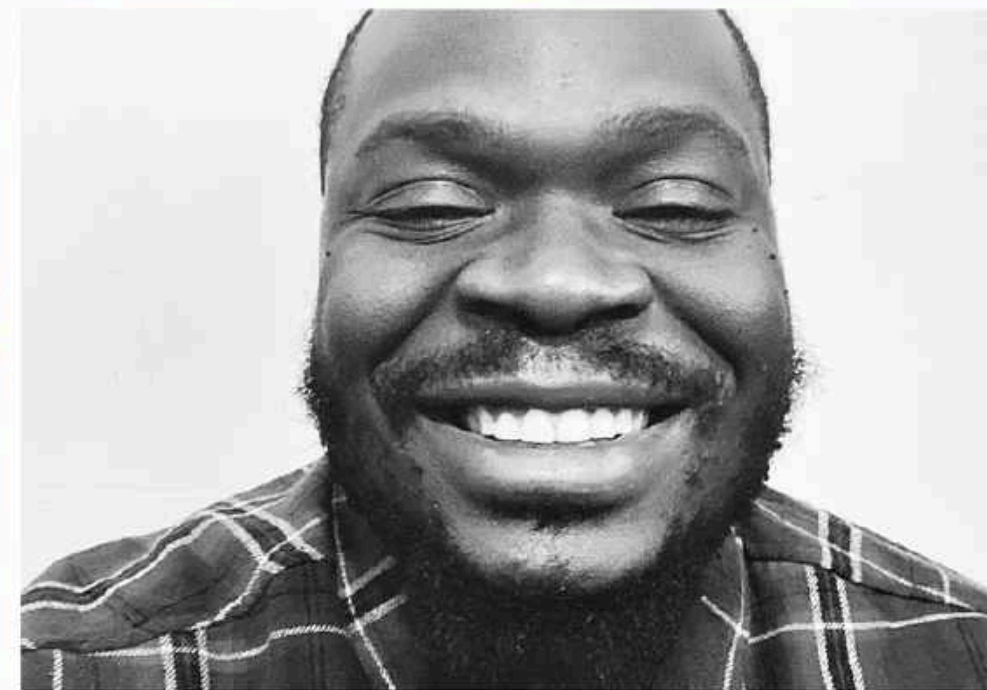
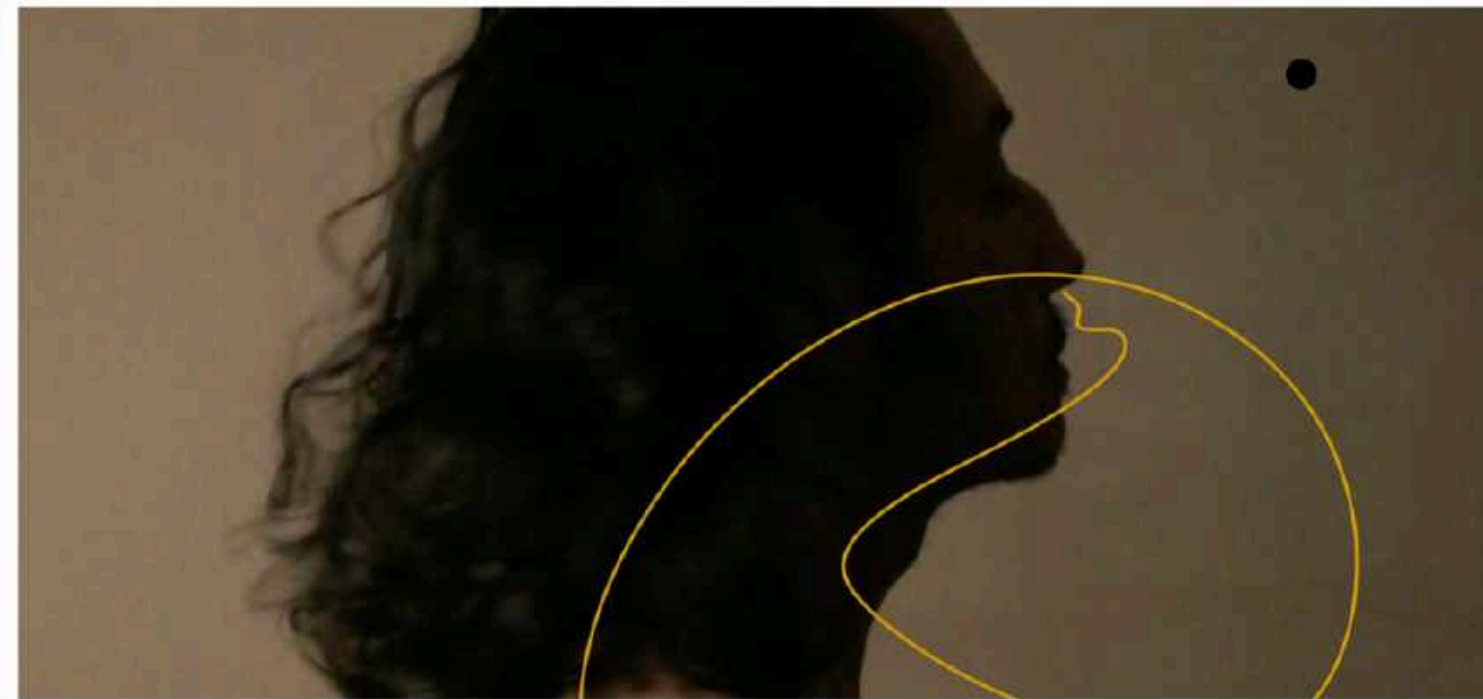
Group 5 - 4 August - 3 September 2024

Group 6 - 1 September - 1 October 2024
- Group 7 - 29 September - 29 October 2024

Group 8 - 27 October - 25 November 2024

Group 1

13 April –
14 May 2024



ALKESTID STERJO

UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD

I am Alkestid, a dedicated professional with a passion for driving positive change and innovation. My academic journey has been diverse, culminating in dual master's degrees in Applied Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics, as well as International Relations and Security Studies, complemented by a Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Management. This interdisciplinary background has equipped me with a versatile skill set, including strong teamwork, problem-solving, and communication abilities.

My professional experience spans roles in community development, mental health advocacy, and international engagements, reflecting my commitment to social impact. I thrive in challenging environments, where I leverage my diverse experiences and skills to contribute effectively.

Outside of work, I enjoy exploring different cultures, fostering connections, and embracing new experiences that broaden my perspectives.



Project

During my month in Venice, I plan to explore the theme "Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere" by creating a photography project. Using my AI and data analytics skills, I will analyse patterns in images from the Biennale and Venice's diverse communities, aiming to highlight the cultural diversity captured through the lens.

To share my project upon returning to the UK, I will organise a small exhibition at my university. This exhibit will showcase the visual narrative I've captured, supplemented by a brief presentation.

Additionally, I intend to conduct a workshop where students and faculty can engage in discussions about the intersection of technology, culture, and art. This approach aligns with the program's values of collaboration and inclusivity, offering a tangible and accessible way to convey the impact of my Venice experience.

@alkeo_st

ANNA JANE HOUGHTON

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES



My practice-led PhD research encompasses my interests and hobbies – specifically, sound, film and print media in site-specific installations and performance. The work is rooted in the investigation of Sound-Space perception, exploring the conventions of sonic artwork in the context of the poetics of materials, the fabric of memory and the sensitivity of space.

My work has been exhibited internationally and nationally as part of Liverpool Biennial's The Stomach and The Port (2021), TATE Liverpool's An Imagined Museum (2016); in Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, and sold in Selfridge's&Co.

I am passionate about the auditory presence and sonic histories of space, which manifests itself in both professional work and leisure – such as literary pilgrimages and wild swims in holy wells and lakes. During my PhD research, my interests and skills gained from previous work are synthesised, and print-making, mural painting, interior design, musical performance, field recording and gardening, all enhance my spatial understanding.

Project

My research aims to explore the context of the Biennale and the work of Akomfrah by means of spatial poetics and my interest in collective memory. In 2023, I was moved by an experience with Akomfrah's work *Mnemosyne*, which contemplates memory and the possibility for infinite re-interpretation of historical events, through a lens of myth and intangible matter. I would aim to initiate a dialogue with the architecture of the British Pavilion and the matter that is responsible for transporting all the bodies that come to inhabit it – i.e. Venice's water ways – to materialise the vibrational presence of a plural sense.

I plan to conduct spatial 'interviews' with hydrophones and shortwave radio, to generate sounds loaded with narrative and immediacy. The use of shortwave draws on Guglielmo Marconi's theory of the immortality of sound-waves, lost to the human ear, but eternal nonetheless. Marconi refers to the traces of time as 'waves', the matter of memory itself. This method will allow a physical dialogue with the space, moving a long antenna, detecting surrounding abstract static, allowing conversation with the 'voices' of our shared past. Documentation of the recording process will form a new work – specifically, a film with reference to Akomfrah through a shared influence of the aesthetics of French New Wave Cinema.

On return, the research will be presented as a written paper included in my PhD thesis, and an accompanying multi-channel film and sound installation, using post-syncing to augment and enhance what an image can communicate.

@aj__houghton

EYE SURIYANON

SCOTTISH CONTEMPORARY ART NETWORK
(SCAN)

I am a person who is curious about how everything works behind the scene whether it's how a restaurant, cultural venue, gallery, airplane or film set works. Besides my interest in how things works, I am also an artist working with sound and creative coding to produce my work and others as well.



Project

For my month in Venice, I'd like to following up my research that I started during my CCA Creative Lab residency where I explored the archive material of exhibited artists of the diaspora to learn more about how they dealt with identity and sense of belonging. I came across John Akomfrah's work from the 'Germans, Speak German!' (2012) exhibition curated by Mother Tongue and an essay by Isabel Löfgren Arriving Naked: Migration as Creative Form citing the Czech Philosopher Vilém Flusser's multiple views on migration and the idealisation of 'home' is something beyond geographical location, something that cannot be restricted by borders.

I'd like to expand the idea of finding a sense of 'home' through language and sound. By listening out and recording pronunciation and phonetics that are akin to English and Thai in other languages. The snippets of research will be shared on social media and the recorded sound will be contributing towards a new piece of work. In the hope that a mutual connection can be form once everything is stripped back, highlighting how we are all connected linguistically and have the ability to speak other language with little effort. As your sound vocabulary and semantic vocabulary are not the same.

@eyesuriyanon

ISAAC GIBSON

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST
(SARC: CENTRE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH IN SOUND AND MUSIC)



My name is Isaac Gibson and I am a Northern Irish DJ, producer, and sound designer with a decade in the music industry, recently earning my PhD in Music from Queen's University Belfast. My expertise mainly lies in sound design, composition, music technology and socially engaged sonic arts which has led me to compose the music and sound for numerous short films, installations and theatrical productions showcased at various institutions across Europe. Additionally, I'm passionate about Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and also enjoy playing various instruments such as the piano and guitar. These hobbies help enrich my creative process, allowing me to blend academic rigour with personal passions in my professional work – Music isn't just work for me; it's part of my whole life!

Project

My project will focus on the expansion and alignment of my 'sonification of incidences of violence' initiative – The project seeks to explore the profound impact of violence on individuals by translating case studies, interviews, and data related to people's experiences of violence into a powerful auditory experience, with themes parallel to those explored by John Akomfrah. Akomfrah's work delves into critical subjects such as racial injustice, colonial legacies, migration, and climate change. In this endeavour, I intend to use auditory and visual elements to create a multisensory experience that engages the audience in a profound dialogue about these pressing issues in relation to incidences of violence.

My approach will involve comprehensive fieldwork and research that contextualises Akomfrah's pieces within their historical and cultural backgrounds. Collaborating closely with my Fellowship peers, I will leverage their diverse backgrounds and expertise to enrich and deepen the impact of my project.

Upon my return to the UK, I will utilise the insights and experiences gathered during the Fellowship to elevate my 'sonification of incidences of violence' project. I plan to organise collaborative workshops and exhibitions that showcase the project's evolution, emphasising its resonance with Akomfrah's thematic concerns.

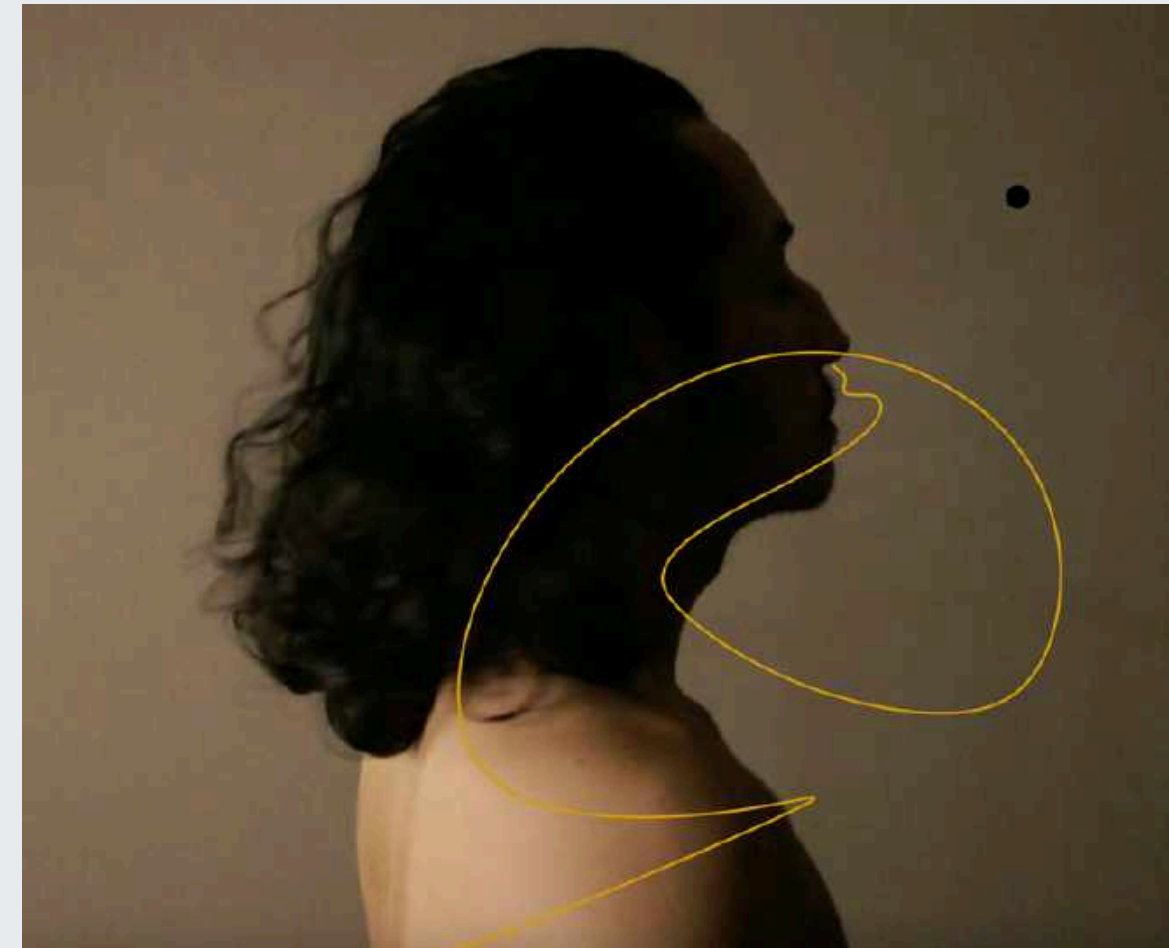
Furthermore, I intend to initiate meaningful dialogues with local communities, students, and artists, emphasising the role of art in addressing complex societal issues. My project's objective is to promote inclusivity and create a platform for crucial conversations centred on the overarching mission of the Venice Biennale Fellowship Programme.

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isaacgibson.co.uk

MARCIO JUNJI SONO

BIRKBECK, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Much like my ancestry, my professional, academic, and artistic interests are profuse and profusely mixed: I have immersed myself in cultural work for many years, while my academic pursuits revolve around philosophy and cultural studies. Meanwhile, my creative endeavors have flourished – in arguably abnormal ways – in parallel to my professional journey, spanning music, visual arts, and the written word. I harbor a profound fascination with the interstices of society and culture, and the overlooked aspects of life – such as non-religious spiritual practices, the dogmatic skepticism of contemporary thinkers, the militant fluidity of identity politics, and the virtually impossible balance between tolerance and harmony, and accidents. I aspire for serenity but cannot help cultivate impermanence.



Project

With a longstanding interest in the intersections of aesthetics and ethics, I have closely followed artists such as John Akomfrah, Sonia Boyce, and Isaac Julien (with whom I worked as head of exhibitions for three years), with special curiosity about how their poetics convey theories of value, phenomenological systems, and political commentary.

My ambition in this fellowship is to create a three-part development: one is strictly artistic. Incipient as it is, my art practice is primarily based on sound, and I am interested in the cognitive hybridism represented by synesthetic experiences. As a neurodivergent non-musician who creates music, I work with non-musical and various (often precarious) elements to produce pop music. For example, I isolate notes from spoken word to trigger the creation of a song. On other instances, I dissect the structure of a sentence (phonetically or syntactically) to extract a mathematical matrix that will become part of musical harmony, or determine tempo.

In Venice, I want to be less abstract and engage with a collection of oral stories and verbal contributions from exhibition visitors, co-fellows, artists, and the general public to expand my practice. The initial goal is to produce a mid-length pop music piece (like an EP), but I am open to drastic changes as I engage in new practices.

The second part of my research is theory-led. I hope to combine my interests in philosophy with aspects of art exhibitions: departing from the hypothesis that how sensory experience conveys discourse bears correlations with the problem of how abstract values are translated into cultural policy, I want to understand whether it is possible to design public policy in the field of arts and culture on grounds that are at the same time objective (data-driven) and accommodating of subjectivities and pluralism. The effort might include a critical examination of exhibitions communications and existing cultural policy, in the framework of moral realism and hybrid expressivism. Should the development prove consequential, I hope to expand the investigation as my MA conclusion dissertation under the supervision of Professor Hallvard Lillehammer.

Thirdly, I would like to develop a curatorial project departing from ideas which I believe connect John Akomfrah's and Glicéria Pupinambá's poetics (Glicéria is a central name of the Brazilian Pavilion in Venice 2024). Inspired by Achille Mbembe's concept of necropolitics, I would like to propose associations between the two artists, suggesting that their work enacts symbolic sepultations of relationships of cultural domination, in ways that do not deny history but transfer historical narration to voices forcefully silenced. Additionally, I suggest we think about those poetic constructs as the opposite of what Mbembe calls 'landscapes of incarceration' — I want to look at the universes brought about in Akomfrah's and Tupinambá's work as spaces where systemic annihilation is replaced with a new ontology, new metaphysics. Material and institutional circumstances permitting, I hope to engage partner organisations in a curatorial dialogue of the two artists to be presented in London, São Paulo, and Belém (the capital of Brazil's northern state of Pará), in partner venues I have been in touch with.

MILA JANUSZOVA

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



As an artist-curator originally from Poland, my journey in the world of art has taken me to Manchester, UK, where I've established myself as a dynamic force in the realms of arts, facilitation, and cultural education. My commitment to personal and professional development has led me to specialize in socially engaged contemporary practice, a realm where I wield a nuanced feminist perspective to explore themes as diverse as body, representation, inclusion, recognition, and accessibility.

Across a spectrum of mediums—ranging from visual arts and textile art to digital art, typography, and beyond—I aim to harness the power of language and visual expression to craft immersive experiences that challenge preconceived notions and unveil authentic perspectives. Visual poetry serves as a particularly potent tool in my repertoire, allowing me to blur the boundaries between language and imagery, offering alternative modes of translation that transcend traditional linguistic boundaries.

Rooted deeply in my Polish and Eastern European heritage, I aim to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, inviting viewers to engage deeply with the rich tapestry of language, art, politics, and social narratives.

Through this multifaceted approach, I seek to challenge stereotypes, rectify distorted narratives, and ultimately foster a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness between tradition, culture, and contemporary life.

Project

"Liminal Echoes: Visual Poetry in Cultural Transition"

Inspired by the 2024 title and theme of Biennale Arte 2024 and John Akomfrah's work, my project, "Liminal Echoes," focuses on the liminal spaces between cultural identities. Rooted in my passion for visual imagery and poetry within contemporary art, the project aims to capture the stories of individuals navigating these transitional spaces.

