

**THE 6TH
JOHN
RUSKIN
PRIZE**

**SEEING THE UNSEEN
HEARING THE UNSPOKEN**



THE 6TH JOHN RUSKIN PRIZE

About the prize

The John Ruskin Prize is a multi-disciplinary art prize in the UK. With the values of the radical 19th century polymath John Ruskin at its core, the prize has a reputation for supporting and promoting artists, designers and makers whose work defies easy categorisation.

The Prize was inaugurated in 2012 by The Guild of St. George and The Big Draw. Organised and delivered by The Big Draw, the prize aims to reflect a central thread of John Ruskin's thought. As a writer and artist - and as an impassioned critic, not only of art but of society and life - Ruskin believed that art has the power to reveal and celebrate universal truths, and that a good artist and maker in any medium should always be guided by that search.

This year's theme

This year's theme, **Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken**, is open to interpretation in many diverse ways,

What happens when we look beyond what we initially see, beyond the obvious, beyond what we are being told to look at, when we peel back the layers or change the lens or position through which we see the world? What happens when we listen to the silences instead of the noise, picking up on what has not been said, the metacommunication? What does it reveal?

We have been overwhelmed by the response to this year's theme, with over 4000 excellent submissions for the 6th John Ruskin Prize.

*"The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy and religion, all in one."
- John Ruskin*

THE PRIZES

First Prize: £3000

Made possible by support from The Guild of St George

Second Prize: £2000

Made possible by support from The Guild of St George

The Alan Davidson Under 26 Prize: £1000

This prize is kindly sponsored by The Alan Davidson Foundation.

The International Prize: £1000

Submissions digital in format and exhibited digitally.

The Kate Mason Prize for Innovation: £1000

This prize celebrates innovation and creativity for all artists, designers and makers working in any materials, at any point in their creative development, whether beginning their creative journey or returning to their practice.

EXHIBITION DETAILS

31st January: Private view and judging ceremony

1st - 17th February: Exhibition open to the public

The Buoy Store, Trinity Buoy Wharf, 64 Orchard Pl,
London, E14 0JW

See the full event programme on ruskinprize.co.uk

"We are delighted to have been a lead partner with our friends at The Big Draw, supporting this sixth iteration of The John Ruskin Prize, as we have in previous years. In its generous, multi-disciplinary scope, this prize seeks to reflect the polymathic sensibilities of our founder John Ruskin. This is important in our world, which can feel splintered and disjointed, and it is enormously exciting to see how our shortlisted artists have responded to this year's theme, 'Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken'. The work speaks to Ruskin's own view that 'The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is see something, and say what it saw in a plain way.' This catalogue, and the exhibition it accompanies, is vivid testament to the multifarious ways in which artists have expressed what might otherwise go unseen and unspoken. I congratulate them all."

Dr Rachel Dickinson

John Ruskin Prize judge and Master of John Ruskin's educational charity the Guild of St George, funders of the 1st and 2nd Prize.



Meet the Judges



Cornelia Parker CBE RA

Visual artist, best known for her sculpture and installation art. Over the last three decades, she has had numerous major commissions and solo exhibitions nationally and internationally, including a career retrospective at Tate Britain in 2022.



Bob and Roberta Smith RA

Visual artist, musician, writer and arts education advocate. Bob and Roberta Smith's work has influenced generations of teachers and students of arts subjects to embrace the idea that the arts are a human right.



Narinder Sagoo MBE

Visionary architectural artist and Senior Partner at Foster + Partners. Sagoo's unique drawing skills have been instrumental in illustrating and communicating architectural visions for numerous projects.



Julian Stair OBE

Artist & Ceramicist who has exhibited internationally since 1982 and has work in over 30 public collections including the V&A and British Museum. Stair is also a leading historian of English studio ceramics.



Jane Barnes

Jane Barnes is the Executive Director of The Big Draw. In addition, Jane is an artist, wellbeing specialist and yoga teacher; her work often merging creativity and wellbeing.



Dr Rachel Dickinson

Textiles practitioner and reader in Interdisciplinary Studies & English at Manchester Metropolitan University. In 2019 Rachel was elected the first female Master of Ruskin's Guild of St George.



Gary Hill

American artist who has worked with a broad range of media - including sculpture, sound, video, installation and performance - since the 1970s.

Claudia Barreira	Olana Light	David Aston
Keith Ashcroft	Ruth Swain	Eddy Greenwood
Nick Grellier	Simone Guideri	Sally Baldwin
Belinda Ellis	Francesca Alaimo	Antoni Kuzniarz
William Bacon	J. G. Fox	Kerry Collison
Lorsen Camps	Katy Shepherd	Caroline Burraway
Sally Muir	Patricia Townsend	Dorcas Casey
Jared Barbick	Trudie Shutler	Fiona Hodges
Linda Hubbard	Rhys Thorpe	Pinkie Maclure
Isobel Scarsbrook	Sally Hewett	Zac Weinberg
Helen Restorick	Wyatt Carson	Francesca Centioni
Matt Lee	Kirsty Bogle	Chris Alton
Zoja Kalinovskis	Maayan Sophia Weisstub	Hanfei
Julie Graves	Julia Polonski	Daniel Hosego
Max Bainbridge	Julie Barnes	Curtis Holder
Thomas Cameron	Olga Kataeva Rochford	Sarah Gillespie
Abby Cocovini	Eithne Healy	Elias Mendel
Anna Larin	Frances Gynn	Kate McDonnell
Scott Kelly	Emily Lucas	Elmira Zohrenejad
Muhammad Amdad Hossain	Blair Martin Cahill	Graham Short
Donna Fleming	Lydia Adams	Pascal Miehé
Alyson J Barton	Duncan Cameron	Blythe Plenderleith
Lucy Stopford		Alan Fortescue

SHORTLISTED ARTISTS

Claudia Barreira

Fracture - Terra Brasilis Series
Ceramic Sculpture

“Terra Brasilis” is the ancient term used to describe Brazil before the arrival of the Europeans in the 16th century. It gives name to this series and represents the journey through the geological landscapes of Brazil that dwell in my distant memories, revealed here from the fissures and crevices found in caverns to the outlines of the tropical

canyons. It celebrates the detail and the vast, the constant process of construction and deconstruction that originates landscapes. Roughness, cracks, irregularities and a true perception of the natural emerge from the unglazed clay body, imbuing this series with a sense of place and belonging. “Terra Brasilis” is a visual diary, a psychological landscape that reflects the memories of growing up among the South American natural environment.



Claudia Barreira



Fragment - Terra Brasilis Series
Ceramic Sculpture

barrstudio.art
@barrstudio



Aftermath
Oil on canvas

Aftermath is part of a larger body of work inspired by Queensgate Market in Huddersfield town centre, which experienced a slow decline and eventual closure in 2023. Through the excessive use of layering, competing narrative elements intertwine and coalesce with material agency. Multiple viewpoints are

contained, overlapped, and disrupted through a continuous process of overpainting and erasure. Structural elements provide skeletal frameworks or invisible foundations designed to both conceal and reveal information respectively. Perspectives are often delineated and displaced from a sense of time and place altogether, presenting paintings where the figure continuously emerges and recedes in perpetual anticipation.



20.22
Plaster, aluminium and acrylic

In 20.22 the casting of body parts in plaster invokes the practice of taking a likeness via the death mask, carrying a detailed translation of surface and capturing a moment of transition. The artist's fingers, uncannily reproduced as multiple anthropomorphic

forms, gesture upward and face forward in crowded, silent isolation. The fingers represent touch and feel and the sensitive membrane between an individual and everything else, playing too with the understanding of digit as numerical time and date. 20.22 was made over the final year of Grellier's father's life when things were too slippery and overwhelming to articulate in words.

