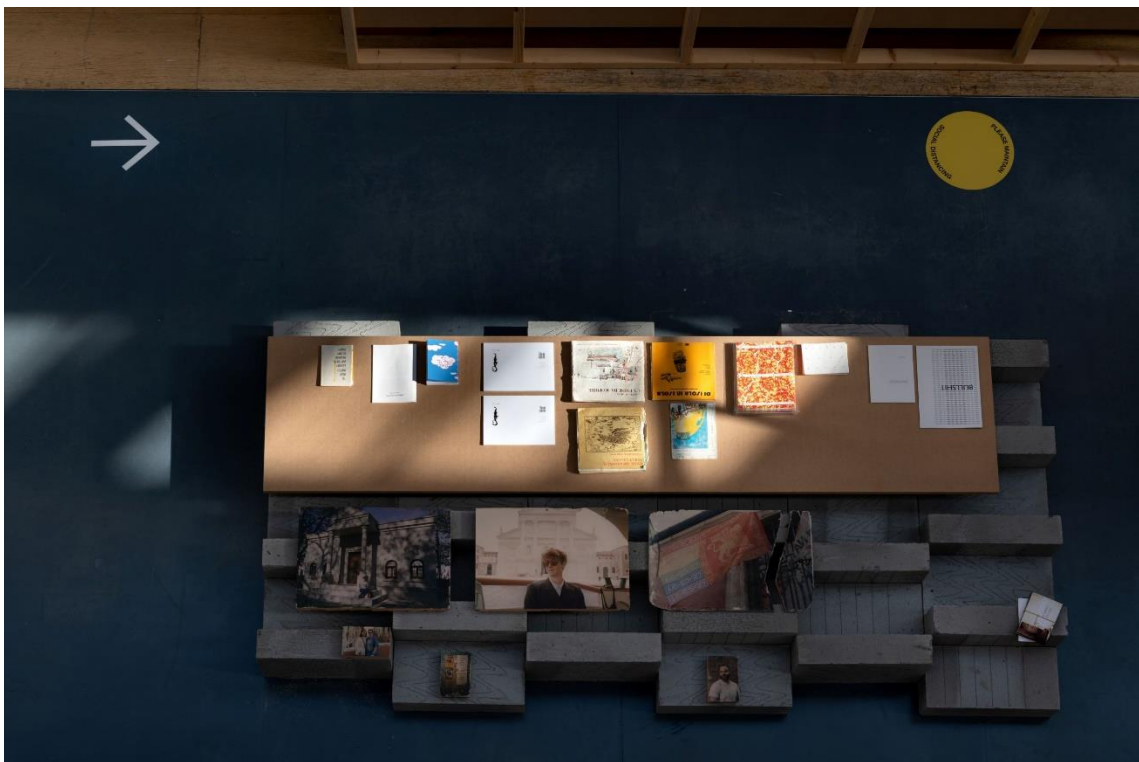


# Interesting Times in Venice

12 October – 5 November 2020

Atrium Gallery, London Metropolitan University

## Venice Fellowships 2019 *Catalogue*



*Photo credit: Stephen Blunt*

## Preface

It was 12 June 2019 when I looked to see I had raised my hand to volunteer London Met's School of Art, Architecture & Design to host the Venice Fellowships Exhibition.

I was excited at the thought of Calcutta House being transformed into the Palazzo Bembo, where the prosecco flowed like there was no tomorrow, where the lowering sun bounced off the grand canal and where I wanted the day to never end.

But it wasn't to be. COVID caught us on the cusp of exhibition.

I visited the exhibition twice and didn't - as I half expected - find it a lonely and dispiriting experience at all. Rather to the contrary. My first visit I was the only person in the Atrium; and while it wasn't the splendour of a glistening salon in the Palazzo Bembo, it was the splendour of the Venice of early morning barges gliding silently through the mist hanging over narrow winding canals. It's the Venice of handwritten signs above shop windows, the Venice of monogrammed brass doorbells set in aging brickwork, graffiti on wooden shutters, distressed glass mirrors, humble side streets...Venice in February...

The diversity of the works and my 'lonesome' perambulation, recalled for me Orhan Pamuk's wonderful nonfiction work, *Istanbul: Memories of a City* and Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*. Pamuk's multi-layered representation of city as landscape, city as nostalgia, melancholy and memory, Calvino's metafictional narrative in which all cities are versions of Venice, these works combine, and the fellows' exhibition, located in the midst of the pandemic became a nostalgic and melancholic re-representation of the 2019 Venice Biennale relocated to Aldgate. The range of work is wonderful.

The British Council's Venice Fellowships scheme is so important; it's a wonderful scheme that must grow. It's important not only in the experience it affords our fellows through their stewarding and research, but it's important in the way that our fellows feed into the Biennale as an event. The rich diversity of our amassed student body can stretch and test the demographic of this huge event. The 2019 Biennale had almost 600,000 visitors on top of the 24,762 attendants of the pre-opening week, and our students become the public face of the British Pavilion, they represent us as at a global level and we are duty bound to make sure that our stewards and their research represent the diversity of Britain, and it's hard to find a better way of doing this than drawing on students from the outstanding Arts schools that stretch the length and breadth of this country.

Gian Carlo Rossi, Head of Art  
School of Art, Architecture & Design, London Metropolitan University

Yinka Aresa  
*Unseen words*  
Photography

To begin to consider the limitations of one's existence,  
To acknowledge something temporal.  
In conversations, laughter, tears,  
In goals, ambition, truth.  
In moments of peace, solitude, chaos (unseen)  
To be this person I present to be,  
a number of concessions of the person I could be  
needed to be made.