1. Photographic Portraits and Audio Narratives:

- Capture portraits of locals in iconic Venetian locations, accompanied by audio narratives sharing reflections on cultural transitions and identity.

2. Visual Poetry Workshops:

- Conduct workshops merging visual arts and poetry, encouraging participants to express liminal experiences through a blend of visual and written art.

3. Community Engagement Workshops:

- Host additional workshops fostering dialogue on cultural fluidity, incorporating visual poetry to strengthen connections.

Post-Fellowship Sharing:

1. Exhibition at in Manchester

- Curate an exhibition at the Manchester Art Gallery (Proforma or PINK) Pavilion featuring the interactive installation, showcasing visual poetry alongside portraits and audio narratives.

2. Digital Documentation and Symposium:

- Develop a digital platform with comprehensive project documentation, organizing an online symposium to discuss Akomfrah's themes, liminality, and visual poetry.

3. Collaborative Publications:

- Collaborate with publications to share articles about the project, emphasizing the role of visual imagery and poetry in contemporary art and cultural exploration.

Project Goals:

"Liminal Echoes" seeks to merge visual imagery and poetry, providing a platform for diverse narratives in cultural transition. Through exhibitions, digital platforms, and collaborative discussions, the project aims to foster understanding and appreciation for the richness of liminality within contemporary art.

RIZ ALI

TOUCHSTONES ROCHDALE

I'm a Queer South Asian artist who grew up in the heart of Rochdale in a working-class household. I fell in love with performance art in high school, which led to me studying a BTEC in Performing Arts and then eventually becoming a mature student at university, studying Theatre and Performance Practice. I've developed my freelance art practice by exploring how my intersectional identity exists within theatre and creative writing.

I now work at Touchstones Rochdale as their Cultural Community Coordinator, where I support various pockets of communities to engage with their local art, culture, heritage and history, in and around Rochdale. I have a profound interest in creating accessible spaces for all. But between all of that, you can find me collecting pretty rocks, learning obscure board games, and amassing too many card games.



Project

How do we create and explore *fluid and temporal displays* within a multi-medium institute?

How do we take accountability, rather than apologise for, post-colonial legacies and how do we best represent pre-colonialisation?

How does the institute tackle racial injustice to better represent the diasporic history of Rochdale and serve the community not on racial bias but on the need of the community?

My research will be ignited by the questions above. Exploring the multi-media layout of the Biennale, I will be able to return to my own institute to discuss how the new live performance space can become part of the larger programming. This will also influence how we engage audiences through different mediums in spaces in their own community, especially whilst our building is closed for renovations. I will be sharing with my peers via our weekly updates, which will allow me to discuss the exploration of the Biennale and have regular reflection on my research with the guidance of my own team.

*Film, live performance, more environmentally sustainable digital ways of displaying art culture and history.

@heyitsriz_

TONYE EKINE

THE COLLECTIVE MAKERS



I am a visual learner and consume a lot of content to help me gain insight into significant events. Currently my life revolves around developing my art practise and finding my voice in the art world. I also enjoy traveling and experiencing new places, immersing myself in different environments. Apart from my artistic pursuits, I find peace in anime, music, swimming, and hiking. Some of these activities connect me to nature and remind me of the fragility of life. This reinforces my belief in our responsibility as human beings to protect and preserve the world we live in.

Project

During my month-long stay in Venice, my focus as an artist will be to explore the influence of masks in contemporary art and the impact of African masks on modern art forms. I plan to connect with the local artisans and access public spaces and libraries to delve into this topic. Additionally, I am interested in discovering artists who use their work to expose the legacies of colonialism.

To achieve this, I will conduct interviews and document them, capturing the insights and perspectives of individuals who are knowledgeable about these subjects. I will also express my findings through an exhibition using various artistic mediums, such as poems, mark making and creating paintings that summarize my research.

It is crucial for me to find my place and voice within the art movement cycle, considering the historical significance of Italy and Venice. Therefore, I will actively engage with communities and local artists who share similar interests and delve into these topics.

The major themes I aim to address include racial injustice, the persistent legacy of colonialism, the complexities of diasporic identities, the ever-changing nature of migration, and the current concerns surrounding mental health as a result of post-colonial trauma. These topics will be explored within the dynamic environment of Venice.

Upon returning to the UK after the Fellowship, I plan to put on a solo exhibition with The Collective Makers to share my experiences with our audience and secure media placements in print and digital.



@wherestonye
wherestonye.com

Group 2

12 May –
11 June 2024



ANNA SMITH

LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY



I am a third year PhD candidate based at Liverpool John Moores University working between the Liverpool School of Art and Public Health Institute. My research considers how museums and galleries can be reimagined to become citizen-led spaces through which to create positive social change. I have worked in arts engagement and creative research for a number of years prior to my PhD study for arts organisations, charities and museums.

Project

Asset Mapping is a technique from the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model which identifies and harnesses the 'gifts' of diverse groups which often go unrecognized. ABCD uses Asset Mapping to uncover and connect these gifts whilst recognizing the individual skills, knowledge and expertise which we each possess.

As John Akomfrah identifies his upcoming exhibition as 'a recognition of and platform for those I have collaborated with', I propose to create a visual Asset Map in the British Pavilion which celebrates the collaborators of Akomfrah and uncovers how these collaborators may connect to wider collaborators and community groups which have contributed to and engaged with the 60th Venice Biennale.

The 'Collaborators Asset Map' will uncover, connect and celebrate the gifts and talents of the collaborators, co-creators and community participants of the Biennale, each recognized through the theme of the Biennale by their position as 'the foreigner/the stranger'. By identifying and visually connecting the shared and individual experiences, knowledge and gifts of these strangers, the 'Collaborators Asset Map' will creatively map the many diverse voices of the collaborators of the Venice Biennale 2024.

I will share the Asset Map alongside learnings from this project with peers within my Doctoral thesis entitled: 'Constituent Museum Toolkit: Using Asset Based Community Development to reimagine the structures of cultural institutions'. I will also share the Map and learnings in the online 'Constituent Museum Toolkit' I am creating as part of my Doctoral research and in the online 'alternative thesis', an accessible version of my Doctoral thesis.

BETHANY-ROSE ELFORD

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

I am a 23 year old Artist currently studying for a Masters in Art Museum and Gallery Studies, looking to pursue a career in Curation. With a background in Fine Art, my practice strives to bridge cultural narratives and foster meaningful connections, contributing to broader discussions on cultural heritage, migration, and community collaboration.

My current project aims to address the underrepresentation of marginalised and diaspora communities in UK museums and galleries. I am committed to amplifying their voices through visual narratives and collaborative efforts with community members through social and spatial changes.

I am so grateful for this opportunity to develop my research project and dissertation while being fully immersed in the experience of the Venice Biennale.



Project

During my project, I seek to address the gap in literature and practice regarding the inclusion of marginalised and diaspora communities in UK museums and galleries. By focusing on perspectives from fellow volunteers during my time at the Biennale, as well as those from others working in the sector, practicing artists, and most importantly members of those communities, I aim to contribute practical insights that can inform a proposal for enhanced inclusivity in museums and galleries.

Through proposing spatial and social changes for a selected UK museum or gallery, my research project will allow me to gain a better insight into how galleries and museums can be more welcoming and accessible spaces for these groups, gaining valuable insight from those in the sector and the communities that should be at the heart of these changes.

I am deeply inspired by the themes of racial injustice, climate change, marginalised and diasporic identities prevalent in John Akomfrah's work, who will be representing Britain at the Venice Biennale this year.

In a commissioned project completed in 2022 for the Peepul Centre, I crafted handmade clay tiles inscribed with the migration stories of local residents in Gujarati, Portuguese, English, and Punjabi. Drawing inspiration from the Rosetta Stone, this visual narrative chronicled their experiences from the 1950s to the present day.

Building on the success and meaningful engagement of this commission, I aspire to expand and deepen this approach for my research project during the Venice Fellowship Programme. My proposal involves creating a focus group or workshop where fellow volunteers can share their thoughts on how museums and galleries can better include marginalised and diaspora groups. During the workshop/focus group, I will ask the volunteers to express their opinions about this topic which will be used to inform my research project.

During my month in Venice, I plan to engage with the fellow volunteers and others working at the Biennale and encourage them to contribute their stories, creating a visual representation of the interconnectedness of their diverse experiences. Upon my return to the UK, I envision using their responses to inform my research for a proposal of how a UK museum or gallery can better include these groups. This approach aims to ensure that the project's impact extends beyond the focus group, fostering ongoing dialogue and understanding.

Through this research project, I aim to contribute to the broader discourse on cultural heritage, migration, and community storytelling. I am excited about the prospect of bridging cultural narratives and fostering meaningful connections through this proposal.

@elford.beth

CELESTE AURORA MACLEOD-BROWN

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART



I am a Scottish Multidisciplinary Artist & Curator, studying at The Glasgow School of Art. My research-based practice rests on the intersect between various mediums and modes of cultural production, namely written, curatorial and sonic. Through examining institutional and art world structures, I approach issues regarding the self, sexual politics, and the changing climate, often underpinned by enquiry into collaborative approaches and how creative practitioners operate and interact at different stages of their careers. Integral to my practice is my passion for working with arts organisations to cultivate accessible, inclusive and innovative spaces. To that avail, I run Naive Set, a multi-arts & curatorial initiative, and independent press, aimed at cultivating meaningful projects and opportunities.

Project

My research often looks at institutional frameworks within the art world, and issues typically associated with the individual, such as emotions, health, and personal relationships, but through how they might be echoed within the collective and indicative of larger themes that we see as increasingly relevant throughout artistic communities and structures. My practice is artistic, written, and curatorial, with a focus on sonic, immaterial, and collaborative cross-disciplinary processes.

In Venice, I will be undertaking research into ideas of curatorial and dematerialised practice in climate crisis, thinking through both the emotive and the political power of sound-based work, and where a curatorial methodology regarding that sits within the institutional structure. My research follows an ideology of the curatorial constellation, I am seeking to identify its expanse, uncovering notions of care, collaboration, controversy, and the abilities and/or responsibilities of the artistic body in the changing climate. During my trip, I will be looking at the Biennale structure and seeking to examine collective-based, alternative, and artist-led approaches that may run parallel to the Biennale, alongside looking at John Akomfrah's exhibition as an example of sound-based practice addressing climate crisis.

I will be producing a publication from this research which will act as the central output for my project, alongside seeking to enquire into the idea of site-less curating, and exploring the possibilities of artistic representation and display without physical perimeters, largely thinking through Scotland's lack of a pavilion this year – I would love to try and curate some kind of correspondence with emerging artists / students in Scotland whilst I'm in Venice.

@celestaurora

FAIZA FAIQ

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

I have a melancholic mind and am a keen observer who enjoys learning new things and looking at things from multiple perspectives. I work as a curator of contemporary art and a multidisciplinary visual artist. I completed my MFA in visual arts in Lahore, Pakistan, and am currently an international student pursuing an M.A. in curating with advanced practice in Middlesbrough, United Kingdom. I am driven to discover new cultures and places, and I am always searching for tales that need to be shared. In my artwork, stories about consciousness and unconsciousness are also portrayed. Finding people's stories is a constant search for me in my curatorial work. Stories we cannot see or hear, but can tell amongst ourselves.



Project

My suggested project for the Venice Fellowship Programme focuses on examining and reinterpreting the significant body of work by John Akomfrah within the particular cultural setting of Venice. Venice's own problems, like rising sea levels and cultural preservation, present an interesting opportunity for intersection with the artistry of Akomfrah, which frequently addresses themes of migration, identity, and the human connection to the environment.

I intend to spend my entire month in Venice immersing myself in Akomfrah's oeuvre and doing in-depth research on the thematic and visual components of his work. Drawing comparisons between Akomfrah's ideas and Venice's complex relationship with water, history, and identity, I hope to interact with the city itself. The result of this research will be an original artwork that highlights the relationship between Akomfrah's narratives and the Venetian experience by fusing elements from his films with my own creative interpretations.

I want to use a variety of strategies to share the project's results with my peers and the larger community when I get back to the UK. This will involve a panel discussion series, lectures, workshops, and an exhibition of the original installation. In order to encourage a global conversation on the themes being presented, I also intend to develop an interactive digital platform that will enable audiences to interact with the project remotely.

This project satisfies the requirements and values of the programme, as well as being in line with the 2024 Exhibition of John Akomfrah's work. It does this by combining art, history, and technology to address current cultural and environmental issues and to encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration and global engagement. This is a rare chance to unite the compelling stories of Akomfrah with the particular difficulties and legacy of Venice, providing new perspectives and enduring influence.

HARMEET SINGH RAHAL

NEW CONTEMPORARIES



I am a 27 year old artist from Mumbai, India, now living in South-East London. Working across mediums, I create installations, publications, performances, music and films. My recent work explores the poetics of resistance, non-linear stories, and radical histories. I did my MFA at Goldsmiths, University of London, and my BFA at Rachana Sansad AFAC in Mumbai. At Goldsmiths, I received the Almacantar Award for my degree show. My last film 'Chori Chori [CAMRip]' is a finalist for the 2023 Circa prize, and was screened at the Piccadilly Lights screen in London, along with screenings in Milan and Berlin. In my work, I am interested in the role art can play as a means to an end, in social/political liberation – particularly through transformation of meaning.

Project

I would like to develop a research project about the poetics of resistance in the global south, drawing from the Punjabi folk story of 'jugni', and its various iterations across both physical and temporal borders. 'Jugni' is a narrative device in Punjabi poetry, and is often used as a metaphor to tell the story of a girl that has left her hometown to go to a big city. The word Jugni can be literally translated to 'a female firefly'. Through wordplay, repetitions, and remixes, the story has been told and retold to address topics of spirituality, modernity, queerness, migration, and liberation.

There is an old version of the story from the 1900s, where the poets Bishna and Manda were called to perform at the 'Golden Jubilee' of the British Raj in India. The Jubilee was a celebration by the empire, of 50 years of atrocity, famine and colonialism, from the time of the First Indian War of Independence in 1857.

The story goes that the poets relied on a mishearing/mistranslation of the word 'Jubilee', and instead sang songs of 'Jugni' – criticising the British Empire and its colonial celebrations. Here, Jugni becomes a symbol of the vanquished. Through misheard poetry, the firefly continues to resist, even in plain sight.

Through the programme, I would further like to explore the poetics of resistance via the lens of 'Jugni'. This would involve field recordings, mistranslations, and Jugni's current manifestations in Bollywood and Punjabi pop music. After the fellowship, I would like to share this research in the form of an audio/visual montage.

@harmeetrahah

JULIA FRY

OUTSIDE IN

I love the myriad forms creativity can take and I try to follow my intuition so that the expression of what I'm creating or co-creating can be as truthful as possible. In this way, I create art using multi-disciplinary techniques across visual and time-based mediums - I especially love co-creating interactive plays or events. I'm also a coach and creative psychotherapist for neurodivergent folx. Being neurodivergent myself, my current special interest is animism and I'm about to undertake a shamanic practitioner course. Singing to the earth and noticing the magic present in a world where oppressive systems have gotten out of hand helps ground me so that I can share visions of a world where humanity can live in reciprocity with Earth.



Project



[outsidein.org.uk/galleries/
julia-fry/](https://outsidein.org.uk/galleries/julia-fry/)

My work is connected to John Akomfrah's work through the theme of otherness. Whilst John's work uses highly researched historical records and archive footage to show the links between past and present and give voice to different aspects of people who've been othered, mine compliments it by looking at the assumptions and biases present in people that create the conditions for alterity to occur. I have a strong sense that othering happens in a negative sense because in 'Western' societies, a large portion of people do not have a reciprocal relationship with our planet.

My research idea is to walk around Venice following my intuition to find a place that feels 'dead'. I will then visit the place daily to sing (without words) to the Earth. I will listen for Earth's response and will follow intuitive urges to create in that place. It might be that I make videos, drawings, poems, and connect with humans and other-than-humans there. I would like to see whether it's possible to form a connection with Earth in this place and invite other humans to join in, bypassing our othernesses, and see what the effects of this might be and how it might change my idea. I will hold workshops for other fellows in the place and see what we create together in response to singing and listening to Earth. When I return to the UK I will collaborate with Outside In to share the experience and artifacts of this research via online events.

MILLIE SANDERS

BRADFORD 2025 UK CITY OF CULTURE



©- Alun Callender Photography

I'm a textile designer-maker living and working in Shipley, Bradford. After graduating from Central Saint Martins in 2021, I moved back to my home county to grow my creative business. I enjoy spending time outdoors in Yorkshire, walking, wild swimming, and trail running. I love to immerse myself in my creative work, so I find it important to use my downtime to reset and connect with nature as it helps me to gain a sense of perspective and stay inspired. I would love to visit Venice and use this period of travel to gain a bigger picture as I continue to develop into the early stages of my creative career. I also love to draw, take photographs, and play music.

Project

Bradford's community is especially diverse as a result of the migration of many workers in the textile trade during the 20th century. As a textile designer myself, I find the historic movement of textile workers fascinating. Many of the workers could not speak English when they arrived and only had the skills of interweaving threads to integrate them into the community.

The heritage of Bradford is outstanding and the textile trade brought with it a great mix of people who make up the culture present today.

Part of this culture is the Italian community (ACLI Bradford). Italian workers were invited over to work in the mills post-WW2 as they had specific textile skills that were required at the time. The community is thriving today and has some members with direct links to the migration.

My research project would focus on uncovering these textile links between Italy and Bradford, through the collection of oral histories, landmarks, and historical references. Both here in Bradford before and in Venice during the fellowship period.

After the fellowship period, I aim to translate my research into a textile outcome to be displayed as part of Saltaire Inspired, this may be an interactive work involving many hands or a solo piece of work depending on my research findings.

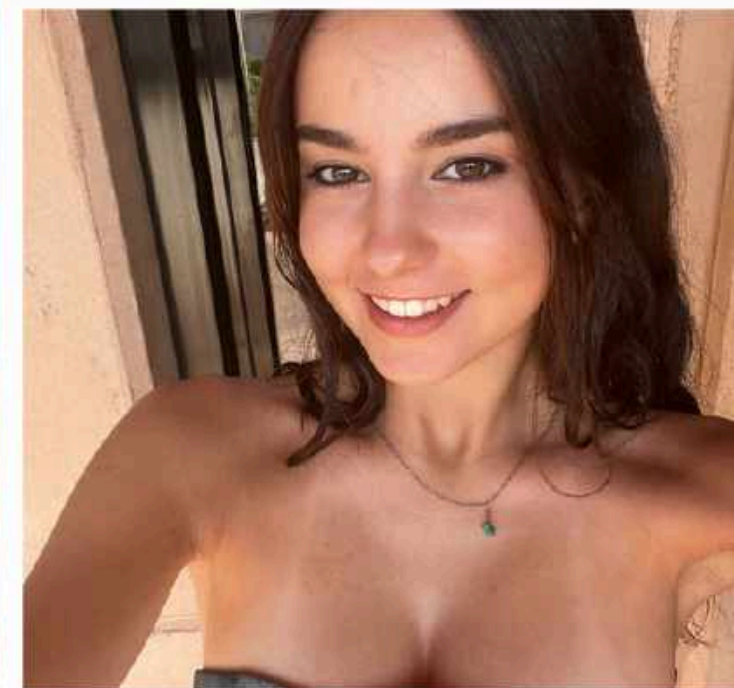
I would also document my visual research while in Venice to share with my online audience. This will allow me to grow a collection of visual inspiration that I can draw from when designing a textile outcome.



@millicentsanders
millicentsanders.com

Group 3

9 June –
9 July 2024



ALICE HOLMES

LIVERPOOL SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

I am currently studying a masters degree at the Liverpool School of Architecture following 2 years working in an architecture practice in Leeds. I am in the 5th year of my journey to become an Architect which I hope to complete in 8 years. I hope to work on pioneering sustainable projects in the future.

