

DEGREE SHOW SHOWCASE 22/23
OPEN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

#WEAREOCA

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

I'm extremely proud to be able to introduce you to the 2023 online degree showcase. I attended the graduation ceremony last week at the Royal Festival Hall in London where forty OCA graduands were in attendance to receive their awards along with their families and friends. The graduates at OCA are unique and individual, highly talented and from a range of backgrounds and communities far more diverse than I would have imagined. This diversity is represented in the work produced. Every student journey is different and these students have had to overcome the challenges of the pandemic alongside degree study, which for many of them also means fitting study around work and family commitments. I am immensely proud of their achievements, and wish each of them success in their professional practices. We create and shape our world as our world also shapes us; with that in mind please enjoy the experience of immersing yourself in their work.

WILL WOODS



WITH THANKS TO

Thank you to all the students and staff who helped to produce this online degree showcase. Particular thanks go to Emma Drye, Beth Hartley, Joanne Mulvihill-Allen and Stephen Highfield.

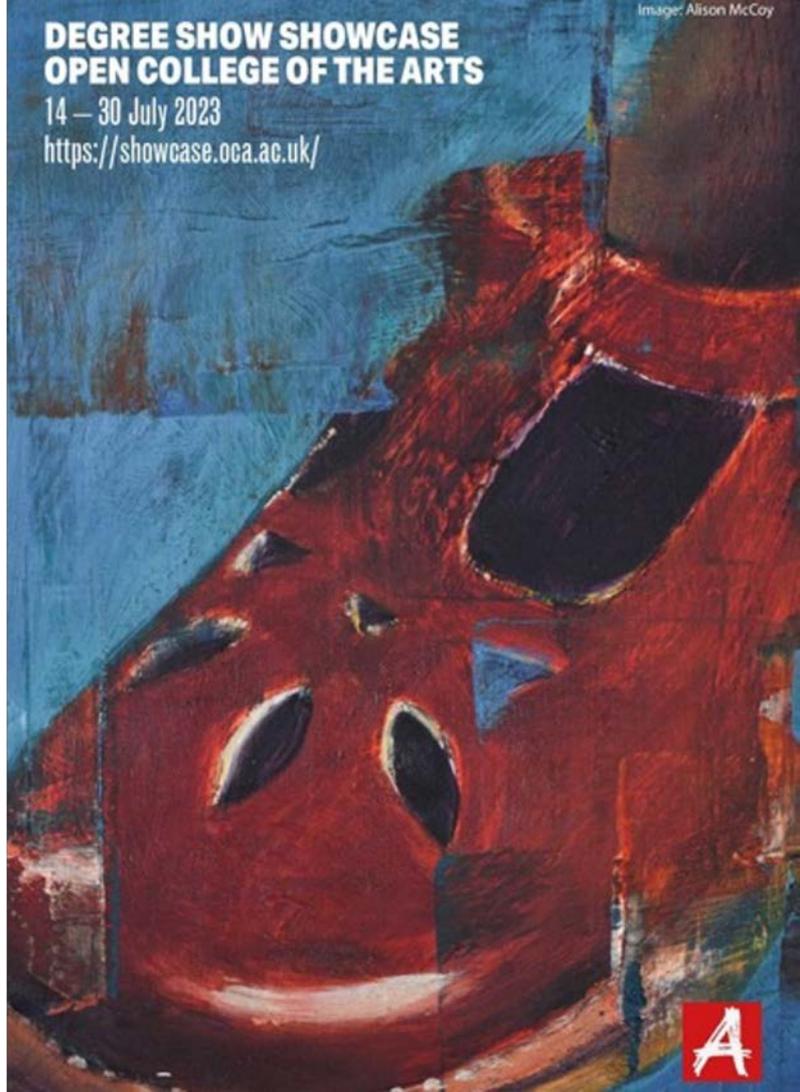
<https://showcase.oca.ac.uk/>
www.oca.ac.uk

**DEGREE SHOW SHOWCASE
OPEN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS**

14 – 30 July 2023

<https://showcase.oca.ac.uk/>

Image: Alison McCoy



PARTICIPATING GRADUATES

ALISON MCCOY

ANNA BARNARD

ANNA SELLEN

ARLENE SHARP

BOB COE

CAROL HOY

DHAMA THANIGASAPATHY

EDDIE TUCKER

ELIZABETH WOODGER

GERALDINE LEAHY

GESA HELMS

JACQUIE FRANKS

JUDITH BACH

JULIE HOOKER

KINGA OWCZENNIKOW

LINDA MAYOUX

MICK WHYTE

MICHELE USHER

NATALYA GRIFFIN

NICOLA HAMPSHIRE

NUALA MAHON

ROSIE MOWATT

SANDHYA BARLAAS

SARAH PEASE

SHARON BUTLER

SOPHIE EDWARDS

STEVE CUSSONS

WENDY HEALEY

CREATIVE ARTS

BOB COE

BIO

I have always been interested in photography, practising it as a hobby for many years. The nature of my photographic work changed considerably over the period of my study for the Creative Arts degree. Studying the twin disciplines of Photography and History of Art gave me a distinct perspective on how images are produced, and allowed my imagination to flourish.

I am interested in the influences within and between different art forms, particularly between photography and other art. Since graduating I have started an MA in Fine Art at Norwich University of the Arts. My work has been exhibited in both virtual and physical galleries and published in magazines.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My work *Flora in Extremis* aims to graphically convey some of the threats to plant life. My *Pesticides* series acts as a metaphor for the threat posed by excessive and indiscriminate use of pesticides. A printed floral image is sprayed with pesticide, the resulting, unstable, image is then scanned to preserve it.

Surimono (literally 'printed thing') applies to Japanese woodblock printed material which combine a poem or poems with a corresponding image. In collaboration with the poet and plant scientist Anne Osbourn, we created a form of *surimono* using photographs and poems integrated into a single image. These give voice to the flowers, addressing the concept of 'plant blindness'.