The work was inspired by this piece of writing that I wrote during my time in Venice. I tried to write some words about my experience each time I felt out of place and this is the one that stuck with me the most. I had many ideas of what I wanted to do when I returned to the UK but this short poem just couldn't escape my mind, so I took my camera and attempted to find the emotions and nouns I mention in the poem.

@acebavior



Sarah Cohen

*Show Me Your Horns and I'll Show You Mine*

(Text) Ink and oil stick on paper, (Mezuzahs) Acrylic on paper

This writing reflects upon time spent in Venice's Ghetto Ebraico. The work explores Jewish heritage, familiarity in cultural and religious spaces, and antisemitic experiences both personal and communal. This piece ponders the idea of "protection", something that Mezuzahs represent in Judaism.

[sarahbethartist.wixsite.com/mysite/my-horns](http://sarahbethartist.wixsite.com/mysite/my-horns)



Gina DeCagna

*Allora*

Letterpress and Screen Printing on Cardboard

Through concrete poetry, the artist repeats the Italian adverb, ‘allora’—translating to ‘at that time’, thus’, ‘so’, ‘well’, ‘then’ in English depending on context—to reflect upon the elaborately enigmatic and decorative nature of Venice’s canals for the boxed transport of goods to and fro, designed for secretive and selective entry routes.

[www.ginadecagna.art/pressure-of-the-return-series-statement](http://www.ginadecagna.art/pressure-of-the-return-series-statement)



Photo credit: Adrian Flower

*Please also see the artist’s work alongside Dianne Kim’s installation, later in the catalogue.*

Michela De Santes

*Migration and Integration in Venice; Current and Historical Thresholds of Belonging*  
Book-Magazine

Venice could be a paradigm of immigration today. 'Imaginative geographies' are all the boundaries created to protect societies that, at the same time, divide cultures. Venice is marked by the continuous flow of water and people. This constant movement of humanity creates a feeling of timelessness because of the loss of a normal everyday routine, and a sense of not-belonging due to the overcrowded streets that make the inhabitants feel distant from their homeland.

<https://micheladesantes9.wixsite.com/portfolio>





Alena Ruth Donely

*Wavy Lady*

Mixed yarn, liquid latex. Hang tufted rug

Wavy Lady is inspired by my experience of Aqua Alta whilst in Venice; watching water consume the city & cause destruction. The piece emulates the feeling of drowning, falling through the waves upside-down. She also references the Partisan Woman sculpture near the Biennale gardens, which can be partially seen at different tide heights & depicts a woman lying down in the water.

[www.alenaruthdonely.com](http://www.alenaruthdonely.com)



## Laurence Dube-Rushby

### *Me and Joan Jonas*

Performance at Ocean Space, at Chiesa San Lorenzo, August 2019  
(film extract; Sites of Resistance, Venice)  
Photograph on Aluminium

In this performance using the work of Joan Jonas, Laurence creates new forms of work as an embodied experience. The work challenges the notion of *art as object*, towards *art as engagement*, to reveal new values. The notions of ownership are tested as she blurs boundaries between artwork, viewer and artist.

### *Venice Making Sense*

Blog

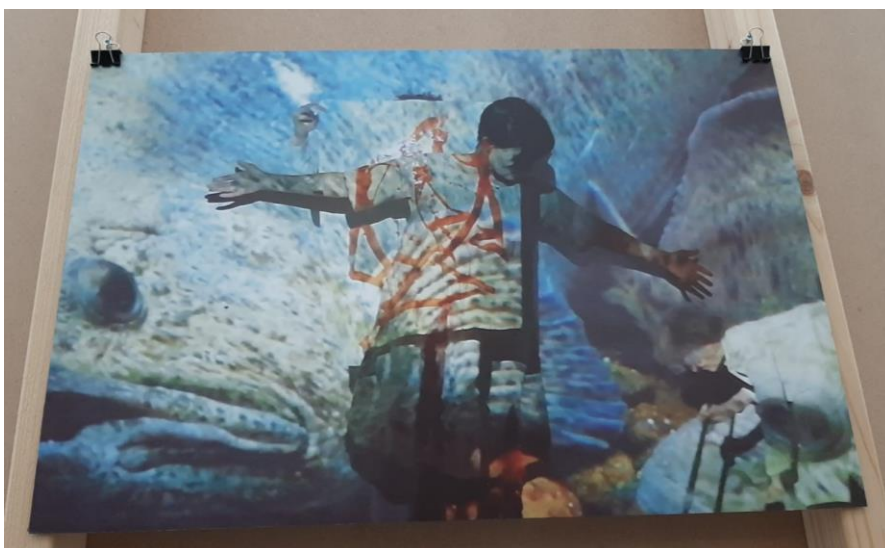
The residency aimed to research the place of live-art, social practice and engagement in the biennale through radical performative interventions. The blog explored the sites of resistance in Venice and how I offered to challenge the convention of contemporary curation through an embodiment of the work to reflect my participation in its existence.

### *Ecotone*

Film

Ecotone, (a term borrowed from Astrida Neimenis, 2012) defines an area of transition between two ecosystems, which also creates connections where rising tensions generate new forms of lives. The work investigates the sites of resistance between the value of art/role of the Biennale and our response-ability to global issues such as climate change.