One of my passions is photography which I use to document my travels and interesting things I see along the way. I particularly like photography that looks at light and shadows in diverse environments. Recently, I have started exploring cyanotyping, the oldest form of photography using sunlight. I love the unpredictability of this type of photography and it allows me to use photography in a different way showing the transparency of natural objects such as leaves and petals.

I've had so much fun discovering new cities and ways to understand them, and am so grateful for this opportunity to be fully immersed in Venice!



Project

The significance of street interventions has heightened, especially in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, where outdoor spaces gained unprecedented value. During my studio module this year, I have looked at Milan's initiatives involving transforming once vehicle-dominated streets into pedestrian zones, incorporating patterned paving, benches, and even ping pong tables. These spaces play a crucial role in addressing societal issues such as the segregation of people with different religions and backgrounds and contribute to reducing vehicular traffic to combat the climate emergency—themes central to John Akomfrah's work.

I would like to compare this between Milan and Venice; given Venice's absence of vehicles, I would anticipate more advanced street interventions.

Additionally, I plan to explore these dynamics through the lens of photography and I hope to integrate what I've discovered into my dissertation next year. I aim to create a curated series of images that I can present to my peers upon my return.

@aliceholmes

CATERINA EDRICH

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY



I am British & Italian, studying on the BA Jewellery & Objects at Birmingham City University. I want to work on strengthening my connection to my Italian side. I was first introduced to making jewellery in primary school, but only properly developed my passion for it over covid as a respite from the stress of a levels, having forgotten it for years. I am particularly interested in the use of craft to bring about positive social change and am currently focussing my (academic) practice on this, trying to create engaging works that bring people's focus to subjects around neurodiversity & identity. My interests/ hobbies include jazz performance on the clarinet & sax, hiking, and rowing.

Project

In Venice, I aim to explore the theme "Foreigners Everywhere" through a personal lens, delving into the dichotomy of being a foreigner in both my native UK and Italy. The project will intertwine my experiences of not feeling "Italian enough" despite my roots, contrasting this with my foreigner status in the UK until age 12. (Despite being born in the UK I didn't have a GB passport until I was 12) This narrative will extend to my family's challenges, such as the need to pay for citizenship in the country I was born and raised in. The project's social impact lies in shedding light on the complexities of identity and citizenship, contributing to fairer and more inclusive societies.

I would like to engage with the diverse cohort of visitors of the Biennale Pavilions and interview willing members, in the UK also, discussing and asking them to describe their experiences regarding citizenship and feeling alienated in their own and other cultures. Including experiences regarding language and being monolingual, bilingual etc. as these are also relevant factors when talking about cultural identity.

Upon returning to the UK, I plan to share my findings through presentations and visual storytelling via an object or item of jewellery which will represent the contradicting experience of belonging and not belonging, potentially making up an interactive exhibition, fostering dialogue around themes of migration, diasporic identities, and injustice. The project aligns with the values of cultural understanding, collaboration, and the broader themes of the 2024 Biennale.

@luvyumuch

FREYA SHI

UAL DECOLONISING ARTS INSTITUTE

I am a graduate student at UAL Central Saint Martins studying the Master of Research program in Exhibition Studies, with a background in computer science, literary studies, film studies, and philosophy. My research institutes critical theory, media theory, cultural studies, and queer theory and I am interested in alternative ways to form knowledge, to tell history, to imagine the future, and to intervene with our present of the Anthropocene.

I am also an astrologer, a mezzo-soprano, a percussionist, a string player, a tarot reader, and a yogi. I especially value the potential of sound, music, myths and games to heal, to assemble, and to subvert hegemonic modes of being and I hope to incorporate these practices within my academic projects.



Project

My project would be a performative board game that imaginatively reconstructs memories of the waterways in Venice through fragmented archival texts, poems, lyrics, and fables. Utilising the concept of “critical fabulation” from black feminist historian Saidiya Hartman and “speculative fabulation” from feminist science theorist Donna Haraway, the game would be a process of cooperative world-building that engages the players in performing texts, and rethinking ways of building history and telling time.

The environmental crisis of Venice, in terms of water pollution and overflows, will be incorporated as a gameplay mechanism that unexpectedly throws “disorder” onto the board and unsettles the state of the game. There will be time where the players are asked to breathe together and to meditate. The game will also use astrology and tarot as systems of instruction and interpretation, to challenge normative ways of meaning making.

I am proposing a board game rather than a digital one because I believe in the power of physical presence in our time of crisis. In playing a board game together, I hope to appeal for a way of assembling, where people can heal and be healed, empower and be empowered and to develop a fluid collective together.

After I return to the UK, I would host participatory events within and outside my institution where people could sign up and play the game together. I hope to also cooperate with galleries and project spaces and to host the board game as an accompanying program for exhibitions or a workshop on its own. The process of playing the game may also germinate new projects not limited to sound pieces or video works based on recordings of live playing.

@shiyufry

HANNAH HORNBY

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND



I am a multi-disciplinary artist, predominately working with kinetic sculptures, sound installations and writing. I question what it means to be human as we evolve with technology, with a strong focus on our environment and the landscapes we inhabit. Patterns in history, time, fiction, and reality are some overarching themes which allow me to investigate the ever-forming hybridity between the human, nature and machine. I also have a strong interest in curation and the role in which text plays in bridging together themes and conversations between the artworks, the research, and the materiality on show. How can art act as an engaging platform to allow others to enter into conversations about the future?

Project

“John Akomfrah declares that the word ‘climate change’ is a euphemism to describe this vast and radical revolution against life”. Contextualising our future within the natural world is vital. I wish to develop my writing as a tool to understand Venice, its unique landscape around the water, and the people’s relationship to that. This will result in a publication consisting of poetic experimental and collaborative writings, with research throughout.

Week one/two: Observational research. Exploring the city and its form, the water as a body, and how the city and its people move between each other. I will develop texts which investigate how the elements move, feel, sound, taste etc. Art duo Ila Becka and Louise Lemoine investigate how people relate to space by interviewing cities in unconventional ways through their use of observation. Their film ‘Homo Urbanus’ takes detailed notice of how people shape the space/appropriate it etc.

Week three/four: Here is a chance to experiment with collaborative writing exercises I wish to conduct with my peer ambassadors, as part of the network of artists I will be within. This will allow the writing to flourish into diverse perspectives on the theme and see how language, translation and words can bring artists together to create a text with agency. I will edit the texts this week as an act of curation, with most of the editing/printing being completed when I’m home.

The publication can be shared physically and digitally amongst the ambassadors, UWE community and possibly through the British Council.

@hannahhornbyart

MRS BLUES

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

I am Mrs.Blues, born as Maurane Gadeau in Ivory Coast, and I develop experiences fostering introspective states from a jazzistic approach. My practice is often described as eclectic because, I am a musician, singer-songwriter, I make installations, performances, paintings, I work with textiles and recycled materials.

Since high school, I have been involved in collaborative work, Arts and Music festival like L'Émoi du Jazz by Dez Gad or WAW! Africa, and I also have a background in Fine Art and Design. That versatility has inspired the vision I wish to deliver by contributing to the public art sphere.

Recently, I have been investigating the relationship between external and internal patterns, as part of a research project I intend to expand further during my time in Venice.



Project



@_mrsblues

In 'Conversation with noise, Extended Play', an interview for Art 21 in 2021, the commissioned artist John Akomfrah states how he uses sounds and noises as indicators of directions through impactful multiscreen projections, emphasizing the political awareness and emanating more questions to the viewer. For my research, I would examine what dynamics are created in the pavilion through the artist audio-visual medium whilst analysing the relationship between the public, sounds and movements in the space.

With my multidisciplinary practice I wish to treat the residency in Venice like an experiment. My project explores patterns through sounds, movements, drawings, textiles or more to develop participatory experiences for audiences. Based on my research, I created a workshop welcoming experimentation and introspection.

For the workshop, participants would be invited to draw and make spontaneous patterns inspired by their visit of the Biennale. Then, shapes, textures and colours in the drawing would be translated into sounds and movements to choreograph what could become an experimental group performance. The workshop would also introduce publics to go on a silent walk around the pavilions or the city to locate unexpected or unique patterns found in Venetian Gothic architecture. The aim of the activity is to engage audiences in personal responses to artworks and their surroundings.

MILLIE NICHOLSON

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY



I am originally from Middlesbrough (in Teesside) but am currently in my third year at Newcastle University, studying for my BA in Fine Art. My art practice revolves around sentimental landscapes, and I make mixed media, expanded paintings to work through personal attachments to the North East and further afield. My research has taken me on residency to rural Northumberland and on a scholarship trip to the Lombardy region of Italy, where my family lived before migrating to Newcastle. Having always wanted to visit Venice, I am looking forward to the atmosphere of the Biennale, and to connect with the other fellows!

Project

In his acceptance statement, Akomfrah recognises “the complex history and significance of this institution and the nation it represents, as well as its architectural home in Venice”. This highlights the Biennale’s responsibility to both the global art world and the local community. I am interested in how this balance is addressed, and how integral physical location is to the event.

For me, the Biennale is the epitome of globalisation, with its cultural exchange and international collaboration. But I am particularly interested in the impact on its immediate surroundings. During my time in Venice, I wish to create an ‘alternative guide’ on how the Biennale touches the city and its residents, directly and indirectly. This will involve practical research through interviews, video recordings and collaboration with the other fellows. I will incorporate sketches and found materials to create maps, capturing how far the spirit of the exhibition reaches. Alongside this, I will engage in local art traditions such as Venetian mask-painting and glassblowing to further understand the city’s legacy.

This interest stems from my own personal experience. In Teesside, the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA) faces reluctance from locals who feel disconnected from the contemporary art scene. I am intrigued to discover whether this separation is still apparent in the centre of the Western art world.

On my return, I will share my research to my peers with an exhibition and open discussion, encouraging them to consider how their own work is affected by local and global influences.

@millienicholsonx

THOMAS GIBBS

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

I am a third-year undergrad studying art history at St Andrews but I originally come from a small village near Rugby, England. Coming from such a small place, I love exploring new places and meeting new people, which is why I'm currently on study abroad in Hong Kong!

Although the food is excellent here, I'm missing cooking at home which is one of my favourite ways to relax. I also enjoy live music and video games. I love cats too, bumping into one on the street always brightens up my day. My hobbies include playing piano, writing for the student newspaper (thesaint.scot) and reeling – although I doubt I'll find any ceilidhs in Venice! I can't wait to meet everyone.



Project

My proposal revolves around migration and identity at the most local level. Comparing two international academic/artistic enclaves, St Andrews and the Venice Biennale, I seek to understand the impact of intellectual culture and over-tourism on two cities being damaged by floods of temporary migrants they “can’t live with and can’t live without.” I want to consider the language of migration and metropolitanism (the words I just used could be from a UKIP pamphlet) through two language maps.

The exact format of my product is open to change and cross-fertilisation with other fellows’ projects, however my plan is to create maps of both towns, each colour-coded according to the languages and accents audible at points around them. I will then choose words that stand out from this overhearing/eaves-dropping process and reappropriate them for poems to be layered into the map. The maps can then be published online, and hopefully discussed in a talk when I return to St Andrews.

My proposal is a direct response to *Foreigners Everywhere* and a quiet reflection on the absence of a Scottish Pavillion in 2024. The irony, of course, is that I am a foreigner imposing myself in both these places. I aim to incorporate my positionality into my work, reflecting on my experiences in Scotland and in Hong Kong – where I will be studying next semester. Like Claire Fontaine, I want to embrace the ambiguity of language and juxtapose it with the apparent objectivity of maps to tease out some kind of truth.

@thomasstjhgibbs

YOUSSEF ELNAHAS

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS
(PHOTOGRAPHY)



© Gideon Fisher

I am a UK-based Egyptian photographer and historian. As a child, and ever since, photography has been my creative outlet of choice for documenting the world around and within me. I am a strong opponent of the belief that a successful artist needs one area of speciality and possess a natural curiosity for experimentation; as a result, my photographic practice is constantly evolving and covers a range of genres. Common themes have included an affinity for nature and the ocean, conversations between the past and the present, and the different ways spaces can be perceived and interacted with based on one's own experiences.

Project

During my time in Venice, I aim to develop a project serving as a documentation and commentary on sea level rise as a result of climate change, a global crisis with major impact that could cause irreversible damage to coastal communities around the world, including Venice itself. Potential media that could be employed include photographic documentation of vulnerable locations and communities, portraiture, and oral interviews with those affected. I also plan to experiment with more abstract methods such as 'Polaroid decay', a technique involving submerging instant film photographs in seawater for extended periods and observing the changes and deterioration caused to the images.

Following my fellowship in Venice, I hope to extend the project to Egypt's Nile Delta, a region I am personally familiar with and one that is set to be irrevocably transformed due to rising sea levels, by virtue of its geography and history of human exploitation.

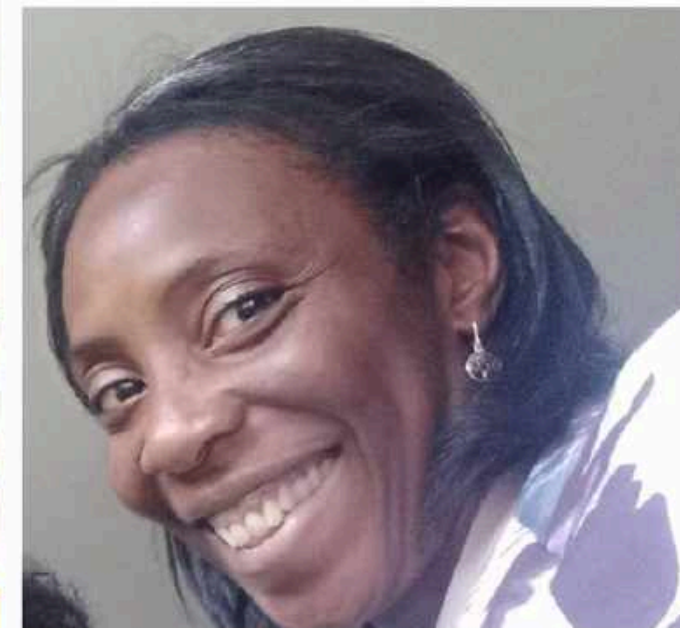
The project is directly aligned with the work of UK Pavilion artist John Akomfrah, whose art focuses on social impact and human stories, including directly addressing the issue of climate change, as seen in *Purple* (2017). It also relates to the Biennale theme, 'Foreigners Everywhere', as climate change transcends national borders, forcing coastal communities to uproot their lives and relocate to a new environment completely foreign to their ways of life. Depending on the outcome of the project, I believe a multimedia exhibition is the best format to present my work, allowing for an immersive experience and conveying an urgent message.



@youssefelnahas

Group 4

7 July –
6 August 2024



CYLENA SIMONDS

ARTS UNIVERSITY PLYMOUTH



I am an artist, reader and writer. I was born in Detroit, left in 1988, travelled as much as I could, lived in Chicago, NYC, settling in England in 1997. Each journey prompted reflection on what it means to (un)belong. My work draws from different cultural sources, making use of ambiguities, distortions, paradoxes, and fictions to form new ways of understanding ourselves in relation to others.

Project

My research in Venice will explore the city's role in the legacy of porcelain. Chinese porcelain was coveted as a luxury item by European elites and alchemists were charged with finding the secret to its qualities. One aspect I find interesting is that accounts from those who had seen porcelain objects and described its qualities read more like fiction than scientific observations. Myths around creative production especially those by "foreign" cultures is a theme in much of my work.

Drawing from theoretical research into how material culture comes into being and operates, my inquiry will explore Venice's role in porcelain mythology. I see parallels with John Akomfrah's examination of transatlantic trade's influence on cultural identity positing that notions of cultural "purity" underpin porcelain's value. The theme "Foreigners Everywhere" at the Biennale resonates with porcelain's complex reception, revered yet sometimes reviled as a foreign cultural influence on European craft traditions. Furthermore, my research will investigate potential parallels between Venice and Plymouth, exploring possible connections in terms of porcelain trade, piracy, and maritime significance within global trade and colonial expansion.

Upon returning to Plymouth, I intend to present my findings, reflecting on them in relation to local lore surrounding William Cookworthy's porcelain. A significant collection of his wares is held by The Box which I could discuss alongside images of porcelain discovered in Venice and their social impact. In the AUP ceramics lab, I'd be able to experiment with Venetian soft-paste recipes and Cookworthy's hard-paste recipes, integrating the results into my artwork.

ISABELLA SO

THE LOWRY

I am an emerging multidisciplinary artist based in Manchester. With a unique cultural identity as both Hong Konger and Korean, I explore themes of identity, memory, and slice-of-life stories with a comedic twist across performance, directing, and projection design. Raised on storytime with family, I value the power of storytelling and draw from my background to inform performances. During my theatre studies at Coventry University, I began exploring themes of identity and memory through video projections and devised performance work.

Since graduating, I have cultivated two passions: uplifting diverse narratives onstage, and engaging audiences through immersive techniques. My diverse background informs my experimental, contemporary approach fusing comedy, projections and cultural commentary. Beyond theatre, I enjoy trying new recipes and dance. Movement is essential to my process; I often explore characters physically before voicing them. I am always looking for new ways to merge physicality, technology and storytelling.



Project

As a multidisciplinary theatre artist with a mixed cultural background, I am inspired by Akomfrah's socially-engaged filmmaking to create a cross-cultural verbatim theatre piece that uplifts and humanizes migrant narratives. In Venice, I will conduct video interviews with those from diverse origins about their journeys, challenges, and aspirations.

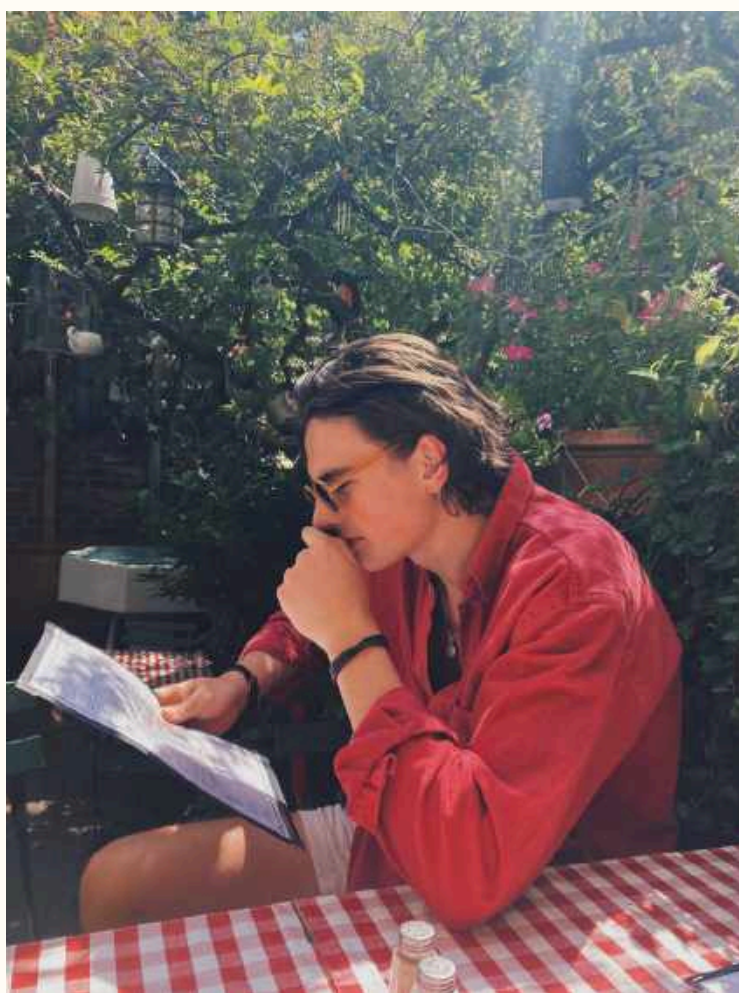
Back in Manchester, a city rapidly diversifying with new immigrant communities, I will collaborate with local organizations to develop an evocative, immersive production centered around welcoming and embracing cultural exchange. Live actors will perform the verbatim script while projected interviews captioned in multiple languages complement the narrative by putting relatable human faces to the stories. My own bicultural upbringing provides empathy to sensitively shape the interviews into a dramatic work building cross-cultural bridges.