Producing Cyanotypes relies on ultraviolet light. Excessive UV, however, also inhibits the growth processes of almost all green plants. I used the cyanotype process as a metaphor for the danger global warming poses to plant life.

www.floremis.com



Jerusalem sage

*These teratogenic embryos,
blind, finding their way
amongst the lipped, hooded keepers
on this crowded downy planet.*

GESA HELMS

BIO

Gesa Helms is an artist and educator, living between Glasgow, UK, and rural Northwest Germany. Her artistic work is often site-specific and walking-based in an expanded field of drawing. She is fond of questions and sometimes writes these out too. Recent works include a collaboration as part of Nastassja Simensky's Leaky Transmissions series for Arts Catalyst, the OCA EU WanderWideWeb residency and exhibition and her own extended exchange through the series of DIY print to zine *A/Folder: an extended glossary*. She also has a chapbook forthcoming with intergraphia in September 2023. She holds a PhD in Human Geography (Glasgow, UK). IG [@draw_lena](https://www.instagram.com/draw_lena).

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

a cover is a covering a ceiling a blanket.

it covers first the transformer so as to trace, to rub, to transfer. it collects sun wind rain needles, and insects wander and meander atop.

i climb up, survey, convey, a tricep lift, a turn, then a jump (i could and do repeat).

the view point is close, softly along the surface, a blur at times.

For cover presents four covers created across a rural autumn and early winter. It utilises tactile media (graphite rubbings and contact printing) to move-with wind, rain, sun, plant matter alongside hands and other bodies. It did so in an unexpected site, across the small village, just where it meets the forest: a cover is a covering a ceiling a blanket, to potentially cover you and perhaps I.

tinyurl.com/forcover

All images are Installation view *For Cover*, 2021, Gesa Helms.



STEVE CUSSONS

BIO

When I was young, art was not seen as an academic subject and was not offered by my school to those over the age of 14. After studying Mathematics and a career in engineering and IT, I retired to concentrate on bringing up my family.

Looking for new challenges as my children became independent, I returned to my early love of art and, in particular, printmaking and drawing. My practice brings together art and science and I also collaborate with other artists. The collaborative film 'Phosphene', made with David Ian Bickley, was awarded 'Best Experimental Film' at the Eden International Film Festival, 2022.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I am a London-based artist exploring process and materiality through printmaking, drawing and digital media. Finding inspiration from my background in mathematics and physics, I seek to convey the excitement of the enquiry into the nature of matter and energy. I work in collaboration with my media to capture its inherent performative qualities. The work is rarely representational; rather it seeks to capture a dynamic moment of interaction between the artist and the materials as co-actants. Photographic works often play with scale, paying attention to minute details which can also reflect the action of matter at the largest scale of the cosmos. Traces of the hand often appear in works, the hand acting as a tool, a biometric and as a signifier of human connection and curiosity.

Website: <https://www.stevecussons.co.uk/>

Degree Work: <https://www.stevecussons.co.uk/art-project-inspired-by-science-matter-and-physics/>

Image 1: Indeterminate. Photomontage, 60cm x 60cm.

Image 2: Indeterminacy. Video stills.



CREATIVE WRITING

JACQUIE FRANKS

BIO

I live in the Mendips Hills with my partner and our cat. I've always loved reading but it was several decades before I felt brave enough to try to write myself. I began studying Creative Writing with the OCA in 2014. My first success came after my first year, when my 5-minute play *Old Blue Eyes, Back in Town* was performed in Wells, Somerset by a Bristol theatre company as part of their Trading Local initiative; this was incredibly exciting. In 2022 I graduated with a first-class honours degree. What I particularly love about writing is that I never stop learning as I write. Although I sometimes hate that about writing, too!

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My OCA studies, together with tutors' and fellow students' input, were invaluable in helping me improve my writing, find my 'voice' and also clarify what I wanted to write. Since completing my degree I have not stopped writing. I love creating flash fiction and short stories, particularly surreal realism and tales with a quirky angle. I began writing my first novel *A Shortage of Deaths* – a collection of closely-connected, character based stories, set in 1983 on a fictional island – during Level Three of my degree and have now completed the first draft. My current goals are to establish an on-line writing brand and to publish both my novel and my flash fiction pieces.



ROSIE MOWATT

BIO

Based in Wiltshire, Rosie Mowatt writes poetry and prose, inspired by a thirst for adventure, a sense of humour and curiosity about her past and the people she encounters on her travels. Born in Somerset on the Bristol Channel coast, she developed an early passion for music and language. After college, she began her career working at an international bank in Switzerland, speaking French, German and Italian on a daily basis.

Rosie studied part-time initially with the Open University, then with the Open College of the Arts and was awarded a first-class honours degree in Creative Writing from the University for the Creative Arts in 2022.

In 2019 Rosie published her first poetry collection, *A Cloak of Memories*, combining memoir and lessons in life to explore hopeful beginnings and fragile endings.

Rosie brings her passion for creative writing to enhance a successful corporate career as an internal communication leader and is the recipient of an industry Lifetime Achievement Award for her innovative work. You can connect with Rosie at www.facebook.com/RosieMowattAuthor and on Twitter [@rosiemowatt](https://twitter.com/rosiemowatt). Read more of Rosie's work on her website, [Finding the Write Rosie — A Writing Journal](#).

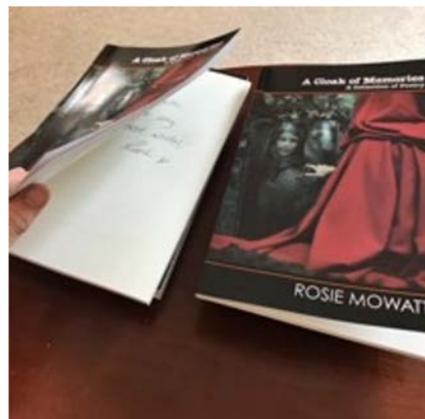
ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I combined memoir and flash fiction techniques to produce flash memoir, capturing past episodes and events through hybrid writing, using an overall theme of Offcuts from the fabric of life as a device to highlight recollections. My prose poem, Working on my 'self' from home, explores authenticity and the various 'faces' we wear. It was written during lockdown, following months of endless online meetings and very little face-to-face contact.

