



VENICE FELLOWS 2025

PROFILE BOOK

Venice Fellowships Programme

British Council is proud to introduce the Venice Fellowships Programme, a scheme which activates and enriches our world-renowned exhibitions at the Venice Biennale.

A key part of British Council's presence in Venice, the Fellowships Programme offers a unique opportunity for emerging creatives and future leaders to represent the UK on an international level whilst broadening their perspective, making connections and developing their creative practice.

As exhibition ambassadors of 'GBR – Geology Of Britannic Repair' (2025), the Fellows will engage visiting members of the public and create moments of intercultural dialogue and connection. They also have the opportunity to develop their own research and/or creative projects, hence using the Biennale as a platform for artistic, scholarly, and professional development. Through these contributions, often created in collaboration with one another, the Fellows elevate the British Pavilion to an important reference point for universities, artists, and creative organisations around the world.

In partnership with twenty-four UK and Kenya Higher Education Institutions and pioneering creative enterprises, British Council is supporting forty-six Fellows in 2025. New for this year, we are delighted to welcome our four Fellows from Kenya as part of the UK/Kenya Season 2025.

UK/Kenya Season 2025

The British Council is collaborating with partners in the UK and Kenya to present a programme of activities in 2025 that celebrate creativity and innovation through the arts, culture, and education. With a thematic focus on innovation, the UK/Kenya Season 2025 will create opportunities in arts, culture, heritage, and education. Activities will take place in both countries between May and November 2025, with public events showcasing work ranging from architecture, design, and fashion to literature, music, visual arts, performing arts, and film.

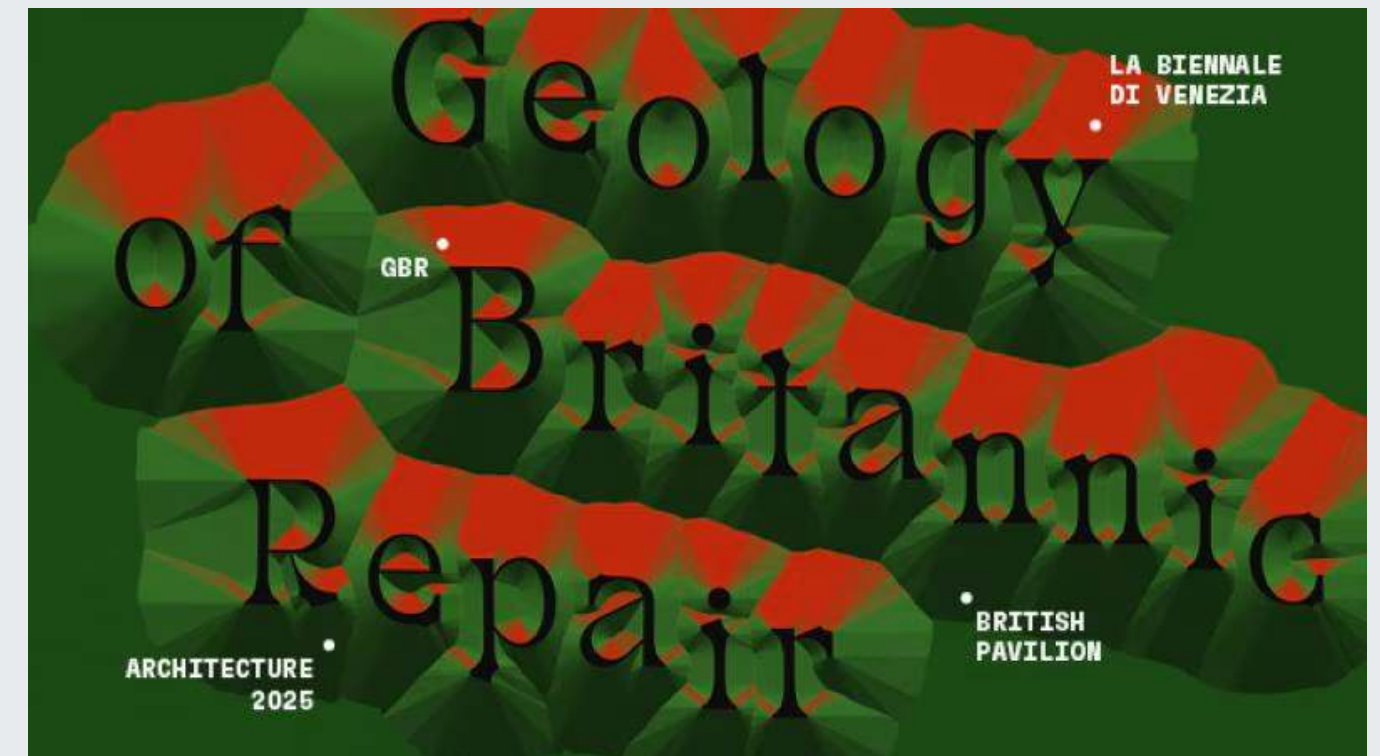
#UKKenyaSeason2025

‘GBR – Geology of Britannic Repair’

This year's commission aims to examine the relationship between architecture and colonisation as parallel, interconnected systems. The exhibition's geographical, geological and conceptual focus stems from the British Pavilion's pivotal alignment along an axis that runs between Britain to the north-west, and Kenya and the Great Rift Valley to the south-east.

The exhibition, GBR – Geology Of Britannic Repair, is a unique UK-Kenya collaboration between a multi-disciplinary team of curators: Kabage Karanja and Stella Mutegi of Nairobi-based architecture studio Cave_bureau; UK-based curator and writer Owen Hopkins and academic Professor Kathryn Yusoff.

Making a case for architecture as an earth practice, the curators and their collaborators hope that the exhibition will help to dismantle the prevalent and often unquestioned concept of architecture and rebuild it as a non-extractive practice geared towards repair, restitution and renewal.



2025 Fellows

Abiola Akinpelu
Amy Bradnock
Anne Kimunguyi
Ariel Zhang
Aur Bleddyn
Ayisha Saniya Ambalavan
Beatriz Castro Fernandez
Charlotte Brooks
Cheyenne Aimee Booth
Consolata Muchina
Elizabeth Grinter
Elizaveta Vasileva
Elvis Ramboh
Emily Groves
Harriette Moore

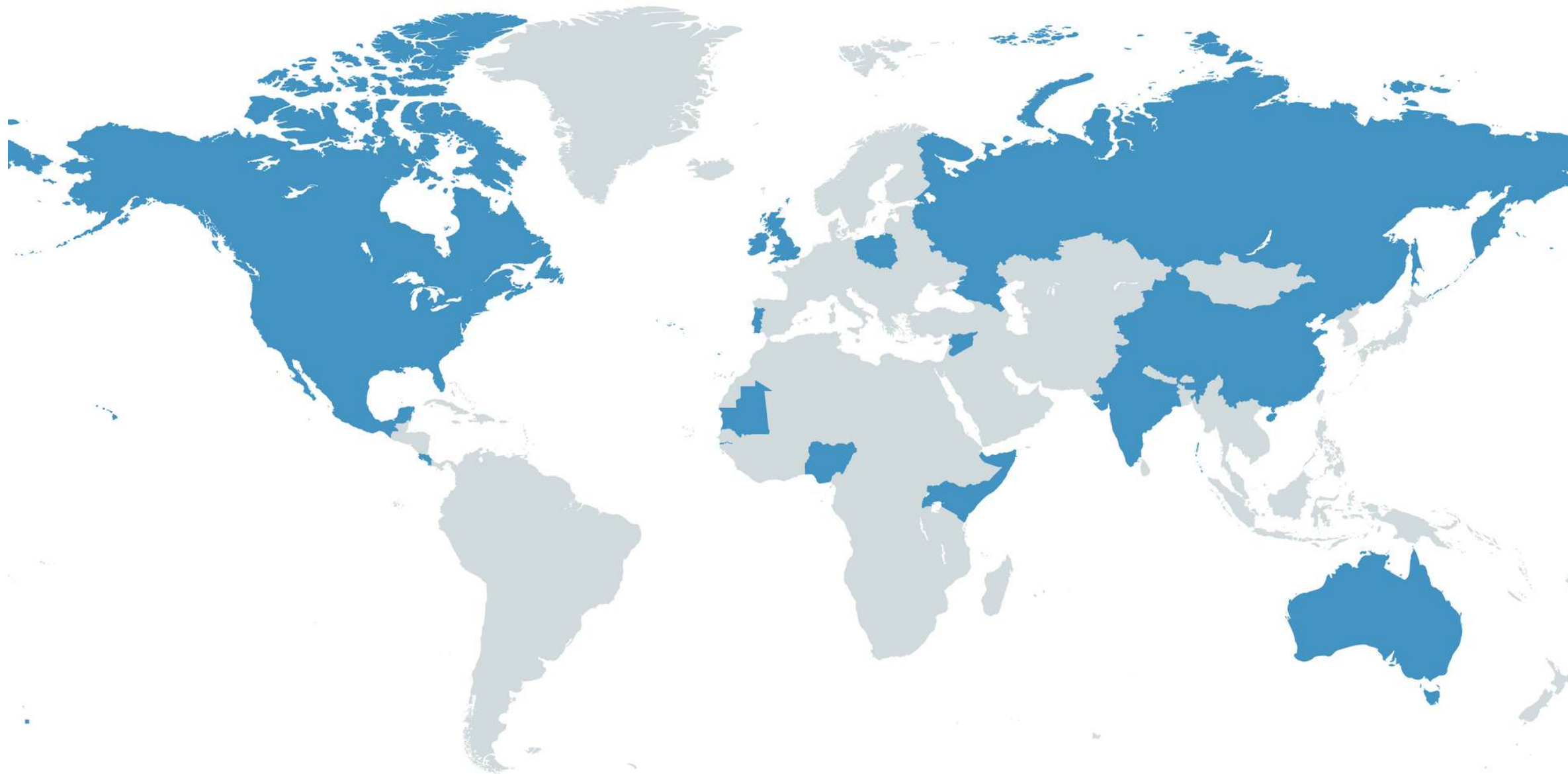
James Lewis
Jamila Garcia
Judith Thursfield
Katarina Kemp
Kizzy Budd
Klarissa Katz
Lalia Saidy Khan
Lauren Pohl
Lilien Ezeguwu
Ma Chang Ling
Ma Jingmiao
Marlie Ewart-Biggs
Matilde Saeed Senos
Maya Rosie Ann Davis
Myah Phelan

Nahla Salkini
Oiseorhenuan Ahimie
Pati Starzykowski
Rehema Kabare
Ricardo Marcus Burt
Robin Ogle-Skan
Salimat Yewande Bakare
Saudat Aminu Koguna
Sofia Victoria Ramirez Sandoval
Sophia Foster
Stella Lonie-Lewis
Tim Ingleby
Toby Berryman
Tony Adembesa
Vy Tsan
Zack Mennell



Nationalities

Reflecting the international scope of La Biennale, there are over twenty nationalities represented in our 2025 cohort of Fellows. In addition to offering conversations and tours in English, our Fellows will be welcoming visitors in a multitude of languages, including French, Hausa, Igbo, Malayalam, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Swahili, Vietnamese, Welsh, Yoruba and more. All Fellows are connected to a creative organisation/Higher Education institution in UK or Kenya.



2025 Programme Partners

In collaboration with twenty-four universities and arts organisations, and with our partner M+B Studio 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 Programme 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.

Anglia Ruskin University

Arts University Plymouth

Birmingham City University

Cardiff University

Durham University

GoDown Arts Centre

HomeGrown Plus

King's College London

London Metropolitan University

Manchester Metropolitan University

Nairobi Now

Northumbria University

Outside In

Royal Academy of Arts

Shujaa Stories

SOAS

University for the Creative Arts

University of Bradford

University of Exeter

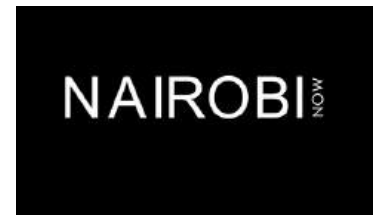
University of Leicester

University of Liverpool

University of Southampton

University of St Andrews

University of the Arts London (London College of Communication)



Group 1

5th May – 3rd June 2025



AUR BLEDDYN

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

I am pursuing a Masters degree in Contemporary Curation to explore the social value of art in communicating identity and culture in accessible ways. My focus is on using constellation as a curatorial approach to reimagine cultural identity, bringing peripheral voices to the centre to foster dialogue and exchange.

This interest is deeply rooted in my passion for Welsh identity, which influences my personal and artistic pursuits. I actively engage with forms of art that connect with my heritage in contemporary and exciting ways.

My art practice centres on drawing as a tool for observation, preservation and exploration. I use archival methods such as drawing, mapping, and collaging to document oral histories and preserve the stories that shape our cultural narratives.



Project

In Venice, I will develop a project inspired by the Welsh tradition shared with other cultures, Tŷ Unnos (One Night House). The tradition was to build a house on common land in a single night and have a fire burning with smoke coming out of the chimney by morning to claim the land. This shared tradition serves as both an act of resistance and a creative strategy against systems that marginalise people. Reflecting the oral histories lost through the unsuccessful Tŷ Unnos stories, this project aims to document the fragile stories held within houses that risk being lost due to displacement caused by the climate breakdown. When we are displaced, what constitutes our homes, and what oral histories survive when the physical materials are lost?

My project envisions a site-less Tŷ Unnos, turning the house inside out and building a constellation of collective memory as an act of resistance. This site-less temporality reflects the absence of a Welsh pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale and explores site-less curation as a means of amplifying marginalised voices. Through a series of interactions with locals, international visitors, and co-fellows, the project will document cross-cultural oral histories, preserving the stories, senses, traditions, fables, and recipes sustained within a house. This documentation will take the form of drawings, mapping, and collages, capturing the essence of what makes a home –coming together as a publication of shared collective intelligence for one place, one solution.

@aur_bleddyn

AYISHA SANIYA AMBALAVAN

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER



With a bachelors degree in interior design and as a current master's student in curation, I am particularly interested in how cultural 'spaces' engage diverse audiences. My published research, *'AI Implementation in Art Museums Through Sensory Design'*, explores enhancing visitor experiences, and my volunteer work reflects my commitment to creating inclusive cultural encounters. In my free time, I enjoy creative writing, informing my artistic approach to storytelling and curation.

Especially drawn to themes of migration and the climate crisis, examining how these issues shape identities and narratives within cultural frameworks. As a migrant from a flood-prone region increasingly affected by climate change, I want to connect my personal narratives of land's erasure—whether through environmental devastation or political displacement of minorities—with the themes of the biennale.

These interests align closely with the Fellowships Programme's focus on culture's social and educational value, fostering connections and raising awareness on important global issues.

Project

Shifting Grounds: Art, Land, and the Colonial Anthropocene

a) During my month in Venice, I will explore the intersections of migration, colonial history, and the climate crisis through the lens of the Anthropocene. Using the Biennale as a research ground, I will investigate how colonial histories, with parallels to Kenya and my home country, India, have shaped identity and landscapes, driven global migration and ecological displacement. Venice, with its vulnerability to climate change, will serve as a reflective site examining land as both an archive of exploitation and a medium for resilience.

Centring the question, “What does ‘land’ mean to you?”, this project invites critical reflection on personal connections to land while interrogating how museums obscure their colonial and extractive histories under claims of neutrality. Reflecting an inside-out approach, it challenges static built-structures and proposes art to reconnect with the earth. Interactive elements will include participatory world maps for visitors to share their migratory stories and a tactile exhibit exploring visitor’s reactions to natural elements present in the Venice Giardini- Documenting these engagements in a digital archive highlighting displacement caused by colonialism and climate change.

b) This research contributes to the curatorial project *‘The Tree Museum’* as part of my course. After the fellowship, I will present my findings at the Attenborough Arts Centre engaging my peers in discussions. Through curation and art activism, I aim to inspire collective imagining of more sustainable futures, focusing on the renewal of our connection to land and fostering environmental consciousness in cultural spaces.