I will thoroughly document my creative process, sharing methodologies that unite divides. This project is an invaluable opportunity to use my theatre and film skills to amplify marginalized voices while significantly expanding my artistic practice and social awareness. By fostering exchange, I hope to reveal our shared humanity underneath surface differences. My mixed identity gives me a unique, multicultural lens to approach this timely, socially-conscious project.

@issabellaso

JACK FRY

DURHAM UNIVERSITY



I'm a Politics and International Relations student but have always hoped to work in the Arts, and have consequently fostered my creative sensibilities outside of my degree. I'm deeply passionate about photography and film; I'm currently working on a short film with my grandfather, who has dementia. It explores themes of identity and who you are without your memories, whilst also being a character study of him with all his quirks, documenting him before his essence fades.

Additionally, I'm a keen writer and am part of a student-run arts and culture magazine, 'Wayzgoose', at Durham. In my role as the podcast director and editor, we aim to create a platform to promote the arts in the North East and bring creatives together.

Project

Venice is noteworthy in its history as a bastion of both the political and artistic world. I would like to develop a short film exploring the relationship between art and politics; more specifically, how deeply our political understandings can be affected through experiencing works of art.

I'd hope to explore this through interactions/ interviews with visitors to the Pavilion and other exhibitions. I'd link my findings from these interactions with works at the Biennale in the present day to the rich history of Venice itself, in particular, the use of art in Renaissance Italy as a political tool. I'd explore how the nature of the relationship between art and politics may have shifted from aiding those in power to critiquing them, and finally examining how this connects to the National Pavilions on an international stage. Access to Venetian museums and records to research and inform would greatly inspire and enhance my work.

Inspired by Akomfrah's embrace of the 'Philosophy of Montage', I would use recordings, archival material and new footage to create a film whose themes would be in dialogue with Akomfrah's work, utilising the stunning setting of Venice to produce a captivating visual film.

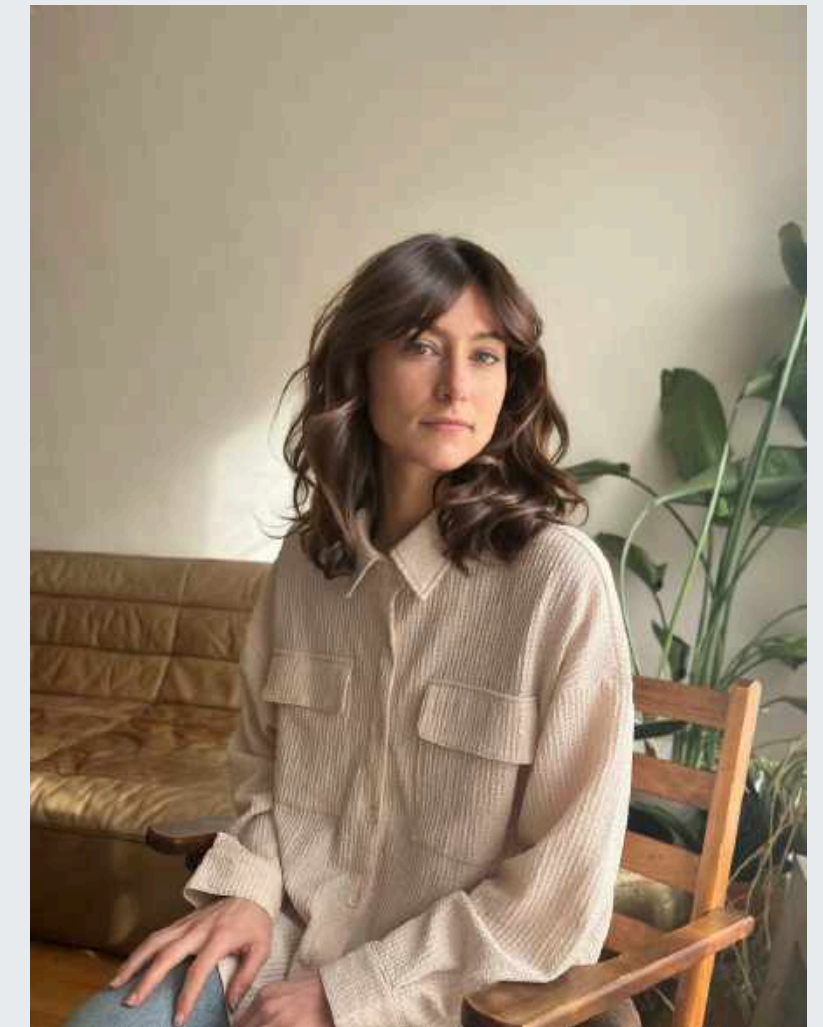
I would share my project by hosting a screening in the UK, whilst making the film available online, too, through a platform such as Vimeo. Moreover, I would do this in conjunction with a piece of writing on my findings, shared in article form or via a collated book of all the fellows' work.

KELLY RAPPLEYE

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

My name is Kelly Rappleye, and I'm a curator and PhD researcher interested in the aesthetics of place, urban space and social memory, exploring social geographies of urban migration, displacement, and home-making. Drawing from my background in community mental health and arts writing, alongside my love for cooking, dancing and film, my curatorial practice aims to promote social care and solidarity in urban spaces.

Originally from Los Angeles, I completed an MA in Contemporary Art Theory at Goldsmiths, UOL, and am currently a PhD researcher at Glasgow School of Art, researching curatorial methods for Scottish moving image art, film archives, and urban imaginaries. I'm presently a curator with 16NSt curatorial collective, supporting early-career artists and feminist curatorial models.



Project

I hope to develop curatorial research expanding from my current PhD research to consider transnational and transcultural topographies of place, memory and identity in British artists' moving images, in the context of climate colonialism, migration, and diasporic memory. I will develop curatorial "site writing" (Jane Rendell) to trace counter-topographies that emerge from John Akomfrah RA's moving image installation, emphasizing landscapes of memory and trans-local identity to draw relations with Biennale audience and visitor localities, and local Venetian contexts. My curatorial approach will involve visitor observation, conversation, and historical and architectural research to explore how hydropoetics link Venetian maritime heritage and Britain's urban ports and waterways, and evoke colonial legacies.

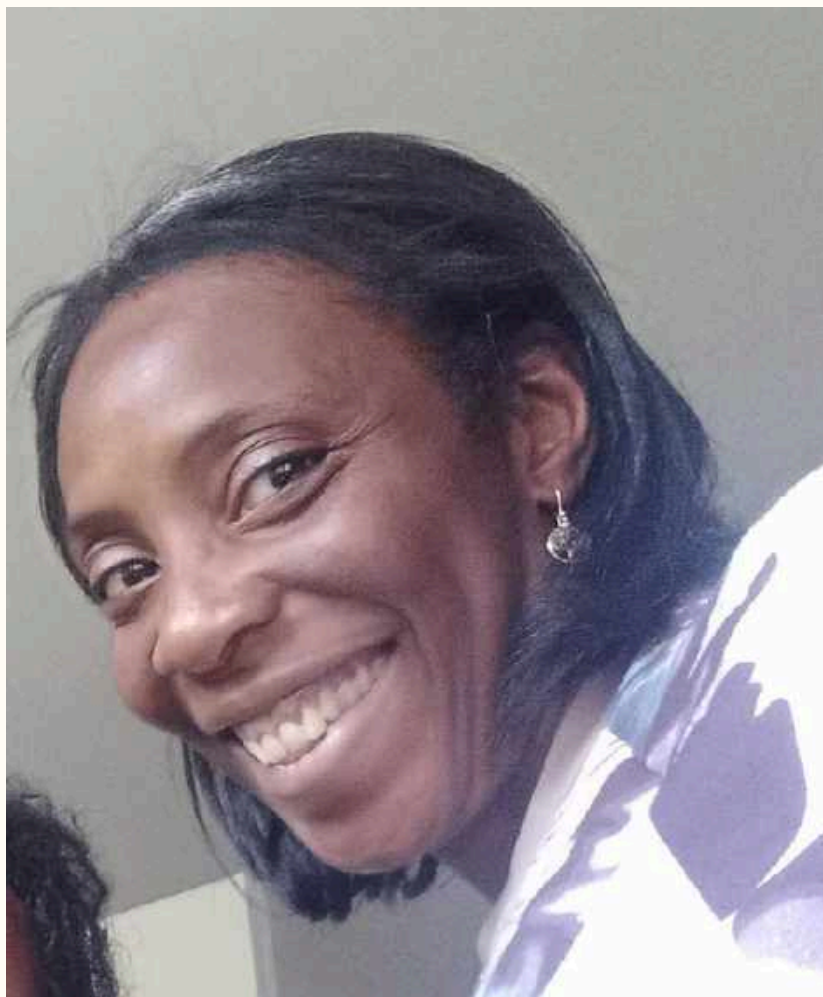
I aim to unspool the layers of "site" represented within Akomfrah's work in connection with the site of installation in the British Pavilion, juxtaposing my own situated positions as invigilator, curator and researcher to evoke complex narratives embedded within these spaces. Learning through these spatial and social relationships to site will enact Caribbean philosopher Edouard Glissant's notion of "archipelagic thinking". I will also invite site writing contributions from artists across the 2024 Biennale to expand a curatorial consideration of "archipelagic encounters" within the Biennale. This aligns with curator Adriano Pedrosa's poignant theme of "Foreigners Everywhere," by highlighting the transcultural and trans-local constellations shaping the Biennale.

The gathered site writings will be shared at Glasgow School of Art, and feed into my curation of a public screening/exhibition event as part of my culminating PhD practice research at GSA.

@k3llycOle

LISA OGUN'

ARTS & HOMELESSNESS INTERNATIONAL



I am a black, female, disabled artist. I am story-enabler using a variety of creative practices, which include creative writing; journalistic theatre; theatrical performance; directing; choreography; producing; dramaturgy and crafting workshop facilitating. Recently I have started to refine my skills in Verbatim Headphone Theatre to enable stories from lesser heard voices to be told.

A trustee to two theatre charities, I was awarded a British Citizen Award for my over-20 years of voluntary work, mostly in the arts and/or addressing marginalised societal injustices. I am also a freelance co-producer for Arts & Homelessness International (AHI) for their international Global Majority online projects and events, and an Objects Story-teller for Museum of Homelessness (MoH).

Project

Using my skills of Verbatim-Headphone-Theatre performer/storyteller, I would engage/workshop 5-6 migrant people of Venice to talk about their journey to the city, the perils or joys of being somewhere that is foreign (including topics of language barriers, services' accessibility, societal prejudices, security challenges, local perceptions, reasons for choice of city, home-communities and inclusions), to produce a translated verbatim-production that is then made into a short film of no more than 8-10 minutes long.

The importance of this 'process and product' project would be to ensure the migrants' stories are both told and heard; to help both empower and encourage change of perceptions, respectively.

Translated versions of the interviews will be 'performed' whilst their (permitted) original recorded interviews made available online to ensure each person's true voice is not lost in the project and they could have their face projected within the film reel if they choose this as an option.

Researching the migrant service-providers of the city, prior and from in the UK, could help either put me in touch with service users or direct me to areas known to find potential interviewees, assisting me to form contact. I will directly meet these contacts made and potential interviewees face-to-face, commencing from the first two weeks there.

Back home, I will translate the interviews and add subtitles to filmed shots of the city (if be so) and me 'performing' the English verbatim stories to form the short film. A live performance could also be arranged, if time permits.

@Lisa Ogun

RAY SIMS

LONDON COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION

I'm a filmmaker and writer, working with ideas about the body in translation, archive, and conjuring physical spaces through film and text. Film archiving exposed me to the materiality and physical nature of film; I'm interested in how film as a medium can convey tangibility and touch. I'm currently taking part in a choreography course at Siobhan Davies Studios and I hope to begin using dance and performance as part of my practice.



Project

During a previous visit to Venice, I collected videos of laundry drying on lines hung between buildings. I was fascinated by the intimacy of these laundry lines, shared between neighbours, and their public nature in a city visited by so many tourists each year. The laundry in Venice reminded me of the invisible nature of domestic work – I'd like to explore the political significance of laundry, paralleling John Akomfrah's use of film as a medium to address political ideas.

The finished product would be collected video works, incorporating footage collected during my time in Venice, and a dance piece I will choreograph in response to my research. The soundtrack will be comprised of spoken word and field recordings. I have asked Sarah Kemali, a designer and architect, to work on sculptural costumes inspired by the shapes of laundry, re-using scrap fabric and disused clothing to explore the ecological contexts of clothing. Venice is a constant in discussions around climate change, as water levels rise in the city: it feels significant to examine the physical ephemera of human lives in a city that is sinking under their weight.

I would love to present the final project as a multi-screen installation. I'm inspired by Akomfrah's layering of footage with creative sound design, as well as the immersive nature of his work. I'd like to act as a flaneuse whilst in Venice, walking through the streets and observing and recording what I can see and hear through a deliberately gendered lens.

@sisterr_ray

SABRINA SUDOL

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER



I am an artist, musician, and curator from Ramsey, NJ, USA. I graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Maine with dual degrees in Studio Art and Music. After I graduated I moved to Florida to work at Walt Disney World as a ride operator at It's a Small World and Peter Pan's Flight. I received the Global Excellence Scholarship from the University of Exeter and am there currently completing a Masters in Curation. I am most passionate about mental health awareness and helping people. In my free time I like to research acoustic ecology and record soundscapes, and try to incorporate them into my artistic practice.

Project

While in Venice I would hope to research the relationship between the Anthropocene and mental health, and how climate change perpetuates colonial legacies of inequality. Moreover, I would look at migration as a symptom of inhabitable conditions produced by the Anthropocene, and in turn, the diasporic identities that are created as a result of being displaced. To do this I would look at archives, contemporary art, and conduct interviews and surveys. After researching I would create an interactive exhibition or facilitate a workshop that would explore who is and will be affected by climate change, why there is a lack of urgency, how migrants are treated and to what degree their mental health is affected, and ultimately how the Anthropocene sustains a colonial agenda. In that, most of the countries that will be heavily impacted by climate change are places that were colonized in the past. I will then implement this research in future exhibitions, projects, and discussions while creating and curating.



SIENA VENTURINO- MALCHERCZYK

PROPOSITION STUDIOS

I am a London-born multi-disciplinary artist, working primarily in sculpture and installation. Graduating from the University of the Arts London, I developed my practice around the interior and exterior landscapes of human experiences. My work is deeply influenced by the migration stories of my Italian, Irish, and Polish heritage. My creations form immersive worlds of in-between spaces, inviting audiences to navigate through the nuanced complexities of identity, and belonging.

My work will explore the Biennale's theme "Strangers Everywhere". I will delve into my matrilineal Italian heritage through an exploration of complex themes such as assimilation, displacement, and belonging, with the aim to reconnect with my ancestral history through the shifting cultural landscape of three generations of women.



Project

As Akomfrah demonstrates through his work, we are products of decisions.
Decisions of our ancestors and the stories passed down that become our
legacy.

My Nonna's migration story is at the heart of the project I would like to explore.
She was a shepherdess in Molise, a small province in Italy. She moved after a
family betrayal disallowed her from owning a knitting machine. As an avid
knitter & seamstress, this was an assault to her core and, as the story goes,
wrote to the Italian president to find passage to England.

Akomfrah's work deals with piecing together story, archive, and history and
displays them in ways that forces you to re-encounter and re-engage how you
feel and experience his work and its ideas. Venice itself acts as an allegory: a
collection of 126 islands, an assemblage of tourists and residents, a collection
of strangers all coming together.

In my own sculptural installations I use textiles to reconfigure traditional
notions around 'women's work'. I recently uncovered a tapestry created by my
Nonna. I would like to use this experience to gather a collection of stories,
materials.

@sienease

SIMONE MARCONI

UNIVERSITY OF WEST OF ENGLAND



I am an Italian artist, writer, and curator currently living and working in Bristol.

Coming from a background closely tied to a graffiti-writing practice, an interest in themes such as ephemerality, instability, and alienation arose spontaneously in my practice. I often combine industrial, rural, and instinctive approaches and breathe new life into discarded materials, creating works that walk on the worn tightrope between the real and the surreal.

With my writing, I aim to ferry the reader into a parallel, personal dimension and introduce the audience to an internal self-exploration. I like to describe them as static journeys, lucid dreams, or endless blinks of an eye in which time dilates.

By reducing the distance between us and the spaces we inhabit, other than challenging the notion of reality as static, my work encourages us to look closer at the world around us. It operates as a parody of reality, a satirical caricature of the Anthropocene.

Project

The castaway, compelled to set out on a stormy journey by outside forces, does not choose to land but is forced to. Are humans indeed the masters of nature, or are we simply at its mercy? Imagining nature as the shipwrecked subject, I will research forced connections between artificial and natural, especially between the water within Venice's urban landscape and humans.

Through photography, text-based pieces, and film, I will document nature's resistance to the artificial world surrounding it, gathering the fundamentals for a new body of work. By collecting materials rejected from the lagoon to near shorelines and combining them in a series of sculptures, I will underline the precarity and fragility of our society; a sort of Odyssey.

The project aims to undermine myths related to the environment as eternal, the anthropocentric vision of humans as the 'master' species, and to reduce the gap between us and the space we occupy. The initial sculptures will serve as testers for a workshop in which, with about ten people, I would collect material from the lagoon shore to assemble a collaborative sculpture on the shipwrecked subject. It would be 'sculptural collective recycling', where elements rejected by the sea, whether manufactured or not, can stimulate a reflection on how migrants and climate catastrophes are employed to construct fictitious narratives.

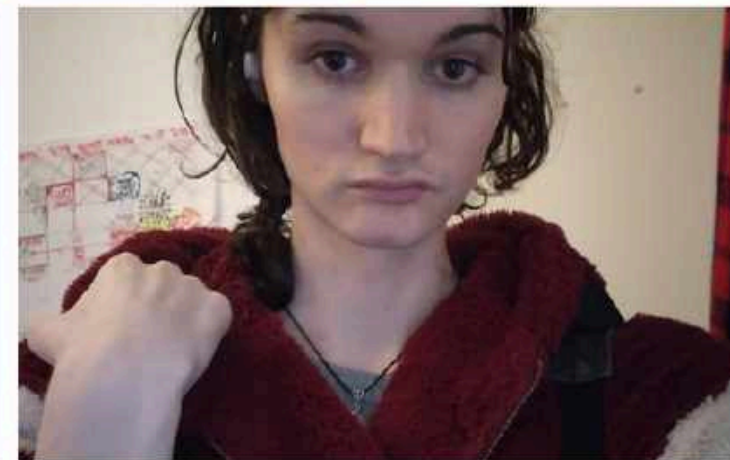
The project will culminate in a publication gathering workshop documentation, writings, and photographs depicting neglected aspects of our controversial relationship with water. Venice, rapidly becoming an emblem of decay before disappearance, could be the perfect incubator to further this idea.



@simone.marconi_

Group 5

4 August –
3 September 2024



DANIELLE HEWITT

INVISIBLE DUST X UCL



I am an artist and historian, trained in both Fine Art Practice and Architectural History. My research and practice largely focus on material histories at varying scales and the social, political and aesthetic questions that arise from these.

I am interested in developing artistic methods of historical research as means to explore complex and often contested histories. I work with an expanded photographic practice which includes the making of photographs, films and performative lectures.

I am currently pursuing a PhD in Architectural History at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London. I teach on programmes in Fine Art and Photography, Landscape Architecture, and on interdisciplinary approaches to architecture.

Project

This project is tentatively titled “The Stones of Venice”: A Cosmopolitan Geology. Borrowing from English art historian John Ruskin’s treatise of the same name (1851–1853) which produced an account of Venetian Art, Architecture and the history of the city as constructed by a normative and western produced art history. My project will take an alternative view; by examining the various building stones used in the construction of Venice and situating these in a migratory geography that is both material and human.

Venice has no stone resources. In the early building of the city stone was imported from within and beyond the Venetian Empire, notably from Istria (modern day Croatia) and looted from Constantinople (modern day Istanbul). The fabric of the city is constituted by a material movement that has crossed or moved within borders which have since been contested or reformed. A focus on this mobile geology points to the arbitrary but active nature of borders in Venices’ past and present and considers how we understand the cosmopolitan nature of Venice when many of the labourers that contributed to it may never have entered the city.