<https://venicemakingsense.blogspot.com/>





## Hadeel Eltayeb

### *'More Real/ Better Than I Imagined'*

Film [Duration: 03:57]

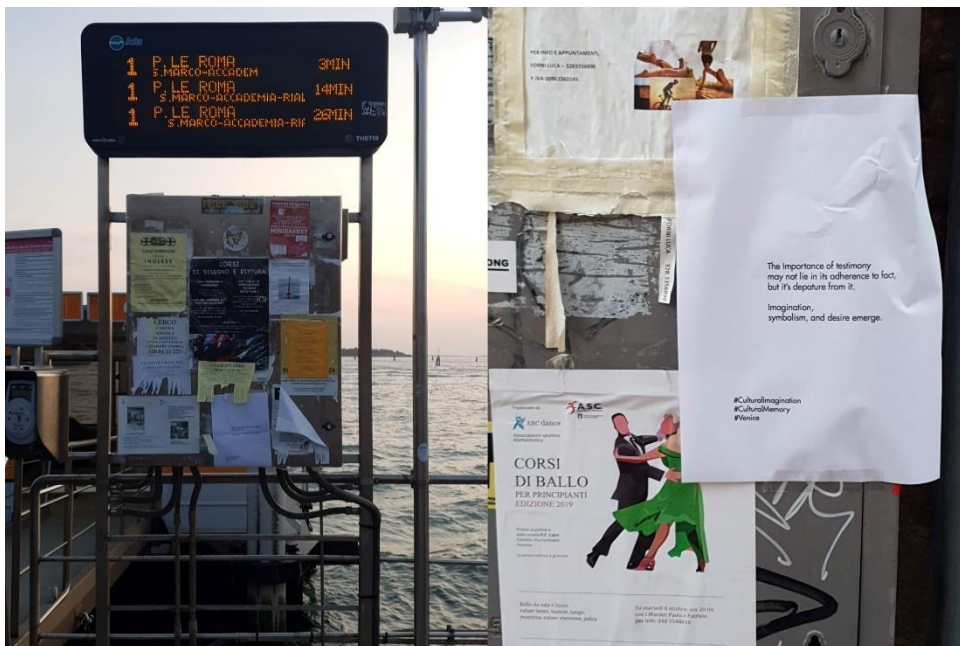
The film maps significant places in historic Venice and beyond: Accademia bridge, Rialto, Campo San Margherita, Piazza San Marco and Mestre. Like Walter Benjamin's Arcades project, which was never intended to be a text, this is a sensory catalogue of the city through descriptions, quotations and observations that mix social history and art.

### *'More Real/ Better Than I Imagined'*

Sounds

Oral history quotes from second-generation Venetians describing the city they once dreamed of, the city they had first encountered when they arrived and the city that lies beautifully. This is juxtaposed with images and sounds of historic Venice from popular culture. Which is more real, and which is imagined?

@hadeel\_eltayeb



**Claudia Friend**

*I fall in love everyday...*

Film

Drawings and dust from British Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2019

Research as practice - looking at looking

Focusing on the act of looking itself, the act of giving attention, the dialogues and power dynamics involved and how they shape our identities and environment, to ask what can be measured that might normally not be measured or easily measurable.

*after the fact - audio tour*

audio

An audio tour of the Cathy Wilkes exhibition - engaging with the auditory description of the visual, now just a memory. - how to stay focussed - concise - dispassionate - neutral - neutral enough - how words taint - how to play with that - how our visual perception appears so instantaneous against the long-windedness of words.

[claudiafriendart.wordpress.com](http://claudiafriendart.wordpress.com)

[@friend.claudia](https://twitter.com/friend.claudia)