CHEYENNE AIMEE BOOTH

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

I have always been involved in extracurricular activities that allow me to engage with diverse people and broaden my perspective. I volunteered at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw in middle school, I was a Big Sib in high school, where I mentored my younger peers and led discussions around discrimination, racism, sexism and microaggressions in the school setting. At university, I joined the St Andrews Saints Connect mentoring programme to help incoming students feel ready to start their studies. I am also the creator of Art History roundtable discussions for students and professors to engage in diverse discussions in a relaxed setting.

Beyond my formal education, I have many craft-making hobbies; I won an award for my linoleum prints and a painting in high school, at university I attend ArtSoc life drawing sessions, and at home my form of relaxation and craft is knitting.



Project

I want to pursue the subject of Kenyan practices of environmentally friendly architecture that battles local issues, such as excessive heat, and how these ought to be taken from vernacular Kenyan architecture designs. While researching ideas, I read many articles which discussed the necessity for environmental policies especially with the growing construction industry, as well as issues around conservation of vernacular architecture (e.g. Swahili architecture in Old Town Mombasa).

Having learnt about many communities in Africa over the course of my anthropological education, I remembered that for many communities Western companies were brought in and dictated the way forward in development projects that ignored local practices and resulted in serious environmental consequences for the region. The main problem in most of these cases was the lack of inclusion of local people in creating these projects, thus much of the crucial local knowledge was left out in the planning process. I'd like the project to be interactive, so I am hoping that I could collaborate with other Fellows in making it engaging.

Upon my return, I plan to share my project either by presenting it during a roundtable discussion, or through social media channels and friends. I also plan on reaching out to the university, with the collaboration of Dr Spencer and Dr Bozoğlu, and arranging a form of presentation online, whether through an email or by posting something online, for instance on the School of Art History Instagram account, so that students can see it during the summer months.

CONSOLATA MUCHINA

SHUJAA STORIES



My name is Consolata Njeri Muchina, a 32-year-old photographer, producer, and event organizer from Kenya with a passion for visual arts. I believe art has the power to bridge diverse communities and foster meaningful connections.

Through my work with Shujaa Stories, I document field research and direct video documentaries, honing my storytelling skills. Photography is my creative outlet, capturing the beauty and complexity of the world, while event organizing allows me to curate cultural performances that inspire engagement. I am driven by a desire to inspire dialogue and understanding through art and am committed to creating spaces where creativity and culture thrive.

Project

During my month in Venice, I plan to develop a project on the *Role of Art and Architecture as a Bridge Across Cultures and Its Impact on Social Understanding*.

Using the 2025 Venice Architecture Biennale theme of Intelligence as a guide, this initiative will explore how different artistic expressions showcased at the Biennale highlight shared human experiences, fostering dialogue and empathy across cultural boundaries. The theme of Intelligence will frame my exploration of how art and architecture can use both natural and collective intelligence to bring diverse cultures together, shaping mutual understanding and creating a platform for intellectual exchange.

I intend to document my exploration through photography and written reflections, capturing moments, installations/spaces that bring our shared human values to life, and interactions that reveal the power of art and architecture in connecting people.

Engaging with artists and curators from diverse backgrounds to see how artists and architects use their work to bridge cultural divides and create social understanding. I aim to focus on how intelligence in design and artistic practice can act as a tool for cultural mediation and knowledge sharing.

When I return to Kenya, I will share my experience through an exhibition or a multimedia presentation that invites others to journey with me. I envision creating a photo essay or a visual presentation that showcases the cultural exchanges and perspectives I encountered in Venice. Additionally, I'll host a talk or workshop for local artists and enthusiasts to discuss how Kenyan art can similarly engage in cross-cultural conversations. This project will allow me to blend my passion for photography and visual arts while inspiring collaborative initiatives that connect Kenyan and global artistic expressions.

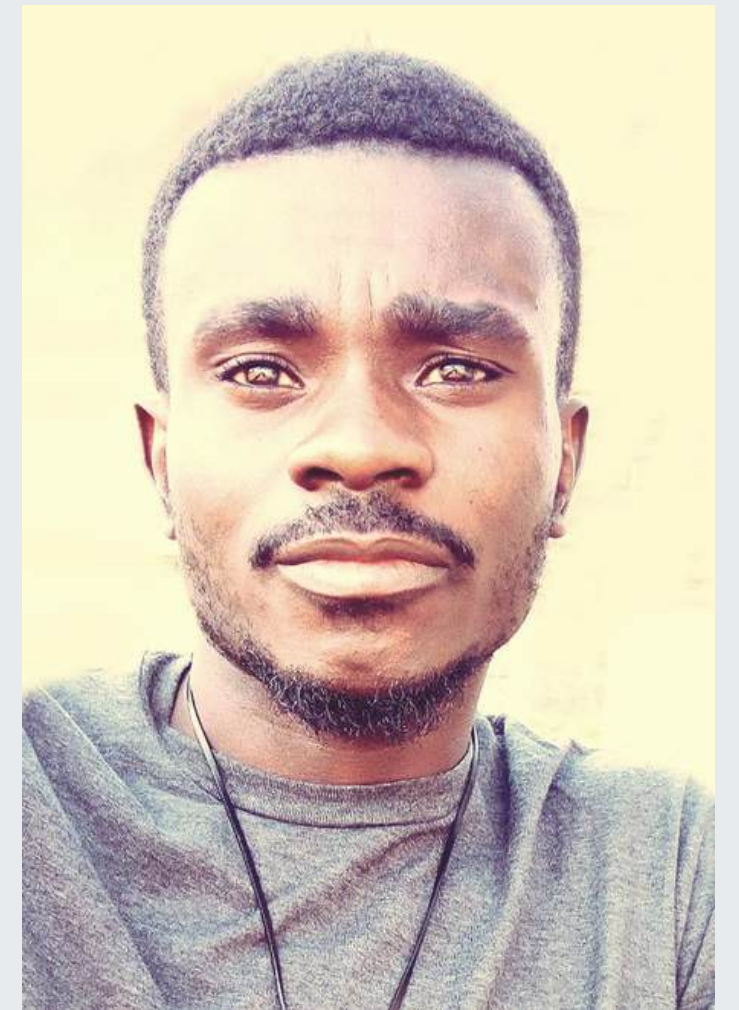
ELVIS RAMBOH

SHUJAA STORIES

I am a contemporary oil painter whose works are evident by a profound exploration of light, texture, and emotion. Sourcing inspiration from nature, the human form, every day life, and inter-personal interactions. My works invite viewers to experience familiar subjects in new and enticing ways. With a skilful display of the mediums (charcoal or oil), I am able to create vibrant and evocative works that show realism with an expressive, personal touch.

I am drawn to curatorial practices and exhibitions that tend to promote cultural awareness and as well provoke a conversation from the audience.

My works have been exhibited in the Nairobi National Museum of Kenya Art Gallery and in various Kenyan group exhibitions and art shows in Kenya.



Project

In my month in Venice, I'd like to create a project called *Tales of a City*, which explores the city's unique architecture, transportation modes, and its cultural essence through the eyes of both locals and visitors. My aim is to develop sketches, paintings, and photos that capture the intricate connections people have with the city's historical structures and daily life.

To deepen the experience, I hope to work with local artists and cultural enthusiasts, gathering their perspectives on Venice's evolving identity. By collaborating with others on site, I can bring out diverse viewpoints in each piece, making the project not just a reflection of my experience, but a shared artistic exploration.

The project aligns with the Venice Biennale's 2025 theme of "Intelligence" as it invites a deeper intellectual engagement with the city and its people. Through this collaboration, I aim to tap into the collective intelligence of Venice's community, its history, its evolving cultural landscape, and its architecture, as well as the diverse perspectives of visitors. The resulting work will be an intelligent dialogue between the past and present, the local and the global, showcasing how art can bring different minds together to reflect on the city's identity and cultural continuity.

Back in Kenya, I plan to exhibit *Tales of a City* and host a panel discussion to delve into the cultural parallels between Venice and Nairobi, encouraging the audience to think about the preservation and evolution of their own cultural heritage. Through this, I hope to spark ongoing conversations and create a space where people share their thoughts on the beauty of local traditions and the impact of cross-cultural exchanges.

EMILY GROVES

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY
(CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF ART)



I am a marine ecologist and I am finishing my Master's in Children's Book Illustration at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. I love to draw outside from observation, especially people and wildlife. I love catching the small moments and interactions others may not notice, or the small things people do when they think no one is watching. I also love that reportage art allows me to capture a sense of place and of the culture of a place, and think art is an incredibly powerful educational tool to share our experiences and see through the eyes of someone else.

I want to make picture books that show people things they have not seen before or maybe not noticed, and share my passion for the sea and the natural world. I want my books to show people how wonderful the world is when you notice the little things, like children do!

Project

My project idea is called '*Interactions at the Venice Biennale*'. I would like to capture interactions of people with each other, with the place and, with wildlife in Venice. I would like to show the impact of the Biennale on interactions as people share stories and experience the show, and as artists work together to bring their country's viewpoint to this international setting. This project will allow me to pursue what I love the most about drawing and draw things I enjoy and am confident in, while also challenging me to draw new places and new types of interactions. On the MA we started with a project on observational drawing, and I loved the challenge of going to new and interesting places to draw. Exploring Venice during the Biennale will be the perfect next challenge.

I think my project fits well with the theme for 2025: 'Intelligens. Natural. Artificial. Collective'. I intend to explore interactions of people and the natural and urban/artificial landscape, and how the Biennale brings together our collective minds and creativity. I also intend to continue working in traditional media as an antithesis to AI art, and to continue to use my sketchbook to show and learn from the world.

I would like to present my work to the MA – this would be an excellent way to practice speaking to larger audiences but also a way to connect with my community after the MA finishes. I would also like to make an artist book or zine to share too. Depending on the wildlife I encounter, I may also present some work for the SWLA, helping to spread awareness of wildlife in urban settings.

This project will help me to continue my training as a reportage artist and build my visual vocabulary as a children's book illustrator. Drawing also helps me feel confident in new places, as once I have drawn them, I feel we are friends, and the new place is no longer so daunting. Presenting my work after the Fellowship will help me remember all I learned and continue to build my practice as an artist.

HARRIETTE MOORE

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

I'm a curator and PhD researcher at Northumbria University, where my research is collaborative with the Bowes Museum, and explores the foundation of a transnational collection of art prints in a French-style building in rural County Durham. I'm interested in visitor engagement and how museums and public space can be more relevant and socially engaged. My work investigates the perception of, and engagement with, art that crosses national boundaries. I would like to help create future inspiring exhibitions that embrace collaboration and foster inclusivity across communities.

I live in a rural area of North East England, and would love to bring my creative practice to Venice!



Project

‘Corti, Calli, Campielli’ This creative project explores shared words and shared spaces. Inspired by these uniquely Venetian words for public space, meaning ‘courtyards, alleys and squares’ respectively, this research explores the significance of open space in Venice in the past, present and future. Responding to the organisation of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition into ‘natural, artificial, collective’, the project considers the use of public space across time in a city where contrived ceremony and procession meet the connected nature of everyday life for inhabitants and tourists alike.

2025 marks 525 years since the creation of an art print – Jacopo de Barbari’s map, a bird’s eye view of Venice – still used today to understand the city’s historical built environment. Using this artwork as a starting point, the project produces case studies of the ‘campo’, the historic centre of community in Venice and the city’s largest public spaces. ‘Campo’ translates literally as ‘field’. Fields are spaces that are cultivated and nurtured in a cyclical embrace of the natural world. In Venice, the campo is a collective space where people gather. In a city normally associated with water, the project considers the largest plot of land in each urban area – connecting people, streets and courtyards where they are most grounded to the land in the centre of the community. Venice is a city historically linked to mixing cultures – this project considers cultural interaction in the city’s largest public spaces. It explores how marginalised groups experience(d) communal space and the interaction of cultures and lives through shared space and the shared words that define it.

In Venice, the project would involve workshops with a number of Venetian communities, including the diverse population of Venice International University, comprising students from 14 countries across 4 continents to consider the past, present and future use of Venetian public space and their own personal ‘field’ of vision. The outcome of the project would then be shared with communities in-person and through a digitally produced catalogue. In addition, I would share my research with my peers in my academic field at Northumbria as well as across the UK with my museum network, giving a talk at a monthly work-in-progress seminar at the V&A/British Museum I co-facilitate.

LILIEN EZEQUWU

KINGS COLLEGE LONDON



I am an African cultural heritage researcher, curator, and artist committed to preserving endangered cultures and fostering global cultural exchange. My work bridges craft histories, sustainable archives, and the transformative power of art in marginalised communities. As a curator and educator, I spotlight forgotten narratives while advancing interdisciplinary dialogue on the socio-economic value of creativity. My experiences span curatorial exhibitions, tourism, and creative economy, equipping me to engage diverse audiences and highlight cultural resilience.

My journey reflects resilience and a commitment to using art as a tool for healing and advocacy. This passion earned me a MasterCard Scholarship at Cambridge and a PhD Studentship at KCL, where I am currently studying Creative Economy.

Venice's architecture inspires me to connect African traditions with contemporary design, exploring preservation and renewal. Through this fellowship, I aim to collaborate with artisans/institutions to foster mutual learning, cultural dialogue, and community building.

Project

In Venice, I aim to explore the intersections of endangered African artistic traditions and Venetian craftsmanship, aligning with the 2025 Venice Biennale's focus on resilience and the embedded relationship between architecture and the environment. Based on my background as an art curator, tourist, and media personnel, my project, *'Threads of Heritage: A Dialogue Between Africa and Venice'*, will emphasise sustainable cultural preservation through two components:

1. Documentary Film: The film will capture my experiences and adventures in Venice, including interactions with local artisans, reflections on the architectural and craft heritage of the regions, delivering insights into how African traditional can engage with Venetian craftsmanship to address global sustainability challenges.
2. Art Exhibition: I will create an art exhibition that reimagines forgotten African motifs in dialogue with Venetian architectural forms, illustrating how heritage can contribute to contemporary conversations on sustainability, inclusivity, and resilience.

Upon returning to the UK, I will host screenings of the documentary alongside an interactive exhibition featuring the artworks and visual artefacts created during my residency. These events will be complemented by workshops, in collaboration with cultural institutions and community groups, to inspire dialogue on sustainable heritage practices. By reflecting the Biennale's theme of resilience and repair, the project will act as a catalyst for interdisciplinary collaborations, fostering cultural exchange and emphasising the societal value of preserving endangered traditions. Engaging schools, artisans, and public audiences, I aim to promote global appreciation for heritage conservation while empowering marginalised communities through sustainable and inclusive approaches.

@lilie_sparkle

MA JINGMIAO

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

As an environmental design graduate with a strong foundation in architectural design, I first learned about the Venice Scholarship Program during my undergraduate studies and it has been a source of inspiration for me ever since.

My academic background has provided me with skills in architectural design and exhibition design, which I further developed during my one year professional experience with an architectural firm. This combination of practical experience and academic knowledge fuels my passion for exploring how architecture and design can be integrated with stories and cultural expressions. Now, as a graduate student focusing on contemporary curatorial practice, I see this project as an ideal platform to bring my architectural and curatorial expertise together to create meaningful connections between spaces, people and ideas.



Project

My project 'Resilient Spaces: Exploring Adaptive Architecture and Cultural Identity' will focus on how architecture at the Venice Biennale reflects adaptive and cultural narratives in response to contemporary challenges such as climate change and urbanization. Drawing on my background in environmental design and curation, I will document how designers combine traditional techniques with innovative materials and sustainable practices to create Spaces that are both functional and culturally expressive. Through photography, drawings, and interviews with architects and curators, I aim to reveal how these methods preserve heritage while meeting modern needs. This study will also explore how the spatial design of the pavilion promotes engagement and dialogue between different audiences.