I returned to poetry as another form of short non-fiction in Cheesecake economics based on my experience of moving to university. The inspiration came from a workshop prompt to imagine a favourite animal and make them inhabit a least favourite place. The incongruity of combining these contrasting images made me tap into memories of moving from the wildness of the countryside, represented by an otter, to a concrete city represented by Birmingham.

In Postcards from Switzerland, I combined memoir and travel writing to record living abroad and my attempts to comply with obscure rules. I used humour to poke fun at the ridiculous nature of some rules, such as the requirement for men to sit down to urinate after 10 at night to avoid disturbing the neighbours.

[Finding the Write Rosie – A Writing Journal](#)



The blackbird clock fell silent when you left,
as lost as once before, adrift in mind.
Now you have flown to leave us still bereft,
no tick or tock to comfort those behind.

Last night your clock chimed robin, soft cuckoo
of dove soaring my dreams with songs you taught.
Our world when small, wings flapping as we flew
your nest of love, secure in soul and thought.

Yes, you have flown but life bird-songs again.
The hours speed up, the clock hands on the days
that distance us from grief and soothe our pain.
For you sing on, rejoiced in all the ways
we live the legacy of your refrain -
the chorus of the dawn in God's own plays.



SANDHYA BARLAAS

BIO

Sandhya Barlaas is a Pakistani writer and poet with a BA in Creative Writing from the Open College of the Arts. Since 2011 she has been a freelance contributor for Dawn, the largest English newspaper in Pakistan. Her work includes both poetry and prose and has appeared in various literary anthologies. She is currently working as a poetry editor at Zoetic Press, an American publisher of short-form literature.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I write so that I can free myself from the confines of reality and hopefully challenge the reader's worldview. To do this, I rely on unusual point-of-view choices that provide multiple angles of looking at characters and situations. In my writing what appears to be one thing turns out to be quite different, far more complex than initially expected. My stories often feature fantasy settings, young protagonists, and a tone of angst and humor that makes it hard to decide whether to laugh at the characters or cry with them. Disguised under the lighthearted tone are intellectual or social themes, but in every case it is the character voice that takes primacy over the ideas. My protagonists are people who chafe against the norms of society—they are the mad and the misunderstood, the mavericks and the misfits—and I use them to challenge the reader into rethinking and re-perceiving reality.

The world is, after all, hardly black and white, right or wrong. It is a kaleidoscope of nuance.

Website: <https://sandhyabarlaas.wordpress.com/>



SOPHIE EDWARDS

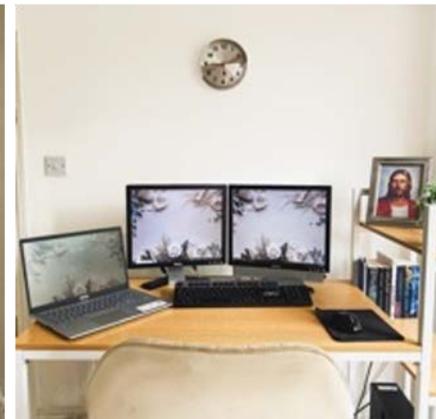
BIO

Sophie was raised in the North East of England with Bamburgh Castle on one side and the countryside on the other and now lives in Scotland with her husband and five children. She began her first novel, PANGAEA, at thirteen, and it will never see a reader's eye. Since then, she has written eight novels and is working on her ninth and tenth respectively.

Sophie's debut novel, MAGE: THE GUARDIAN'S OATH, spent a week on Amazon's bestseller list in 2018. She has delivered library talks, spoken on the radio, and led writing workshops for home-schooled children during the COVID pandemic. Sophie has a wealth of growing experience in editorial, design, and directing with multiple organisations and has gone on to study a MA in writing.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I specialise in writing YA fantasy, thriller and sci-fi novels. Writing is something I've always enjoyed, and now it's my turn to give back what I gained from the fantastical stories of authors who came before me. The more I study, the more I discover myself and learn who I want to be and write with more purpose. I hope to make a difference through innovative and original stories, learning from others and passing on what I know, all the while surprising with twists and subverting expectations.



PAINTING

ALISON MCCOY

BIO

After a varied career in the corporate world enabling her to travel the world, Alison moved to Italy to look after holiday properties. Always involving herself in creative activities – photography club, watercolour night classes - she felt the time was right to embark on the degree program she missed out on when leaving school, and began her remote learning journey with the OCA.

Moving back to the UK, Alison continued her studies, eventually graduating with a BA (Hons) degree in Painting after 10 years of study.

She continues to explore the medium of oil paint in her semi-abstract work with her recent exhibition held in a local Norman church, inspired by the architecture and small details within it. A further collaborative project with other graduating students is also in the pipeline.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Through my art I seek to explore the slippery nature of memory and the way in which our recall fades, alters and distorts our experiences.

My paintings begin with an initial impression which can be anything from an indistinct memory pertaining to a place or experience from the past, to details from a family photograph, historic location or public archive.

Oil paint provides the perfect medium for representing distortion on the picture plane and by overpainting an acrylic underpainting with oils I then use scrapers and brushes to move the paint around the surface, obscuring some areas and blurring lines. The resulting image retains the original subject with enough disruption to reference the degradation caused by our imperfect memories.

Ambiguity is further introduced by balancing figurative and abstract to produce an impression of my subject rather than a complete representation.

<https://www.alisonmccoyart.co.uk/home>



ANNA BARNARD

BIO

Anna Barnard (b. 1983) lives in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. She got a degree in Painting at the Open College of the Arts in 2023.

Anna Barnard paints representational images. They are the artist's personal reflections on her immediate surroundings: everyday objects like fruit, tableware, flowers from a nearby field, window views, her childhood memories and relationships between objects.

In Barnard's paintings colour and form become the artist's language of contemplation of objects and things that interest her. Realistic colours and forms of objects undergo transformation through her reflections, memories and feelings.

Anna Barnard works in traditional medium: oil on canvas. She finds inspiration in the works of painters who highly regarded the laws of painting: Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard and Elizabeth Blackadder.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Through my life my childhood memory of a treescape in front of my parents' home keeps coming back and bringing back memories of everything that was connected to that place: growing up, my family and the time spent with them.