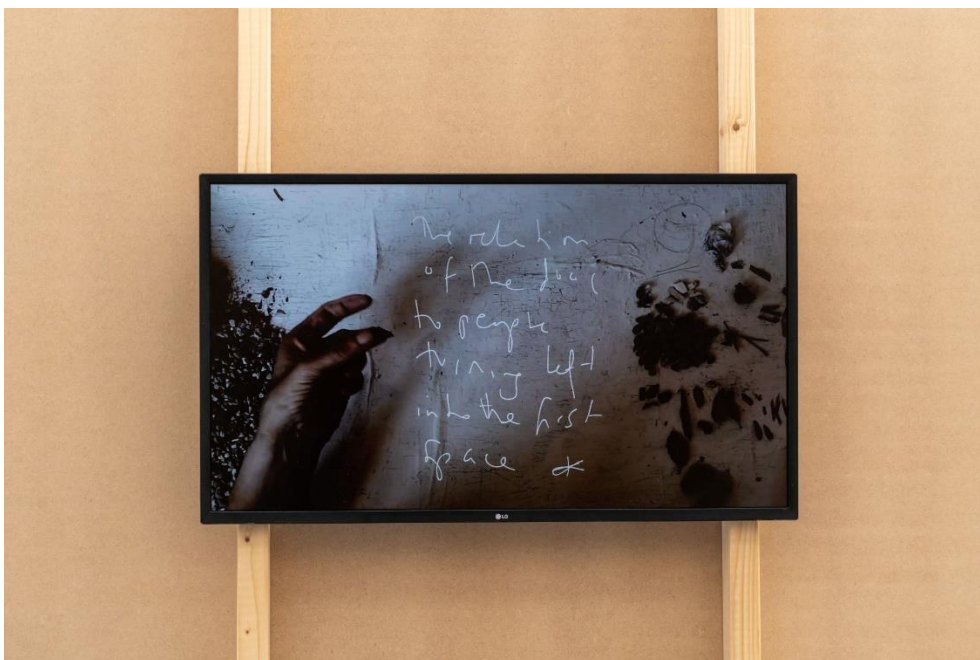
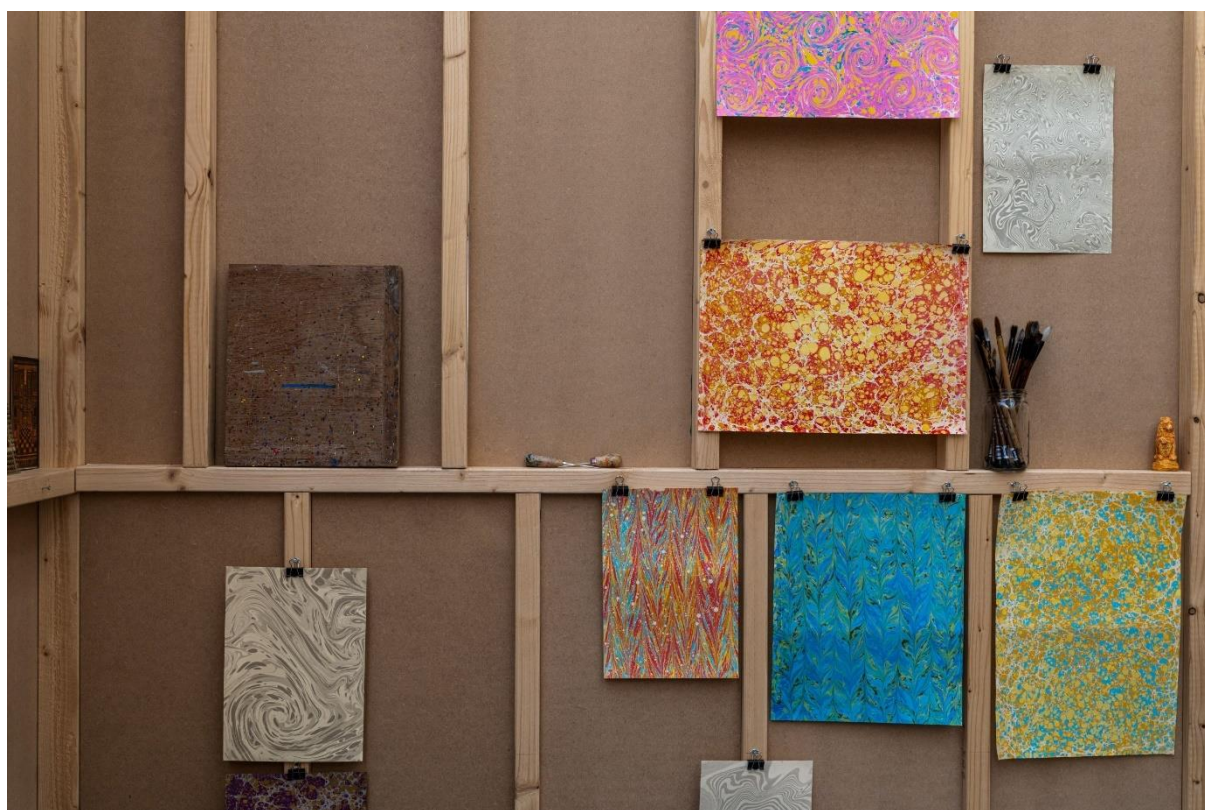


Photo credit: Stephen Blunt

Robert Foster  
*Scuola (a space for exchange)*  
Mixed media installation

'Scuola (a space for exchange)' is inspired by my research into the history of paper marbling, its relation to trade and the transmission of ideas in the city of Venice. The installation considers a network of histories interwoven and influenced by acts of artistic production, incorporating craft, interventions and chance associations.

[www.robertjohnfoster.co.uk](http://www.robertjohnfoster.co.uk)



*Photo credit: Stephen Blunt*

Carole Griffiths  
*Are You Ready?*

*Be Patient*

*It Hurts*

*Be Seated*

Photographic Prints of Selected Pages

The Venice Art Biennale Fellowship has been a great starting place to identify possibilities of a 'mundane' phenomenon of production. We know that it is ever present. But how then can this be explored through revealing human concerns, re-discovery, and re-inventing the past, recovery, and narrative realities? This is my journey through Venice which has informed and captured some significant moments related to place and setting and where objects become the catalyst of global and human concerns.

@griffsculpt

[https://issuu.com/griffsculpt/docs/are\\_you\\_ready\\_2020](https://issuu.com/griffsculpt/docs/are_you_ready_2020)





Layan Harman

*Cuttlefish Feeding Scenarios*

Short film

This film is intended to show a journey, a narrative record. It was made like a collection, to reveal the arc of a journey, in a particular place, at a particular time. My walk each morning to the Giardini took me down Fondamente Nove, along the northern edge of Venice, which bore the brunt of a strong wind coming off the Laguna. My first memories of Venice are presided over by this heavy weather. These memories are slightly at odds with the images of a sunny paradise emerging from the many inevitably encountered stories growing up, more intense than the place itself.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uu7GytReITA>





Helen Harris (Fellow) and Petrus Amuthenu  
*The cost of Representation/ Saturday Morning in Tura*  
Lino Print on photographic postcards

This collaborative artwork is made up of postcards depicting Venice, with a Lino cut depicting Katutura, printed by the Namibian artist Petrus Amuthenu on the reverse. This work explores what it means to represent a place as well as what it means to truly be 'represented' by art. If you would like to participate in this artwork by receiving a postcard, please fill out this Google form.