Upon my return to the UK, I will curate a small exhibition and host a talk for my peers, combining visual literature, written reflections and interactive discussions. This will include presenting my findings through photographs and sketches, complemented by a short video that brings the ambience of the Biennale to life. To get my peers actively involved, I will be organizing a workshop where participants can brainstorm ideas for research-inspired adaptive building concepts. In addition, I will publish an article or blog series to reach a wider audience and promote discussion about the role of architecture in addressing global challenges, while respecting cultural identity.

@Jillian0051

PATI STARZYKOWSKI

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS



I am an artist and transdisciplinary researcher working at the intersection of art, science, ecology, and politics. Currently pursuing a PhD at the University for the Creative Arts, Canterbury, my research investigates the ecological, cultural, and political agency, as well as the materiality, of ruderal plants in urban and peri-urban environments as a methodology for socio-spatial practices. With an MA in Art and Science from Central Saint Martins, my practice engages with repurposed and living materials, local contexts, and collective making to question perceived and actual value in the production of space. I have collaborated with scientists from the Tokyo Institute of Technology, the Iskratch Lab, QMUL, and the Biophysical Sciences Institute. My work has been supported by the Mayor of London grant for Meteorite, and I consulted on Tactile for the 2023 British Ceramics Biennial. I am also the co-founder of a community-managed library and cultural hub, where I established an artist residency program. Beyond my research, I am a keen fermenter, drawn to slow, transformative processes.

Project

As part of my month-long Biennale of Architecture 2025 British Council Fellowship in Venice (May-June 2025), I will map the presence of ruderal plants in the city's squares and courtyards. Venice, an engineering marvel, has long been a place of refuge yet also a center of colonial power and trade. Ruderal plants—emerging in the cracks of shifting economies, migrations, and ecological disruptions—serve as a material testimony of these processes. They disrupt the meticulous planning but emerge as an ambiguous and somewhat hopeful glee in the production of space.

This project intends to produce a 'map of intensities' and to reproduce local pavement tiles made with local materials, to explore these entanglements by tracing the historicity of ruderal plants and their role in remediation and repair, particularly in the context of flooding (acqua alta). I will be consulting with the local NGO and artist, working with lagoon clay and investigating the adaptive strategies of halophytic weeds—plants that thrive in saline environments. Through material experimentation, I aim to test the potential of their roots and rhizomes as ecological agents of repair, engaging with Venice's precarious landscape through a practice of mapping, making, and collective inquiry.

@mother_matter

REHEMA KABARE

NAIROBI NOW

I am a construction engineering manager passionate about shaping inclusive and culturally-rooted urban spaces. My work explores the intersection of culture and the built environment to offer climate-resilient solutions that enhance well-being and human experience. As an early career researcher, I am exploring the feasibility of mass engineered timber as a sustainable construction material that contributes to near-zero African cities.

I am keen on merging my research and urban-culture experience to reimagine sustainable African cities, drawing from my MSc in Construction Engineering Management from the University of East London, UK and a BSc in Construction Management from the University of Nairobi, Kenya. My contributions to the built environment have earned multiple awards for academic and professional excellence.

Beyond construction and research, I have been a classical violinist for 15 years and perform with the Nairobi Orchestra in Kenya where I use music as a medium for expression of structure and creativity.



Project

I am proposing to work on a research project titled *The Intelligence of Materiality* which aims to showcase the ingenuity of the various materials used to construct buildings. The project will explore how people interact with materials, their perceptions of them and the overall effect of these materials on people 's lifestyle in an urban setting.

I aim to interrogate the ways in which materials in the construction sector have been used over different centuries, using the buildings in Venice as the case studies. By identifying a select number of materials, I shall look at the relationship people have with the building materials. This will be through the interaction they have with these materials such as smell, touch / feel, sight and perceptions.

These interactions will form the basis of the research data that will inform a larger research project to investigate the suitability of material use in cities, especially in emerging economies in the wake of climate change.

Upon my return to Kenya, I aim to advance this research with the goal of hosting a photo exhibition in Nairobi and publishing in an international journal. The project's outcomes shall also be included in my wider academic studies, particularly in a PhD programme I intend to commence in September 2025.

RICARDO MARCUS BURT

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



Working within community projects teaching kids broadcasting and dj skills I quickly learnt the power of community and horizontal skill sharing. For two years I've fostered skills and connections I gained through community projects to bring into my passion, aiming to showcase music, black British and community driven narratives. From textile mediums, to short films, I have a deep rooted love of research. I believe these kinds of attributes are running through the biennial, and each and every person attending. I was interested in applying last year but felt like I hadn't understood who I was as a designer yet.

With a much deeper understanding of my design practice and how it could impact the environment around me, I feel ready. I am drawn to a biennial which brings together so many disciplines under one theme to collaborate and connect. My work is very heavily inspired by black jazz music, the stories and communities they foster and diasporic joy..

Project

@ricardomarcusburt
@marcus__burt

I intend to develop a large-scale series of flags which brings together the rich history of the jazz scene that flows through Venice from Herbie Hancock to Miles Davis. The greats, playing at the jazz festival and the Venice Jazz club which hosts dimly lit nights of live experimental jazz. The type of place that sets my creative imagination running wild.

The freedom, the expression, the joy and the creative act of collaborating live with the high chance of it all going pear shaped, always leaves me in a state of joy and exhilaration. I often find it holds many similarities to collaborating on creative projects and how the biennial comes about, a lot of hands all working together towards an end goal.

Through primary research I aim to discover the jazz scene, both popular and hidden along with, potentially, diasporic greats who played in Venice. A focal point of my project is the confidence and self presentation that was displayed by the early male jazz musicians, if you are constantly looked at, then make it worth looking at. I would explore working with the textiles mills of Venice, Tessili Vittorio, Veneto for their beautiful shirting and cottons, Serica 1870 with their silk blend textiles, all which have long rooted histories. Utilising their fabrics to create flags that would embody the overlooked personal curation of jazz musicians.

Previous projects of mine have included a flag showcasing Jamaican runners but this would be my most ambitious and most heartwarming, bridging my aesthetics with my experiences and conversations of Venice. When I'm back in the UK I intend the flags to be put on public display. In tandem to the making of the flags I will be documenting the process and experience and create a mini film. This will become a vehicle for a way to showcase the work globally through a digital video format. Digital visualisation is a newer, rawer direction my practice is exploring, it is another form of communication, alongside and complementary to my making and designing.

TONY BULIMU ADEMBESA

NAIROBI NOW

I am Tony Bulimu Adembesa, a Kenyan-born artist and art curator based in Nairobi. I am part of an art collective of 30 professional artists, united by a shared commitment to storytelling—bringing to life personal narratives from our communities and the places we explore.

My work is driven by a deep interest in human culture, behaviour, and interaction. These elements shape the foundation of my artistic approach, influencing how I interpret and present the world around me.



Project

On my trip to Venice, my goal is to find common ground with the local communities—what connects us at our core? I believe that any meaningful negotiation begins with shared understanding. But before I can fully engage with the lessons my stay will offer, I must first grasp the facts: what do we truly have in common?

From there, I'll explore the deeper question: *what makes us, us?* This will be my guiding principle throughout my journey. The theme of the 2025 Venice Biennale, *Intelligence*, will shape my inquiry. And for one, architecture stands out as a defining element of our shared identity.

Once I've gathered insights, the next step will be to distil them into a statement—one that will influence my future career and help shape a more enriched, artistic, yet adaptable future for my people.

I plan to document this journey through short film, photography, notes, and perhaps even a painting—culminating in an exhibition for my final project.

Group 2

1st June – 1st July 2025



ABIOLA AKINPELU

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY



I am passionate about contemporary architecture and futuristic building design, exploring their intersections with human living, culture, and society. With a background in Civil Engineering and construction management, I draw inspiration from visionary architects like Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers. Their iconic works, such as the Shard in London and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, highlight the transformative power of architecture and inspire me as a young professional. I am particularly interested in how architecture and design enhance the educational and social value of culture, improving living experiences. This passion aligns with the Venice Fellowships Programme's goals, and I am eager to contribute to the appreciation of architectural exhibitions.

In my spare time, I love visiting cultural sites and exhibitions, always seeking new knowledge and inspiration. Representing at the British Pavilion would be an incredible opportunity to further explore these interests and share my insights.

Project

Idea: LiDAR technology for the Mapping of Ancient architectural civilization.

During my time in Venice, I plan to delve into the exciting intersection of modern technology and ancient history by exploring the application of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology in mapping ancient architectural civilizations. This research will focus on how LiDAR can reveal hidden architectural marvels and offer new insights into our historical heritage. It will also aid in the identification of the level of technical complexities in ancient architecture in comparison with modern development.

Upon returning to the UK, I plan to share my findings and experiences through various platforms including academic presentations, publications and collaboration with established partners such as academic institutions, archaeological societies and technology firms to further research and explore new applications of LiDAR in uncovering our past.

linkedin: [abiolaakinpelu](#)

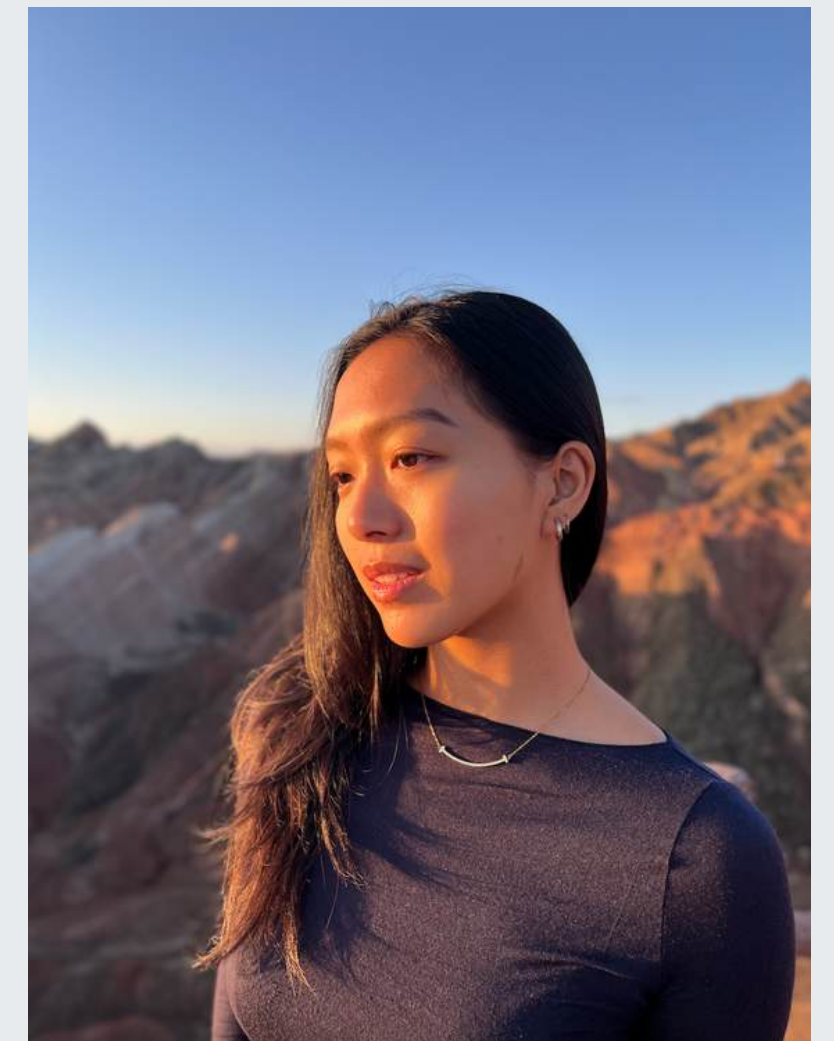
ARIEL ZHANG

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

My name is Ariel, ethnically Chinese, raised in an international context. I am a student, freelance visual artist, dance instructor, and travel addict who loves intercultural, interdisciplinary, interpersonal connections.

I am pursuing a Liberal Arts degree majoring in Art History. Although new to the discipline, I find art and the art world's ability to drive social change fascinating. I currently take modules such as contemporary art and curation, debates and contestation in art history. It has given me the knowledge toolkit to unpack exhibitions as a physical manifestation of institution, epistemology and social condition. While critically reflecting on the status quo to strive for institutional and social change.

I am someone who proactively seeks new learning experiences. I am currently exploring human connection in the context of movements. Discovering social dancing, martial arts, and callisthenics to unpack themes of social norms, gender fluidity, physical intimacy, and cultural diversity.



The curatorial team's description of the 2025 British Pavilion highlights "an embedded relationship to the ground, which are resilient in the face of climate breakdown, social, economic and political upheaval". The current society faces enormous challenges ranging from climate emergency, war, discrimination, human rights...the list goes on. Living in a time where the pressure of addressing these issues are urgent has led to a global epidemic of mental health. Cynical outlooks on the future can manifest in feelings of isolation, identity crisis, depression, and anxiety.

I want to explore this concept of "grounded-ness" in physical movement. How it can be extended to empower mental wellness. Movement in my opinion is such a unique platform because of its universality. It allows people to overcome language barriers and come into dialogue, with each other and themselves. This idea branches from my personal experience with social dancing, specifically kizomba: an afro style of partner dancing that focuses on weight transfer, connection with the ground, and connection with a partner. Through the journey of exploring this style of dance, I find the principle of groundedness is in every aspect of the dance.

From a physical perspective, being grounded in kizomba means maintaining balance, keeping your body on the axis, and pushing off the floor to create stylistic dynamics. This physical grounded-ness manifests in a mental groundedness of being present and confident about yourself in space, in relationships, in society. The direct effect physical 'groundedness' has on mental wellness is also recognizable in other movement based activity such as callisthenics.

I hope to explore how this abstract concept of grounded-ness can be created tangibly through movement in different contexts, and the mental effect it has. Specifically how grounded-ness can be used as a treatment that promotes individual wellness, and fosters community in building resilience to face the epidemic of mental health.

I intend on sharing this project after returning to the UK by incorporating my findings to dance lessons. Running grounded-ness dance workshops that focus on mental wellbeing. I hope that through running these workshops, I am able to bring conceptual findings into physical impact that promotes human connection and mental health at a local level.

ELIZAVETA VASILEVA

LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



Travelling is my number one passion. It gives me so much inspiration and a sense of freedom and connection with the world. I use every opportunity, no matter how small the trip is going to be. Every new encounter enriches my artistic practice. I love to talk with people from different backgrounds, make friends, and explore places. My favourite way to get to know each other better is by cooking together—did you know Russian dumplings, pel'meni, originate from my homeland, Udmurtia? I'm always excited to share the recipe.

Volunteering also influences my creativity. In Russia, I helped restore ancient wooden churches in the north. In Germany, I organised an inclusive exhibition for people with visual impairments. In Turkey, I supported local artists in exhibition planning. Through volunteering, I not only support communities but also exchange ideas, share my culture, and form meaningful connections.

Project

I would like to develop one of my MA projects on violence against women during my time in Venice. This project engages women who have experienced trauma, using creative practices as a platform to share their stories and raise awareness about these critical issues. The idea was inspired by the workshop session with Dr. Luisa Bravo. I especially related one of her projects, 'Imagining Public Space with/for Her;', that aims to activate a debate about public space from a gender perspective. Venice, with its unique urban structure and distinct socio-cultural environment, offers a compelling case study on women's safety and gender-inclusive urban planning. I aim to explore the city's design from a safety perspective, using performance art as a method of my research.

Upon returning to the UK, I plan to share my findings through a public presentation or workshop with peers and professionals. This will include visual documentation, research insights, and a discussion on how creative practices can address societal issues, fostering dialogue on urban safety and gender equality.