The treescape became a safe place of my own which now lives in my mind. It has become a deeply heart-warming experience to embody these memories into paintings.

The vibrating colours of the curtains on the window and the charming shapes of the tree branches reflect the joy of my childhood memories.

When I am looking at my window paintings, I find myself in the virtual reality of my memories. I am back in the kitchen at my childhood home and I can hear the soft sound of Granny's slippers, my Mum's loving voice, my Dad's jokes and my sister's laughter.

www.annabarnard.wordpress.com

@anna_alyna_



ARLENE SHARP

BIO

Arlene recently graduated with a First Class BA (Hons) in Painting after 12 years of study with the OCA. Her paintings are inspired by the natural world and how that can be expressed through space, form, colour and light. Gathering visual information through walking in the local area and travels further afield, Arlene's paintings, in acrylics oils and mixed media, evoke a sense of place, reflecting her personal response to her surroundings.

Arlene undertook a solo exhibition for her final year degree show. 'Painted Space – Remembering Gilberts Lake' which was held at Harrow Arts Centre in September 2022. The work comprised paintings, large hanging canvases and photographs inspired by the nearby ancient woodland of Grimdsyke Woods in Harrow Weald.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Our sense of space and place is not fixed or static, it is bound up with experience, memory and perception as well as the actual surroundings. Fragments of visual images, thoughts and senses are juxtaposed, jostling for attention. My interests lie in how we experience this space and how these sensory experiences can be translated visually.

The paintings for my final year project, Painted Space, were inspired by the ancient woodland of Grim's Dyke and by the writing of French philosopher Gaston Bachelard. The estate was home in the early 20th century to English librettist W.S. Gilbert; the swampy ornamental lake and surrounding woodland was the focus for the work.

Through walking, sketching and photography, ideas took shape. Several paintings were made on unprimed canvas which had been left in the edges of the lake for several weeks to absorb the elements. Other pieces were made using acrylics, oils and collage.

For further details see: <https://www.arlenesharp.co.uk/>



EDDIE TUCKER

BIO

My interest in art originates from my amateur-artist mother. Instead of an artistic I had an engineering career - ship's Engineering Officer, Oil platforms in West Africa and refrigeration Engineering Manager traveling worldwide. Through this succession of jobs I still drew and painted.

In late 2008 an out-patient back procedure left me with spinal MRSA infection. Spending many months laid up and off work recovering from major back surgery I turned to art. With my interest rekindled I attended evening sessions before my OCA course started in 2013 and completing in mid 2022.

My influences are varied but I have always been drawn to the drama and lighting of Rembrandt's ink studies and Caravaggio's drama and virtuoso. Frida Kahlo's work has a special resonance with me as she used most of her work to describe and visual her pain, an area of interest and exploration in my own practice.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I am primarily a painter producing figurative realism works that are strongly narrative based. Focussing on works exploring physicality and mentality, their imperfections, damages, fragilities of injury and age, and how these are revealed in the flesh - making us who and what we are.

Exploring how pain, injury trauma of the body and mind can be depicted through painting. I do this through the use of collocations - a combination of paintings; such as a figure with injuries and an associated image such as a damaged object.

Our bodies and minds are like a diary or map of our life, revealing the stresses, strains, injuries, age and imperfections within its surface and underlying core. I want to explore how paint can be used as a physical representation of a body's flesh and mind, reflecting on a life's experiences.

Links
Instagram, [@art_tucker](#)
<https://www.eddietuckerart.co.uk>



GERALDINE LEAHY

BIO

Geraldine Leahy returned to education to study painting with The OCA, completing a BA (Hons) Painting degree in 2022. Her lifelong interest in landscape and the natural world informed her studies and her current body of work is concerned with the exigent and immediate issues of climate change. Vibrant objects, both natural and manmade, that have become embedded in the shoreline following severe weather events, provide a starting point for her work. Noting the entanglement of these materials on the beach, she uses shoreline debris in layered processes that suggest changes in the environment and encourage reflection on the effects mankind has had on the coastline. Intriguing combinations of monoprint and paint reveal the devastating consequences of coastal erosion at a local level. However, the artist also brings this issue to universal attention through her continued engagement with digital and print publications, as well as physical and online exhibitions.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My practice is concerned with coastal erosion and involves an awareness of the pernicious inseparability of organic and manufactured debris on the beach. As I walk the coastline I seek out the unexpected in the environment – incongruous objects and situations that are the result of both natural processes and human actions. Perception of local memory, embedded and submerged, resurfaces and is exposed in personal belongings as the terrain disintegrates and subsides. Corroding metal objects, discarded plastic toys, collapsed fencing, and lengths of rope linger on the beach, traces and imprints of the processes of a changing climate. My approach involves working with these objects in layered processes that reflect the mutability and fragile beauty of the littoral environment. I explore the incongruity of manmade materials which strangely assume the appearance of organic forms throughout the painting process. These forms mutate into evocations of the entanglement of mankind and the natural world.

<https://www.gleahyart.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/gleahyart/?hl=en>



MICK WHYTE

BIO

<https://mickos.co.uk/>

<https://www.instagram.com/painterofpictures>

Date of Birth: 15 November 1956

Qualifications

BA(Honours) Painting | Diploma Norfolk School of Painting

Exhibitions of Work

Searching For The Light (Solo Degree Show) 2022

J/M Gallery, Portobello Road, London UK

Courtyard 15th Open Exhibition 2022

Courtyard Arts Gallery, Hertford UK

Art in Mind and Contemporary Painting 2020

The Brick Lane Gallery, London UK

In the Studio: Art by MoMA's Online Learning Community 2018

Museum of Modern Art, New York USA

Enfield Art Circle Summer Exhibition 2016, 2020, 2020, 2022

Enfield Art Circle, London UK

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Michael lives in London and paints in oils. He is inspired to paint his landscapes by the countryside on the fringes of the city. He regularly makes studies from the masters to understand techniques he later embodies in his own work. He is interested in the physical qualities of the paint and the effect of light, his work hovers straddles the boundary between reality and abstract.