<https://www.startartgallery.com/the-cost-of-representation>



**Asten Holmes-Elliott**

*The Verchant of Menace series (nos 1,2,3,4 and The Verchant of Menace Himself)*

35mm photos printed onto venetian plaster

*The Straw That Broke The Camel's Back*

35mm photo printed onto concrete

Before I began the project I had a vision of Venice, one that was probably shared with millions of people in cultural memory - romance, religion, history, family etc. The question I asked myself was whether there was room for people like me within the city, was there space, was there visibility, in essence could Venice be queered or was its history and tradition too big to be imagined out of?

[www.astenholmeselliott.com](http://www.astenholmeselliott.com)

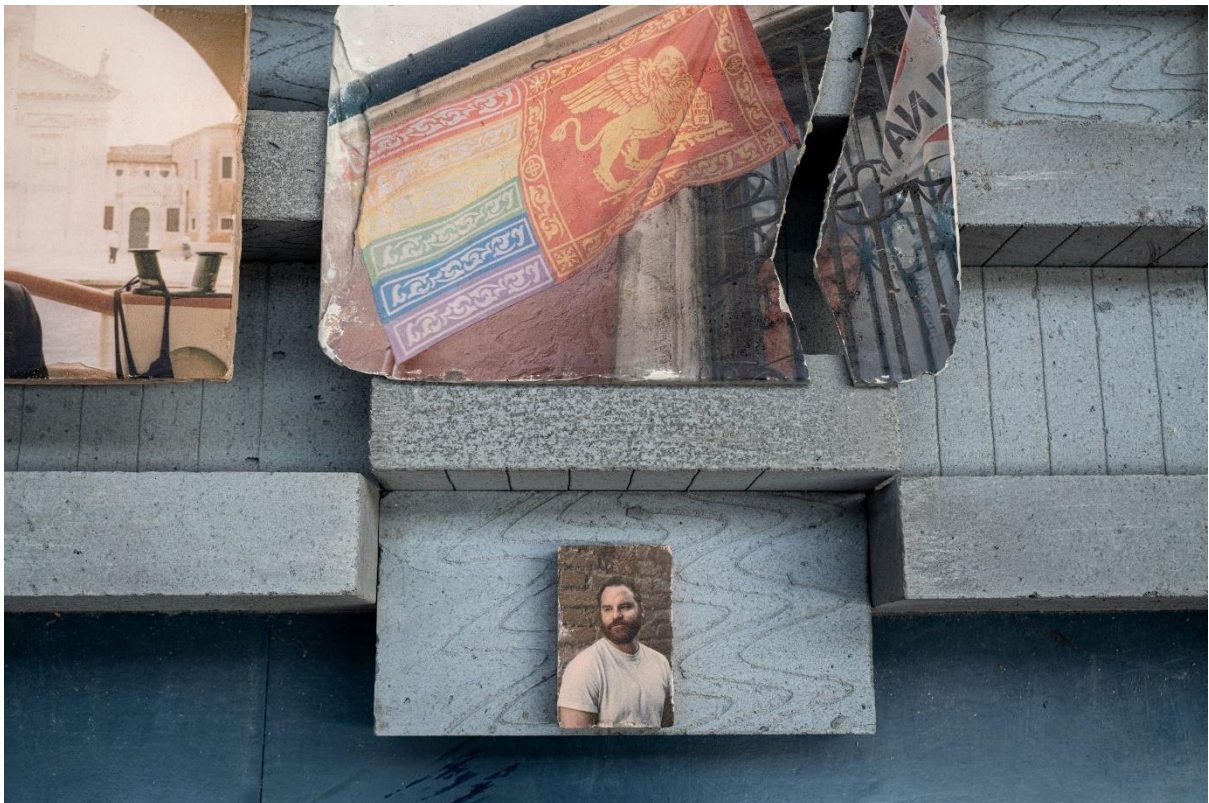


Photo credit: Stephen Blunt

Dianne Kim

*The Ambient Art Object*

Augmented Reality (AR) website, steel rack, digital print on fabric, and digital print on vinyl sticker

'The Ambient Art Object' incorporates images of stones collected during the 58th Venice Art Biennale, digitally printed on fabric and 3-D rendered on video. The installation contemplates the ephemeral nature of collecting and experiencing time-based objects in a mobile-phone era.