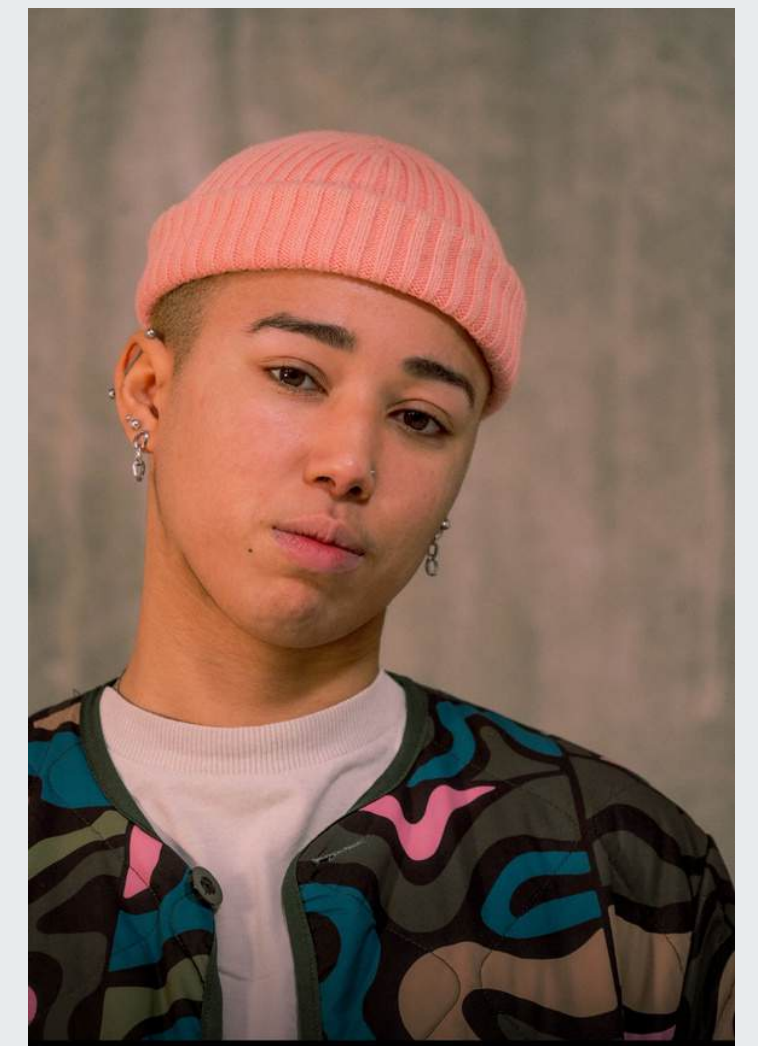
MYAH PHELAN

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

My name is Myah Phelan, and I'm an MArch student from Birmingham studying at the University of Liverpool. I have a deep passion for architecture, performance, and visual arts, and as a freelance DJ, I engage with queer and black culture. Through my sound, I explore the intersections of queer culture, creating safe spaces for expression. My sets draw from the black queer roots of Detroit and Chicago, aiming to educate audiences on queer electronic music history.

My interest in architecture and performance led me to work with Liverpool's 24 Kitchen Street, where I facilitated queer music education through the built environment. I secured funding for the SOPHIE mural, which later enabled me to organise a panel with the Stephen Lawrence Foundation for Black History Month.

These experiences highlighted the social and educational value of culture—particularly Black, queer, and music culture—which I hope to further develop through the Fellowships Programme.



The built environment is responsible for 42% of global CO2 emissions, with embodied carbon from construction and refurbishment contributing 20% of the UK's emissions. Approximately 50,000 buildings are demolished in the UK annually, creating 126 million tonnes of waste. Despite efforts to reduce emissions, the issue of embodied carbon remains largely overlooked.

My research project aims to address this by exploring how existing infrastructure can be preserved and reimaged using new technologies. Using this year's Venice Biennale theme 'Intelligens' as inspiration, my project will reinterpret the festival's ideas through natural, artificial, and collective methods in the context of Liverpool.

Rather than providing a singular solution for retrofit, my project will establish a precedent for reimagining space and demonstrating how neglected or endangered infrastructure can be revitalised with new value. This approach can help delay demolition, promote preservation, and indirectly reduce the need for new construction by retaining the embodied carbon of existing structures.

To reimagine spaces without carbon-intensive renovations, my project proposes using intangible means. I will record audio and video samples from the Venice Biennale to build an archive reflecting the festival's atmosphere. Using JavaScript, I will combine the visuals and projection-map them onto a Liverpool venue, while the audio will be used to train AI software to generate a sample pack. This will be shared with music producers to create short songs, and will be played alongside the visuals, transforming the space into an immersive, reimagined environment.

*It is important to acknowledge the use of AI. The AI in question will be trained and used locally as a result will use significantly less energy compared to more complex software which are generally trained using vastly larger amounts of data. This is in reference to the AI software Dance Diffusion which would be used to generate new sound.

ROBIN OGLE-SKAN

UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD

As a second year Architectural Engineering student, I am very passionate and interested in not only the general design of buildings but also how they differ globally according to where they are based with in different cultures.

I have also previously completed research projects on the differences of the structural design of buildings across the world depending on their local environmental constraints such as if that area is susceptible to frequent natural disasters or harsh climatical conditions, for example, earthquakes, hurricanes droughts. This project included many case studies from, Japan, California, Hong Kong, Malaysia and others.

I am also intrigued to learn and discover more about different design and architectural elements that originate or are inspired form other cultures around the world and see how they can be alluded to and encompassed within architectural designs.



Project

I plan to base my research project on the differences on how the buildings in Venice have been built and designed structurally compared to those in the UK. With a focus on how efficiently the city has been built on very soft marsh islands and how the UK could learn and potentially try something similar, especially with the increased frequency and severity of floods in the UK that has come as a natural response to climate change. Researching this topic will also give me the opportunity to gather data in the form of people's opinions via a short questionnaire on their opinion on how life in Venice is with the lack of roads and traffic due to the canals and footpaths instead, determining the social impact on local communities and individuals.

As the title of the Biennale (Intelligens. Natural. Artificial. Collective.) suggests, I am planning to cover all bases with my project, via: data collection, research on the original landscape of Venice, the engineering and architecture of the city, and the local and visiting community found in Venice.

I plan to present my findings in a portfolio style report with a focus on architectural sketches and photography.

TIM INGLEBY

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

I originally trained, qualified and practiced as an architect. I now work in academia full-time where I enjoy sharing my knowledge and enthusiasm for architecture with others.

My creative work is focused upon developing methods for how disciplines such as photography, sculpture, structural engineering, textiles and Generative AI can inform design and construction. My work is closely aligned with ideas about repair and concern for climate breakdown. It seeks to combine the use of low-impact/environmentally inert materials with approaches such as bricolage and ad-hocism to explore the artist and activist Theaster Gates' idea of 'second life'.

I have applied to undertake a PhD which seeks to reflect upon the works I've made and position them within a wider theoretical context. The ambition is to make the methods developed accessible to people with limited training or resources by developing a series of illustrated 'self-build' manuals.



Project

‘Squeri’ is the name used to refer to the small shipyards in Venice where expert artisans handcraft and repair wooden boats of the lagoon (gondolas, sandoli, topi, etc.). Jacopo de’ Barbari’s woodcut ‘View of Venice’ map of 1500 depicts some of the dozens of Squeri that once existed. Today only a small handful remain. This research project aims to record and depict the architecture and activities of these unique places of repair that for so long were responsible for maintaining the boats that transported food, fuel, water and mercantile goods around the city, while they still remain.

The project will commence with a review of historical and contemporary maps to identify the locations of past and present squeri. In addition to digital resources, this will also include visits to Venice’s Museo Storico Navale, and to the Museo de Correr which holds the original woodblocks used to reproduce de’ Barbari’s map.

In a dense city of brick and stone architecture, traditional Squeri are interesting exceptions. Their function requires distinct urban forms while their timber construction recalls alpine huts rather than the buildings that neighbour them. I propose making an architectural study that aims to understand and graphically communicate the typological characteristics of the Venetian squero in the context of this unique location and the circumstances that gave rise to these.

Alongside this typological study, I aim to produce a photographic study recording how these distinctive spaces are occupied and the work undertaken within them. While an output in and of itself, I am particularly interested in using these photos as a springboard for developing an existing research interest which develops methods for translating creative works across spatial dimensions. The inspiration for the proposed next stage of this investigation is the work of the great Venetian neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822), specifically his bas-reliefs. Though now scattered across the globe, Venice remains a great repository of Canova’s reliefs (Museo de Correr, Gallerie dell’ Accademia, Frari). Others are on display in Milan’s Gallerie D’Italia which can be visited en route to Venice. The Fellowship would provide an invaluable opportunity to study at first hand the composition and materiality of these incredible works, with the hope of developing methods that enable me to (a) inform the composition of the aforementioned photographic study, and thereafter (b) translate these 2-dimensional photographs into a series of 3-dimensional bas-reliefs.

TOBY BERRYMAN

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS



A proud Cornishman, passionate about my county's rich artistic heritage and its resultant social impact, my interests include writing/student journalism (for HASTA in St Andrews, although I have featured in The Times/Radio 4 and founded an arts-journal at my previous school), collecting (especially cartoons and illustrations, which I consider remarkably disrespected), and amateur-photography. I have, possibly atypically broad, cultural interests from Bruegel the Elder to AC/DC, Jamie Lloyd to Jenny Beavan, and I recently began lobbying for continued youth-access and youth-ticketing within many of the UK's galleries and theatrical spaces.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, therefore, I have a longstanding interest in art as performance, whether Gilbert & George's so-called 'living-sculptures', Robert Yeoman's cinematography, or simply the way we present outwardly on a daily-basis. Likewise, I am often drawn to the relevance of place (both contextually and content-wise) in the art world, owing no doubt to my own positionality: resident far from the bustle of London's art-scene and yet retaining a more profound regional identity.

Project

@home.onfilm

home, a photographic survey project that examines the dynamic status of 'home' conceptually, as well as its architectural-fluidity.

In practical terms, *home* seeks to photograph the residents and visitors of Venice (a snapshot of the current moment), inviting them to handwrite 'home' in their native-language/dialect on a board, before posing for a picture in front of their home-space. Showing only their lower body, the sign, and the openings of a location in-frame, the project affords just enough character (in clothing, writing) to satiate human curiosity, while seeking to anonymise the subject and highlight the fundamental equity of all peoples' struggles for 'home', amidst conflict/housing crises/tourism.

In the wake of the Venetian anti-turisti movement and drawing upon my own status as a lifelong resident within a tourist-hotspot, parallels with St Andrews where the student-influx has priced out locals and dismantled their understanding of home, and a flexible reflective but predominantly reactive approach to Venice itself; *home* would hope to challenge the Biennale concept (and its half- million visitors) whilst confronting the idealism of architectural-exhibition with the lived everyday realities of the wider populus outside the Giardini walls.

Thus, much as cave_bureau consider the natural materialities of the African city in their architectural practice, in line with 2025's UK-Kenya collaboration, *home* would aspire to address, actualise, and normalise the realities of diaspora life too, showcasing the nuanced actualities of 'home' (often temporary, or even unwanted) and its meaning to an inclusive, broad range of societal-groups.

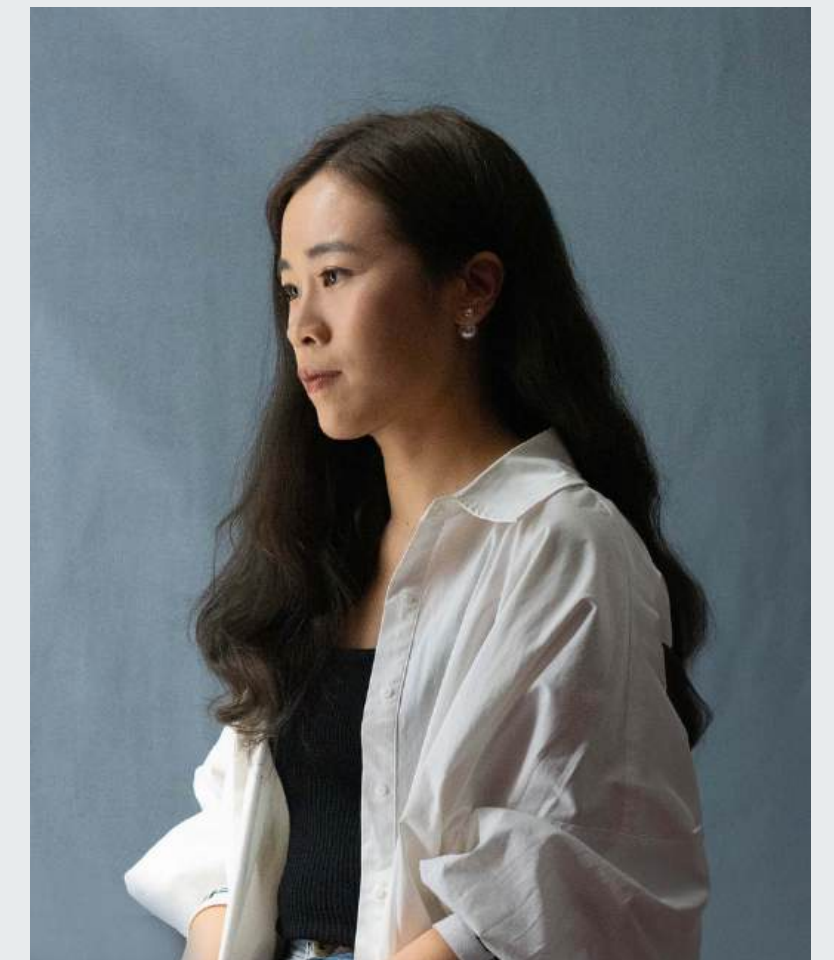
Confidently replicable throughout further settings (not least St Andrews and Porthleven), I propose a twofold method of exhibition for *home* – both a physical display (ideally evoking the very notion of community at the project's core) and a social-media-feed or digital website, enabling accessibility and encouraging a broader audience.

VANESSA MA

UAL (LONDON COLLEGE OF
COMMUNICATION)

I am a former practicing architect from Hong Kong, where I gained firsthand experience navigating the practical and bureaucratic frameworks that shape the built environment. This professional background has given me a deep understanding of how regulations, policies, and logistical considerations influence architectural outcomes. However, I became increasingly interested in exploring the invisible, emotional dimensions of architecture—elements often overlooked in traditional practice.

This led me to London to pursue further studies in documentary photography, an attempt to add an additional dimension to my artistic practice. Through my recent projects: a curatorial & exhibition programme Pixelated Chronicles on islands of Hong Kong and a speculative photography project Land Is the Only Thing That Lasts that includes an interactive installation and folded zine, I have sought to blend my architectural expertise with visual storytelling, uncovering how emotional narratives, memory, and cultural identity interact with regulatory structures and physical spaces.



Project

Venice, with its precarious existence on water, offers a unique context to explore how bureaucratic systems have historically shaped its resilience and renewal. My proposed project will investigate the intersection of governance, architecture, and ecological management, focusing on how regulatory frameworks influence water systems, land use, and urban transformation in Venice. By using photographic and mapping methodologies, I aim to reveal the often-overlooked structures that underpin the city's survival amidst rising waters and mass tourism pressures.

This research will draw parallels to my ongoing work on Hong Kong's islands, where similar tensions between bureaucracy, ecological fragility, and architectural interventions persist. It will culminate in a zine blending visual documentation, analytical maps, and reflections, highlighting Venice's intricate, unseen infrastructures of repair and renewal. The zine is intended as a dynamic tool to receive public feedback during the Biennale period, inviting audiences to engage with these critical issues.

Aligned with the Biennale's theme of repair, restitution, and renewal, this project examines how bureaucratic and ecological systems collaborate in sustaining fragile environments. By incorporating visual artifacts, the work extends beyond documentation, offering new ways of perceiving and critiquing governance, ecological management, and architectural transformation. These artifacts have the potential to bridge technical discourse and public understanding, emphasizing the psychological and cultural dimensions of repair.

@vanessaaaama
@_fab_a_scene_

Upon returning to the UK, I will host a zine/map launch and workshop, sparking discussions on visual methodologies in legal-architectural research. This foundational project also advances my aspiration to pursue a PhD exploring Photographic Methodologies for Documenting Legal-Architectural Transformation.