To communicate these complex and contested histories, I will draw on the visual and poetic methods I develop in my PhD. I plan to photograph and research individual stones in Venice, creating an expanded catalogue of stones, and their material and human geographies. This work will then be shared as a small booklet, and a live lecture performance to be developed into a film.

ELYON LIU

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

I am Xiaoyi Liu, and you can call me Elyon. I am an illustrator and children's book creator, currently pursuing a postgraduate degree in Children's Book Illustration at Anglia Ruskin University.

Originally from Beijing, where I lived for many years and earned both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Economics, I decided to come to the UK to pursue my artistic dreams after working for a few years.

I have a passion for nature and animals, a love for books and illustrations, and an enduring enthusiasm for engaging stories. I am dedicated to narrating meaningful tales in a child-friendly manner. Simultaneously, I enjoy experimenting with various creative techniques and materials.



Project



During my one-month residency in Venice, I plan to embark on a children's book project inspired by the themes prevalent in John Akomfrah's art. The book will serve as an accessible introduction to complex subjects like identity, diversity, or environmental consciousness, echoing the nuanced narratives found in Akomfrah's work. This innovative approach aims to introduce young audiences to complex themes through visual storytelling.

During my month in Venice, I plan to conduct fieldwork, gathering inspiration from the city's rich cultural heritage. Upon return, I intend to collaborate with local schools or galleries or museums, using workshops and exhibitions to share the project's development.

This project aligns seamlessly with the program's emphasis on education, visual arts, and cultural exchange, offering a captivating and thought-provoking medium to engage and inspire young readers.

@elyonliu
elyonliu.com

HANNAH KEMP-WELCH

LONDON COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION



I'm a socially-engaged artist; I often work collaboratively with community groups through a relational practice. I enjoy collecting intriguing sounds through field recording and I have recently become obsessed with riso-printing zines. I'm currently a PhD student at University of the Arts London, working on a project titled 'Listening in Socially-Engaged Art: Artistic Strategies for Equitable Collaboration'.

Project

In an interview about Handsworth Songs, Akomfrah reflects on BAFCs mission to create 'counter narratives' that speak back to the dominant media position, often based on crude and politically motivated stereotypes. The use of montage as a strategy to show complexity rather than represent people through one voice or one view intrigues me. I'm also deeply interested in themes of migration and the 'hostile environment', which Akomfrah explores through films like *The Nine Muses*.

I come from a family of migrants, from Ukraine to Poland to England, and I have an archive of photographic works from my family that I'd like to explore through moving image – inspired by the techniques proposed by Akomfrah. How might migrants' journeys be represented in their full complexity through the layering and juxtaposition of archive images?

Venice seems a highly relevant setting for this research. Its historic position as a sanctuary for migrants (for example during the Balkan war) reversed by tragic cases of hostile policies against asylum seekers and tough conditions for migrant workers in the hospitality industry.

My research will involve ethical street photography, film capture and field recording. I will use this valuable time to experiment with montage techniques and create a short film – perhaps a trailer for a longer version I will develop after the project. The film will be shared with peers back in the UK via a video link, as an online screening, or as a series of annotated stills from the film.

@soundarthannah

LASZLO MOLNAR

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

I am László Molnár, and I am a Level 5 student currently studying Fine Art at the London Metropolitan University. Since my childhood, arts have been at the centre of my life. I am an interdisciplinary artist, primarily focusing on painting, photography, and installations.

In my artistic practice, I strive to create works that engage with life's most important questions. I believe that the role of art is to raise questions and provide possible answers, thoughts. Recent works of mine focus on randomness and the creative power of accidents in art. To facilitate the occurrence of randomness, I provide consistent conditions, established rules within which randomness can occur.

My process for images is a blend of randomness and established guidelines, with human intervention playing a role, too. This method allows for an element of unpredictability within a structured framework, the exact patterns and interactions of the paint remain largely subject to chance.



Project

During my month in the Venice Fellowship Programme, I plan to delve into the deeply complex and often tumultuous relationship between humanity and nature, focusing on nature's exploitation by humans and the joint future of both. My exploration isn't just about how this exploitation threatens human survival, but more so about the unjustified actions against nature that risk Earth's very existence.

I'm strongly affected by Akomfrah's recent work, 'Vertigo Sea', which demonstrates the impact of man-made climate change and humanity's destructive activities on nature. It is extremely heart-wrenching to watch recordings of whaling, which, with dramatic force, depict the cruel destruction of Earth's biodiversity and the greed of humanity.

A key area of my study will be the impact of rising sea levels, particularly relevant to Venice. I will investigate how the increasing instances of "acqua alta" (high water) due to climate change are not only more frequent and severe but also pose a significant threat to Venice's sustainability. I will document the current state with the help of photos and video recordings. In addition, I would conduct interviews with the older members of the local population to uncover the changes of the past decades through their recollections.

According to experts, there's a potential threat of Venice being submerged by 2100. To document my journey, I intend to capture numerous photographs and video recordings, including a video diary. These will serve as a comprehensive record, enabling me to effectively share the events and insights gathered during my time in Venice.

MARIA SAYOKO AOYAMA

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH



My family is from all over the place - My mother is Romanian, father is Japanese, I was born in Tokyo but have grown up in Switzerland. I now am studying BA Fine Art in Bournemouth at the Arts University Bournemouth, where I'm hoping to establish and develop my artistic practice.

Whilst I have always pursued and loved visual arts, I feel that now, more than ever, I've been able to use it to learn about myself and my place within the cultures that surround my life. I'm very interested in Japanese artists and movements, such as Mono-Ha and Gutai, as well as photographers, like Daido Moriyama and Rinko Kawauchi.

Apart from art, I enjoy Taekwondo, fashion, and all types of music!.

Project

I struggle to develop an idea of a specific outcome when I approach a work or project within my practice, but I would like to investigate Venice as a point of intersection – of cultures, languages, the local and the foreign, water and land. I want to explore every manner in which I can document the movement and energy that this space possesses, particularly through video and sound. Venice feels like an artefact, a part of history preserved, yet most of what it experiences is completely foreign.

I would want to explore the traces that this movement leaves, and how this could be documented to one day be experienced in an “archive”. I would be interested to test the limits of the intersection, how it could be extracted and placed in a completely new environment such as a gallery space. I think it would be equally as intriguing to create something participatory, whether that involves other fellows, or visitors of Venice, to reflect the continuous movement that has been compacted in this city.

The research I would conduct would inevitably feed into my practice in the UK, as what I wish to explore aligns with what I am overall quite interested in. I think it would also be valuable to take the documentation compiled and transform it into work that could be experienced online, or into a physical space, and see how the dynamic and perception of movement changes.

@mariasaoyamart

MARTHA DEAN

WINCHESTER SCHOOL OF ART,
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

My name is Martha and I am a painter on the Autism Spectrum. I am often asked 'when did you start painting?' and this is something I have never been able to answer. I just never stopped. However, I could say that it has been my pursuit and fascination for over ten years, along with writing, often about women in art, the gaze and autism.

Since undertaking training at Sarum Studio Atelier and beginning my Bachelor's in Fine Art I have established a dual practice. At Sarum, I developed my technique in figurative work from life while learning theory and history that has subsequently imbued my practice's concern with gaze on the figure, from my own to centuries of artists and spectators looking.

In Venice, and anywhere, my autism separates me, and yet being a foreigner in Venice would connect me to the other 'Foreigners Everywhere'. My sensitivity to space, people and the edges between us means I often felt something apart, viewing fundamentally on the edge but being within cities, watching within crowds intrigue me. Lauren Elkin wrote 'she voyages out, and goes where she's not supposed to'. This is what I want to do.



Project

When I was nine in Venice, during a glistening November morning, after a few days passing endless figures and shadowy spaces, jumping along temporary platforms across flooded streets it felt surreal to then be running around a strikingly empty Piazza San Marco before the skies turned gold and pigeons outnumbered us 50-1. The feeling of being an individual in a space now seemingly synonymous by overcrowding hasn't left me.

My proposal is concerned with temporality and the autistic gaze as a flâneuse within spaces marked by people. Eye-contact is a contentious issue of autism's perception, and I will make work of the gaze that wanders just beyond what it's meant to look at, over the heads of people and voyages to the corners and the edges of the city. I take notes from Baudelaire's 'The Painter of Modern Life' and Lauren Elkin's 2016 exploration of the female flaneur 'Flâneuse'. Inspired by John Akomfrah's use in 'Five Murmurations' (2019), My pallet will be monochromatic and focussed on content without colour as in this film. Every mark of my brush will be intentional. The temporality aspect of his work and using a triptych of screens together as one interest me to also make triptychs that follow my gaze.

I will continue painting with washes of earthy oil paint- burnt umber, raw sienna et al- on cardboard, wooden panels and unbleached linen; work that's unrestricted by stretcher bars, that can expand, be ripped, put together again. I'll work from life, studies and memory, the focus on the surveyor surveying central. Cardboard is transportable, and everywhere and shares qualities of the frescos of Venice. Every mark is loaded. The fading propensity of painting with oil on cardboard is a reaction to the state of Venice today.

@marthagrace.dean.art

RACHEL HUTCHISON

OUTER SPACES



About more than painting a pretty picture: Since graduating with a BA (Hons) in Painting from the University of Edinburgh in 2022, I've become a lot of things. What I like to call the 21st century artist: Learning Assistant, Barista, Supervisor, Student, and stubbornly, still an Artist.

As a working-class artist, my space in the art world hasn't come easily to me. But I truly believe art is a universal language and a tool for connection with both ourselves and others, something I've always returned to. My practice is about externalising internal experiences, giving them a chance to materialise, take up their own space, and maybe even have a wee dance.

Project

During my residency in Venice, I will immerse myself in the emotional landscape of migration and foreignness, drawing inspiration from John Akomfrah's evocative storytelling and Venice's rich history. My project, "Borders Within: Embracing the Foreign," delves into the emotional journeys amidst shifting identities. I believe that once we leave home, even home becomes foreign, a sentiment shared globally.

I'm particularly interested in the struggles faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in the wake of discriminatory policies. Michela Leidi, an Italian Mother, who was officially cancelled as the mother of her daughter on the infant's birth certificate. 'I cried for ten days when I opened the letter.... It was as if I did not exist.' (Birell, 2023). This sort of displacement is a feeling I believe is shared in the theme Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere. I aim to capture how inhabitants and visitors of Venice find solace despite displacement, exploring facets of longing, hope, resilience, and cultural identity. Influenced by Akomfrah's ability to evoke empathy, my artworks will serve as windows into migrants' souls, inviting viewers to connect with their struggles and aspirations.

Project Idea: I am to create a series of emotive portraits of locals and visitors en plein air, finding home-ness in their surroundings. It captures the essence of feeling foreign in one's own home and the resilience emerging from such adversities. Using painting, drawing, and printmaking, I depict the intricate tapestry of identity, emphasising the struggles faced by LGBTQ+ individuals and immigrants. Through this, I highlight the ways people make themselves feel at home despite displacement.

Sharing Plan: Nearing the end of the fellowship, I plan to transform these emotional artworks into a travelling exhibition. It will begin in Venice, move to my studio space with OuterSpaces, and then partner with local and international galleries, including those in my partner's city in France. This cross-border exhibition aims to foster empathy, understanding, belonging, and solidarity. Interactive workshops will accompany the exhibition, encouraging participants to explore their emotions through art.

Additionally, I will create an online exhibition and a narrative book, ensuring global accessibility. This digital space will feature artworks accompanied by narratives, serving as a tangible exploration of the human spirit, challenging societal norms, and fostering dialogue around foreignness and discrimination.

Birell, I. (2023) Italy erases names of gay mothers from their children's birth certificates in crackdown, Daily Mail Online. Available at: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12302509/Italy-erases-names-gay-mothers-childrens-birth-certificates-crackdown.html> (Accessed: 05 October 2023).

@rachelhutchison.art

AMBER POTTS

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL (
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE)

I'm currently studying at Liverpool School of Architecture having completed my placement at White Ink Architects Belfast. I'm very excitable and absolutely live to try new foods and flavours and love going for long walks with friends. One of my passions is cinema and film, my favourite of all time is Ridley Scott's 'Alien', HR Geiger's creature and environment design fascinated me – and having such a strong female lead filled me with ambition.

In general, I love sci fi and fantasy genres, as they typically celebrate adventure, discovery, and being different. As a transwoman my personal development and journey has been turbulent but exciting, I can't wait for summer, and look forwards to meeting everyone else!



Project

I will create a collage of architectural models showing 3 "moments."

I would prefabricate some of the basic parts at home and then assemble them in Venice and encrust them in stuff like grit from the city, and build physical elements in a "dollhouse" manner.

Each room or street would show a scene from the city conveying a narrative or experience to do with the theme "foreigners everywhere."

@amberr.pls

Group 6

1 September –
1 October 2024



AMY TOWNSEND-LOWCOCK

THE LOWRY



I am a 24-year-old, Black British, multidisciplinary artist based in Manchester. I am interested in how the existence and legacies of colonialism affect the way people think about British history and how diasporic histories can be documented without reinforcing ideas of the Other.

My practice incorporates documentary filmmaking, live performance, video art, projection, and installation. I am also interested in binaural sound, which I am exploring through my current role as an assistant director in Rochdale. I graduated from the University of Manchester in 2022 with a degree in Drama and Film Studies. Since then, I have worked in the arts industry as theatre-maker, filmmaker, assistant producer, workshop facilitator, and artist liaison to name a few. I am very excited to collaborate with other Fellows!

Project

As part of this program, I would like to investigate how the Venice Biennale may act as a way for countries to reify their national narratives. I am interested in how the national identities crafted within the different pavilions relate to each nation's diasporic communities; I am keen to explore how different groups may feel included or excluded by the national stories presented.

For my research, I plan to visit the different pavilions and document the narratives that are present. I will do this by engaging with exhibitions, studying the supplementary exhibition material, and recording short interviews with visitors, asking questions such as "What does this exhibition say to you about national identity?" I would also be interested in collaborating with other fellows on a workshop about John Akomfrah, the British Pavilion, and national narratives.

As a research outcome, I would like to create a short, multimedia performance. I would like to approach the University of Manchester to share it with students on my former degree course. I think this performance would be an excellent way to encourage audiences to think critically about the politicisation of art and the gallery setting.

This research investigation would be an exciting continuation of 'My Fruits', a multimedia performance that I created and presented at Manchester's HOME Theatre in 2023. 'My Fruits' emerged from a participatory filmmaking project that I led, which explored the documentation of Black British history and invited audiences to reconsider the place of diasporic communities in Britain's national story.

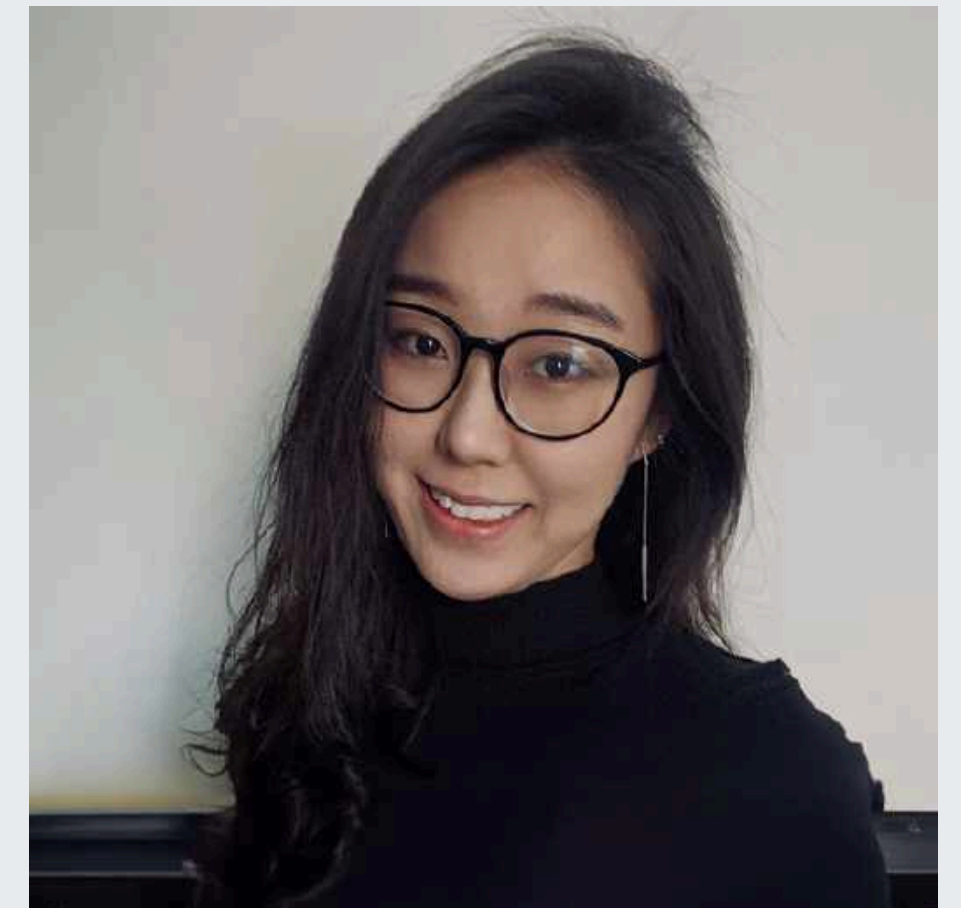
@_ajlt_

CRYSTAL LEZHI ZHANG

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON

I am Crystal Lezhi Zhang, currently a PhD candidate at University of the Arts London. I am also a product designer, artist, lecturer, researcher, writer, workshop leader and third-country kid. My life's narrative has unfolded against the backdrop of "London-based, Guangzhou-born, and Vancouver-raised", weaving a rich tapestry of experiences that profoundly shape my value.

Within the realm of interdisciplinary design, my research and creation extend to pedagogical methods, eco-social justice, circularity design, design for social innovation, and education for sustainability. Drawing inspiration from food, dialogue, form, shape, colours, sound, material, texture, multisensory experiences, and the intricate interplay between the human and non-human, my works seek to evoke connections with our surroundings.



Project

During my full month in Venice, I intend to create an interactive installation that explores 'object-based learning' as a tool for public education on Eco-social justice. The installation is envisioned to be an evolving entity that transforms as it engages with its audience. The intent is to provide a tangible, multisensory, hands-on experience, allowing individuals to connect with the complex and urgent issues surrounding climate action and social justice visually and physically. I will employ materials like plaster, paper, stone, and more. Each element is designed in specific shapes that can interlock, forming a cohesive and adaptable whole. The arrangement of these elements will be left to the audience, encouraging a participatory and dynamic exploration of the exhibit. After the exhibitions, these materials will find a new purpose as furniture or decorative sculptures, promoting a circular and eco-friendly approach to art creation and consumption.

Throughout my Venice journey, I will document my creative process on my Instagram account, allowing a global audience to follow my exploration. Upon returning to the UK after the Fellowship, I plan to share my work through various UAL exhibitions and events. One avenue for presenting my project will be 'Unfolding Narratives,' and exhibition specifically for Postgraduate Research students, where I will showcase the installation and its evolution. Additionally, I will actively participate in UAL 'Arts SU Exhibition & Project Spaces'. I will not only submit my project for their open calls, but also organize an artist talk to share my insights gathered during my time in Venice, fostering discussions on the crucial themes of climate action and social justice within the academic community.

@crystalacheung
@cz.phding

ISABELLA PAXTON

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH



I have a creative and curious mind that is prevalent not only in my art practice but in my interests such as cookery and textile crafts both of which I enjoy for their intuitive, process focussed nature. I am someone who thrives off human connection and enjoy learning from others.

I feel passionately about sustainability and my personal connection to the earth, nature is something that I find personally grounding and completely enthralling to learn about and explore. I have been furthering my practice at Arts University Bournemouth for the last year and a half, discovering my affinity for sculpture and eco-feminist art.

Project

I am fascinated by the paradoxical human desire to impose order and control in an inherently entropic reality. Initially focusing on environment, ecology and natural forces, then delving into the human attempt to prevent or control unpredictable environmentally driven processes.