3-D Designer: Nutcha Pajareya

Creative Technologist: Ido Moskovich and Dan Melancon

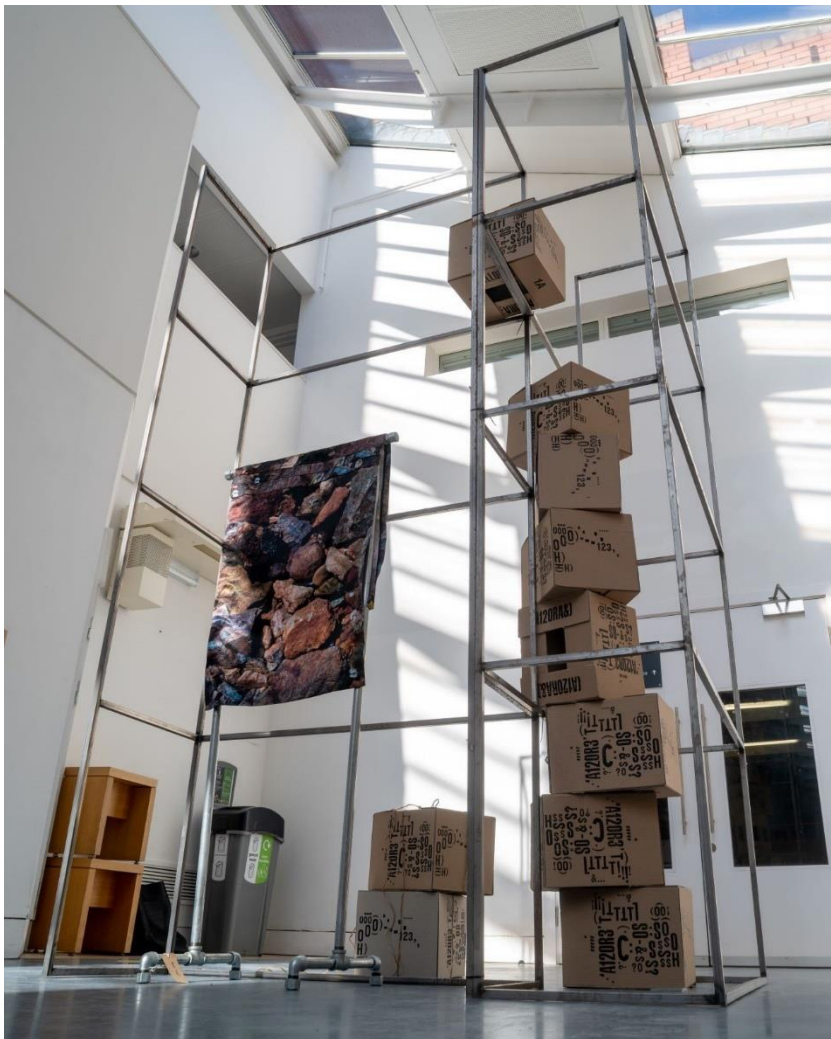


Photo credit: Stephen Blunt



Andrew Lane

*From Palladio to Rossi: an investigation into the skin-deep relationship of the façade.*

Extract from dissertation

The dissertation investigates the skin-deep relationship of the façade. Specifically, in Andrea Palladio's Basilica Palladiana and Aldo Rossi's extension to the San Cataldo Cemetery. The relevance of the façade is highlighted in the discussion on globalisation and its relationship to style, while the façade of each case study is analysed in its role within the city and its ability to perform as a threshold, surface and message.

From Palladio to Rossi: an investigation into the skin-deep relationship of the façade.

This dissertation investigates the skin-deep relationship of the façade. Specifically, in Andrea Palladio's Basilica Palladiana and Aldo Rossi's extension to the San Cataldo Cemetery. This includes the use of archival material and fieldwork. The relevance of the façade is highlighted in the discussion on globalisation and its relationship to style, while the façade of each case study is analysed in its role within the city and its ability to perform as a threshold, surface and message. It is intended that this will reveal the nature of each façade's skin-deep relationship to its structural mass, the building and its context. This dissertation demonstrates the façade of the Basilica Palladiana and the San Cataldo Cemetery can be both skin-deep and not.



Globalisation and its relationship to style



The role of the façade in the city



Façade as threshold



Façade as surface



Façade as message

Richard Laphorn

*Tourist as Pilgrim; Pilgrim as Tourist*

Oil on Canvas

This painting aims to focus on the tourists of Venice consuming the city in an act of religious virtue. These pilgrims come one by one, in an infinite line, to see, do, and use everything this consumerist Mecca has to offer. Whilst taking a selfie in front of St Mark's cathedral has become one of many rights of passage whom all who visit the city must undertake.

[www.richardlaphorn.wixsite.com/artist](http://www.richardlaphorn.wixsite.com/artist)





Isobel Manley

*the lagoon / a complicated relationship with water*

Sculpture - brass and clay

Water cannot be controlled, but it can be poisoned and it can give life. Venice has become home to the visitor and not the inhabitator, the aquatic ecosystem suffers below while surface pulses with life. It is often easier to see fiction over fact.

[www.isobel-manley.com](http://www.isobel-manley.com)



*Photo credit: Stephen Blunt*

Aimée McCallum  
*Guidecca Dream Team*  
Zine

The zine is a collaboration between a group of creatives who fortunately got to work at the Venice Biennale through the British Council's Venice Fellowship. While invigilating the Cathy Wilkes exhibition we found small moments to capture our experience through satire drawings, writings and comic strips.

<https://aimeemccallum.wixsite.com/website-1>



Natasha McHugh

*Give and Take*

84 35mm colour film photographs

*Give and Take* is a collection of sentimental family photographs, pictures of unspecific locations and landscapes collected in charity shops and images taken in Venice. The environmental and ecological crisis dominated the artist's experience and research in Venice, as swarms of tourists packed onto the island and cruise ships crashed into the land during the Biennale.

To explore ideas surrounding human nature and greed, the audience is allowed, but not instructed, to take the top printed film picture from the vertical stack. The photos were taken at different times, in different locations and by different people, but are viewed as of equal importance by the audience without being informed of their differences. If the audience knew the importance of the photographs to the artist, would this change their need to acquire one of the images? Would it be heightened or would it lessen the urge to adhere or ignore the 'rules'?