Belinda Ellis

Between a Rock and a Hard Place - A Climate Emergency

Oil and charcoal on canvas

The painting started with no pre-conceived notion of the outcome. Thoughts and ideas around the climate and ecological emergencies – the elephants in the room- fed into it. The theme 'Seeing the unseen, hearing the unspoken' related in two ways. First is the practice itself described as non-verbal communication and synthesis of the internal and the external, colour relationships seen and imagined. Secondly the painting attempts to reflect the complexities of the climate and nature emergencies, the ongoing inability to grasp the enormity of the problems and the uncertain future.



belindaellis.co.uk

William Bacon

willbacon.com

@will.bacon26



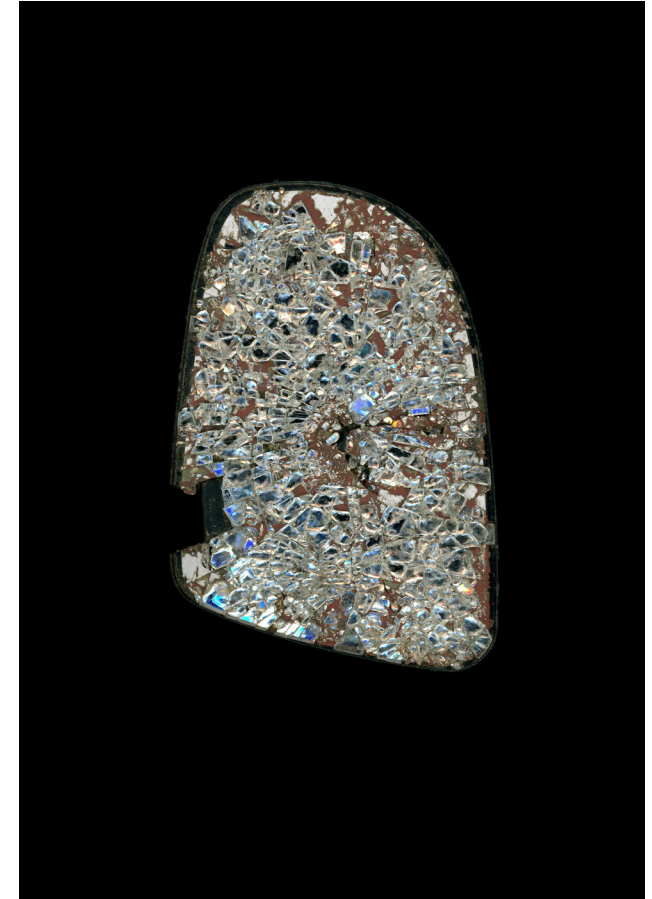
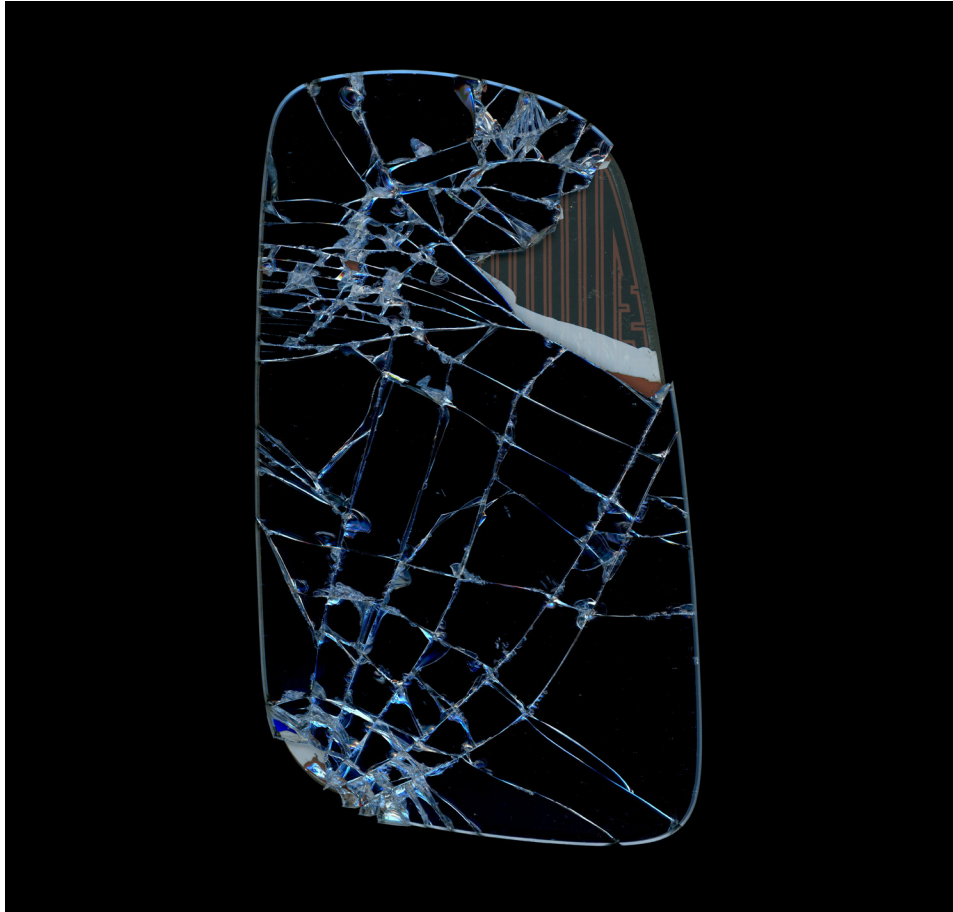
Lucky Number 7 / Confetti

*Found used National Lottery scratchcards
+ collected scratchcard dust*

The 'Confetti' installation comprises of two artworks. The first, 'Lucky Number 7' is made entirely from used National Lottery scratchcards collected from a single player. Approximately a hundred cards were used to assemble this artwork; distorting the original image by cutting and layering the pieces.

The second piece is a collection of shavings left behind after a card has been scratched - gathered in the last three years from found and donated cards. The shavings have a foil-like quality and are an array of different colours, like confetti. Confetti itself symbolises a celebration, however in this setting, the pile represents moments of discarded hope that have passed through the hands of strangers.

Broken Wings #70
C-Type Print



Broken Wings #92
C-Type Print

Broken Wings #70 and #92 are from a series of photographic works (2021-22) capturing a collection of 200+ broken car wing mirrors from the streets of Coventry. Through the process of documentation and display, this street gutter detritus is brought to life and

truly seen.

The mirrors are portraits - histories/imagined narratives written into the surface of the glass. They are personal, real, authentic. These portraits point to the brokenness within humanity. They share the damage and markings from the past (all wing mirrors reveal what is behind us), but have become something redeemed, hopeful and beautiful.



Beyond Black 14
Monotype

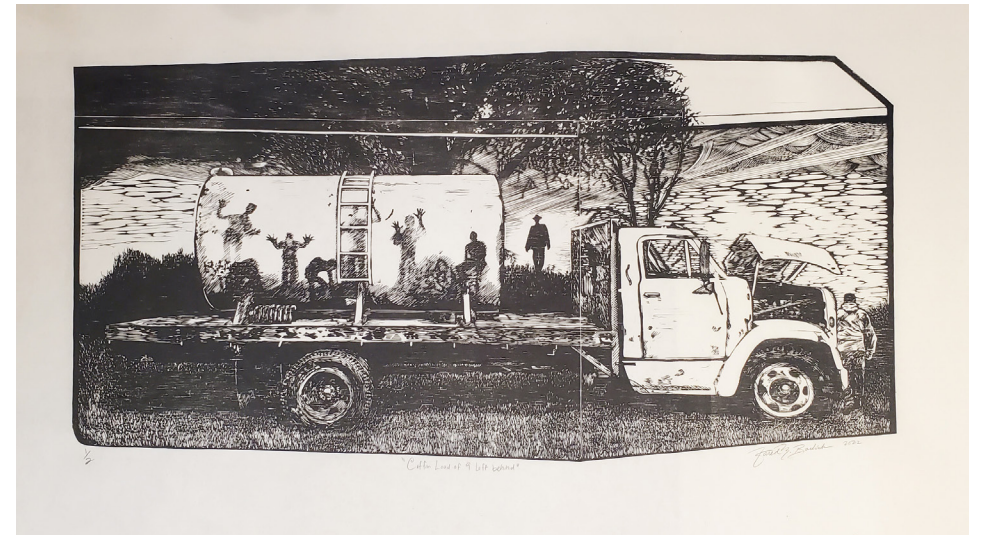
The series Beyond Black started during lockdown, when I read almost all of the work of Hilary Mantel, these monotypes appeared as a result.

sallymuir.co.uk
@sallymuir

Coffin load of 9 left behind

Woodcut in pine hand barrend onto Kozo paper

This woodcut strives to bring to light the very real and life threatening risks immigrants (adult / children) face when attempting to come to the United States in search for a better life. These 9 were transported in a sealed water truck and because the truck broke down, the Coyotes are abandoning them with no notice, no help, and no way out. To face their fate together.