I would like to explore my current opinion, that our relationship to the earth shouldn't necessarily be one of dominance and control but understanding and adherence. Attempting to observe these often unnoticed yet integral ecological shifts which I feel is incredibly apparent in Venice, a city which is actively reacting to and trying to prevent the inevitable reclamation of the city by water, and coming to terms with its unstable future. This instability also reflects my current interest into permanence and how we value life and art based on this concept. Questioning why we as humans find comfort in creating things that will outlive us?

Whilst in Venice I would like to research, observe and reflect upon restoration techniques currently being used to attempt to prevent nature's influence. Practically I would like to take inspiration from these observations and take advantage of the collaborative nature of the programme to lead a workshop in Venice then the UK, creating collaborative sculptures to try to relinquish control and use changeable organic materials in conjunction with natural forces; gravity and balance.

Currently I am thinking of presenting to my peers on return in a temporary, immersive, interactive exhibition in which I can hopefully portray this feeling of control and prevention I hope to observe in Venice and challenge the viewer to reflect on this.

@bella.gracex

MARIAM OSMANI

DURHAM UNIVERSITY

My core interest lies in the transformative power of effective cross-cultural communication. Currently, I am in my first year reading Philosophy and Politics, and with experience in both management consultancy and the world of restaurant kitchens, I am passionate about exploring the nuanced intersections of culture as they manifest in our daily life and professional environments.



Project

In Venice, a storied port where cultures have mixed for centuries, I aim to investigate the city's culinary scene as a reflection of its complex history of trade, migration, and exchange—mirroring the themes present in John Akomfrah's work. My project will delve into how food tells the story of 'foreigners everywhere,' exploring the origins and evolution of dishes, ingredients' journeys, and how these elements shape social hierarchies and identities. Through engaging with chefs, home cooks, and vendors, and by tracing ingredients' representation in art and literature, I plan to craft a long-form piece of experimental prose. This narrative will not only be a sensory exploration of Venice's food culture but also an examination of the ingredients as historical currencies within the grand tapestry of migration and change. In this exploration, I hope to uncover how modern-day cross-cultural conflict is contrary to our food cultures, using the connecting ability of sharing meals to undermine cultural exclusion and hatred; food is the guerilla force present in all of history, proving the hypocrisies of our hatred for the 'other.'

Upon returning to the UK, I will share these insights at Grey College, Durham, through a curated community dining event (ideally a college formal tied to a charitable arts cause). This event will feature a menu inspired by Venetian ingredients and cooking techniques, blended with the diverse food cultures of my college peers. The dinner will serve as a platform for dialogue around cultural heritage, connecting Akomfrah's themes of diaspora and shared histories through the communal and inclusive act of eating. By integrating these experiences into a tangible communal event, the project aims to foster a deeper understanding of how our collective past is digested and interwoven into the present.

@mariam_osmani_

MELANIE COBLEY

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY



Hi I'm Melanie I'm in my final year of studying fine art so will have graduated once the fellowship begins. I'm using a lot of clay everywhere at the moment but my general interest is in the intersection of gender, migration and society

Project

I'm interested in 'semi-disposable' objects, which exist in the realm between items built to last and those designed to be thrown away. Examples of such objects include phone chargers or cheap sunglasses. These items often go unnoticed in our daily lives but can reveal much about our habits and behaviors. In the context of travel, they act as signifiers of place.

I intend to map and document these discarded items while also observing the behaviors and gestures of travelers as a form of ethnographic research. I'm particularly interested in understanding why people exhibit increased openness to engaging with strangers but also have heightened caution against potential scams while traveling. I believe this is an interesting way to examine cross-cultural communication.

I would like to combine this research with preexisting information I have regarding the objects and gestures people adopt when traveling as migrants. My goal is to translate this information into a series of workshops or portable sculptures/assemblages that allow for a broader discussion about the inequalities of migration and globalisation that can take place outside of traditional art spaces.

However, I am highly adaptable and would be very interested in working on a collaborative project with other individuals in the program if there is interest.

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@breadysteddy

SAFFRON WOODS

WINCHESTER SCHOOL OF ART
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Having grown up in a busy city, I enjoy taking a step back and going on walks with my two greyhounds in the countryside. With this love for nature, themes of wildlife and local woodland creatures are quite often present in my work.

Regional folklore is the current forefront of my practice, where I work largely with masks based off animals; often using materials that would've been thrown away. I am currently on an exchange semester in Bergen, Norway, and the greeting of a troll after finishing a mountain hike is something I will never tire of!



Project

My practice is largely based around folklore and how it differs based on location. My proposed research project involves having conversations with fellow artists and visitors of the Biennale about the folklore and stories passed down to them in their home countries. I plan to collate this information and celebrate the figures within these stories in one collective piece of work. As a sculptor I'd like to express the feeling of togetherness I experience when I learn about folktales, through a body of work about the characters.

The goal of my research project is to honour the cultures and stories of the people I meet, values aligned with the 2024 Biennale's celebration of strangers, foreigners, and identity.

The Title 'Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere' and the description of the foreigner being ever present in practice, ethnicity and sexuality really resonated with me and offered me a strong sense of inclusion. I feel that folklore is often discarded due to its obscurity and the acknowledgment of all ideas from the Biennale is refreshing to me. Sir John Akomfrah's works around diasporic identity and the connection of people to their origin is somewhat like my focus around folklore and how it connects people to their homes.

I plan to share my findings and research project, in the UK, through an installation of sculptures sharing the folklore of the fellows and guests. The installation will have the characters staggered and feature descriptions of the stories recorded.

SIMRAN KAUR SANGHERA

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER



I am currently a student studying Art History and Visual Culture with Film Studies at the University of Exeter but I am originally up North from Scunthorpe, a small town in Humberside. . I am, at heart, an enthusiastic screenwriter and storyteller, who wants to put unheard stories on the screen.

In terms of other creative output, I record podcasts about film and write and perform spoken poetry each month with a group. I enjoy exploring the rich tapestry of film history, especially the captivating world of the Czech New Wave.

Excitingly, I am curating an exhibition on this at The Bill Douglas Cinema Museum at my university. In the realm of ideas, reading philosophy works such as Schopenhauer, Barthes, and Kierkegaard fuel my creativity and provides me with both a meaningful outlook on life and different enlightening perspectives.

Project

I want to develop a documentary installation that delves into the diaspora of my hometown, Scunthorpe. The town's historical role as a hub for migrants drawn to its industrial sectors mirrors Venice's own changing narrative as "a sanctuary town", shaped by migration from the Balkan Wars onwards. Being in Venice holds immense value as it allows me to draw parallels between these two diverse yet interconnected settings, enriching the depth and universality of these diasporic stories within my documentary.

Inspired by the recent passing of the revered Scunthorpe figure, John Rose, I aim to weave together narratives of local traditions, cultures, and diasporic experiences, drawing parallels to research I will undertake in Venice's multifaceted history – providing a platform for dialogue, education, and community empowerment. The documentary will spotlight the Caribbean Diaspora, which John was a part of, and my family's, the Indian Diaspora, immigration in the 1980s, exploring the cultural intertwining and the impact on us, the second generation. The narrative serves as a microcosm reflecting broader themes of migration, adaptation, and cultural evolution.

Upon my return to the UK, I intend to share this project through public screenings, exhibitions, and community engagement events. Venice's influence on my work will be evident, as the comparative analysis between the two locations will offer a unique perspective on migration, adaptation, and cultural evolution. The goal is to foster a deeper understanding of diasporic stories of "Foreigners Everywhere", promote dialogue, and contribute to the ongoing conversation about cultural diversity and racial justice.

@filmsofadedeadgirl

SOFIA MARIA GERACI

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

My name is Sofia, some people call me Sof. I'm 23 and I currently live in Manchester, studying Fine Art at Manchester School of Art. I'm a multi-media artist with a specific interest in craft, ceramics, print, sound and installation. My practice references embodied knowledge, familial histories, my Sicilian heritage and personal experiences within the diaspora to communicate themes around migration and concepts of home. I am interested in how the feeling of home is nurtured by the passing down of stories, values and the assemblage of objects and their significance to migrant identities. Growing up between homes in London and in rural Sicily, both cultures have had a huge influence on my identity.



Project

I would like to center my ideas around the migrant home, largely supported by the culmination of my experiences and the experiences that have been passed down to me by the matriarchs of my family. I am interested in how the diasporic home is nurtured through the sharing of stories, values, practices and their significance to migrant identities.

The exploration of these themes is my way of making and translating complex feelings of home for myself and for a wider diasporic audience. I believe the diaspora communities in Britain are a majorly significant part of British history, society and culture. I therefore think it is important and relevant to present themes around migration within the British Pavilion, paying homage to diverse experiences and definitions of what it means to be British.

My most current research is based on discussions around the souvenir as a mnemonic domestic object that references ideas around travel, culture and pride. Souvenirs are common visual cues which represent the theme of 'Foreigners Everywhere' at face-value. However, for diasporas, the relationship to souvenir objects can imply a domestic aesthetic of longing, belonging and assimilation. I am constantly drawn to make work which allows for audience participation. Thus, I aim to continue considering different ways the audience can interact with the piece once I am back with my peers in the UK.

@geraci.sofia

VIKTORIE BREZINOVA

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS
(CREATIVE INDUSTRIES)



I am a journalism graduate of London South Bank University with broad interests in creative cultures, music, media world, politics and sustainability. I was raised in the Czech Republic, now UK-based. I am pursuing a career in media, communications, marketing and PR whilst continuing my postgraduate studies in Global Marketing & Communications at the University for the Creative Arts.

Project

Following Sir John Akomfrah's work on migration and climate change, I am applying for the Fellowship Programme to research the impact of media culture shaping public awareness and understanding of the direct consequences of climate change threatening Venice, including climate migration which Venetian society might face in the upcoming years due to rising sea levels. As lives and local cultural heritage are directly endangered, I would like to explore how local media help in drawing attention to the pressing issue, what measures the Italian government and local organisations are carrying out and most importantly, how the Venetian public reacts to the evident threat and what actions are being taken.

I would like to connect with local stakeholders to understand what measures have been put in place so far and collaborate with those to find new ways of mobilising broader audiences. Utilising my communications skills, both written and audiovisual, I want to create a marketing campaign on the future of Venice; illustrating the possible dystopian state of the city and its residents who might lose their homes if actions are not taken. This could be an effective method to raise awareness about the issue and its consequences, both in Venice and on a global scale, educating and mobilising the public to become fully involved.

As I plan to create a digital project, I would share it across professional networks. I would like to present it at both national and local climate events and workshops. Additionally, I would share the project across professional online platforms such as LinkedIn.

@viktoriebrezinova

Group 7

29 September –
29 October 2024



BUKKY TIJANI

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY



I'm Bukky Tijani. I'm from Nigeria, and I'm currently doing an MA in Media Production in Birmingham City University. I love stories, which is why I'm passionate about influencing the world through storytelling. I'm an experienced Copywriter and Voiceover artist, and I've had the opportunity of working on several successful campaigns for different brands.

I like to believe that I am innovative, and I love to come up with solutions. I love bringing ideas and stories to life that are relatable to people in a creative and fun manner. I'm also very passionate about Creative Arts, Film, Theatre, and working with children. I hope to be a known Director for Film and Theatre and a UNICEF Ambassador. I strongly believe in doing what you love and finding joy in what you do. If i'm not in school or working, you'd find me watching movies, reading a book or unwinding through dance.

Project

The theme for the Biennale is Foreigners Everywhere, and while in Venice I would like to explore the theme in line with John Akomfrah's work which explores issues such as racial injustice, colonial legacies, diasporic identities, migration and climate change.

Foreigners everywhere is a concept that often reflects the experience of feeling like an outsider or feeling different in various contexts or places due to factors such as cultural differences, language barriers or simply not fitting into the societal norms of a particular place.

I would like to create a Photography series and an audio documentary that captures diversity in Italy. Italy has a rich culture with colonial architecture, sculptures and buildings. With Photography I'd like to explore or tell the story of cultural differences within Italy through my lens, while with the use of an audio documentary I want to explore living as an immigrant in Italy. I would interview a few immigrants based in Venice or other parts of Italy on the positives and negatives of being an immigrant or a creative in Italy.

Returning to the UK, I plan to share this project through a series of mini-workshops, exhibitions or listening parties around the school, eventually leading to interactive sessions and open discussions on cultural identity, cultural differences within countries, migration and possible shared human experiences. All of which are still in line with John Akomfrah's art.

With this, I intend to give room for cross-cultural conversations on global issues, suggestions and possible next steps that could in turn help make the world a better place.

@bukkytijani

CAITLIN MCHUGH

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

For curatorial praxis to move forward, I believe it is essential to recognise the oppression that is present and reframe our institutions around a continual dialogue model. I want to rethink what an institution is, within the context of care, since I believe they should act as a civic institution that works for and with its constituents. I am interested in exploring new methods of experiential knowledge production, centred in collectivity and co-curation.



Project

Research Question:

How is poly-vocality used to create a new approach to interpretation, how has the power shifted back to the participants rather than sitting with the biennale producers?

Not only the international voices present, but the visiting members (who feels welcome). Who is art for?

Use the presentation of the biennale to explore what voices are missing and how I believe they could be included.

What does interpretation mean? Whose interpretation is it and for whom? (Methods of interpretation- what encourages engagement, what is accessible and inclusive)?

Project in UK:

Carry out a collection of 6-week projects with co-curated exhibitions at the end, these can then be replicated and brought to different groups.

Each project will have a theme but the body of work will be decided and built by the participants (inclusive critical pedagogy).

On-going workshops to encourage project growth but also to provide a more meaningful relationship between me and the participants (anti-tokenistic).

Co-curated exhibition to celebrate and present work. Artists will provide their own interpretation, speak as a collective. The work will not just be showcased within the participants' community, but to the broader community to encourage harmony and conversations.

Each theme can be brought to different groups who usually feel excluded from creativity and culture. This collection of exhibitions will speak to the creativity of the city (Manchester) as a whole. Art made for Manchester by the people who live there.

caitmchugh22@hotmail.com

CARLOS FERRARA

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



My name is Carlos Ferrara and I am a history of art student at SOAS University of London. I was born in Venezuela and have always been passionate about art, particularly Japanese and indigenous art. I am fascinated by the history and cultural significance behind different art forms and enjoy studying and analyzing them in depth. I hope to further specialize in these areas and contribute to the preservation and understanding of these rich artistic traditions.

Project

Research Project: Venice Biennale's Impact on Local Working-Class, Immigrants, and Local lower-income Artists

This research project, significantly shaped by my time living in Naples, Italy, where I gained a deep understanding of the challenges and perspectives of working-class and immigrant communities, explores the Venice Biennale's influence on similar demographics in Venice. My ability to speak Italian fluently will be helpful for engaging effectively with these communities and will play a key role in the success of this study. The work of John Akomfrah, known for his exploration of themes like colonialism and migration, resonates with my Naples experience and provides a rich framework for analyzing the Biennale's socio-cultural and economic impacts. This project aims to dissect how the Biennale affects Venice's working-class residents, its immigrant population, and lower-income local artists, drawing parallels to the complexities I observed in Naples.

The methodology involves conducting interviews in Italian, analyzing case studies with a focus on artists like Akomfrah, and reviewing economic and social reports from Venice during the Biennale.

Expected outcomes include an understanding of the Biennale's impacts, highlighting disparities and suggesting inclusive strategies for future events. Findings will be shared through academic journals, social media, and workshops, aiming to reach a broad audience interested in cultural events and community dynamics.

In conclusion, this research merges personal experiences and artistic perspectives to offer an alternative view of the Venice Biennale's. It contributes to the broader conversation on cultural inclusivity, enriched by the insights from both my time in Naples and the thematic depths of Akomfrah's work.

EMELIA HEWITT

VENTURE ARTS

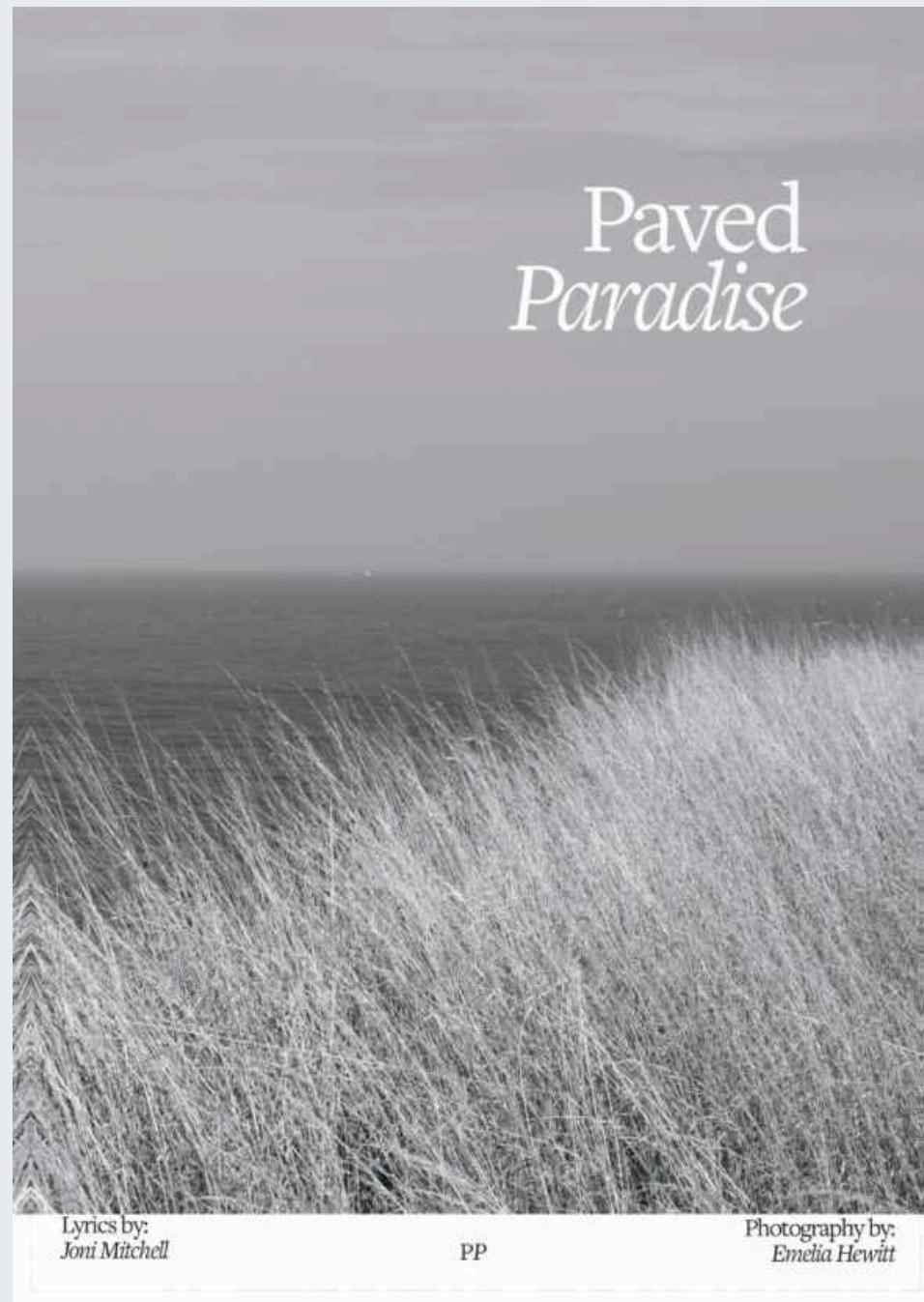
I am an emerging artist based at Venture Arts with a strong practice using intricate and innovative photographic methods, manipulating digital and analogue images, narratives and histories.

I am inspired by the works and history of Vivian Meier's found collection of film and images, a seminal, mundane and sumptuous recording of daily life which could easily have been lost.

I record small instances of life and skewer serious photography with comical feeling. I am also currently exploring ways of printing and using analogue methods printing photography onto canvas and fabrics, creating a collection of new historical artefacts.



Project



In Venice, I plan to explore cyanotype, reflection and water photography work and the possibilities of using lagoon water in the photographic process.

I am looking at a global movement of people through ideas of fluidity of water, its omnipresence and natural cycle, the idea that water molecules in India are part of the same body of water in Manchester or Venice.