Michael thoroughly enjoys his time dancing at the easel, his preparatory work and much of the decision making are done before he gets to the easel and believes that only the enjoyment of the dance shows through in the finished work. The actual painting time takes just ninety minutes, he calls it the football process. In the first half, he establishes his dominance over the canvas, then allows the painting to guide him into finding a resolution of the objective in the second half.



NATALYA GRIFFIN

BIO

British Artist, born in Azerbaijan. Since 1999 have travelled and lived in England, India, and Georgia; Travelled across each country as well as Turkey, Wales, and Scotland. For the last 11 years, we live in the UK, currently in Staffordshire. My Identity and work have been challenged and shaped due to various factors – experiencing war, change of environments and culture, language, and mentality. All this combined made me who I am today. My work is about colour, life, and connections – a mosaic of many places and encounters, they are my painted windows and doors between past, present, and future. Experimenting through painting, sculpting, pyrography, and photography enriches the process and gives way to new connections with the world around me.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My work is inspired by nature and walking. Through repetition of pattern, texture, and colour I create my own world where each mark is a connection to a memory, place, time, or an encounter. The process of painting and making is like a maze – or mycelium – it moves in all directions, expands, and explores possibilities. My work is my fruiting body, my mushroom, that starts with a spore, an idea that grows and evolves into an entity of its own. In my work, I look for connections between myself, the world around me, and new ways of experiencing familiar through unfamiliar approach and exploration. The process is important to me, and I tend to use materials as my substrate, where ideas land as a spore, and the result is a new fruit that gives way to new ideas to continue as a new link of an expanding net.

www.natalyagriffin.co.uk

@natalyagriffinart



WENDY HEALEY

BIO

Wendy Healey lives and works in Herefordshire. Inspired by her surroundings she explores her environment and its connection to our bodies, our minds-what makes us who we are-humanness. Early sensory associations to her birthplace Vancouver Canada and memories of a feral childhood in the Midlands countryside permeates her practice.

Her passion and interest in art has been integral to her life. Informed by her experience as a Child Psychotherapist and understanding of Psychoanalytic psychotherapy her artwork explores the conscious and unconscious slippery interface between our internal and external worlds.

1988 B SocSc (Hons) Political Science, Birmingham University, UK.

1990 M SocSc, Birmingham University, UK.

2000 Accredited Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist with the Association of Child Psychotherapists (ACP), London, UK.

2022 BA (Hons) Painting First Class Degree, Open College of Arts (OCA), Barnsley, UK.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Humanity- humanness, intrigues me and guides my research and practice. I paint, sculpt, following the rhythm of found, natural and manufactured materials, harnessing their tactile energy. My making is intuitive and spontaneous. I explore and transform discarded debris, mud, brambles, muslin, dough, plaster, plastic, bark, baby wipes....fused these disparate materials emit a re-energised life of their own.

My paintings, sculptural forms, and non-forms inhabit the liminal world of the 'in-between'-an ephemeral place between outside and inside. These sensory forms and non forms possess fragility and resilience reflecting the dichotomy of humanness and what shapes our identity. Simultaneously my work can attract and repel, evoke a complexity of emotions by revealing physical and psychological aspects of our internal and external landscapes.

Website: www.wendystudio.co.uk

Instagram: wendyhealeystudio



DHAMA THANIGASAPAPATHY

BIO

Dhama Thanigasapapathy is a London based British artist whose work is informed by her interest in science, science fiction, psychology, futurism and her life-long fascination with the awesome power and chaotic beauty of climatic phenomena. Her perspective is unusually enriched by a prior career in IT Consultancy and telecommunications which involved analysis of the impacts of artificial intelligence, ubiquitous connectivity and other revolutionary technologies.

She uses painting as a way to relate to the changing environment, allowing the flows, drips and chemical interactions of paint to echo natural processes. She spends many hours drawing, painting and photographing elements of the natural environment such as water, geological formations and weather effects. Her paintings bring together ideas fermented over months of research, observation and study.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The semi-figurative landscapes of future possibilities are based on a complex layering of reality, imagination, multiple overlapping memories, cultural stories and emotional drivers including unease and nostalgia.

The awe-inspiring power of natural forces transform, dissolve and erase constructs over time and space, creating a sense of the ephemeral nature of time in relation to human lives. Rather than showing the moment of devastation, it stands at the edges observing the creeping anticipation and intentionality and the elegiac aftermath. The ghostly remnants of the past linger as storms and seas encroach, time elapses, erosion occurs, human artefacts break down, natural objects are displaced, matter grows over the ruins of civilisations. The materiality of the paint – splashes, drips, paint flowing like water, air, fire and earth - echoes the chaotic nature of the subject matter

Website: www.dhamat.com

Instagram: @dhama100



PHOTOGRAPHY

ANNA SELLEN

BIO

Based on the west coast of Wales, Anna Sellen is a multi-disciplinary artist working across photography, video, sound, installation and text. She often works autobiographically, combining her personal history with research and archival work to explore wider political and cultural debates. She is currently artist-in-residence at the Kelvedon Hatch Cold War bunker. She is also a founding member of INK, a collective of six UK-based image-makers.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

'Drip by drip, we are fed with concrete' (ongoing)

This multi-media work explores the psychological effect of censorship and silencing on the lives and the identities of people. It draws on my family's lived experiences in the Soviet Union between 1952 and 1986. Their first-hand narrative accounts unfold through the photographs, poems, sound and diaries, revealing a distinct interpretation of the defining geo-political events of the Cold War era.

To create this series, I burned, defaced and buried in concrete the photos of my family, acting out their agony of constantly living in a state immersed in fear and secrecy. I used concrete and the Cold War bunker as metaphors for the impact of silencing on people.

The moment we take free speech for granted, it can be lost in the next moment. This work is a visually expressive reminder of what we can learn from history, and the consequences of what can happen if we do not.