Costumes of War: Prizes for Dying - The Victoria Sock
Jesmonite, acrylic paint, ribbon, metal pin, presentation box

Artists don't own the meaning of their work once it is shared; the meaning belongs to the viewer. Saying destroys the magic. So let's say nothing except see the unseen and hear the unspoken.

lindahubbardart.com
[@lindahubbard](https://twitter.com/lindahubbard)



England
Knitted scarf: acrylic yarn

England is a football scarf depicting online misogynistic comments on the topic of women's football.



Contained Exhalation

Cast Glass

Exhalation is the flow of breath out of an organism. The muscles and diaphragm relax, and air passes out of the body. We may not be aware of, or pay heed to, the physiological process as it takes place. Here two identically sized pieces of cast glass form a diptych

with flow patterns travelling from the centre outwards. The pieces partly mirror each other. The opaline glass flow changes in colour and pattern depending on where the piece is viewed in relation to the light source. The flow pattern is contained, it is both informed and limited by the surrounding blue space that it lies within.



Perfusion

Cast Glass

Perfusion is defined as the act of pouring a liquid over or through an organ or tissue. It is the passage of fluid into a blood vessel in order to reach an organ, usually to supply nutrients and oxygen. An essential process

happening continuously, yet it may be unrecognised or unconsidered.

This piece shows the progressive influx of flow patterns into a cuboid shape of fixed dimensions and is a representation of blood flow. As the flow increases and permeates, so the depth and volume of the piece increases.



Death Landscapes III

Relief paper collage

This work examines the ephemeral qualities of memory and material through a series of internal landscape collages. Light defines, demarcates and ultimately completes the images. It invites viewers to contemplate form, structure, line and space, whilst allowing individual projections and inscriptions onto a visual plane, which both

welcomes and resists embodiment. It is inspired by my memories of Bangalore and the sculptural qualities of its landscapes – old houses, new apartment complexes, temples, crematoriums, factories, billboards, rock and boulder formations. These paper constructions bring together the urban and natural iconography of this city and reimagines them through the prism of fading memory.



Phopy (Unseen series)

Fine Art Photographic Print

Disabled people are the largest minority group in the world with an estimated 1.3 billion people across the globe living with significant disabilities. Unseen is a deeply personal project that aims to flip the script on what disability 'looks like' by including those

with visible and invisible disabilities, whilst also challenging the prevailing narrative that disability is synonymous with suffering or a lack of beauty. The series is inspired by classical sculpture and reveres disabled bodies as worthy of art instead of pity and encourages the audience to question their preconceived notions about disability.

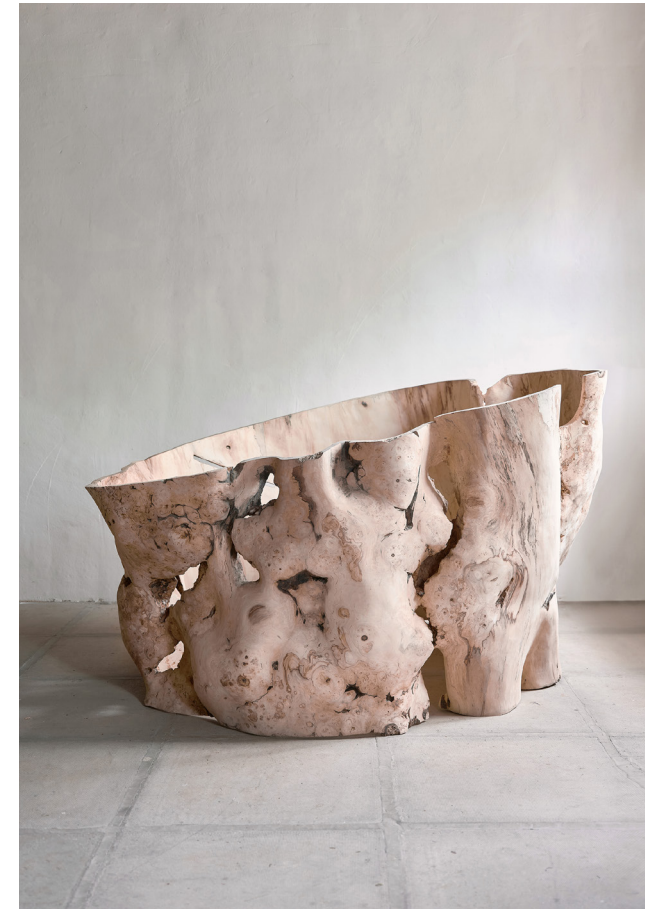


Cyclic Iterative

Pine needles, linen thread

'Cyclic Iterative' represents a combination of fragility and strength, the cycle of life, loss and of renewal. It has been meticulously crafted from fallen pine needles collected from the ground on walks during Covid.

Once gathered the needles are washed and dried and carefully stitched together to give them a new purpose and a strength far greater than the individual elements. It is a painstaking process using thousands of pine needles and many hours of repetitive labour. The vessel is carefully balanced on a small base to add to its vulnerability.



Hallowed

Horse chestnut wood

'Hallowed' is a reflection on our relationship with nature, and how the natural world holds a mirror up to our own human condition. Taking something as monumental in scale as a felled horse chestnut tree to create a sculpture that has both a strength and fragility in equal measure. By following the outside profile of the tree, the exterior has been stripped of its skin and worked until smooth, revealing the naked surface of the wood, once protected by its bark. The interior body of the tree, once solid and strong, now occupied by an intangible void.

Fast Food Workers

Oil on canvas

My paintings often depict liminal, transitional spaces or non-places in cities. These spaces have the effect of anonymising and grouping those who inhabit them. We become customers, commuters, workers et cetera. The 'everyday' is the main theme of my work, with a focus on urban life and the tension between togetherness and isolation these environments. Within this, my paintings gesture towards the ongoing conveyor belt of consumerism: mannequins, supermarket shelves, vending machines, fast food outlets and delivery drivers. I see these as signifiers for the disposable, fast-paced, detached lives we live today.



This Train Terminates At Kennington

Oil on canvas

At a time when society is becoming increasingly tribal, the equality found on a tube carriage on London Underground offers momentary relief. Abby's paintings celebrate an egalitarian space where only the elderly, disabled and pregnant hold higher status.

Anna Larin

annalarin.co.uk
@anna.larin.art

Gaia

Oil on canvas

It's a portrait of Kimberley, who I met by chance six months after I tragically lost my partner, Ray. It was the first portrait I had painted in my bereavement. My palette since then has become much darker and limited. My intention shifted from presenting the sitter to concealing the sitter.

I can't help being intensely interested in disappearing/being unseen/veiled or absent.

Over the weeks of painting it, I felt slightly more grounded and focused, and so I called it after goddess Gaia - the personification of Earth and mother of all life. The meaning that is also enhanced by the earth colour palette and a floral William Morris wallpaper behind the sitter.



Scott Kelly

scottconradkelly.com
@scottconradkelly



Great Cosmic Banality III

Rose quartz and resin

The spacetime continuum is a theory by Hermann Minkowski that encapsulates the entirety of the universe, including time, matter and weight. Common renders that visualise the theory, look remarkably like a common household product: the Finish dishwashing tablet with powerball.

The sublime, it turns out, can be found in the banal. While we partake in the mundanity of washing dishes, we are of course anything but mundane. We are fizzing assemblage of atoms, which have the ability to comprehend the universe we exist in. 'Great Cosmic Banality' is a household sculpture that represents the beautiful bizarreness of our paradoxical existence.



Fatigue Sleep

Digital Photograph

Homeless women in Dhaka, Bangladesh, uprooted by floods and river erosion, seek refuge in the city for a better life. Struggling without shelter, their days unfold in grim piles of dirt and aimless boats. Dumps and floating boats became temporary homes for

these unidentified refugees, working as street vendors, boatmen, laborers and odd jobs. At the heart of urban challenges, they face a daily journey from destitute to survival.