Group 3

29th June – 29th July 2025



BEATRIZ CASTRO

UAL (LONDON COLLEGE OF
COMMUNICATION)



I'm Beatriz, a multidisciplinary artist driven by a deep love for communication in its many forms. My journey has taken me from contemporary dance, where I earned my BA, to graphic design, and to founding my own illustration brand. At the heart of everything I create is the desire to connect—sharing emotions like anger, or sadness born from personal experiences.

I cherish the magic of working with my hands—experimenting with materials and finding joy in the act of creation. My art is a reflection of my life as a Latin-American woman, exploring how this identity shapes my world. Through my work, I hope to tell stories that resonate deeply, inviting others to see themselves in the honesty of my experiences.

Additionally, I'm passionate about food and its cultural significance, learning from my grandmother, my culture, and the people around me. For me, food is another form of storytelling.

Project

During my month in Venice, I'll take advantage of the Biennale—a gathering of cultures and ideas—to explore the intersection of domesticity, culture, and sustainability. Using the apron as a cross-cultural symbol of labor, identity, gendered expectations, and resilience, I aim to highlight its deeper significance across societies.

Drawing from my art background, I'll use the apron as a storytelling medium to trace its historical and cultural meanings, focusing on how it has shaped women's roles in domestic spaces worldwide. Inspired by the Biennale's theme of adaptive intelligence, I'll also examine how traditional kitchen practices have influenced modern sustainable methods. The apron serves as a lens to reveal how women's work in the kitchen—often invisible—can act as a site of cultural exchange, innovation, and empowerment.

At the Biennale, I'll conduct interviews and host workshops where participants can share their stories and design aprons using materials and tools reflective of their cultures. These aprons will capture the diversity and creativity of global kitchen traditions.

Back in the UK, I plan to organize an exhibition in a kitchen-inspired space, featuring the aprons created at the Biennale. Visitors will be able to interact with the aprons and listen to audio recordings of people sharing their experiences. This immersive experience will showcase how the kitchen has been reclaimed as a space of autonomy, protest, and community building, emphasizing its enduring role in cultural and sustainable innovation.

@habito.cr

CHARLOTTE BROOKS

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

I am passionate about architecture's role in shaping resilient communities and preserving cultural heritage. This passion has driven my professional and academic pursuits, from my undergraduate work on reimagining Saltaire's future and remembering the forgotten female mill workers of the past to engaging with primary school children and low-income families during my time at Mawson Kerr Architects.

My main passions within architecture are centred around sustainability and ecology. I am also fascinated by the intersection of architecture, design, and education – exploring how spaces can inspire learning and social engagement. During my time at Faulkner Browns Architects, I was involved in projects for schools and universities to create spaces that encouraged learning. I thoroughly enjoy sketching and modelmaking, which allows me to visually explore and communicate concepts. This aligns with the Fellowship's focus on culture and education, as I believe architecture can serve as both a physical and social catalyst for positive change, fostering deeper connections between people, place, and history.



Project

My BA dissertation was a creative non-fictional tale about the effects of the climate crisis on the landscape of the Lake District, set out as a parable for the present and our future. By applying 'storytelling' as a teaching method to understand material and social-cultural heritage through architecture, art, and design, we get a closer understanding of how to teach cultural heritage in the future. I am inspired by the 'passing on' of collective educational morale and the ability to embark on a time travel through storytelling.

English writer John Ruskin uses Venice as a lens into material cultural heritage to investigate the architectural qualities inherited in the material stories of the many famous buildings. His fieldwork had a phenomenological character, comparable to modern visual mapping methods, encapsulating this storytelling approach and highlighting how buildings and culture serve as lessons for both the present and future. Like Ruskin, I hope to tell a story of Venice for the present and our future. During my time in Venice I hope to share my research through online blogs and social media to document my process, ideas and reflections of the Fellowship, inviting peers to engage in the conversation. Upon my return to the UK, I would like to deliver talks or a visual exhibition for my peers to explain how storytelling can enhance our understanding and preservation of culture..

JAMES LEWIS

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY



I have a passion for supporting others, helping them each achieve their full potential and foster environments of working collaboratively towards a common goal. Whether this is academically, through roles like Course Rep, STEM Ambassador or Deputy Head Boy or sports as a Referee and Coach. In my experience of working young people, examples include helping them develop their skills in CAD, workshop modelling techniques and design proposals. I have experienced working with adults through my role as Course Rep where I help students resolves problems and help improve aspects of their experience.

Through my studies of Art and Architecture, I themed work around one of my keen interests is Archist Illustrations, (Example being Federico Babina). Being involved in the programme will help develop my interest in this area, create new ideas from the art galleries museums, cultural assets and architectural heritage in Venice and help me consider potential design applications.

Project

The future of the Built Environment faces a critical challenge in maintaining the balance between sustainable development and the preservation of cultural heritage. This dual imperative is evident in the contrasting yet interconnected contexts of Birmingham and Venice.

In Birmingham, particularly in Digbeth's Creative Quarter, the ethos of urban regeneration merges green building practices with cultural preservation. Meanwhile, Venice's struggle is magnified by the effects of climate change, particularly rising sea levels, necessitating innovative architectural and preservation efforts.

This research aims to explore how both cities are addressing the challenges of sustainable urban renewal while preserving their unique cultural and architectural heritage. By exploring the Biennale and areas around both cities, this research project will provide me with insights into best practices, shared themes, and distinctive approaches. My findings will inform my design concepts for future projects and contribute to my broader understanding of cultural and architectural integration, and potentially aid my final year project.

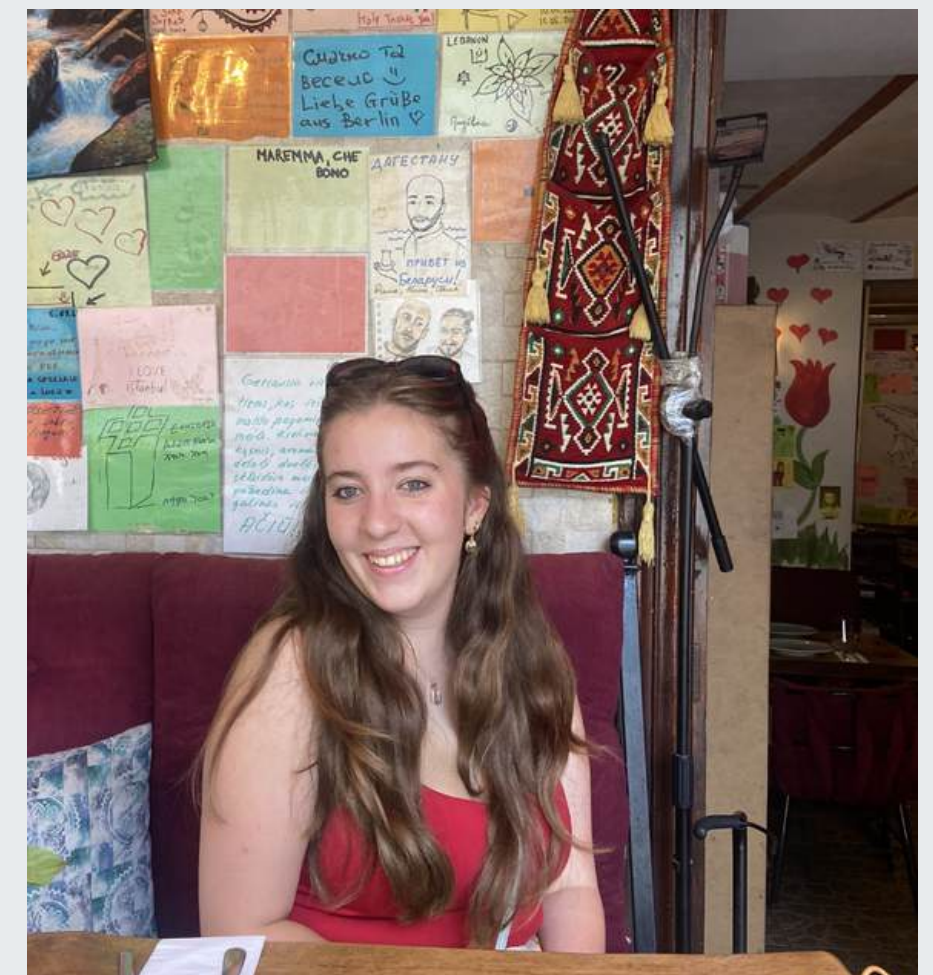
linkedin:james-lewis-
709674232

KATARINA KEMP

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

One of my main interests is world-building, its a tactic commonly used by creative writers and animators to help them flesh out an entire fantasy or even existing universe, I like to go to places with unique clever architecture and imagine the creatures and humans that could have lived there, how they would act and their society. I find it a wonderful way to connect to places and look closer at details along side that gaining a understanding of how the people that exist there react and normalise the world around them that may appear fascinating to others.

A lot of my free time is given to water sports, whether it be teaching or racing. The mere act of being out on the sea with the motion of the waves below me I find to be a necessity in my life in particular the moment when all that surrounds you is horizon, I have been teaching sailing since I was 16 and raising my younger cousins out on the water to get the same experiences. My interest in history specifically ancient history is a hobby that takes up a lot of my time, I find the ancient civilisations fascinating, along with their dedication to mastering the arts and philosophy, along with their architecture and often due to not having an over reliance on technology a better understanding of how to live in symbiosis with nature, coming from a costal town under threat from constant erosion and flooding it is goal that has become fundamental to keeping our house.



Project



Due to climate change my town has faced multiple issues – from field and marsh fires encircling it to floods sweeping away family members' caravans due to weakened natural defences. Human nature has adapted to it; where I once used to play as a child on the dunes is now unthinkable to even walk on and where people used to plant grass is now sea grass to strengthen the ground.

Humans adapt to necessity. I wish to create, via a series of interviews, observations and paintings, is an exploration of how Venice has adapted without noticing: the small actions humans have undertaken almost subconsciously; how the ground has changed under their feet without them noticing; what of their life is irrevocably changed without hope for change due to climate change.

I plan to share this findings via a series of large scale poster-paintings aimed to draw attention and shock.

@kata_kemp

KIZZY ROSE BUDD

ARTS UNIVERSITY PLYMOUTH



My main interests are making practises and their social and educational value. Craft is everywhere in our daily lives, and has been for centuries. Wood, metal, ceramic and fibres saturate our domestic spaces, form the clothing and jewellery we wear and the tools we cook and eat with. Craft, in this way, provides an expansive entry point to engage people with making, material practises as well as culture and heritage.

I also believe that craft can offer us a vision for the future of sustainable design. It presents us with a rich archive of global knowledge which illuminates the relationship between natural resources, the transformation of these, and the ways making processes have been adapted through collective knowledge building and sharing. Craft, in this way, both offers opportunities for social and educational engagement as well as the existing material knowledge and technologies needed to uncover solutions to global crises collectively.

Project

With the total depletion of many of the natural resources used in craft practices predicted to occur in the next 40 years, many practitioners, including myself, are looking for more truly circular, sustainable ways to practise their craft.

My main medium is clay, a material which is largely a waste by-product of the construction industry. During this time in Venice, I would like to make connections with architects, developers and fellows to research how this 'waste' clay could be harnessed as an important and sustainable resource in mitigating economic barriers to making practices in the UK.

When back in the UK, I would like to disseminate this research through a series of workshops which explore and make visible the extractive economies embedded in the ceramics industry and the chain of industrial processes which transform the earth's materials into the objects we use daily.



@kizzybudd

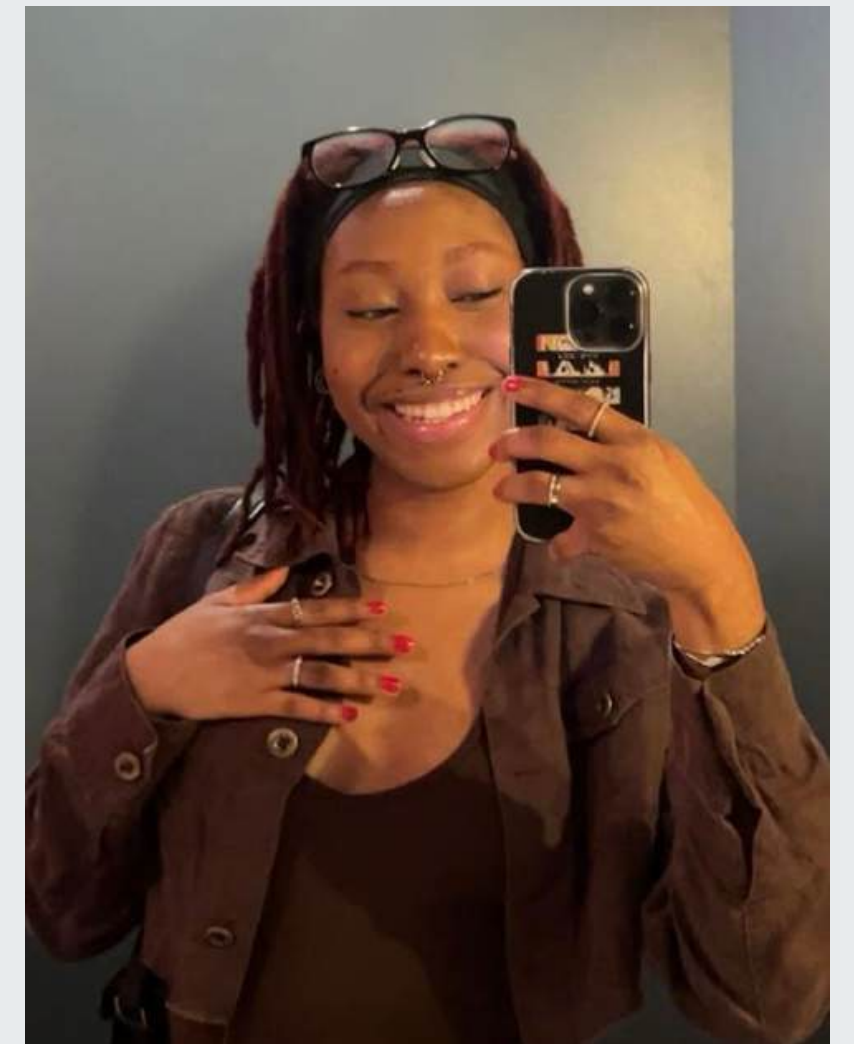
OISEORHENUAN AHIMIE

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

I am an Irish architecture student of Nigerian heritage, currently exploring life in the UK. I'm passionate about using design and creativity to explore the intersection of diverse cultural narratives. With a curious mindset, I love connecting ideas across disciplines, always eager to learn a little about everything.

My creative interests span writing, drawing, fashion design, and architectural sketching, allowing me to celebrate cultural richness through design. I also love traveling, as it fuels my curiosity and offers opportunities to immerse myself in global architectural heritage. In my downtime, I find joy in running, swimming, discovering new restaurants, and watching films—activities that often influence my creative rhythm.

I deeply align with the ethos of the fellowship programme and I'm excited to contribute my perspective, shaped by my multicultural background and passion for learning. I look forward to engaging with initiatives that foster dialogue through architecture, culture, and storytelling.



Project

My research project will explore the intricate relationship between sound, memory, submerged ruins, and architecture in Venice. The city's unique acoustic environment is central to its cultural identity and urban experience, and I am particularly interested in how architecture, when intertwined with sound, has the potential to inspire reflection and deepen the connection between people and places. Given the opportunity, I aim to explore how these sounds, combined with Venice's architectural elements, shape collective memory and influence the emotional and cognitive experiences of residents and visitors.

I will focus on how soundscapes in Venice's spaces foster introspection, drawing people closer to the city's past and present. Central to this research will be Venice's submerged ruins and forgotten foundations, shaped by rising sea levels, which influence the evolving soundscape. These hidden remnants offer insight into the intersection of memory, decay, and renewal.

Working with local experts such as divers, gondola operators, and residents, the research aims to reimagine both surface architecture and submerged ruins as dynamic, living spaces. By proposing sustainable practices that integrate sensory experiences with adaptive design, the research will examine Venice's delicate balance between preservation and progress, revealing how the city, built on sound, memory, and water, thrives through their constant interplay.