I am excited to take photographs of the water in Venice, travelling by boat and working with people from all over the world.

venturearts.org/artists/emelia-hewitt/

LILY HORTON

YORK ST JOHN



I am fascinated by imagination – how it works; where it exists; what it is... My imagination is extensive, an infinitely extending entity existing separately, yet tied to the shared reality which we all collectively experience. Consequently, I am intrigued by the concepts of immateriality and event theory – the existence of something beyond things, and how events could exist immaterially. Do immaterial substances exist in space? in time? in the mind? I am currently studying an MFA in Fine Art at York St. John University, hoping to achieve a deeper understanding of these abstract concepts as well as to develop my own performative, event-based practice.

Project

Stemming from my art practice, I've developed a fascination with seemingly mundane things: cracks in paving stones, telephone wires cutting through the sky, puddles of murky water etc. I believe these things exist somewhere in the hazy border between material and immaterial – material things existing with immaterial qualities; things existing in time, as time, as event – implying past, existing as present, anticipating future.

I feel the immateriality of these things through their prehension – a crack in a paving stone exists now, but didn't always exist – where did it come from? Where does the crack exist? ...through time? ...in the material of the stone? The crack goes unnoticed, perceived but ignored, existing yet nonexistent.

I see the world differently to others. Finding difficulty in rooting my attention in the shared, communal reality, I often drift into alternate perceptions of the world. Still, specific things will capture my attention – invisible things, overlooked things.

I would like to use my time in Venice collecting imagery of these things, capturing these events through photography and film, developing a catalogue of the material immateriality of Venice. Illuminating an existence of Venice through these muted, somewhat unnoticed events in a city formed of bridges, canals, and carless streets.

Once returned to the UK, I would then use this collection of imagery to form a short film highlighting Venice from this perspective – from my perspective – not in magnificent views or grand monuments, rather in cracked bricks, creased fabrics, ominous clouds...

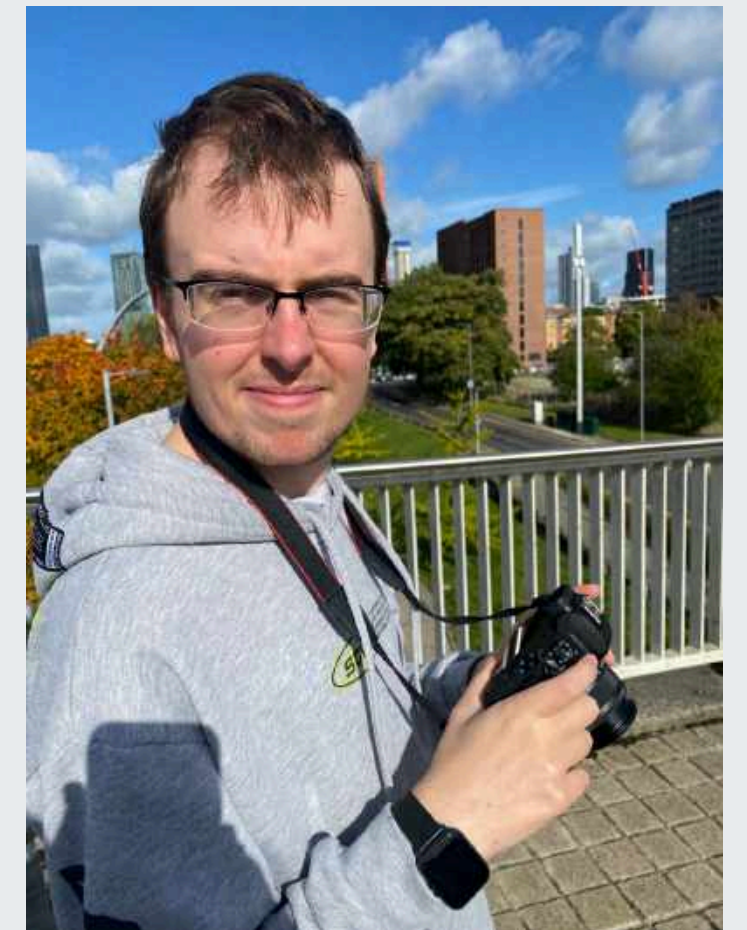
@l__horton

MICHAEL NASH

VENTURE ARTS

I am an emerging digital artist based at Venture Arts in Manchester working across painting, embroidery and photography. I take inspiration for his work from the world around him and is particularly interested in maps, food and travel.

In 2020 I successfully achieved my Bronze Arts Awards and was also commissioned by Venture Arts to produce the artwork for the Warm Hearts Winter Challenge. I have worked with the People's History Museum, Royal Exchange Theatre and Venture Arts through the Cultural Enrichment Projects programme.





Project

I am currently exploring Google Earth software and animation and plans to use both as a focus for my work, making a personal digital travel guide to Venice.

This will incorporate my cultural experiences during the Fellowship and explorations of the city and surrounds.

I plan to interview local people, tourists and fellow biennale workers as part of this and create digital drawings.

I am excited to work at the British Pavilion, to plan routes around of the city and to speak with people I meet.

venturearts.org/artists/michael-nash/

NAHO MATSUDA

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY



I'm a visual artist and design researcher, and sometimes I teach. My art practice is situated and often socially engaged. I work with different communities, specialists and often in close collaborations with other creatives. One of my recent projects is an exhibition about various forms of apologies, where I made large scale drawings, a video and a collection of local apologies. And most of last year I worked with Greenpeace on a commission for which I made a giant AR pig placed on locations linked to industrial farming.

As a researcher I work part-time with the Interaction Research Team at Northumbria University at their London campus. And currently I'm teaching on the MA Design Programme at Goldsmiths.

Project

I'd like to work on a continuation of a previous work, for which I always wanted to film additional material and conduct research in Venice! As part of the fellowship, I will create a new or a combined bigger work based on my findings and time in Venice.

'Songs without Words' is a video work that looks at migration, diasporic identities, and romantic dreams of Venice, through the working routine of a Southeast Asian migrant worker in a Venice-themed shopping mall in Doha, Qatar. The video's narrator speaks from the perspective of a Southeast-Asian gondolier living in a fictional Venice, sharing worries about belonging, reminiscing about home-cooked Filipino food and talking about professional dreams and worries. The narration was written with Filipino authors and narrated by a Filipino voice actor.

In Venice I will film footage in canals, gondolas and possibly in gondola schools and other meeting places, make field recordings, and conduct interviews with gondoliers and their passengers. I'm interested in exploring the topic of migration and romantic ideas of 'Venice' with these communities. Based on my previous experience, I am confident that I will be able to create relationships with local gondoliers to collaborate and share their routines.

I will share my research and the work with my peers at Northumbria as well as with my art, design network in London. I will screen the film in a London canal cinema and apply for short-film festivals and opportunities to show the work in the UK and internationally.

@naho.matsuda

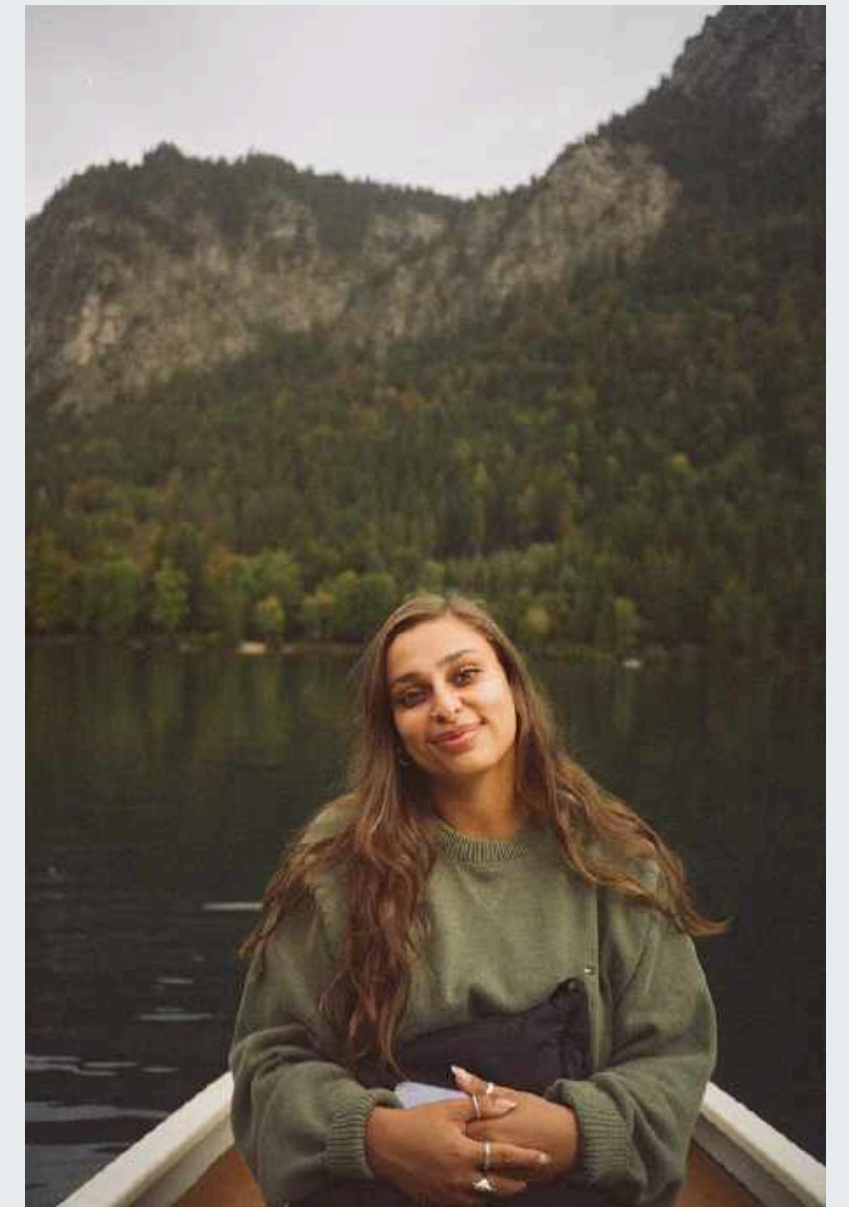
SHANIECE MARTIN

COVENTRY UNIVERSITY

I'm a successful and passionate spoken word artist from the Midlands currently studying a PhD about the identity of Indian English poets. Throughout my research I explore the diaspora, specifically looking at the journey poets of Indian heritage writing in the English language make to the West and how this can change their identity and complicate the relationship they have when they return to their homeland in India.

As well as looking at diaspora in my research, it is a theme central to my own poetry and spoken word work as a third-generation immigrant of grandparents who moved to the U.K. from Kenya and India after the break down in the British Empire.

Outside of my research and passion for poetry I enjoy attending artistic and creative events with friends in cities around the U.K. and travelling to different countries to explore and immerse myself into new cultures and new cuisines too!



Project

I am inspired by the main theme of this years Biennale being Foreigners Everywhere, the idea that people and cultures exist all around us. I am looking to create an interdisciplinary documentary that brings together spoken word poetry and video.

I am inspired by the brilliant work of John Akomfrah, particularly his 2012 work The Unfinished Conversation. Akomfrah's work makes me want to create my own multi-screen and multi-layered documentary that gives space and voice to the diasporic stories coming out of the Biennale. I want to put up boards where visitors to the Biennale can write down their thoughts and ideas around the words diaspora, colonial and postcolonial both before and after they enter the pavillion to see if the Biennale changes their thoughts and perceptions of these key words.

I would utilise words and stories told by visitors to create a spoken word piece that is the voiceover to the documentary and the visuals of the documentary would be split into three parallel screens. The three frames would be adjacent to one another, the first frame would be snippets of people writing their thoughts on words like Diaspora and Colonial, the middle frame would have videos taken by myself around venice that capture these key words, the third frame would be close up of what visitors have written around diaspora after visiting the biennale. I would plan to put on a screening of my documentary to share it with my peers when I return to the UK after the fellowship.

@darknessbeforethelight

YI CHEN

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS
(CREATIVE INDUSTRIES)



I am an international student from Taiwan, currently studying fashion marketing and communications at UCA. My journey has taken me across borders, spending a year as an exchange student in Korea and experiencing the wonders of Yellowstone National Park through work opportunities. I am particularly drawn to the performing arts, namely modeling and dancing, which I've zealously pursued through freelance work in Taiwan.

Project

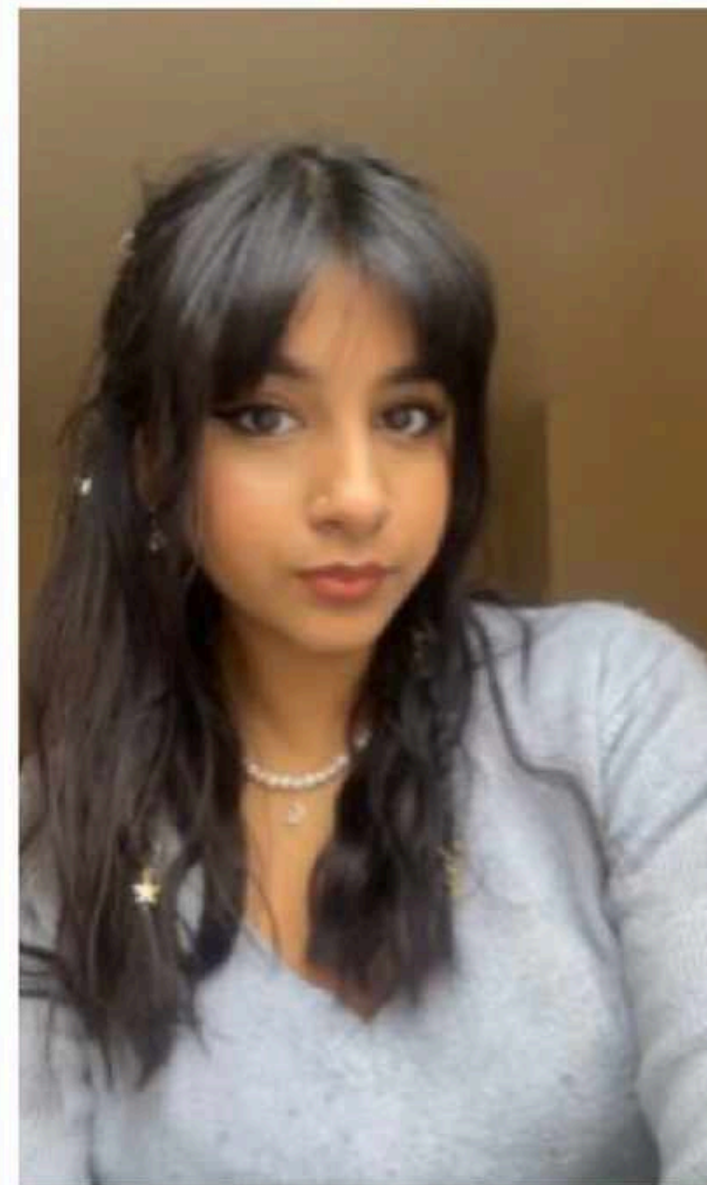
My art project will focus on interethnic relations and immigration issues. I want to explore issues of race and immigration through video interviews and a series of photographs. Upon my return to the UK, I envision sharing this project through an exhibition and an online photography portfolio. As a model, I've found videos and photos to be the most resonant mediums for conveying my ideas. In Venice, I will document my encounters, engaging with local residents to glean their insights on foreign immigration, thereby fostering a dialogue that transcends borders and cultures.

Additionally, I see this as a valuable opportunity to introduce them to Taiwan and foster cultural exchange. By recording their insights, I hope to share the diverse perspectives that shape this cosmopolitan city. Through these interactions, I aspire to show people about Taiwan's culture and way of life. This exchange of knowledge and experiences will not only enhance mutual understanding but also build meaningful connections between Venice and Taiwan. Additionally, my project will revolve around creating a series of photographs that capture traditional Chinese attire portrayed against the background of Italy's historic architecture. Through this juxtaposition of Eastern and Western cultures, I aim to evoke a sense of stark contrast, highlighting the coexistence of diverse cultures on the same land. This concept is consistent with the theme of *Foreigners Everywhere*. Globalisation has brought different cultures closer. Cross-cultural exchanges and immigration promote the integration of multiple cultures and have an impact on the identity of individuals and communities. I hope to contribute to a more inclusive and globally connected community through this art project.

@jill.O421

Group 8

27 October –
25 November 2024



CAITLIN MAGDA SHEPHERD

UAL DECOLONIZING ARTS INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF ARTS LONDON



I'm deeply interested in how money, work, our bodies, education and health shapes access to secure and equitable employment, and everything that is enabled (or not) through secure and fairly paid work. My PhD (2015 – 2023) examined how intersectional working-class experience is excluded from socially engaged art (and the creative industries at large) and studied how convivial listening practices might help to better understand and challenge such inequities and exclusions. I'm interested in how we listen together, and how this might offer a form of giving attention, a form of listening to stories often erased, played down, or muted. I'm currently prototyping listening-rituals, using a range of listening practices and processes.

I'm interested in listening as a radical act of giving attention and platforming stories of disquiet, breakdown, refusal, and resistance; especially from precarious and revolting bodies – bodies no longer able to take compounded and complex pressures of systemic inequity.

Project

It is vitally important to remain critical of the pervasiveness of Eurocentric patriarchal capitalism. This is important because this system normalises banal and extreme forms of violence, forms of socio-economic discipline and notions of success contingent on the systemic exploitation of people, social values, and ecosystems (Federici, 2004).

My project, Body Matters sets out to research and develop a series of short magical realist, critical, performative films, that document and explore the first person lived experience of socio-economic and psycho-somatic precarity. In attuning to the difficult, uncomfortable states and stories that come to shape the body, the nervous system, movement, gesture, and speech, it becomes possible to tend to the symptoms and structural causes of a sick society.

I see strong connections between Body Matters and the title of the La Biennale di Venezia, Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere, the title of the 60th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. My work is committed to revealing, critiquing, and challenging the historical and contemporary inequities endemic to colonial Eurocentric patriarchal capitalist systems of thought and socio-economic organization. Further, I see strong conceptual, symbolic, and aesthetic connections between my work and the work of John Akomfrah, whose critical film practice demonstrates "commitment to a radicalism both of politics and of cinematic form finds expression in all his films".

I will disseminate practice-research arising from the fellowship through a reflective journal article, and sharing my work at contemporary art conferences, and the British Council and Decolonizing Arts Institute networks and events.

@caitlinmagdashepherd

MARILYN HENDERSON

OUTSIDE IN

I am an artist who enjoys working with photographic processes, zines, and embroidery techniques around themes of identity, trauma and grief. I have worked in a variety of social inclusion projects on homelessness, immigration, debt and welfare rights as well as disability policy. I have studied British Sign Language up to degree level and currently work with deaf children interpreting in a primary educational setting. I enjoy walking with my dog in nature as I find this helps to keep me calm and centred. I have a daily yoga nidra practice and I also run workshops and online sessions in this meditative practice.



Project

The way we visit Venice has a big impact on the local community and the environment.

My project will relate to the following questions:

Is it viable to travel sustainably and sensitively on a budget in Venice?

How can I interact with local artisans and contribute to art and environmental initiatives?

Can I use my creative study of this subject to highlight the work of similar organisations in the UK?

From initial investigations, I have identified a few organisations that work in the cross section of arts and environmental issues. Venice Calls have a number of projects such as the Climathon that focuses on how the arts can bring attention to the Venice Lagoon. Plastic Revolution is a recycling lab organised by volunteers looking to build benches from collected plastic. Venezia Autentica's mission sets out an alternative to mass tourism to enjoy a more meaningful and authentic experience in Venice.

Understandably, there is a lot of negativity and a feeling of helplessness about the climate crisis. However, by meeting with these pioneering environmental organisations and artists, highlighting their work, and contributing something creative myself, hopefully we can find ways to support each other so we don't become frozen in climate grief and anxiety.

/outsidein.org.uk/galleries/
marilyn-henderson/

I would like to produce a 'zine, a resource, or even an exhibition (using photography, film-making, interviews and written pieces) focusing on the work being done in Venice and the changes we can all make to help mitigate the effects of climate change in Venice, and beyond.