[www.natashamchugh.com](http://www.natashamchugh.com)

Jordan Page

*Imprint: A Response to Cathy*  
Installation

Focusing on the complexities of family dynamics in the modern age; the artist explores the personal yet universal ideal of the 'perfect' family as a system of belief and dependence. The everyday family scenario is broken and fragmented through using disparate objects, many of which are distressed, damaged or forgotten. From this, the artist compels us to consider the unconscious mind of the child.



Photo credit: Stephen Blunt

**Liz Ramos-Prado**

*Data Moments*  
*Acrylics on Canvas*

This work is the result of visual ethnography research which aimed to capture people's reactions and behaviors when experiencing the artworks within the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. The data obtained contributed with facts and figures that then were interpreted as movement, colours, and shapes to recreate a resemblance of those ephemeral moments.

*Data Moments*  
Video

Notes, quick sketches, numbers and rapid schemes. All the information was collected on a notebook, which compiled relevant data for this research. Taking photos and recording sound was crucial to develop a better understanding of people's behavior and to map emotions, as, sense of space, light, time and sound indicated an evident influence of people's reactions. This video represents a time-lapse of the collection, processing, and analysis of the information gathered.

@liz\_rprado





**Vishnupriya Rajgarhia**

*Azad*

Text as image: Limited Edition Print on Acid Free Paper

*Text as image, symbolism of art and its power to move beyond normative constraints*

*Azad*

Oil on Canvas

*From the scenes of San Marco, Venice*

[www.vishnupriyarajgarhia.com](http://www.vishnupriyarajgarhia.com)



## Evie Redwood

*105 Hours Performance documentation*  
*8 6x8 Photographs*

*105 Hours* took place in the basement of the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, directly underneath Cathy Wilkes exhibition. The performance lasted for 2:57 minutes and consisted of me wearing a t-shirt with *105 Hours* written on it and speaking the data I had collected whilst invigilating. My voice was transferred from the microphone to the loop station and speaker to disembodify it.

[www.evie-redwood.co.uk/105hoursdoc](http://www.evie-redwood.co.uk/105hoursdoc)

*105 Hours Zine*

Screen print on A3 card

*30 individually screen printed zines to accompany my 105 Hours performance, exploring my role as an invigilator and ideas around invigilation.*

[www.evie-redwood.co.uk/105hourszine](http://www.evie-redwood.co.uk/105hourszine)

*105 Hours performance t-shirt*  
1 cotton black vinyl t-shirt

*105 Hours* was accompanied by wearing a uniform whilst performing: a black t-shirt with white vinyl lettering, black trousers and shoes.



William Rees

*preserve/perverse:ferment/foment*

Active vegetable ferment, cherry preserve, glass jars, fermentation weights, cheesecloth, rubber bands, Cypriot worry beads.

During his time in Venice, Rees researched queer ecologies in relation to the Lagoon. This included developing a number of recipes using fermentation, pickling and preserving methods, two of which - a *giardiniera*, or Italian vegetable pickle, and a sweet cherry preserve, or "spoon fruits" - are on display: one to ferment over the course of the exhibition, another to last long after its conclusion.



Photo credit: Stephen Blunt

Nica Sabet

*Here is Half the World*

1. Written piece (play script)
2. Aluminium wire frame movable model (puppet).

A short play composed from four separately recorded conversations with four Venetian citizens. The play tries to uncover how coherent Venetians' view of their own city is: an exercise of listening and connecting. The story-line follows a migrating bird who flies from place to place, listening to conversations about the city.

[https://issuu.com/nicasabet/docs/here\\_is\\_half\\_the\\_world](https://issuu.com/nicasabet/docs/here_is_half_the_world)

## HERE IS HALF THE WORLD

*A play by Nica Sabet*

Set in a small Piazza in Venice, Italy. It is a warm summers day in June. The streets are busy with visitors.

### Characters

1. Isadora: age 25. A performing-arts student who recently moved to Amsterdam for her university. Nicknamed Isa, she is visiting Venice for summer break. Her home overlooks a small piazza.
2. Piero: 32, youthful yet wise and patient man. He owns a workshop just off the piazza where Isa lives.
3. Moulaye: From Africa, mid-40s, charismatic character. He owns and works in a glass making workshop in the Same piazza Isa lives.
4. Bird (puppet): a little migrating bird that has newly entered the city. It is eager to look around its new home.

Kinnari Saraiya

*to the privileged,*

Plaster casted hands, leather, paper and silver foil

to the privileged, draws attention to passport privilege as an inequality that produces a world in which the 'high powers' are not only more free to move but in which the hierarchy is clearly laid out in 'Global Passport Rank' as common sense.

<https://kinnarisaraiya98.wixsite.com/artist/to-the-privileged>





Vicky Souti

*A Life in Ruins*

Powdered stucco, PVA glue & water-mixable oil on canvas (30 x 20cm)

A series of paintings that transfer the decay induced by acqua-alta on Venetian architecture to the two-dimensional canvas. The making of the paintings has been conceived as a project to be carried out by anyone: the cognitive map of the area is sketched on site and materials are collected from each building in the area to form the painting.