After the Fellowship, I plan to share my findings through an interactive architectural model. This 3D-printed topographical representation will explore the intersection of Venice's submerged and surface architecture, accompanied by immersive sound maps. The model, combined with soundscapes of Venice's acoustic environment, will allow my UK peers to experience firsthand the dynamic relationship between sound, memory, and architecture. By blending architectural intervention with sensory experience, I aim to foster a deeper reflection on Venice's cultural transformation and its relevance to sustainable urban development, sparking conversations on preservation and progress.

@arch.rhenua

SOFIA VICTORIA RAMIREZ SANDOVAL

KINGS COLLEGE LONDON



I am currently working towards my Master's in Arts and Cultural Management at King's College London. As an international student from a city on the Mexican border, I'm particularly interested in the curation of international exhibitions that transcend frontiers and serve as bridges for different cultures to foster reflection and reach solutions collaboratively. If I had to name an example, the Venice Biennale would be the perfect one, especially when considering this year's Architecture Exhibition's theme of using intelligence to tackle the current climate crisis.

My undergraduate studies were in International Relations, so I'm well-versed on how exhibitions of this scope are invaluable for cultural diplomacy. Not only is the International Architecture Exhibition an instrumental space for education and productive dialogue, but it is also a breeding ground for collaboration on all levels that I am thrilled to make the most of as a Fellow.

Project

I've previously done academic research on the Venice Biennale. Given my International Relations background, I'm fascinated by the collaboration between the UK and Kenya for this year's exhibition at the Architecture Biennale. When looking into the theme for this year's International Architecture Exhibition, I found curator Carlo Ratti's prompt for national participations "One place, one solution" highly stimulating. In his introduction, he expresses that the current (and urgent) climate crisis is "a challenge that can only be tackled in a cooperative manner, reflecting a multiplicity of approaches," which is something I strongly agree with and see directly represented in the UK-Kenya team focusing on architecture of repair.

In a similar vein of international collaboration, for my research project I'd be interested in exploring the representation of diaspora in the 19th International Architecture Exhibition's National Pavilions as an asset for addressing global matters such as the climate crisis. I'm interested in developing this research through content analysis, structuring a coding process for the visual contents of the exhibitions at the different National Pavilions and their accompanying texts. If possible, I'd be interested in interviewing the invigilators to gain verbal accounts of the themes covered by their respective exhibitions.

To seek out trends in these, an important starting point to develop the necessary categories would be a literature review drawing from the research of Karen-Mary Davalos (UMN), Jefimija Vujcic (U Toronto) and Artwell Cain (ICHK). As a fan of documentary short films, I believe the most effective to share my research would be via a creative video report, ideally including clips not only of the exhibits and the themes displayed but also of the interviews.

@sofi.vic

SOPHIA FOSTER

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

My interest in poetry and community-building guides my curatorial praxis. Having written poetry since five years old and evolving as a writer through readings, collaborative works, a poetry residency at Royaumont Abbey in France, and a minor in creative writing, I appreciate language's ability to nurture accessible communal knowledge. I completed my bachelor's degree in art history and a year-long curatorial fellowship at the Rollins Museum of Art in Florida, experiences driven by my passion for communicating art's sociopolitical significance.

During my undergraduate studies, I dedicated 1,200 hours to service work, an experience that opened my eyes to the possibility of poetry and art as a vehicle for social change and healing. This possibility becomes particularly radical when functioning within built community spaces.

Currently as a graduate student studying curation and contemporary art, I am exploring a curatorial framework prioritizing the relationship between art, language, and building physical/social communities.



Collaborative Video Art w/ Hannah Neo: I OWN THIS SPACE
wrote and voiced poems + shadow performance



Project

The foundations of the project I will develop during my Venice residency emerged as I thought about how architecture and the visual arts represent the embodied human experience, and how similarly, language does the same. Experimental writing can aid in reimagining the embodied experience and continue to deconstruct current systems that persistently threaten humanity and the earth itself.

Complementing Cave Bureau's radical transformation of the physical space, I will produce a chapbook of experimental poetry and prose that digests, communicates, and elaborates upon their visual exploration. By incorporating poetry and prose, my project will encourage critical conversations without putting restrictions on who has access, or the "right answer," to the knowledge shared via writing. Poetry and prose will add to the critical discourses of the exhibition in a new way, engaging with an accessible way to facilitate dialogues about art and its context.

@sophi.fo

Group 4

27th July – 26th August 2025



ANNE KIMUNGUYIL

HOME GROWN PLUS



I am an early-career researcher, writer, and editor, currently studying for an MA in Contemporary Art Theory at Goldsmiths University. I am interested in ecocritical, geographic and spatial ways of observing histories within artistic and architectural practises. My research interrogates the permeability of colonial logics within rural and urban administration, underpinned by a consideration of geographic sites – oceans, landmasses, cityscapes – as zones of archive and inquiry.

My writing practise engages with these ideas beyond traditional academic formats. It spans poetry and speculative fiction, rooted in experimental and expansive modes of articulation. Influenced by artists/writers such as Imani Jacqueline Brown, Octavia Butler and Dionne Brand, my writing speaks to that which escapes conventional or historical documentation. Additionally, much of my art writing comprises of spotlights, reviews or criticism, and regularly features in platforms such as Shade Art Review – a newsletter dedicated to the work of contemporary Black artists and practitioners.

Project

I wish to explore questions of scale as both integral to notions of planetary repair, and as shaped by the shifts in perceptions stemming from their localisations across varying geographical zones – specifically in relation to Kenya and the UK.

My proposal comprises of three parts:

- a) I seek to produce a compilation of written work, responding to the pavilion's themes of extractive geology, expanded architecture, and processes of 'unearthing' and repair. These will constitute poetic and experimental forms of writing that lean into an understanding of earth as archive to these practises.
- b) I would like to collaborate closely with other fellows to coordinate a series of public-programme workshops in and around the exhibition. My ambition is for these workshops to encourage visitors to produce varied and experimental writings, using the exhibition's UK-Kenya collaboration as an entry/departure point to grapple with the politics of scale that characterise considerations of extraction, architecture and repair in relation to the two countries. Equally, I hope to locate prompts within the local context of its display in Venice, exploring what changes when the city is foregrounded in these questions.
- c) Upon returning, I wish to coordinate a display that showcases the written responses produced in the workshops, fitting them within the constellations of understandings developed through thinking with Kenya, with the UK, and with Venice. My aim is to conclude with a final invitation to respond, further encouraging London communities to relate to planetary questions of repair and renewal via their local context.

@annekimunguyi

KLARISSA KATZ

OUTSIDE IN

Utilising my experience as an outsider artist, art workshop facilitator and designer I've been navigating my own mental health, views on climate change and human relations to natural materials through art making and learning craft skills. That journey has led to my enrollment on an architectural stone carving BA degree with the City and Guilds London Art School.

My intention is to pursue stone carving and sculpture and to further explore human-material relationships and how art in public places is informed by and informs local natural and social ecosystems, with an interest in art as a foundation for social ethics and the philosophy of craft.

I am also interested in the therapeutic benefits of art-making and craft overall, with a consideration for accessibility. I have facilitated therapeutic workshops in the past for disadvantaged groups and for young people with additional needs and have designed for environmental advocacy groups.



Project

I would like to explore the themes of the exhibition through human relationships with water. How we, as humans, have interacted with this maternal element and found ourselves 'above and below' it; at times the arrogant master and exploiter, at others reminded of our fragility and wonder before a sublime, untameable blue world.

Within this framework, I would embrace the exhibition's focus on 'repair' by exploring the symbiotic architectural heritage of Venice and how architecture and publicly accessible art can establish new mythologies, dialogues and ethical/philosophical thought processes.

I would like to interpret this research holistically, not only informed by the exhibition and factual, historical explorations, but also by collective experiences with water in coastal environments, and how the element in combination with human activity is understood.

My research will encompass process-led material exploration, embracing a feeling-sensing approach intending to examine the environment and develop an intimacy of understanding through a practical and emotional searching, to better understand material-human connection, collaboration and belonging. I think this would be an enjoyable feature of my project development to share with other fellows with me on the project and with my associated peer groups in the UK.

On returning from Venice I would like to deliver talks/discussions in combination with practical workshops with my peers. Uncovering our relationships to the elements of our natural world, considering what repair and empowerment means in our current circumstances and how we reinvent our world through the narratives we display on our unique cultural pathways.

@klarissakatzart

LALIA SAIDY KHAN

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS



My career interest is in architecture exhibitions and the dissemination of architectural knowledge. I'm interested in how architecture is exhibited and what we choose to display. Architecture is an art form and a discipline that touches our lives every day so should be shared not just in its completed form; it is important to show the processes that create the spaces that one exists in day-to-day. I'm excited to develop my ideas on how we can best engage people with architecture in this way.

Outside of my work, I'm interested in writing, photography and drawing and how people appropriate these forms of media to express their personal experience of life and space. A camera roll can tell us what a person thinks is worth capturing – what they consider to be important. By uncovering common themes in what people are documenting, we learn about society's interests more widely.

Project

a) Connecting my interests in documentation, architecture, and engagement with exhibitions, I intend to create a series of alternative maps of the Biennale spaces. Whilst I have a few themes as a starting point for the mapping, I hope to develop more whilst invigilating and exploring the Biennale. Below are some examples of the maps I want to develop (here in the context of the RA). Overlaying the visitor map, words and colour are used to demonstrate spaces where different groups who work in the RA spaces interact and how these crossovers play out spatially.

Using a similar technique at the Biennale, I will begin with mapping the ways in which people's jobs/role in the production of the exhibitions impacts their movements through the spaces; who are the different actors that come together to "stage" the Biennale and how do they experience the spaces? Alongside this, I will develop a series of maps that note how visitors experience the spaces. Where do they stop? Where do they sit? Where do they take pictures? Where do they interact with staff members?

b) I want the work produced to act as a journal entry, documenting the month through the lens of spatial practice. I would like to show the work as a series of images with the maps, as above. The moments that are more anecdotal, I would like to take the opportunity to invite other members of the programme to share their stories. This could be through a live event but also as videos to be shared through personal blogging. In this way, I hope that the observations and the physical work act as a springboard for further conversations with my peers following the fellowship.



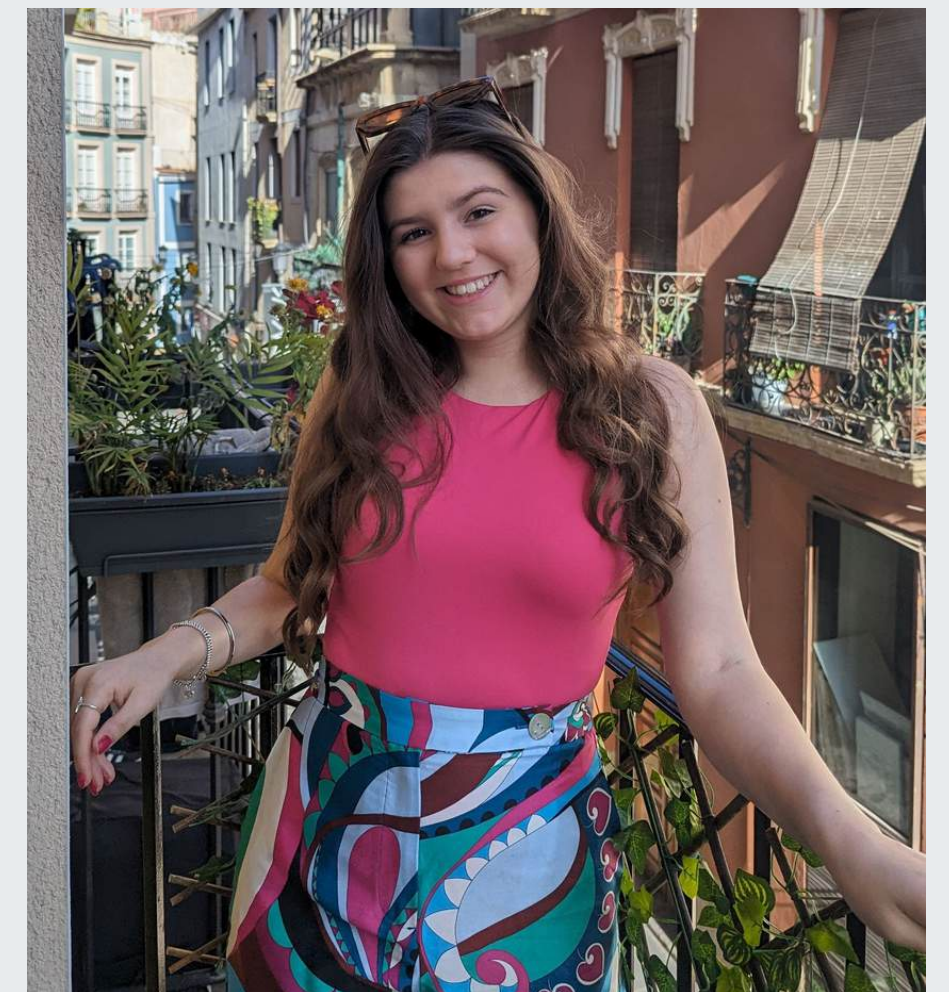
@lalia_again

LAUREN POHL

UNIVERSITY OF CARDIFF

Architecture, for me, is the connection of creativity, social impact, and human understanding. Spending a semester at the University of Melbourne offered me a global perspective on diverse design philosophies and solidified my appreciation for architecture's educational and cultural significance. After completing my Bachelor's at Nottingham University, I gained practical experience in a collaborative architectural firm in Cardiff, which further ignited my love for teamwork and the dynamic profession. Currently I am undertaking my Master of Architecture at Cardiff University as the next stage to becoming a qualified architect.

I continuously seek to deepen my cultural awareness through travel, often aligning these experiences with art and architectural exhibitions. The Venice Fellowships Programme presents an exciting opportunity to engage in these passions on an international stage, connecting with others and advancing my understanding of architecture's role in shaping societies.



Project

I would like to explore the art of compactness within architecture, this would explore Venice as a model of high-density living that thrives without the presence of cars. Uncovering urban strategies that foster community cohesion, sustainable mobility, and efficient land use.

While in Venice, I will document the city's unique pedestrian network, compact urban form, and the ways public spaces, such as piazzas and calli, serve as social hubs within a dense environment. This would involve on-site observations, sketching, and photographic documentation of key streets, public spaces, and pedestrian flows, with an emphasis on how these areas naturally support transit-oriented development (TOD) principles without conventional vehicle infrastructure.

Additionally, I plan to engage with current residents to gain insight into how they navigate their city, and how different attributes of the same spatial typologies can influence user interaction. The findings would be visualised with diagrams and artwork that highlight if Venice's pedestrian-centric design facilitates high-density living, reduced congestion, and enhanced quality of life—all key components of TOD.

Upon my return, I plan to share my research through a mixed-media presentation at my workplace. I plan to invite my fellow architects, planners, and technicians to collaboratively discuss how Venetian urban design could be adapted for UK-based projects. Early brainstorming has already raised curiosity about how UK goals such as the 15-minute city can translate to venetian life where proximity is crucial, and walkability is inevitable.

@lauren_pohl

NAHLA SALKINI

UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD



Raised at the intersection of a British home and the rich tapestry of a Syrian identity, I have always been fascinated by the contrasts between the wildly differing traditions, cultures, and art. Growing up, I was immersed in the beauty of calligraphy, arabesques, and intricate mosaics — a stark contrast to the satirical, grim-yet-grand, and playful-yet-cynical British art scene. My expression has become a bridge, weaving my heritage into reality and telling the story of a enduring culture through creativity.

My work takes the form of whimsical cartoon illustrations—paradoxically juxtaposing harsh realities—and documentary photography that captures the world in its rawest form. I have exhibited at the Manchester Open and contributed to a women-led magazine, using my art as a medium for storytelling, reflection, and cultural connection.