Live with the dirt hill

Digital Photograph

A young child laborer stands amidst the vast garbage dump in Halisahar, Chittagong, Bangladesh. In this pollution-prone area near the city's waste dumping site, children toil tirelessly for meager wages. The image captures a poignant scene of these young

workers collecting recyclable materials from the towering heaps of garbage. With determination etched on their faces, they navigate through the debris, contributing to their families' income. These children spend their days at this scrap store, working as shopkeepers, enduring not only the physical challenges but also the severe health risks posed by their hazardous environment.

Muhammad Amdad Hossain



Sleep in the kingdom of dirt

Digital Photograph

Many families in the coastal area of Bangladesh have lost their homes and property due to frequent floods, river erosion and other natural disasters. They are forced to migrate to cities in search of a better future. These

families have no shelter in big cities. Their children's days begin in the dirt heap and end on the road or boat with nowhere to go. Concrete-covered roads and piles of dirt are a flower bed for these refugees, who have virtually no identity. They make a living by working as street vendors, child laborers and other odd jobs.

Donna Fleming

ddonnaflaming.co.uk
@donna_fleming_artist



Solid world of matter as a stream of condensed energy

Steel wire, wax and paint

The solid world is an illusion, we live in a sea of energy whereby everything is connected.

The visual part of the world is connected to something immense and invisible. We are vessels, not closed and fixed forms. Our consciousness is not contained in our minds, it's in the space in between.

Alyson J Barton

alysonjbartonalchemyandartworks.com
@alysonjbarton

Illumine

Chromogenic Silver Halide on Glass

"Illumine" is inspired by nostalgic memories of the beautiful English countryside of my childhood - the numinous, sublime atmosphere and feeling of something "other" that I often sensed as a child. "Illumine" goes beyond what we see with the naked eye, referencing the eternal lacuna between memory and myth. Elements of emotionalism, romanticism, and tonalist pictorialism emphasise mood, mystery, and the sublime through the use of light, shadow, soft focus, and atmospheric perspective. "Illumine" goes beyond literal representation, utilising painterly chemical printing techniques to express the sublime mystery of my homeland and its larger-than-life amber presence in my mind.



Lucy Stopford

lucystopford.com
@lucystopford_artist



Life

Charcoal on paper

The model returns the artist's gaze through charcoal. Working from life injects the experience with an element of immediacy and unpredictability better suited to the subconscious allowing for the unexpected. Terry, drawn from life, in willow charcoal on Claire Fontaine paper

Fly Like a Butterfly

Wearable Sculpture/Installation/Film

Inspired by nature, identity, and a desire to take art to the people, I make immersive, other-worldly installations, and wearable sculptures, that are designed to surprise, excite, and inspire the viewers.

I explore the theme of metamorphoses and change, through a series of large-scale wearable caterpillar and a butterfly, largely constructed from natural materials.



I regard the butterfly as a powerful metaphor for transformation, as it begins life in one form - as a caterpillar - and emerges after a period of dormancy from its cocoon as a magical butterfly.

It is a process that we can all take inspiration from, I believe- no matter where we have come from or where we are now, we can initiate personal growth, change, and endeavor to live in the moment and in harmony with nature.



Looking at Vermeer

Oil on canvas

The painting "Looking at Vermeer" shows the back of someone's head viewing a painting which we can't see - there is a small hint of the Vermeer painting but the head obscures the view. We are seeing the unseen. The man was surrounded by others but he is isolated and we don't hear the noise.



Intangible Balances, Monolith 4

Crystal glazed ceramic, brown beeswax solution, LED light

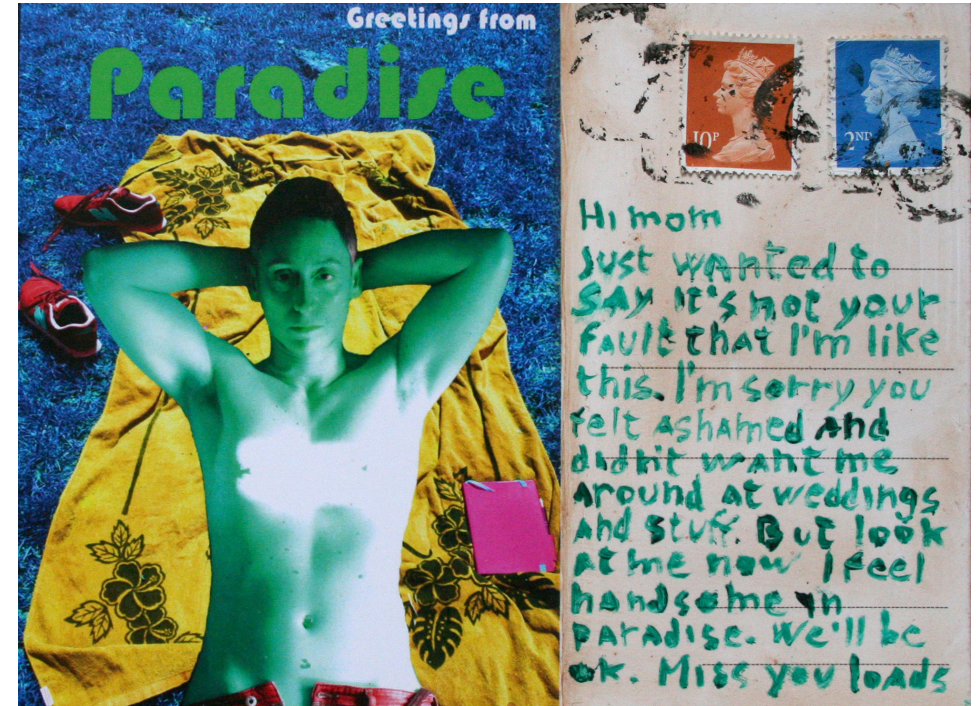
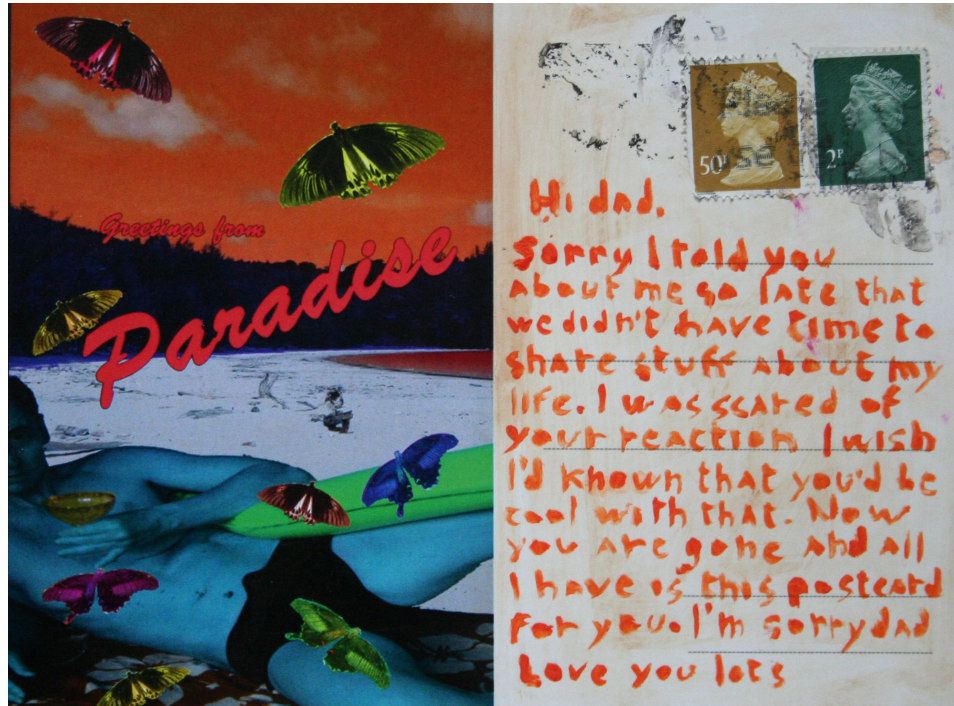
The clay they're made of represents the basic, raw feelings in humans, like instincts and the earth, with all its flaws and realness. The orderly, bright part arranged

in geometric shapes adds a sense of order and logic. It's like a symbol of the world of computer circuits, connecting the natural and touchable with the strict and abstract world of technology. This intangible connection reflects the intimate balance between these two deeply connected worlds.