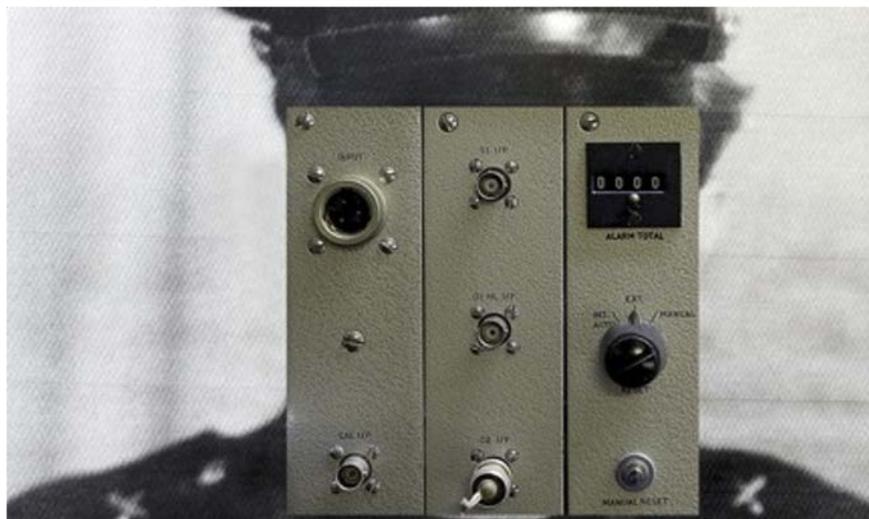
Links

www.annanas.co.uk

'Drip by drip, we are fed with concrete' digital/VR exhibition:

https://www.4piproductions.com/catalyst360_as/

Instagram: annasellenphotography



ELIZABETH WOODGER

BIO

As a former geologist with a PhD in palaeoclimatology, my creative practice represents a form of environmental and ecological research; I investigate how landscapes have been shaped and how they respond to human influence. My work combines studio-based construction with outdoor experimentation in order to create spontaneous and evocative imagery. Much of my photography is characterised by tactile transformative processes, such as the physical and chemical manipulation of photographic prints. I also incorporate many natural elements into my artworks; the sunlight, trees, plants, rivers, rocks and waves of my surrounding countryside. In essence, my photographic practice creates a mechanism through which I can explore my local landscape, respond to global environmental issues, and reflect on the inherent connections between humans, environment and natural processes.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Diagenesis examines elements of the environment in and around Exmoor; an incredibly beautiful and dramatic landscape that has been subject to human influence since the late Mesolithic period. In order to create the images for Diagenesis, I made a series of conventional photographic prints and then folded them into complex three-dimensional forms via an intricate studio-based process. The folds exert an unnatural level of control over the scene, contorting it and re-shaping it, until it becomes something else entirely.

The folded objects represent human interventions on the environment. But by returning the forms to the landscape, they are subjected to unpredictable natural forces (the wind, rain and tides) and that human control is inevitably diminished. Ultimately, Diagenesis explores the relationship between humans and the environment, using myself as both a metaphor and a catalyst.

Links

Website: <https://elizabethwoodger.com/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/elizabethwoodger/>



JUDITH BACH

BIO

Judith (b. 1954) is a Worcestershire based photographer with an interest in the preservation of photographic archives and their use in an artistic practice. We only see snippets of information when viewing any photograph, there is always a gap between what we see and what we truly know; this break in time is what makes snapshots unequalled. Whilst old photographs are static objects their meaning constantly evolves, they are never anchored in time. Working with contemporary and archival imagery Judith's interventions allow alternative and new dialogues to be imagined.

Judith was recently awarded a First-Class BA (Hons) Photography Degree from the University for Creative Arts. Various images from her degree project Paper Memories have been exhibited in Arles, featured in the 2021 Association of Photographers Awards book and won both a Gold and Bronze Award in the 2022 Budapest Foto Awards.



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Paper Memories.

The small green leather case was kept in a cupboard in mum and dad's bedroom. Inside were their old analogue snapshots and albums; paper memories. As a child they transported me to another era, to a time when my parents were young.

Whilst old photographs might be thought of as silent pieces of paper, they are also objects that communicate events and experiences. As they get older they become yellowed with age, have marks and rips, possibly remnants of glue from where they were once pasted into an album. Despite any flaws they are kept for their symbolic value chronicling happy occasions; an ageing print that outlives the original subject is often all that remains.

Working with my late parents' archive I explore abstract concepts, temporality, materiality, love, loss and longing. Mum and dad's photographs are just ordinary snaps but they signify something different now.

<https://judithbach.com>

Instagram @judithbach



KINGA OWCZENNIKOW

BIO

A native of Poland, Kinga is an emerging art photographer. She considers her practice as a collaboration with the world which reflects her inner landscapes. Kinga spent most of her adult life in metropolises like Hong Kong, London, Ho Chi Minh City or lesser known places such as Tirana or Paro, in the Himalayas. She is currently based in Bay Area, in California.

Kinga had a solo exhibition “The secret paths of Hong Kong” at the Asia and Pacific Museum in Warsaw, in 2011. She was a finalist of the Mediterranean Spirit at the PhotoMed Awards, 2016, and a finalist in the Association of Photographers Student Awards, 2019, in the category Places (single photo) and the AOP Student Awards, 2020 in the category Things (series). Her photographs have been exhibited in group shows in the UK, Hungary, France, Spain, Italy, Netherlands and the United States.

Kinga first studied photographic theory and practice at Warsaw School of Photography. She holds a BA (Hons) in Photography from the University for the Creative Arts. Kinga is an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society, a member of SF Camera Work and Center of Photographic Art. She is also a part of RPS’s Women in Photography group.

Links

Website: <https://www.kingaowczennikow.com/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/kingaowczennikow/>

ARTIST’S STATEMENT

Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience. [Ralph Waldo Emerson]

“Green House” presents viewers with photographs of natural and urban scenes in seeming harmonious coexistence. To passersby who choose to pause and gaze, the vegetation appears to be gazing back. I believe that nature is patiently waiting, sometimes in harsh conditions, for its opportunity to evade the human barriers and occupy the place it deserves.