Project

In my project I aim to explore how climate change is reshaping Venice's food, identity, and community spaces. As environmental shifts affect local ingredients, Venetians—both native and from ethnic minority communities—adapt their culinary traditions, influencing their sense of belonging and social cohesion. Through a visual and sensory approach, the project aims to capture how food unites a diverse Venice in the face of change.

The project unfolds in three parts:

1. *Photography Series* – A collection of portraits featuring Venetians in markets, kitchens, gardens, and 'third-spaces', documenting their experiences interacting with foods and community. Accompanying quotes will share their reflections on adaptation, tradition, and community.
2. *Illustrated Recipe Collection* – Each portrait will be paired with a hand-drawn recipe reflecting the individual's cultural heritage and adaptations to changing food sources. These recipes highlight the intersection of tradition and environmental shifts.
3. *Community Dinner* – To bring it all together, a shared meal bringing together participants to celebrate their stories and recipes. The space will feature large-scale photographs, recipe illustrations, and ambient sounds from Venice, immersing into the city's evolving food culture.

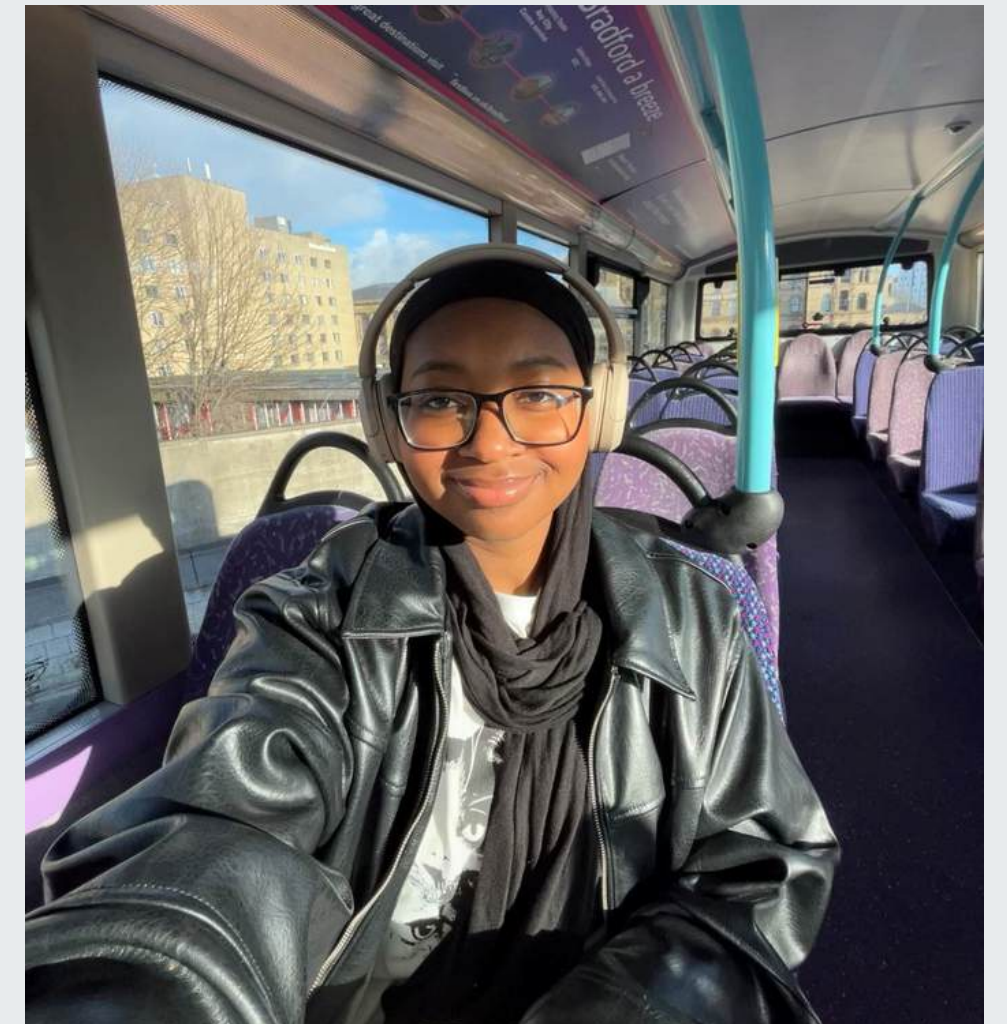
SAUDAT KOGUNA

UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD

I am a civil engineering university student. I have always been interested in architecture and structures since high school, designing and creating beautiful spaces has always brought me happiness. I am passionate about creativity, my hobbies are drawing, painting, reading and visiting museums.

Traveling has been my favourite activity to do since arriving at the UK, I have visited many areas around such as, Halifax, Harrogate, York, Knaresborough, Haworth, Spofforth and Blackpool. As well as cities like London, Leeds, Brighton and Manchester. I am always looking forward to traveling to new places to learn something new.

I am a student brand ambassador for adobe express, I oversee the promotion of the app and teaching student to be more creative as well as informing students about the benefits of the app. I work well with people and enjoy meeting new people also finding it easy to start a conversation.



Project

My project titled *“Resilient foundations: Bridging Venice and African coastal communities”* I will be exploring the intersection of historical architecture, climate resilience and sustainable practices by drawing comparisons between Venice’s adaptive designs and strategies used in African coastal communities, in countries like Nigeria or Kenya. These countries face challenges posed by rising water levels and environmental pressures, which makes this a meaningful study in cross-cultural solutions to sustainability.

In Venice I will investigate historical structures for example St. Mark’s Basilica and its canal systems, and how it has adapted to environmental problems over the centuries. As for Nigeria, I will be concentrating on coastal areas like Makoko in Lagos, these structures are innovative with stilt buildings and floating structures to protect them from flooding. This research will demonstrate the architectural response to water related challenges and how different cultures and communities face them. I could also include some examples from Kenya.

I will be documenting this study through sketches, models, paintings, photography and videos. The final project will be a visual demonstration of Venice’s and Africa’s artistry, functionality and sustainability in architecture, these innovations can inspire global solutions to rising water levels and urban resilience.

Sharing the project in the UK will be done by presenting a multimedia display of side-by-side comparison of Venetian and African architectural techniques, that will be including paintings models, sketches, photos and videos.

@saudat_kx

STELLA LONIE-LEWIS

DURHAM UNIVERSITY



I am a Modern Languages and Cultures student, currently completing my year abroad in Italy and France. My studies have highlighted the importance and developed deep appreciation for intercultural dialogue, a theme central to the Fellowship Programme's mission of cultural engagement.

During my ERASMUS+ programme in Siena, I had the privilege of connecting with an international group of students, immersing myself in diverse perspectives on art, architecture, and cultural heritage. This constant cultural exchange has not only broadened my understanding of these traditions but has also challenged preconceptions, fostering empathy and a greater cultural awareness.

Beyond my studies, I am a musician and frequent composer, playing the piano and saxophone to explore the creative connections between language and the arts. I am also part of my college's rowing team, a sport that builds resilience, dedication, and collaboration —qualities I would bring to engage with visitors and support the Fellowships Programme.

Project

linkedin: slonieLewis

In Venice, I aim to compose a piece that embodies the UK-Kenya Biennale theme of 'repair, restitution, and renewal'. This project blends research on both Kenya and British musical traditions to create a work that celebrates cross-cultural dialogue while communicating the exhibition's core themes.

My project has two main elements. Firstly, it will explore and merge elements of both Kenyan and British musical heritage. By researching traditional music from both cultures, I will examine how these traditions can interact. For example, Kenyan call-and-response patterns and rhythms might engage with Western tonal structures, creating a musical dialogue that celebrates both styles and invites listeners into a cross-cultural exchange through familiar and new musical motifs.

Secondly, the composition will follow a thematic structure based on 'repair, restitution, and renewal'. It will begin with fragmented, dissonant melodies and rhythms, symbolising brokenness. As the piece progresses, these fragments will evolve through blend of musical motifs that complement and 'repair' each other. Moving toward harmony, the composition will conclude with a unique synthesis of UK and Kenyan musical ideas, symbolising a renewed and collaborative future. This structure aligns with the Biennale's architectural focus, turning both music and architecture 'inside out' as a lens to envision spaces of justice, healing, and shared heritage. I also hope to incorporate field recordings from UK and Kenyan natural soundscapes, emphasising each culture's connection to nature.

Returning to the UK, I plan to present this project through a multimedia event, perhaps during Durham University's Global week. This presentation will feature a performance of the composition, supported by visual materials from the Biennale to create an immersive experience. I also plan to create a digital version of this presentation to reach wider audience, aiming to inspire conversation about cultural interaction and the role of art in addressing social and environmental challenges.

VY TSAN

SOAS

As an emerging Asian-Australian researcher and curator, my practice centres on diasporic material culture and fostering care for objects within foreign museum collections. Most recently, I have pursued these passions as Curatorial Assistant, International Art at the National Gallery of Australia.

I hold a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Art History & Curatorship from the Australian National University, which have shaped my ethics-led, interdisciplinary approach to research. Currently, I am a postgraduate student at SOAS studying Asian Art.

My other interests include creating zine and artbooks, and supporting collaborative output through small-scale publication.



Project

While in Venice, I would like to explore and develop the concept of Material Kinship as a framework for deconstructing traditional human-centric and consumption-driven perspectives on material. This concept, drawn from the making ethos of the artist Clementine Edwards, challenges extractivist attitudes reflected in our built environment by positioning 'kinship objects' – heirlooms and artefacts passed down by people – as entities estranged from their natural life cycles and ecosystems.

Within the unique hydropolis of Venice, where water shapes both the city's architecture and cultural identity, my research will be grounded by the ever-present interplay between the natural and built environments as articulated by Astrida Neimanis' theory of Hydrofeminism.

The primary objectives of this project will be to illustrate that materials within the built environment have been isolated from their natural lifecycles. Thus, we should prioritise their care and make ourselves their kin, as we have estranged them from their natural order.

Group 5

24th August – 22nd September 2025



AMY BRADNOCK

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



I am passionate about ceramics, which has been the main focus of my artistic practice in recent years. My work explores the inherent materiality of clay, its responsiveness to touch, and its agency as a material. I am particularly drawn to the craft aspect of making—focusing on process and material exploration rather than creating art solely to convey meaning or statements. For me, craft reconnects us to materials, ourselves, and our communities, as it is inherently rooted in collective practices.

My current research investigates how material bodies influence one another, whether through the act of making or through our physical navigation of spaces. From a curatorial perspective, I am intrigued by how people interact with and move through a space, not just in relation to the artworks but in how their bodies shape and respond to the environment.

This has inspired my interest in creating immersive environments that incorporate sensory and visual elements, creating deeper connections between space, material, and audience.

Project

@amybradnock.art

For my research proposal, I aim to explore the embodied interactions between the human body, architecture, and materiality, focusing on specific spaces within the Biennale and the unique architectural context of Venice. Using a phenomenological approach, I will examine how visitors navigate these spaces and how their physical movements shape both the perception of the architecture and the material environment.

I plan to observe how bodily interactions—walking, touching, and engaging with installations—create a dialogue between the human body and the materials of the space. I'm particularly interested in the subtle, often unnoticed traces left by the body on materials, such as wear patterns, imprints, or shifts in the material itself. These traces, in turn, alter the space's perception for future visitors, creating a dynamic, evolving relationship between people and place. Additionally, I'll explore how Venice's cultural context shapes the embodied experience of these spaces, looking at local customs and movement patterns that inform how people engage with architecture. The project will be documented through photography, video, sketches, and written notes, capturing both physical responses and material shifts over time.

Following my research, I will create small-scale installations using materials like clay, glass, to mimic how spaces absorb and respond to bodily presence. These installations will invite viewers to physically engage with the material environment and experience first-hand the embodied interactions I've observed.

Upon returning to the UK, I will present my findings through a visual documentation, of physical installations, and written reflections on the intersection of body, space, and material. Additionally, I will create a digital portfolio to present my findings possibly offering virtual recreations of the spaces. This will encourage them to reflect on their own embodied experiences and deepen their understanding of the ways bodily movement shapes our perception of the built environment.

ELIZABETH GRINTER

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

I am a third-year architecture student at UCA who strives to use design as a vessel for positive social change and addressing the climate crisis. I am passionate about inclusive and sustainable design that involves accessibility and prioritising community.

My current project is housing for parents in the textiles industry with a built-in communal studio and childcare facility. I have travelled European cities to admire their architecture and art. Before university, I studied an art foundation diploma where I explored sculpture and public installations, and I design with people's engagement in mind. I love art exhibitions, recently seeing Sarah Lucas', Louise Bourgeois' work and Henry Moore's studio.

My hobbies include crochet: last year I set up a craft and gossip society at university combining a creative outlet with meeting new people. As president of 'Stitch n' Bitch', I am responsible for running weekly sessions and I teach crafting skills.



Project

I wish to revive traditional craft and decorative techniques by creating a collaborative wall tapestry with recycled materials, acting as temporary internal insulation while celebrating it as a form of decoration. Reflecting the 'inside out' theme at the British Pavilion, this idea takes the usually hidden function of insulating and makes it a feature. This concept could both retrofit old buildings in winter to improve thermal efficiency and insulate tents and temporary accommodation for refugees and homeless people. I would hold a pop-up community workshop and research existing craft groups in Venice, reaching out to collaborate. The workshop would bring together people from different cultures, backgrounds and generations to value handmaking methods, while also highlighting the damaging impact of fashion and textiles.

On a global scale, fast-fashion waste is offloaded on developing countries and pollutes their immediate environments. In October, the Venice Sustainable Fashion forum discussed improving this industry's impact. Encouraging a circular economy, I intend to collect fashion waste in Venice through an open call for unwanted textiles that can be reclaimed for a second life as decorative insulation.

Within the workshop, I would empower people with craft skills through a collaborative prototype predominantly using hand sewing, carrying out a full risk assessment and enlisting other fellows to help run it. I would speak to participants about their family or cultural connection to domestic craft, collating their responses into a research diary. I would continue with workshops in the UK, collaborating with local refugee charities. This would make the tapestry an international collaboration and connect strangers through co-creation.

@lizziegrinter

JUDITH THURSFIELD

UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD



Craft has been part of my life for many years, but it is only recently that I have been able to work towards any formal art qualifications. I have taken on a part-time BA (Hons) course in Textiles as a way of bringing my technical skills together with a more academic aspect of learning. This will be completed in early 2025. It is through this work that I have become interested in slowing down when looking at Urban environments and picking out small details for use in my own work.

Having worked in the NHS through the pandemic it became very important to me to have a creative outlet away from that work. Having something to work on that results in a finished item gives a great sense of accomplishment and helps to maintain good mental health.

I feel that craft, design and art should be accessible to everyone, so I would be keen to learn more about the British Pavilion exhibition to explain features of the work to any visitor to the Pavilion who feels that the exhibition is not for them.

Project

Urban environments are not often used to inspire textile ideas. I feel that these areas deserve further exploration to give up their secrets. To do this we will need to stop scrolling on our phones and really observe the places we are walking through each day.

While it would be great to explore all Venice, I would like to limit the areas that I explore to those noted by Ralph Rumney in his 1957 psychogeography exploration of the city. He was looking at sections of the city that were less explored by tourists, proposing six walking routes. I think it would be interesting to follow at least two, if not all, of these routes.

By doing this I believe that shapes, patterns and colours can be extracted from each place that can then be used in textile-based projects.



@judith_thursfield

MARLIE EWART-BIGGS

DURHAM UNIVERSITY

I am half Ugandan and English and currently studying Visual Arts and Film at Durham. I have always been very interested in the portrayal of African in the UK, frustrated by imagery centred on poverty and conflict.

My artistic interests are in sustainable fashion and design, and use of traditional methods. In Uganda I have researched the use of Bark Cloth in crafts and jewellery making with recycled glass. In Durham I involve myself in artistic endeavours to create more modern view of my continent using the arts as a way of dismantling old colonial style stereotypes. I modelled in the student led fundraising fashion show in Durham raising £250K.