Shannon-Lea Stevenson

*Top 9 Must-See Things in The Most Beautiful City in The World Before You Die*

Oil and gold leaf on board

*The travel guide in your altar of tourism, reflecting on the Venice that's lurking behind your instagram feed and is strategically cropped out of your selfies.*

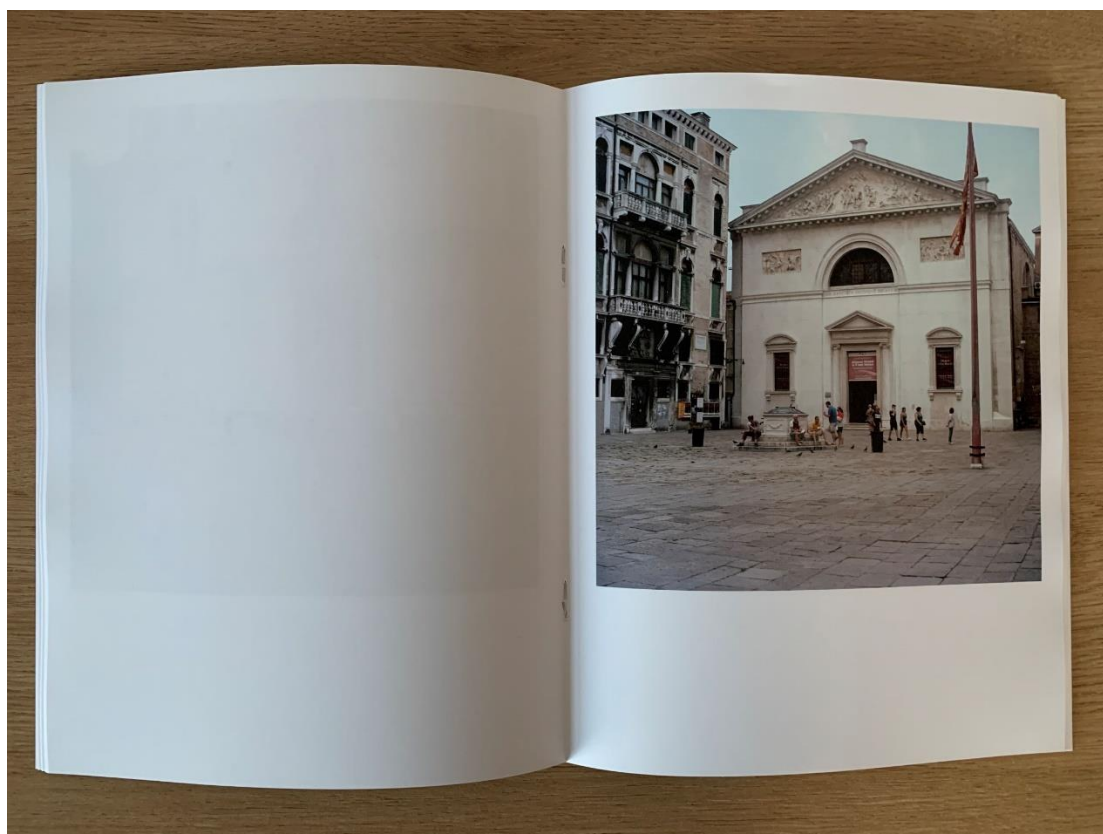
@shandelionsart



Joshua Turner  
*Catch Your Breath*  
Photobook

'*Catch Your Breath* is a photographic and literary meditation on the claustrophobia of Venice. The chaotic Venetian streets are an overwhelming experience, creating a stress-induced psychogeographic navigation of the city. An anxious pursuit of calm space, in response to the socio-political tensions of a landscape saturated by tourism.'

[www.joshuaturner.co.uk](http://www.joshuaturner.co.uk)



Charles Williams  
*Some New World (Version Two)*  
Oil on Canvas

My project was studying Domenico Tiepolo's fresco 'Il Mondo Nuovo' (1791) in light of my experience of the Biennale and Venice itself. It's an ironic, grotesque, self-knowing depiction of Venetians of his own time, queueing to look at a magic lantern show in the Piazza San Marco. The perfect model for my own experience.

@swiftcharles2002



Photo credit: Stephen Blunt

Rebecca Wymark

*Grid (2019)*

Monoprint with colour pencil on Zerkall paper

The artist has drawn upon the domestic by creating a haptic relief print using fabrics and thread that have been stripped from everyday objects. Hands-on processes of sewing, tearing and assembling are discreetly documented in the surface of the work. In this way the artist demands attentive looking from the viewer.





Eleni Xynogala (Fellow) and Theodora Kanelli

*ABSENCE*

Video Performance & Video Installation: Machine Learning Generations & Oil on Canvas  
with Mixed Media

Two trained machines create a dialogue around Cathy Wilkes's exhibition, as art critics. They generate narration and images referring to pain and loss. A painter is called to interpret these generations into drawings. These successive perspectives, similar to Chinese telephone game, lead to the loss of the initial message.

<http://www.elenxyn.com/ABSENCE.html>





Xia Zhi-zhou 夏之舟

*How Far Is It?*

Crayon, acrylic, and high-lighters on paper

As nowadays more and more people travel and live internationally, displace of motherhood becomes a common phenomenon. My topic of research at the Biennale was on the displace of motherhood and how the displacement bridge the connection between artists and viewers. *'How Far Is It?'* is a series of drawings made with the visual elements extracted from the research. The drawings explore the distance and consequently collision of memories and reality.

[xiazhizhou.com](http://xiazhizhou.com)



**Thank you to our partner organisations in 2019:**

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a space arts

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Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

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Central Saint Martins, UAL

Canterbury Christ Church University

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Golden Thread Gallery

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Plymouth College of Art  
Royal College of Art  
The Ruskin School of Art  
University of Salford  
South London Gallery  
University of the West of England  
Wysing Arts Centre

**Thank you to exhibitors and all the Fellows who went to Venice in 2019:**

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