MICHELE USHER

BIO

Michele Usher is a New Zealand based photographer. Her love of photography started at an early age within the darkroom and has progressed to a combination of both analogue and digital techniques. She has a love of travel and landscape photography, but this has grown to include documentary and social aspects and a growing awareness of the use of photography and the arts to help and support communities through difficulties such as mental health to help drive change and increase awareness. She has taken part in several joint exhibitions and has just completed her first solo exhibition in New Zealand. She is an accredited Photography Society of New Zealand judge. In 2014 she started on her journey to a formal degree with the Open College of the Arts.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

This series has been created around the coastal community of Ngawi (pronounced 'naa-wee'), a small fishing village which is located just five kilometres from Cape Palliser, the southernmost point of New Zealand's North Island. Known for having more bulldozers per capita than permanent residents this project scratches the hard-male surface and discovers what is holding the community together, the very backbone under the shell. Through eight women I have explored the relationship between the land, space and the community who inhabit it. I have tried to capture a feeling of the location through landscape, portraits and still life, showing the hard conditions and the environment which gives a feeling of isolation, hardship, but also the softer side of these women that through their own strength hold the community together by making do and sticking together to support each other.

My website is: <https://ushermichele69.myportfolio.com/>



NICOLA HAMPSHIRE

BIO

Nicola Hampshire's photographic work is driven by the effect that countryside litter has on the environment, its people and its wildlife.

Initially motivated by the amount of litter she observed discarded on the Yorkshire Three Peaks, she investigated the history and dissemination of the countryside code to the public through visual methods and whether signs and information contributed to a litter-free countryside.

Her fascination with illusion and optical viewers inspired her to view litter through a teleidoscope, fragmenting litter to reveal its different sides. A floating triangle hovers over a regenerated, post-industrial landscape, reflecting waste found at the scene. She is interested in how her own and others photographic work might be a sufficient catalyst to change societal behaviour. In her degree studies, she researched questions about historical and contemporary waste disposal and its limitations, waste infrastructure and plastic disintegration.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

In Plain Site is a collection of composite images which establish an imagined reality inspired by surrealism, fantasy and optical apparatus. A chance find of mirrored tiles evolved into a hand-built teleidoscope, (3-sided open-ended kaleidoscope). Through this, Nicola explored detritus, considering its diversity and decomposition into microplastics in the regenerated, post-industrial landscape of Rufford Colliery, Nottinghamshire.

From the discarded coffee cup to the pink inflatable flamingo, valueless waste is reclassified, addressing consumer capitalism and environmentalism, challenging the relationship between humans and the landscape. A critical exploration of waste and consumerism suggests part of the litter problem relates to David Cameron's "Big Society" Model (2010-15), expecting unpaid volunteers to provide services such as litter-picking to offset council spending cuts.

Inspired by her despondency over the quantity of litter left behind by visitors walking the Yorkshire 3 Peaks Challenge in 2019, In Plain Site recognises consumer capitalism plays a part in product packaging and disposal. Litter is unseen until it becomes a problem, exposing social order and assumptions about the place.

<https://spaces.oca.ac.uk/nicolahampshiregraduationshowcase/>



NUALA MAHON

BIO

Nuala Mahon's interest in photography started when her father gave me a box brownie at the age of twelve. She is a qualified chemist and holds BSc and MSc degrees. She is a keen gardener with a deep love of nature. Mahon's maternal ancestors were seafaring men and net mending women. She lives on an island off the South West coast of Ireland.

She worked on mainland Europe before travelling to Africa as a volunteer. In Africa, she worked with women's groups using her photography where the literacy levels were very low. On returning to Ireland she enrolled in the OCA Photography degree programme and qualified in 2023,

She developed a sustainable photographic practice during her final years with OCA. She interwove her chemistry background with her photographic skills to create her degree exhibition on Sherkin Island, West Cork.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My seafaring ancestry and island location have a strong influence on my work. I embarked on this project to capture the enormous increase in plastic waste being washed up on Sherkin Island's beaches.

I tried several different techniques to photograph the debris. I made straight images of the washed-up plastic in situ on the beach. I brought the plastic flotsam and jetsam back to the studio and created artistic images with it. But I was not satisfied that the work highlighted the extent of the problem.

I wanted to create a sustainable photographic practice. I made pinhole cameras from cardboard boxes and tin cans. I brought these to the beach in all weathers and made images of the plastic waste. Back in the studio darkroom I made my developer from seaweed and fixed the images in sea salt solution. The results were variable but intriguing.

www.mahons.org

@nualamahonphotography



TEXTILES

JULIE HOOKER

BIO

I am a proud mother of a wonderful daughter, step mum to a great stepson, and now a doting granny to two adorable grandbabies. I have spent all my life in the beautiful Surrey Hills, where I am surrounded by beautiful countryside and many talented craftsmen and artisans. As an adult, I decided to pursue my passion for textiles and attended the prestigious East Berkshire College in Windsor. There, I studied for the City & Guilds Certificate and Diploma in Stitched Textiles under the guidance of renowned textile artists. Their inspiration and guidance encouraged me to deepen my knowledge of the craft. After completing my studies, I continued my education and earned a BA (Hons) in Textiles with a 2:1 from the OCA in 2022. I am currently teaching A-level textiles in a private school and will be starting my formal teacher training in September of this year.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

My lifelong obsession with traditional crafts and textiles has brought me to have a process-led practice heavily based on interaction and engagement with the landscape and people around me. Primarily textile in construction, my work regularly draws upon reclaimed, found, and gathered materials and uses the traditional craft techniques that I learnt whilst growing up surrounded by many local craftspeople. These influences and my use of unusual construction methods, combining traditional and modern processes, help me to create highly individual pieces that explore the environment and sustainability. My current body of work concentrates on creating pieces that use natural and found objects, natural dyes and other 'eco-textile' techniques to explore sustainability in textiles. As a teacher, my work often involves working with children, helping them to understand their surroundings and the value of the natural world around them.

<https://www.juliehooker.co.uk/degreeshowcase>



SHARON BUTLER

BIO

I never thought I was very creative – my career history is varied and had always been linked to academic endeavours.