During an internship with the V&A International team I researched Africa focused exhibitions and links with African new talent. I volunteer for a charity called Flynn's Barn which provides creative retreats for young people living with cancer using the environment, creativity.



Project

My project will focus on the ideas of using hair as a medium of bringing together weaving/braiding with architecture and design. I will seek to research and examine the role of black hair being at the centre of dialogues of power, discrimination, and perceptions of beauty imposed on generations of Black Africans during colonisation. Black hair is political, cultural and personal. Discrimination of black hair started as far back as the 15th century when European Colonialist depicted afro hair as wool, and fur, validating the narrative of dehumanisation. Slave traders shaved the hair of slaves and afro hair has long been seen as untidy, messy and unclean. These perceptions live on today and the hierarchy of hair types which started in colonial times still frame the standards of beauty. Only now are younger women reclaiming traditional natural styles of braiding, curling and natural products – fighting against an industry of chemical straightening. I have spent much of my young life discovering my hair and challenging the stereotypes – I have often been told my hair is untidy, or have people touching it, and hairdressers despairing over its “difficulty”.

When I started braiding my hair in salons in Uganda I discovered a world of appreciation of my hair, a creative haven in the salon. I started researching inspirations for new hair designs including the built environment. Joy Matashi a Nigerian artist and architect described her hair designs as “small architecture”. In Venice I want to develop the idea of how a new look at afro hair styles as inspirations for other forms of architectural, interior design as well as the use of reusable materials such as beads, glass. I would like to use the time exploring these ideas with the range of artists present. I would extend the project to examine the role of hair salons in creating spaces for women, how they shape women’s interaction with each other, their empowerment and how design of salons has developed.

On return to Durham, I would showcase my research raising awareness of the ongoing hair discrimination which exists and the really powerful intersection with design and architecture of black hair. I would bring together the executives of fashion shows running in Durham and aim to have a collaboration focusing on diverse hair and their impacts on design and sustainability.

MATILDE SAEED SENOS

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON
(LONDON COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION)



I am a mixed-media animator and director with a growing love for interactive art and interdisciplinary work, currently taking the MA Animation course at LCC. This course has given me many chances to collaborate with other artists, which is something I love to do and wish to do more of throughout my career. Exchanging knowledge and sharing your interests with like-minded people is something I am becoming more and more passionate about as my love for mixed-media art grows!

I have experience with combining different mediums in my practice, and have now started to move from traditional film-making into creating more interactive works, as seeing an audience interact with and react with a piece in front of them is immensely fascinating! I want to explore many different ways of expression, from creating stage visuals to automata. I am very excited to get to know other artists and exchange ideas!

Project

The concept is of an interactive installation, using a combination of images projected on walls and automata; the room would be set up with four projectors (each facing a wall) and four automata. Audience members would enter the room in small groups and choose small figurines from a box, which would then be placed on top of the automata (each automaton would have three bases, meaning space for three characters to be placed on an individual automaton). The figurines represent characters of different shapes, sizes, and colours. Rotating the handle of each automaton prompts an animation of the chosen characters to be projected onto the corresponding wall, transforming the empty walls into a scene of a friendly gathering. The characters can be switched as many times as the audience wishes, allowing for endless combinations and encouraging group play and storytelling. This project is also great for collaborating with other artists, as ideally each character would have a unique art/animation style, and each corresponding figurine could be made with different techniques/materials. A short video showcasing a small prototype for this concept is available to view here: <https://vimeo.com/1032856605>

This project connects with the theme of the 19th International Architecture Exhibition. The word “intelligens” can be broken down into two components: “inter”, meaning “between”, and “legere”, which means “to collect”, “to gather” or “to pick out words” (to speak). By picking out the figurines to put on the automata, the audience can create a space of comfort where play is not only encouraged, but the central activity. The group has a chance to communicate amongst themselves in a moment of pretend play and collective storytelling, highlighting and supporting our natural interest in creativity and group interaction/connection.

I would love to show the completed project to my peers back in the UK, through maybe showcasing a smaller setup (one automaton and one projector), or by organizing small exhibitions with other artists where this would be one of the exhibited pieces. I am excited to explore different ways of showcasing this!

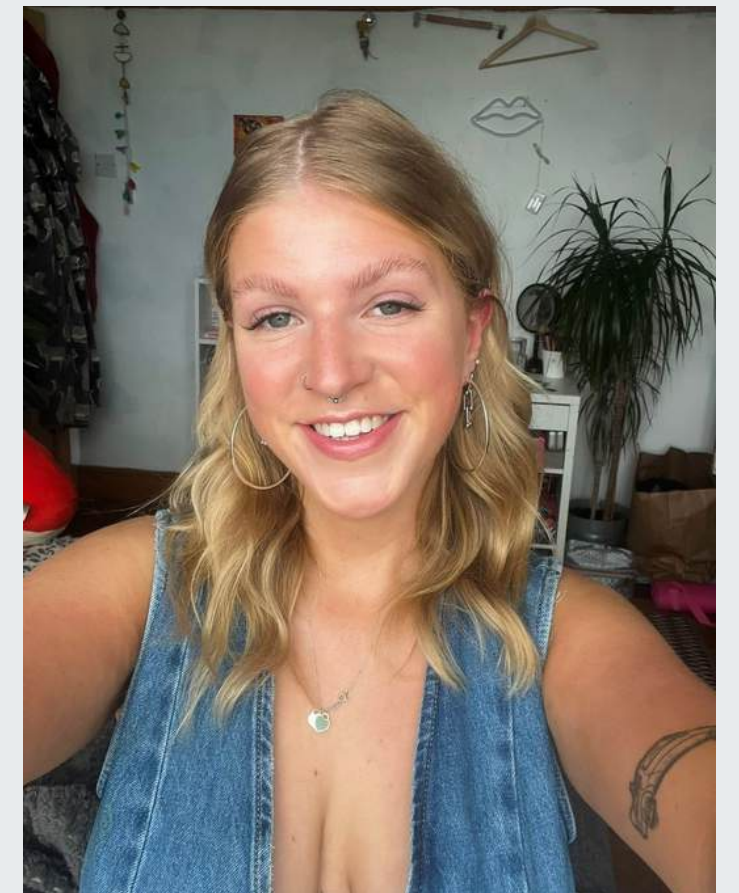
@ma.senos

MAYA ROSIE ANN DAVIS

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

I'm excited to apply for the Venice Fellowship Programme because it combines my love for creativity, culture, and sustainability. Sewing and upcycling have taught me the beauty of giving old things new life, which connects deeply to sustainable design and craft. Traveling and art inspire me to see the world through different lenses, while reading fuels my curiosity about stories behind people, places, and traditions. Cooking, for me, is a way to share and celebrate culture through food.

These passions inspire my interest in exploring how local, sustainable crafts and everyday cultural practices can foster meaningful connections in exhibitions. I believe these ideas align with the programme's values of creativity, education, and engagement. Being part of this programme would let me contribute while learning from others about the ways culture shapes and enriches our lives.



Project

During my month-long residency in Venice, I plan to create a 10-15 minute documentary that explores the intersection of local crafts and technology, focusing on their potential for preservation and innovation. This project will centre on the themes of sustainability, tradition, and identity, investigating how Venetian artisans adapt their ancient crafts to meet contemporary challenges, including environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

Key components of the project:

- Interviews with artisans (e.g., lace makers, glassblowers, mask makers, and stonemasons) to delve into their unique stories, techniques, and materials.
- Visual documentation through videography and photography, capturing the intricate processes behind Venetian masks, Murano glass, stone masonry, and the craftsmanship of Venice's iconic churches.
- Drawing parallels with my own upcycling practice, examining how these traditional crafts offer inspiration for sustainable design solutions.
- A focus on the integration of intelligence and technology in craft, exploring how innovation can enhance traditional artisanal techniques to ensure their relevance and longevity. This relates to the Biennale 2025 theme of 'Intelligens'.

By visiting nearby islands like Murano, renowned for its glassmaking heritage, and participating in workshops, I will immerse myself in the craft culture. This will allow me to directly compare these rich traditions with the challenges faced by arts education and funding in the UK, reflecting on my own experiences as an arts student.

@mayadavisproductions

MILA GARCIA

SOAS

I am a creative practitioner born in the Philippines and raised in London/Oxfordshire. My interdisciplinary background spans ceramics, painting, sound, carpentry, filmmaking and photography. Studying History of Art and Archaeology at SOAS has deeply informed my focus on decolonial studies, diaspora narratives, and feminist oral and visual archives.

Recently, I've explored intersections of housing security and climate justice through London's sound system culture, combining art and activism to address systemic social inequities.

This background aligns with the Venice Architecture Biennale's focus on architectures of repair and renewal. My passion for clay derives from it being a symbol of strength and mutability and whilst also being an unassuming therapeutic tool in fostering story-telling and connections. This reflects my commitment to exploring the role of design in addressing social and ecological upheavals. Engaging with the British Pavilion would provide a unique opportunity to extend this work on an international stage, fostering meaningful networks across disciplines and geographies.

Project

My proposed project, *Clay Intelligences*, explores the intersection of natural, collective, and artificial intelligences through the medium of clay, connecting to Kenya, the UK, and Venice. Clay, a universally available and ancient material, symbolizes adaptation, elasticity, and transformation. Given the significance of Venice's structural foundation which stands on 10 million ancient tree trunks rooted in a layer of clay, these workshops become a metaphor for what I am hopeful is connectedness. This project engages clay as both a material and a metaphor for interconnectedness—reflecting the UK-Kenya collaboration and Venice's historic reliance on clay and timber foundations as well as inviting participants in addressing Venice's pressing environmental challenges, such as flooding and sinking.

Workshops would welcome participants to co-create hybrid clay forms, blending Kenyan earthen techniques, British ceramic traditions, and Venetian material histories. By embedding sensors in some pieces, we could explore artificial intelligence's potential to monitor environmental changes, creating a dialogue between ancient practices and future technologies. The tactile nature of clay fosters collaborative, intergenerational learning from young children to senior citizens, making it an ideal medium for reflecting on architecture's role in responding to climate and social crises.

The project will culminate in a living installation at the British Pavilion, combining clay sculptures, soundscapes of participant voices, and projections of workshop footage to reflect collective creativity. I will document the process through short films and audio recordings, creating a multimedia archive that captures the project's essence. Upon returning to the UK, I plan to share the outcomes through public exhibitions and interactive workshops in community spaces, incorporating the recordings, and films into immersive installations. These will act as a bridge between Venice and the communities I work with, sparking further conversations about sustainable architecture, inclusivity, and creative resilience.

SALIMAT YEWANDE BAKARE

HOMEGROWN PLUS

Growing up among Yoruba craftswomen in Nigeria, I was immersed in a world where making was both sacred and sustainable. These women transformed local, natural materials into objects of functional beauty, nurturing their communities and ecosystems with care and ingenuity. That early exposure to the tactile and spiritual dimension of craft laid the foundation for my path into architecture, where I now view materials not merely as resources, but as living mediators between people, place, and ecology.

As a Black Muslim woman and recent immigrant to the UK, my identity shapes my practice and my commitment to reimagining spaces of belonging. Rooted in my faith, I embrace the role of Khalifah—a steward of the earth—called to protect and regenerate it. This spiritual and cultural grounding fuels my vision of architecture as a medium for care, resistance, and renewal.

Through my work in humanitarian architecture with organisations like Article 25, I've come to understand that the most powerful architectural solutions are often the simplest. In communities where access to infrastructure and resources is limited, architecture must be contextual, adaptable, and easy to maintain—yet still capable of delivering dignity, resilience, and beauty. These experiences have deepened my belief that architecture is not just a technical practice, but a radical act of reclamation and reimagination. It is a tool through which communities can shape their own environments, grounded in cultural memory, ecological wisdom, and collective agency.





Project

Roots and Roofs: Reed's Resurgence in Architectures of Harmony explores the architectural potential of reed—a humble, renewable material shared across cultures and histories—as a symbol of environmental stewardship and cultural continuity.

During my time in Venice, I will investigate reed's role in both Yoruba traditions and Venetian craft, exploring how this ancient material can be reinterpreted within the lagoon's unique ecosystem. Through hands-on experimentation, ecological study, and archival research, I aim to uncover new possibilities for reed in contemporary sustainable design. My work asks: How can a simple material like reed become a catalyst for rethinking architecture as an accessible, inclusive, and regenerative practice?

'Roots and Roofs' is also a call to decentralise architectural knowledge. In embracing materials and techniques that are low-tech yet highly intelligent, the project challenges dominant paradigms and opens up space for community-driven, culturally rooted design. I envision reed not just as a material, but as a metaphor—for flexibility, for rootedness, and for the quiet strength of tradition in the face of climate uncertainty.

After the Fellowship, I will facilitate workshops for architecture students focused on reed weaving and material experimentation. These sessions will offer more than technical skills—they will be spaces to reflect on sustainability, cultural heritage, and the importance of simplicity in empowering communities to co-create their environments.

Ultimately, my work is a call to re-indigenise the built environment—to reclaim ancestral wisdom, honour marginalised histories, and reimagine architecture as a collaborative, healing, and ecological act. I remain committed to challenging dominant systems, collaborating across disciplines, and designing futures that are inclusive, equitable, and profoundly rooted in care.

@salimatyb

ZACK MENNELL

OUTSIDE IN

I am a self-taught artist; since 2022 I have been exploring my experiences as a queer, working-class, neurodivergent, and disabled person through my emerging solo practice, which is socially engaged and multi-disciplinary. Central to my work, which spans performance, analogue photography and film, and writing, is an exploration of mental health, ecology and power structures. Last year, I was awarded a DYCP to explore alternative and sustainable photographic processes. Two weeks ago, I was awarded an ACE NLPG grant to support a year of site-specific performance-making in post-industrial landscapes.

I am particularly interested in hidden histories, addressing the erasure of queer, working class, disabled and marginalised experiences from and within archives. Having grown up in the industrial corridor of the River Thames, I am drawn time and time again to post-industrial infrastructure, seeking to unearth the buried forms and networks our lives rely on and draw attention to what looms over us, ignored and hidden in plain sight. These explorations entangle my interests in ecology, agential realism, anti-psychiatry, folklore, physics, lived experience, disability rights, and fighting injustice.

Project

@zackmennell

My recent site-specific works along the Thames Estuary in London and Essex have engaged with the social, economic, ecological and medical legacies of industry. I have been commissioned by DaDaFest (Liverpool) to realise a new work exploring inter-generational trauma through the framework of nuclear semiotics. I am thinking about the obfuscation of nuclear waste, storage and leakage in terms of its literal impact on people and ecologies, and as a metaphor for the ways that the 'nuclear' family is contaminated or damaged by traumatic experiences which go untreated or unacknowledged.

The curatorial focus on "architectures across the world defined by an embedded relationship to the ground which are resilient in the face of climate breakdown, social, economic and political upheaval" resonates with me. I am interested in questions of what (or who) is resilient, and how resilience (or survival) can be fostered.

In Venice, I would propose to continue my research into the generation and impact of energy, power and connection, and to questions of human/architectural resilience and risk. The context of the lagoon is a potent one – the majority of Venice's power is generated by fossil fuels, whilst the city is at high risk of rising sea levels and extreme weather. Every corner of Venice seems illuminated – electricity and beauty presumably perceived as abundant. On the fellowship, I would like to seek out the unlit corners of the city, taking psychogeographic walks into dark spaces, turning my attention to the industrial infrastructure surrounding the lagoon, and finding out what is hidden. I would imagine using analogue eco-photography to document and activate these sites with performative actions, engaging the human/non-human communities of locals and visitors as accidental audience or witness.

This work will feed into my current Arts Council-funded project in the Thames Estuary, developing new video, sculpture, and performance works with local communities to explore landscape, ecology, and disability. The fellowship research will contribute to and be shown alongside these works in late 2025 and early 2026 and I would imagine sharing my learning as part of workshops and talks that I will deliver in Essex as part of this project. I am eager to engage other Venice Fellows working with and researching similar topics to collaborate on this and future projects.

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