NAZIMA

KALITA

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY



Throughout my personal and professional journey, I have always been driven by a deep curiosity and a passion for learning. From a young age, I frequently visited museum and art exhibitions with my father. The artworks of different regions and the miniatures paintings immediately connected me with rich historical tradition of arts.

This aroused my interest in arts and I started visiting Folk art Galleries and festivals which weekly presented traditional folk dances and dramas from legendary Indian Epics. This informal learning coupled with my actual practice of art developed me into a visual artist.

I also developed a keen interest in exploring diverse subjects. This interdisciplinary approach allowed me to develop a holistic understanding of the world and nurtured my ability to think critically and creatively.

Alongside my academic pursuits, I also embarked on a professional journey that enabled me to apply and expand my knowledge through practical experiences. These experiences provided me with invaluable opportunities to collaborate with talented individuals, tackle complex problems, and make a positive impact. As I continue on this journey, I am excited to embrace new challenges, expand my skill set, and contribute to the betterment of the society.

Project

The Art of Hiding in Plain Sight: Appearance, Disappearance and Re-appearance in the City

A city is a dynamic entity that is continuously undergoing transformation in tandem with its dwellers due to a multitude of socio-cultural and political changes. The Art of Hiding in Plain Sight is designed to show where I am located, where you may be located and where every stranger is part of a diasporic community that need not be divided. I engage an artistic perspective on and through current scholarship around the construction of cities by examining how the design of urban dwelling can communicate residents' experiences of oppression, violence and loss. In my work I attempt to explore the creative potential of subjective, often unruly, changes made to urban design whilst navigating political debates that together constitute a contemporary struggle.

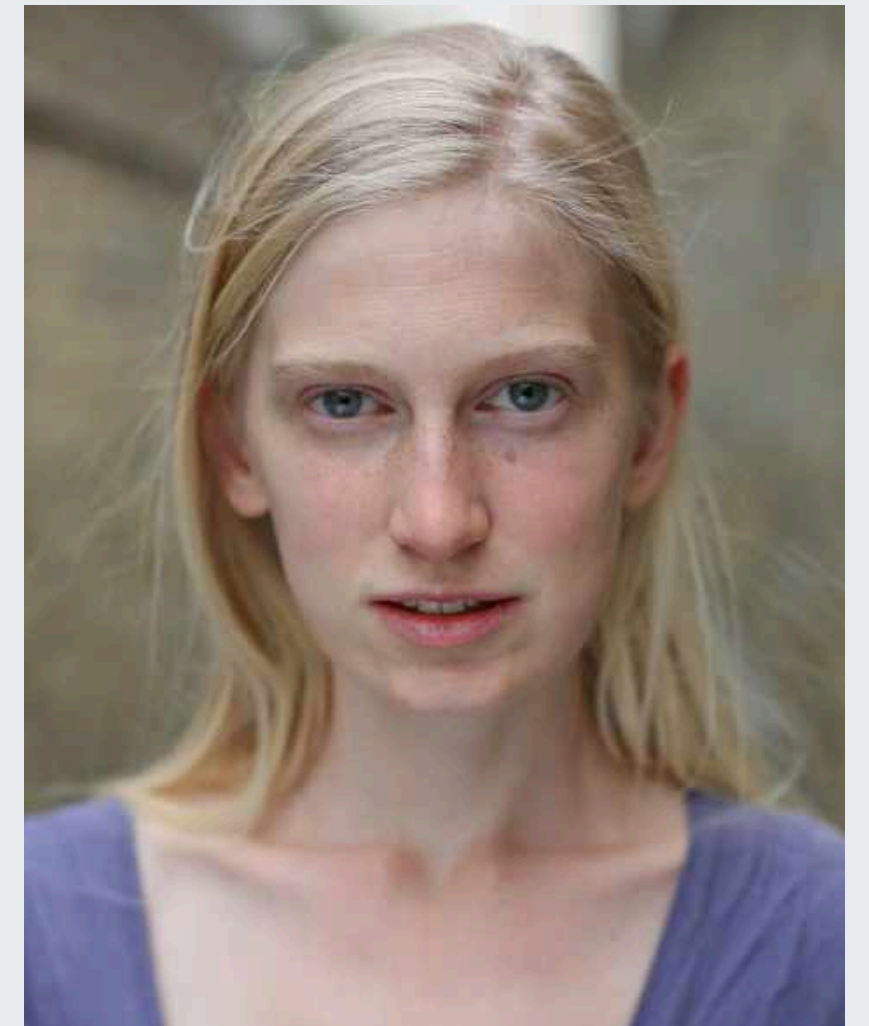
How does the individual memory of violence help us constitute an image of the future city as a space of social equity and justice? How do people adapt their built environments in states of extremity, and how do architectures change in situations of segregation? This research relates very much to Akomfrah's practice, which is characterised by its investigations into memory, post-colonialism, temporality and aesthetics and explores the experiences of migrant diasporas.

After returning from Venice I will share my experience of the Biennale in a number of PGR workshops that will draw attention to the relationship between marginalised histories, and the creation of spaces that accommodate diverse perspectives.

NELL HARDY

ARTS & HOMELESSNESS INTERNATIONAL

I am an actor; writer; theatre maker, producer and director; multi-arts facilitator; and trauma-informed coach. I am the founder of Response Ability Theatre: a theatre and participation arts charity that seeks to represent and support people who experience or are at risk of experiencing trauma. I believe firmly in the voice and body of lived experience, everyone's capacity for empathy and creativity, and the potential of the arts tangibly to change the world. I am particularly interested in trauma healing in relation to homelessness and displacement, disability and neurodivergence, spiritual abuse, childhood, gender, and systemic failures.





Project

I would like to build on work I have been doing in collaboration with CHAMPIONS: a UK national research project exploring experiences of under 5s in temporary accommodation (TA). The upcoming stage of their research will focus on migrant and asylum-seeking families, and the specific challenges to young children growing up as "foreigners" reliant on state support.

This year, I created a piece of verbatim theatre from transcripts of interviews with parents in TA. This time, we want to explore how to present the child's experience more directly. We have discussed the possibility of using MRI scans of the brains of early years migrant and asylum-seeking children, as a way of identifying how the challenges they face are affecting their cognitive function and development. I would like to take this and other evidence gathered from research in the first quarter of 2024 to Venice and, inspired by the artistic modes and approaches to "foreigners everywhere" around me, create a piece of expressionistic performance art depicting the significance of the evidence, and ways in which such children can be supported through policy change. CHAMPIONS and I could then take this piece to conferences and other events attended by policy makers, peers and public back in the UK.

If possible, I would be very interested in collaborating with other fellows who have skills in visual arts, film-making, and sound, to add texture to the piece – and would of course love to return the favour by offering my skills on their projects.

@nellhardyactor
responseabilitytheatre.com

SARA DOWNHAM-LOTTO

UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD



I am an abstract painter, educator and mother of three adult children, interested in building connections between contemporary visual art and peacebuilding pedagogy.

Trained in Fine Art and Art History to postgraduate level, over 35 years making and exhibiting my own art and facilitating others to do the same, has taught me the power of the arts.

Formative in this realisation has been an ongoing experiment in the form of Arts Lab, a social enterprise I set up in 2016, together with a recent Masters in Peace, Resilience and Social Justice in Bradford. Stepping into the field of peacebuilding has been a natural evolution of my practice development and ambition - to help embed the visual arts as a significant contributor to peacebuilding and peacebuilding pedagogy.

Project

Hoping to enhance levels of humanity and humility at the 'GRAN BRETAGNE PAVILION', my proposed project is Friends Everywhere. The urgency of climate breakdown and marginalisation remind us we're all in this together. Focus will be on the 'danger of a single story' (Adichie) and issues around culture, identity, belonging and 'equality within difference' (Nathan).

Approach

- Participatory activity inviting visitors: take 4 cards, draw and/ or write one word/short phrase in your own language summing up return to me: a) Your pavilion experience; b) Another person's experience (connect with someone new); c) What makes us all 'friends', what connects us.; d) Home
- In-depth viewings of and research into Akamfrah's practice and concepts.
- Research/photographic journaling of Venice features contrasting/comparing with Bradford (refugee/immigrant populations, social inequalities, climate crisis, tourism, Bradford 2025).
- Visit Music Festival events.
- Propose to interested fellow ambassadors set-up of open-to-public test space/mini lab.
- Explore/develop combining all of above into piece of immersive art for public experience.

Post-fellowship

- Participatory presentation/workshop to share with: University of Bradford Peace Studies department (extending 50th Anniversary celebrations); UoB Culture & Identity Research Group and Leeds University partners; Bradford 2025 City of Culture; Bradford Peace Museum; Baltic, Gateshead
- Develop new series of paintings and interactive installations for exhibition.
- Organise workshop tour of interested ambassador group members to our various institutions. (Similar to '8 British Artists Tour Poland' during 1988-91 British Council postgraduate scholarship).
- Share on Arts Lab website and Instagram journey and outcomes. Include online 'artists-in-residence' from interested ambassadors.

@artslabuk @downhamlotto
arts-lab.co.uk saradownhamlotto.net

SIMRAN JUNAID

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

I am currently an Arts and Cultural Management MA student at King's College London, where I am passionate about challenging and reshaping heritage practices in the UK to be more inclusive and representative of diverse communities.

With an undergraduate degree in Classical Studies, I have great love for the ancient world which developed from an early age. I try to spend my spare time reading books, particularly female narratives from Classical Greece and Rome. I have been a barista for four years, and so I have developed a talent for latte art. I have volunteered with the British Museum as a member of their Youth Collective and worked for the Science Gallery during their most recent AI exhibition. I also used to be a competitive cheerleader for the University!



Project

I would like to develop my research into the impact of the Islamic world on the city of Venice, examining the historical artistic and cultural influences and juxtaposing them with the contemporary integration of faith. The artistic and decorative elements in many Venetian paintings were deeply inspired by the cultural exchange between Venice and its Islamic neighbours. Within my research, I intend to analyse the lingering influence of Islamic aesthetics in the city, exploring the relationship between modern-day Venice and Islam. I am interested in discerning any shifts in the tolerance of Islam and characterising the experience of Muslims living in Venice.

My research idea was inspired by the 56th Venice Biennale, featuring the installation of the first 'mosque' in Venice within the historic Church of Santa Maria della Misericordia.

The prayer space sparked controversy, reflecting varying levels of religious tolerance across the city. Currently, Venice houses local independent Islamic centres that do not integrate into the city's architectural landscape, in comparison to the ancient Islamic artistic influences. My research plan involves on-site visits to the local Islamic centres and prayer spaces and conversing with Venetian Muslims regarding their experiences practicing their faith. Additionally, I aim to share my own experiences as a practicing Muslim tourist in Venice. Proficient in Punjabi and Urdu, and with an intermediate level of proficiency in Arabic, my linguistic skills will help gather comprehensive insights.

I hope to share my findings as an article, contributing to both the University and KCL's Islamic Society.

@sim_a.j

TAHIR SHAH

BRADFORD 2025 UK CITY OF CULTURE



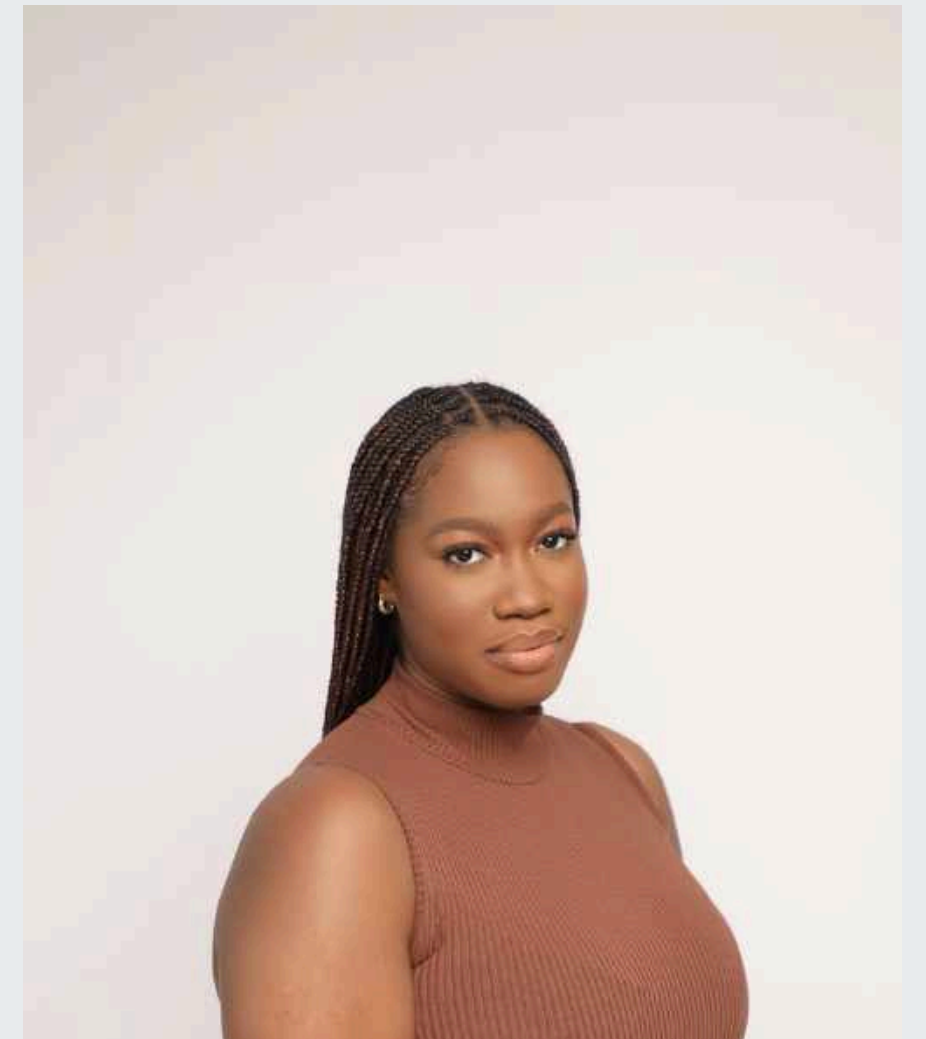
I am a Bradford born and bred writer and actor, I work in community development and speak 3 languages. I have previously worked in Rwanda where I spent 6 months with children from disadvantaged backgrounds. I love cooking, spending time with mates and going to the gym.

TONI ADEBAJO

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

I am an MA student in Arts and Cultural Management at King's College London, where I am also actively involved as a student representative. With a professional and academic background in Law, I intertwine my interests in African Literature and discourse with a passion for exploring the intersections of Art and Legal Systems.

In my endeavours, I have worked in organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Gateway Arts, Phillips, Purple Rain Collective, and Shape Arts, and I actively collaborate with and support Dis/abled artists in my work. I am dedicated to improving accessibility within the arts and cultural sector by engaging with frameworks that prioritise access from anti-colonial perspectives.



Project

What does access mean to you?

I would like to explore the above question through creative and collaborative praxis and to gather the feedback and expressions activated by this invocation. I will be taking a multimedia and multidisciplinary approach to collating these responses – from visual, sonic, and written responses, to stream-of-consciousness recordings. I will draw on connections to the accessibility in Giardini, Venice and the British Pavilion, as a landscape that has various physical hindrances to mobility and the reasonable adjustments that have been made to improve them.

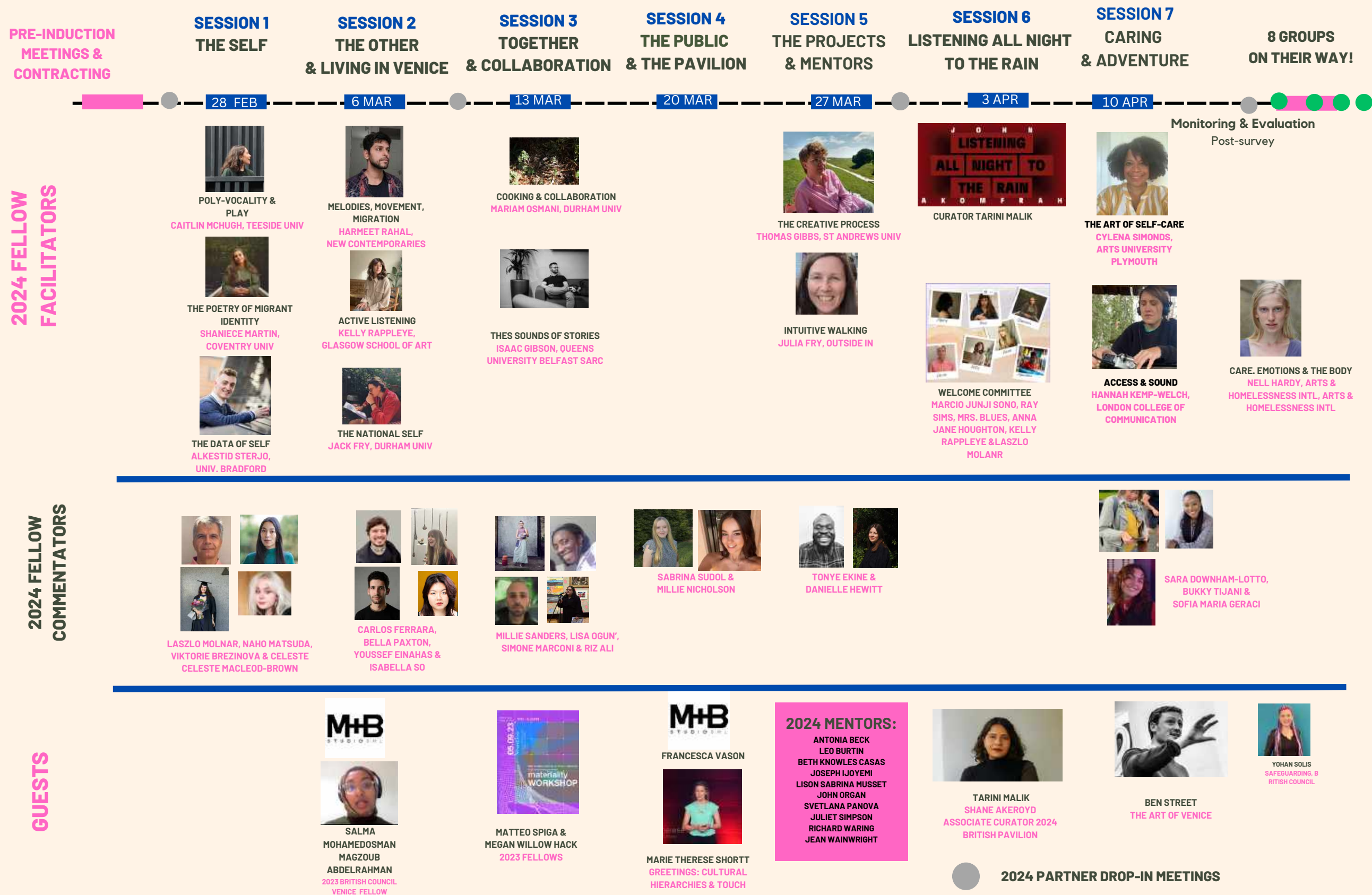
Access provision is often posed as an additional request, therefore, I am reimagining the timing and purpose of the question and exploring the possibility of introducing it at initial stages of dialogues. By encouraging conversations about inclusivity and access within a creative and cultural community, I am interested in exploring notions of ‘care’ towards ourselves and our environments, within our capacities and through mutual education.

Upon my return to the UK and in collaboration with Black and Disabled artists in my community, I endeavor to produce a creative collage reflecting the feedback gathered. The final piece will serve as a resource that can be accessed digitally, as an avenue to further engage with access needs.

I hope this in turn offers valuable feedback to inform and enhance the programmes overall accessibility. I aim to align with the values and themes outlined in the fellowship, contributing to its commitment to creating an enriching experience for future participants.

BRITISH COUNCIL VENICE FELLOWSHIP 2024
INDUCTION PROGRAMME

28 FEBRUARY - 10 APRIL 2024



THE VENICE INDUCTION PROGRAMME WAS DESIGNED & FACILITATED WITH AND FOR THE 2024 FELLOWS & THE BRITISH COUNCIL BY BECKY SCHUTT

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venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/fellowship