Studying with the OCA as a mature student, was a massive challenge – not least because of managing a home, family, and a job. The ‘breakthrough’ moment, which led to my practice seemed to come from nowhere – I cannot remember having a process that led to it – it was just a random thought that snowballed.

Even after an extremely successful exhibition and achieving a First, I still have imposter syndrome. I feel very blessed to have the support of the friends I made from my peers.

Fortunately, the passion I have for my practice is carrying me onwards and I am excited about future projects and opportunities.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

The main inspiration for my work has always been nature. I have been specifically inspired by plants and flowers - their strength, form and colour. Using a materials-led, exploratory approach, I developed my own method of natural dyeing. I use alum powder milled from pure, earth-grown, volcanically formed alum crystals, to fix the colours, mainly from flowers and foliage, to natural fabrics and yarn - resulting in beautifully muted outcomes. A scientific hypothesis leads me to conclusions and further investigations. However, I do not feel that we can disregard the positives from the Industrial Revolution and so I believe that nature can coexist in harmony with what is manufactured. I want to continue to explore the possibilities available to me by reducing, reusing, recycling and repurposing what is already available, in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way and to share this knowledge through teaching and working collaboratively.

<https://spaces.oca.ac.uk/sustainingmypractice/>



VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

CAROL HOY

BIO

Carol is an illustrator, artist and veterinary nurse based in Hertfordshire. She studied Visual Communication with the OCA to develop and extend her illustration practice, gaining first class honours in 2022. Her work has been published in veterinary books and journals and she is fascinated by how illustrations and stories can aid learning and understanding.

She is always looking for novel ways to illustrate, communicate or utilise her skills. Her practice includes traditional illustrations, with or without colour, collage and assemblages, installation, digital, video, and collaborative pieces which encourage audience participation. She enjoys learning for its own sake, constantly seeking ways to develop as an artist and to try new ideas, combinations, methods and materials, to extend her practice. Her degree projects explore the dual themes of education and storytelling

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

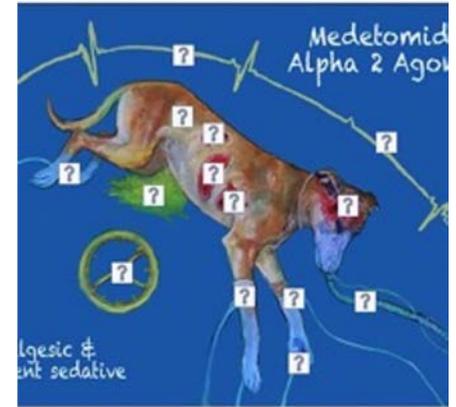
Building on the universal language of drawing I work to make complex ideas and concepts more accessible and understandable, and to reveal the seen and the unseen.

My practice includes illustrations to educate:

<https://calhoy.com/visual-research/>

And to entertain:

<https://calhoy.com/yarns-2/>



LINDA MAYOUX

BIO

Linda is an artist and writer based in Cambridge, UK.

Her work builds on, and gives more balanced perspectives to, her professional life as consultant with international development agencies and activism around gender, environment and human rights. She started studying with OCA in 2009 as part of recovery from breast cancer. She completed a certificate in painting and photography courses before deciding on Visual Communication as the best way to combine her professional and artistic interests. Visual Communications enabled her to explore visual dynamics and narrative across a range of media: photography, illustration, sketchbooks, printmaking, book design, moving image and now creative writing.

Much of her work is based on journeys and social and political issues in Africa and Asia connected to her professional consultancy work. But she now increasingly focuses on issues nearer to home - the social and environmental challenges in UK and her own responsibilities within that.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

"Image-making is my way of living, experiencing life and discovering new ways of looking at the world around me. Some of my work is political. Some emotionally dark. Other more 'human' work aims to help myself and others laugh, appreciate beauty in the everyday and 'look on the bright side of life'."

In my final degree portfolio 'Tales from the Edge' four location projects in Cambridge and the Suffolk Coast explore different approaches to addressing tensions and questions in location-based visual narratives:

interlinkages between multiple 'objective', 'subjective' and imaginary perspectives on 'realities of place' diversity and unpredictability of audience responses and meanings within and between cultures how far these challenges might be addressed by working across different visual media, and/or different ways of combining images and text.

What all this means for creative visual documentary for activism to 'Make the World a Better Place' and accessibility to different global audiences.

<https://www.zemniimages.com>



November 2020

The day
here on
Richard Oshroff
floating on rising leaves
No longer moving

What is my soul?
No way out!
The longer I grapple
Or negotiate myself!

Will you be gone
Please, bring something
Have nothing in your eye
Or walk through the
Morning light

line 2020

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SARAH PEASE

BIO

I originally trained as a doctor, working as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist. I left medicine to have a family and took up evening life classes, exploring painting, printing and sculpture until I joined the OCA in to do Visual Communications in 2012.

A steep learning curve at the beginning, especially acquiring software skills but as I progressed through the levels it became clear that I wanted to be my own client and had a story to tell. By level 3 it was clear that this would be in the form of a graphic novel. My personal project was the first 4 chapters in the form of individual zines. I am continuing work on it now I have graduated and have nearly finished Zine 5, which takes me over half way through the novel.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I am a comic book artist, visual communicator and magazine editor based in the north of England.

The magazine I produce is in collaboration with 2 others, we are currently working on Issue 40, it comes out quarterly and 1000 copies are distributed locally, funded by advertising.

Comic book work is produced as the Spillustrate team who are working on the autobiographical graphic novel "I am Sukey, Hear me Roar"

Spillustrate Team

The G-Ma (the cat) does the boring admin and layouts

Susie is the office junior, does the drawings, especially working with markers.

Sukey is 8 years old and is the beating heart and creative muse of the team. The team leader without actually saying very much. She makes the models.

The Octopus who is non verbal, works with patterns and textures and deals with the darker, emotional stuff.

website: www.spillustrate.com



FEATURED PATHWAYS 22/23

CREATIVE ARTS

PAINTING

TEXTILES

CREATIVE WRITING

PHOTOGRAPHY

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

#WEAREOCA

CLICK THE IMAGES BELOW TO GO TO THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS SITES IF APPLICABLE