Intangible Balances, Monolith 6

Crystal glazed ceramic, brown beeswax solution, LED light



Greetings From Paradise - Hi Dad
Digital photography, acrylic paint, stamp

'Greetings From Paradise' is both an openhearted letter to my parents who have passed and a series about Utopia and reach-

ing out. Often we can't open up with people we love until they are gone. Fear and shame are paralyzing emotions and surviving by their rules means not living. This work wants to inspire people to show love and compassion for each other.

Greetings From Paradise - Hi Mom
Digital photography, acrylic paint, stamp



Inhumation No.1

Print, modified from an 18th Century original

While the original print showed the joyous uncovering of ancient classical artifacts, Fox's version uses the same composition to show contemporary masterpieces being buried, in some imagined future iconoclastic purge.



Inhumation No.2 / Inhumation No. 3

Print, modified from an 18th Century original



katyshepherd.co.uk
[@katyshepherdart](https://www.instagram.com/katyshepherdart)

Imaginary Daughter
Hand drawn animation

This animation was created from an idea that I had been harbouring for a while that came into fruition whilst I was isolated during lockdown. I have tried to visualise what it would be like to share my space with the daughter I might have had in another life. Sitting at the kitchen table trying to paint in the same way I did with my own mother on the rainy days of my childhood.



Inner Worlds 1
4K digital video

In 2022, violent storms hit the area around Brantwood, John Ruskin's former home, uprooting thousands of trees. Root plates, studded with fragments of rock and trailing torn roots, were suddenly exposed.

Responding to this scene of devastation, Townsend takes one of these root plates as her starting point to imagine a hybrid being in which animal, plant and mineral are intertwined and interdependent. 'Inner Worlds 1' bears the marks of one tree's trauma but also carries the hope of new life.

Learning to Swim

Film

A moving image piece exploring the relationship between the visual story and the narrative. Is there a truth we can't see, and is memory a reliable witness?



Jutsi Staple Vase

Early 20th-century Japanese vase, gold plated sterling silver

The technique of using metal rivets to repair ceramics has been used for centuries. Originally utilised to prolong an often utilitarian and functional use of ceramic pieces in a non-

intrusive way, here the technique is celebrated and accentuated.

The fragility of the material is explored through a deliberate act of destruction and the repair subverts the context in which the object exists. It is seen in a new light and elevated beyond its original form and purpose.

Sally Hewett
sallyhewett.co.uk
@sally_hewett



Louis' Chair
Antique French chair, Lycra, padding, embroidery silk and papier-mâché

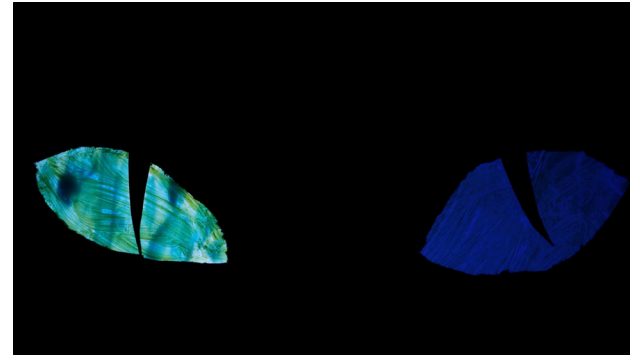
I made this chair after hearing a story about Louis XIV and his eating habits. After he had eaten to the point where he could eat no more, he would leave the table and go to another room where a chair was carefully positioned to enable him to vomit into a

bucket. After he had recovered himself, he would then return to the banquet for the next course.

It is upholstered with quite fragile lycra fabric. I imagine that as time goes by the fabric will lose its elasticity and will fray and tear and will need to be repaired thus mirroring how the body loses its elasticity and becomes more fragile as it ages.

Wyatt Carson

wyattcarson.com
wycarson.art



Mary: Through Glass
Paint-on-glass stop motion

Busy cars, dotted distant windows and aimless lights make up a city through the whimsical perspective of an indoor cat. "Mary: Through Glass" tells the story of a curious cat who finds the company of an imaginary

friend more intriguing than the neighborhood cats, remaining mysterious and desired by others. The city around her is assembled with abstract shapes through the lens of Mary, often mimicking cat-like features and only revealing themselves as reality through the subtle reflections of it.

Kirsty Bogle
kirstybogle.co.uk
@kirstybogle



Measuring Inside the Hive
Inks and graphite on paper

People have loved and honoured honeybees throughout time. The current relationship between honeybees and humanity is often based on an intensive agricultural practice for honey production. 'Measuring Inside the Hive' is a drawing of honeybees festooning, this activity inside honeybee nests, is rarely

seen by humans. Kirsty Bogle's work is the manifestation of her creative relationship with the land around her home and other living beings there.

"Capturing the wonder of the moment, as I draw, hours pass. No thoughts occupy my mind. I focus on the sensory experience of sitting, absorbing, living, drawing the seen and the sensed unseen."

Maayan Sophia Weisstub

weisstub.com
@weisstub

Mnēmē– A Breathing Objects Installation
Wood, silicone, metal

Mnēmē consists of a desk, a chair, a book and a glass of milk. While the scene seems commonplace, closer examination reveals that each object is subtly breathing in its own rhythm. The setting thus fills the space with an animate presence, inviting us to reflect on the vital associations that each of the elements hold.

Banal furniture are somewhat overlooked, yet they are rich with memories. The seemingly simple objects are precious and unique thanks to the stories they contain within them. This work aims to preserve the present and relive the past while dealing with the deep emotions that are connected to grief and loss.





Observer of Dreams

Oil on canvas

The painting “Observer of Dreams” sits between two worlds; holding the fragile space where we recall and reframe our elusive dreams from sleep, into our awake conscious life. Often in our efforts to hold onto the felt

experiences and emotive images witnessed during our dream state, we are able to attain a clarity of inner vision.

The time we sit with such dreams can be beautiful meditations that enrich our daily existence, and allow us to briefly experience, the mystery of seeing the unseen and hearing the unspoken.



Questions to the big beyond

Oil on board

I look for the extraordinary in the ordinary and my work is shaped by an empathy and solidarity towards all living things. My recent figurative work explores the fragility of existence and the power of wonderment. I felt a strong emotional connection between my paint-

ings and the theme of ‘Seeing the unseen, Hearing the unspoken’. I placed a figure looking out into a scene of land and sky, a human vessel where inner and outer worlds converge. In the words of Mary Poppins (by P.L Travers) “ The same substance composes us—the tree overhead, the stone beneath us, the bird, the beast, the star—we are all one, all moving to the same end.



Photo Album. In Memory of the Victims of Deportations of the 20th Century

Tempera, wood on canvas

In my series, utilizing photographs from the 1922 Soviet Union deportations, I alter faces, rendering portraits anonymous. This process embodies a paradox, oscillating between two symbolic impacts. On one hand, it mirrors the historical suppression of purge victims'

images in printed documents for propaganda, in times of terror. This erasure, transposed to painting, absurdly amplifies the act of forgetting. On the other hand, alternating the painted image, rooted in cult tradition, we are touching a sacred aura. These paintings evoke protective plates (oklad) of Orthodox icons, symbolizing divine light, yet present only a disconcerting void instead of a sacred face.



Pigeon, Camden Town

Screen print (EV)

I have observed London pigeons go about their daily routines just as I go about mine. They might be found sitting irreverently on top of the head of a sculpted figure or perched like winged surveillance agents on the ledges of civic buildings.

I imagine from such vantage points us commuters are perhaps reduced to tiny moving specks.

I have wondered about how they survive the everyday hostilities to their existence and at what they might have to say, if they had capacity, on all that they witness ...

Frances Gynn

francesgynn.co.uk
@frangynn35

Public Erasure - Hedgehog (Post Erasure) Graphite on paper

This work 'Public Erasure - Hedgehog (Post Erasure)' has been partially erased. The subject came about when I heard a girl ask her mother if 'hedgehogs really existed?'. Just one species among many, one it's unbearable to contemplate that we might

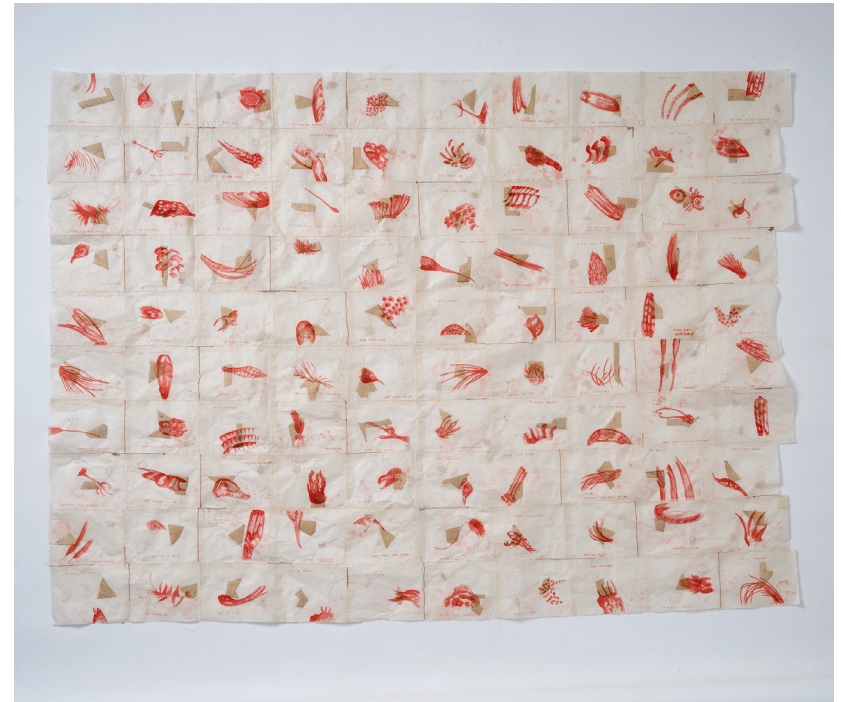
never see again.

The hedgehog is listed as vulnerable on the Great British Red List. Visitors of all ages took part in this erasure at The Forest of Imagination event in Bath. Interactive and thought-provoking, some participants called it 'criminal' to symbolically 'destroy both hedgehogs and the drawing'. A realisation that this is what humans are doing.



Emily Lucas

emilylucasartwork.wordpress.com
@emilylucasart

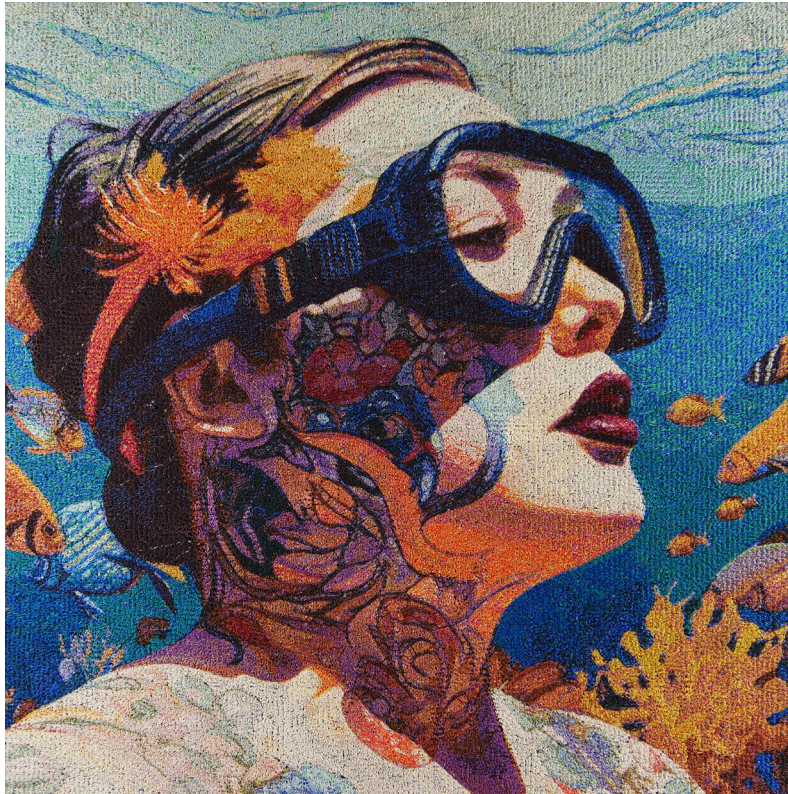


red birds (from the mute sky)

Monoprint, watercolour and stitch on
Japanese paper

Part of a larger body of work entitled '1000 beautiful things', 'red birds (from the mute sky)' pairs mono-printed fragments of bird parts with tiny, found pieces of text. The 100 collaged panels made on Japanese paper have then been hand-stitched together.

When making this piece of work I was thinking about impossibilities of wholeness, unity and perfection and the inadequacies of language to describe and communicate about inner worlds and feelings. Sometimes pictures or words on their own are not enough and 'red birds' is my attempt to embrace fragmentation, imperfection and not knowing.



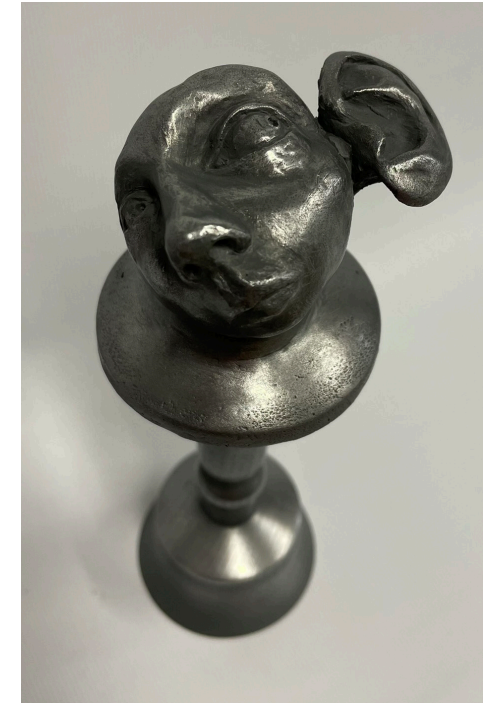
Rincon
Embroidery

Rincon is a place where the connection with nature runs deep. It's not just about the waves; it's about a profound communion with the elements. Swimmers and surfers alike are drawn into an experience that transcends

the ordinary. The sheer splendor of the environment creates an indelible and meaningful journey for anyone who delves into its waters. It's in those unseen feelings and the bonds formed with the surroundings that Rincon truly leaves an enduring mark on those who venture there.

Seeing All, Hearing All
Coldcast metal

The subject matter 'Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken' instantly conjured up so many images and sayings in my mind that I connected with it, eyes at keyholes, ears against walls, the fascinating world of clairvoyance and clairaudience, eyes peeled, ears to the ground. Also as the subject suggests all the things in life we can't see or hear that are there, none the less.



Duncan Cameron

Spring Summer Collection 2020

Wood, glass, newspaper cuttings and natural history specimens

This sculptural work is about and of its time – it's a piece about collection and context. The work draws on an established cultural legacy of selection and display and our changing sensibilities about material provenance and associations. This is a collection of natural history specimens found ethically on walks from our family home in Somerset during the unfolding first Covid lockdown. The wood was sourced from discarded furniture and old pallets and the imperfect glass was retrieved from a dismantled greenhouse. The found specimens, oblivious to our human dramas, are preserved, arranged and labelled with contextual newspaper clippings from the days of their collection.



Photograph credit: Dave Merritt

sharkcage.wixsite.com/duncancameron
@brokensharkcage

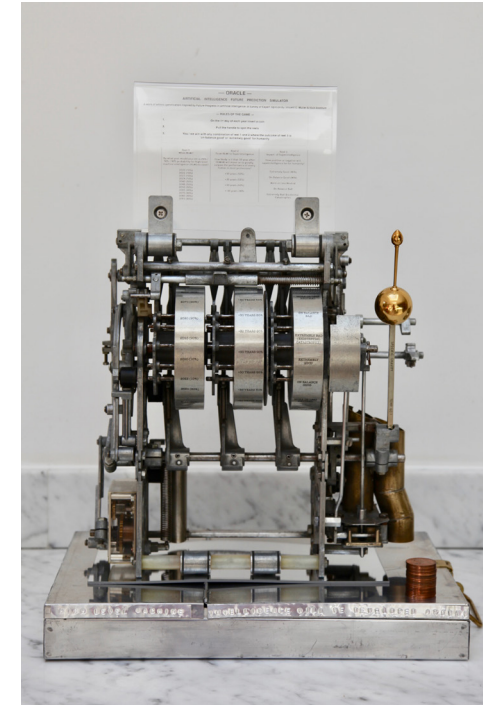
David Aston

Oracle (Artificial intelligence future prediction simulator)

1956 one arm bandit and bank safety deposit box, embossed aluminium, brass, plastic, one penny coins. Digital simulator

Oracle is a sculptural Artificial Intelligence (AI) future prediction simulator inspired by "Future Progress in Artificial Intelligence: A Survey of Expert Opinion" at the Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford. A deconstructed one arm bandit made in the same year as the Dartmouth conference and intended to be used as an oracle to gamify AI future predictions.

In the classical world, when faced with complex decisions people consulted an Oracle, a person capable of precognition of the future. In complexity and computer theory, an oracle machine is used to study decision problems and is capable of solving any computational problem.



rmutt.co.uk
@davidastonart



The Lace Collar
Oil on linen

This portrait is my 2022 version of a Dutch 17th century theme. The model, Michael, is an African American student, studying in The Netherlands. Five hundred years ago, the only black people in Amsterdam were slaves. Owned by the wealthy merchants who could afford to have their portraits painted by artists like Rembrandt. By facing our past, we can pave the way towards a more equitable

future. And commit to an inclusive society where there is no room for racism and inequality. That mission is especially significant this year, as the Kingdom of the Netherlands commemorates the 150th anniversary of the final abolition of slavery in its former colonies: Suriname and the Kingdom's Caribbean islands. Learning about the stories of enslaved people gives us a better sense of the huge numbers involved. It helps us see the unseen - that behind those statistics were human beings.

Lost
Stitched and deconstructed paper

Densely packed flowers thin out towards the hem referencing the loss of native flowers due to warming temperatures. Using the garment form links it to the human, and to

our own loss and transience. We cannot yet see the full effects of climate change, but we can imagine them and know we must act. We do not like to speak of our own and loved ones decline and passing, but we understand it will happen and with that knowledge must act with love and compassion.



Antoni Kuzniarz

artstation.com/antoni_kuzniarz

@antoni_kuzniarz



Swamp of Doubts

Acrylic on canvas

The painting depicts a mysterious place within a fantastical realm I create. There's always fog over the marshes, and amidst the reeds, friendly swamp llamas roam these lands. The Collector sometimes employs their help

to pull a cart to another location. He is the host of the Hut on a Cliff - a building perched on columns above the Swamp of Doubts. He retrieves vessels from the water. They are ancient artifacts in which one can confine negative emotions or a difficult past to find peace. The llamas have sensed your presence. Can the Collector assist you in any way?

Kerry Collison

kerrycollisonartist.co.uk

@kerrycollisonart



The Devil's on the Streets of Swansea

Stained glass

Made during the second winter of the cost of living crisis, the panel shows a giant marauding creature inspired by a Japanese Yōkai: Gashadokuro (starving skeleton) that references the worryingly large homeless population living in Swansea. A morbidly laughable reality that it might just be easier to stay warm at night if you were set on fire by a giant demon walking the streets.

Tarik: The Face of a Modern Diaspora

Large scale charcoal drawing (triptych) with video work

Can you see him ...

Beneath the smudges of polished graphite and lumps of charcoal, the erasures, the scratches, the face looms out of the darkness - the ungrievable life. Gradually breaking down into fragments of a life once lived - now displaced, stateless, dispossessed ...

Demanding to be seen, to be heard through his silent piercing gaze - not only the face of the individual, but of all the stories and voices of those held at the borders of Europe. Plotted with red map pins and thread - his journey of hope and resilience taken in a desperate attempt to reach a land of dreams.



Toad

Glazed white earthenware and furniture

I made this sculpture whilst I was away from home on a residency in Denmark. As the hustle and bustle of my everyday world fell away, I had time to listen to the quieter voices of dreams, myths and memory, and pay attention to the natural cycles of creativity. This image was in my mind for a while, it comes from a dream. I hand-built it out of white clay. I'm interested in the hidden world of the unconscious and how it seeps into our daily life through dreams and visions.

Two Cheeks of the Same Arse
Ceramic

Trust in politicians and the political process is extremely low. Is there an increase in the number of people feeling politically homeless? Do our politicians listen to us, the electorate? Or are their strings being pulled

by global business leaders and NGOs? It's getting more difficult to distinguish between the two main political parties. In a 'first past the post' electoral system does it really matter which party you vote for? Chances are you'll just end up with a different cheek from the same arse.



Ambushed by Cake
Ceramic

While the country was locked down during the Covid outbreak, we later discovered that some in Government, including senior ministers, were not sticking to the rules imposed on the rest of us. In an attempt to dismiss

people's concerns many Conservative MPs started to make excuses for the staff and ministers attending these gatherings, including Conor Burns MP who claimed that Boris Johnson had been "... ambushed with a cake". This sculpture lampoons the hypocrisy of a Government behaving as if it's above the rules it sets everyone else.

Two Witches (Knowledge is Power)

Painted, layered and engraved stained glass and mixed media in light box

Two Witches (Knowledge is Power) celebrates education, social inclusion, safe sex and reproductive rights, with two friends sharing ideas via earpieces. In history, women who educated themselves were often persecuted

as witches. The girl on the left is writing 'Knowledge is Power' in seven of the world's most common languages, unspoken by an estimated 85% of British people.

The girl on the right is attracting moths, to highlight nature. The crow is a symbol of intelligence and the owl is defecating on a Masons' emblem, which is ablaze, promoting openness and resistance to gender apartheid.



Various Positions

Blown glass, found lamp, 1/12-scale chandelier, electrical components, mixed media

"Various Positions" is part of a series exploring the essential, often overlooked infrastructure underpinning our modern lives. Constructed of blown glass and found objects, the glass is at once structure and

accomplice to its contents, an interface mediating the viewer's experience of the objects within. Connected via handmade renderings of the often-unseen pipes, wires and ducting that surround and enable our constructed environments, these contained systems reveal their constituent elements for observation.

Vol.144

Polymer Gravure

Vol.144 is inspired by the theme 'Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken'. In mythology, the forest acts as a witness representing immortality, mystery and enlightenment. Over time memories inform new impressions. The almost forgotten books are a reminder of past knowledge, the forest printed on found pages become collaborators speaking to today and tomorrow.



Ways to Speak Absence
HD film with sound

Ways to Speak Absence is a short film, based on a poem by Matt Alton. It brings together spoken word, an original soundtrack,

improvised movement, and a choral performance of the chorus from Eminem's 'Cleanin' Out My Closet'. The film's primary themes are grief and bereavement; it speaks explicitly about the loss of a parent at a young age.

Whispering
Kinetic sculpture

This kinetic sculpture draws inspiration from our Art Residency project at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Emphasizing a dialogue between art and nature, it builds on our previous creative concept of 'Musical Typewriter NO 2.' Here, forces of nature like wind and rain replace human keystrokes, creating a poetic dialogue between nature and humanity. The installation underscores the growing significance of our connection with the natural world, portraying it as a constant narrator and whisperer in our lives. Finally builds the connection between the theme of seeing the unseen, hearing the unspoken.



Wide Awake
Pen and ink on paper

The piece explores the re-evaluation of our values in a post Christian society. The vacuum left by the collapse of this belief system's moral code has given space for the unheard voices and repressed narratives to finally be heard. The role of women, sexuality, gender

stereotypes to name a few. The third eye emanating from the colossal head is simultaneously the Third Eye from Eastern spiritual practices that leads to enlightenment, but also the Eye of Providence, a Christian icon synonymous with Free Masonry and the darling of conspiracy theorists. Representing the battle being waged across digital frontlines for the future of who we want to be.



Will You Hear Me?

Coloured pencil on paper

Will You Hear Me? is part of a series of portraits titled The Talk exploring intimate conversations between black men. The rawness of the dialogue between artist and subject is expressed through unapologetic, unaltered pencil lines, which trace the journey of the conversation and reveal the layers of a

shared lived experience. Here, the three portraits of Mike represent a breadth and depth of emotion often overlooked in young black men; an assertive stance preoccupied with the outside world; a tentative yet tender moment; and a relaxed, contemplative gaze. The figures - and the febrile lines that form them - challenge us to look beyond the obvious in search of society's unspoken narratives.

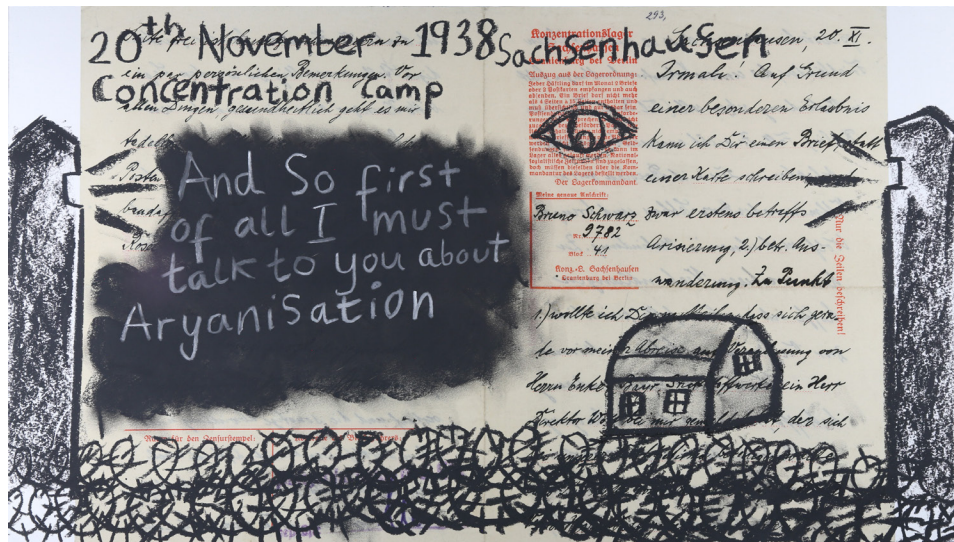


Wounded Tiger

Mezzotint engraving

“Wounded Tiger” is a mezzotint engraving of a Garden Tiger Moth. The gorgeous, often day-flying Garden Tiger with its scarlet underwings was once a common sight of English summers. However it is now rarely

seen at all, at least in southern counties; its numbers having crashed by 92% in my lifetime. Climate change, pesticide use, habitat loss and light pollution may all be to blame. I've chosen to make an image of a battered and wounded Tiger, his flashy red underwings folded away. Alive but only just.



Writing of Memory

Charcoal on Hahnemühle Photo Rag stop motion animation

These intersecting series of charcoal stop-motion animations are derived from Mendel's Jewish Family history, from German Jews fighting and dying in the first world war, to the holocaust, escape and diasporic life in South Africa. The animations combine photographs, archival documents, interviews and excerpts from letters. This film visualises, re-imagines and illustrates family stories, combining the banal with the momentous. These narrative palimpsests speak to the negative space, the silences and the unspoken.



Twisted Paper

Tortured garlands of black paper are massed in an uneasy clump, restless tendrils seem ready to escape their tether. Born out of hundreds of hours of labour twisting rolls of paper, 'Twisted' is testament to purposeless activity and restless energy. It is brittle and friable, knotted and tangled – somehow alive but captured frozen mid-squirm. It's blackness seems threatening, and there's an unease built into its structure.



An elderly woman resting in a nursing home during COVID-19 Pandemic

Digital Photograph

My art is inspired by the human body and face, where each line tells a life story. During the COVID lockdown, I worked in a nursing home, assisting understaffed personnel.

There, I photographed an elderly woman in her bed, a portrait of solitude. Her hands rested on her shoulders, finding comfort in discomfort, self-protection in isolation. She lay amidst the folds of her blankets, mirroring the wrinkles of her masked face and crossed hands, a visual echo of the unseen and unspoken.

“Daddy, I wish...”

Hand engraved on a gold pin measuring 3mm wide

“Daddy, I wish...” is hand-engraved, using a very fine needle, on the head of a gold pin. Engraving at such microscopic levels is a slow process. The artist lowers his heart-rate to 20 beats a minute, then engraves between heartbeats when he is perfectly still. This piece took eight weeks to complete.





ARENA

Video Projection

ARENA is a moving image work documenting the performance of a five-way tug of war. In crafting structures and constraints that can be interacted, performed with, or 'activated' by a group, I aim to explore intertwined systems of power and domination. I want to work out the ways in which these systems spill over or simmer beneath our everyday living. Involving multiple bodies in these works allows me to explore elements of multiplicity and mutuality and to wrestle with our collective societal interconnectedness.



Bed of Hails

777 Cast Plaster Marys

Seeing the Unseen, Hearing the Unspoken causes doubts, problems and pathologies. 777 figurines are missives founded in belief. They are no more than any memorabilia yet

they each partake in the role to assume a gesture. This gesture probes community spirit, support, balance and jeopardy. Bed of Hails is the result and resilience of holding the artist's weight before and after the figurines have fallen questioning Blythe's fascination with a certain mode of behaviour.



Not Home

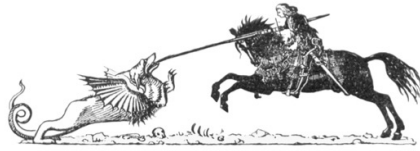
Oil on Board

Is the subject of this painting looking wistfully out into a darkened world, thinking of freedom, or of escape, or, is she looking out in the hope of someone's return? Or is

something else going on? Where has she herself come from, what events surround her, and what is to be made of the dark void to the right behind the partly open door? And who is watching her? What do we see in this picture and what do we make of all we cannot?

Discover more about the prize and the shortlisted artists on ruskinprize.co.uk or on [instagram.com/thebigdraw](https://www.instagram.com/thebigdraw)

THE BIG DRAW & THE GUILD OF ST GEORGE



GUILD of St GEORGE

The Guild of St George is the charity for arts, crafts and the rural economy founded in 1871 by the Victorian art and social critic, John Ruskin (1819-1900). Directed by a Master and a dozen Directors, all of whom are voluntary, it employs an Administrator and one or two other officers to run its daily affairs. There are now more than 300 members, who are known as Companions. Almost a fifth of these Companions live overseas, so the Guild is now becoming international.

Ruskin's aims and aspirations for the Guild are contained in the ninety-six letters he published 'to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain' under the title, *Fors Clavigera* (1871-84). His principal purpose in founding the Guild was to make Britain a happier place to live in.

Now a charitable Education Trust, the Guild tries to put Ruskin's ideas into practice in the modern world. It owns and supports the Ruskin Collection, a collection of works of art and other precious objects given by Ruskin in 1875 to the City of Sheffield so that working people could see and handle beautiful objects and now in Sheffield's Millennium Gallery. The Collection has been the basis for three major Triennial Exhibitions at the Gallery, all funded by the Guild. A fourth exhibition, *The Power of Seeing*, was shown in both London and Sheffield in 2019, to celebrate Ruskin's bicentenary.



Founded in 2000 by The Guild of St George, The Big Draw is a pioneering visual literacy charity dedicated to raising the profile of drawing as a tool for wellbeing, thought, creativity, social and cultural engagement. The charity leads a diverse programme of advocacy, empowerment and engagement, and is the founder and driving force behind The Big Draw Festival – the world's biggest celebration of drawing.

The Big Draw manages collaborative research projects, campaigns and educational conferences on visual literacy, digital technology and STEAM. The charity supports professional and emerging artists through its national contemporary art prize, The John Ruskin Prize and exhibition, and through events, awards, and competitions, creating platforms for each and everyone who wants to draw. We believe drawing is an essential human skill important in all walks of life, and our work has won support from leading practitioners within the arts, sciences and education. Take a look at some of our campaign videos here. With educational policies increasingly de-valuing the role of creative subjects and careers in our society and economy, The Big Draw strives to ensure access for all to creative events, training and resources.

The Big Draw's continued development is made possible by the support of many organisations and individuals who share our vision. Without them and the commitment of hundreds of venues across the UK and beyond, our mission would be unachievable.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & THANK YOUS

The John Ruskin prize is organised by visual literacy charity **The Big Draw**, charity no.1114811, and was founded by **The Guild of St George**, charity no. 231758.

Jane Barnes: Co-director of The John Ruskin Prize & Executive Director, The Big Draw

Sandra Borszcz : Co-director of The John Ruskin Prize & Head of Operations at The Big Draw

Lucia Vinti: Content Producer & Administrator, The Big Draw

The team at Parker Harris, Patrons and ambassadors of The Big Draw

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