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THE VENICE FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAMME

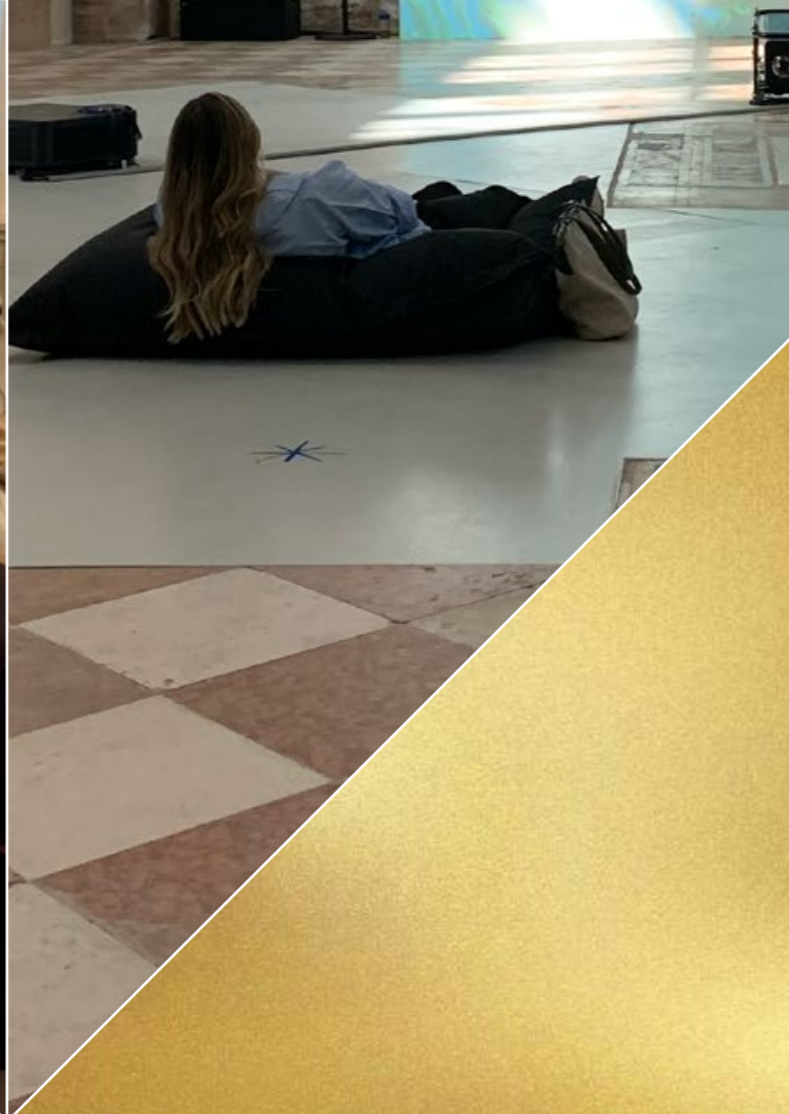
British Council is proud to introduce our *Fellowships Programme*, a scheme which activates and enriches our world renowned exhibitions at the Venice Biennale. The Biennale itself has long-standing international cultural significance. Alternating each year between a focus on art and architecture, our national presentations influence the future of contemporary culture at a global level. Initiated in 2014, the aim of the Fellowships Programme is to strengthen the British Pavilion as a space for ideas, innovation and research. Through the scheme, around 60 emerging UK creatives are given the opportunity to contribute to and support the Pavilion in Venice. As exhibition ambassadors at the British Pavilion, they engage visiting members of the public and expand the impact of the show. Alongside this practical support, they have the opportunity to develop their own research and creative projects and use the Biennale as a platform for creative and international development. Through these contributions, Fellows elevate the Pavilion to an important reference point for universities and creative organisations around the world.

“The programme offers a live space for Fellows to essentially learn and develop, be inspired through a ground breaking opportunity where they get to invite dialogue with so many different cultures and walks of life and experience the power of creativity and the arts.”

Skinder Hundal
Director Arts at British Council

*Fellow from Group 4 – Madina Aw Tall, August 2022 © Anja Dimitrijevic
Fellows from Group 1, 2022 © Francesca Vason*





Fellows include some of the most exciting emerging creative minds in the UK today. They are selected from a diverse range of backgrounds and areas of interest, with priority given to those who would benefit the most from the scheme. Before they arrive in Venice, Fellows attend induction training and talks online in order to strengthen their network and build interpersonal skills. In total, they participate in over sixteen hours of presentations and collaborative workshops over a six-week period. They enjoy first-hand interactions with the artist and curator and have time to really delve into the intentions and practical concerns of the exhibition. The Fellows connect on an a close interpersonal level, building a sense of community and shared practice. Their final classes relate not just to their participation in Venice but assist them in navigating the city and the Italian cultural scene. Fellows are supported on a practical level with a grant, funded by participating institutions and sponsors, to help support the cost of their travel as well as their accommodation and living costs for their month in Venice.

“Collaborating with other fellows allowed for a freeing environment for artistic exploration to do with my project. There was constant bounding of ideas and problem solving that I would never have been able to replicate back in the UK. I feel incredibly grateful for the people I met and continue to discuss work with!”

2022 Fellow

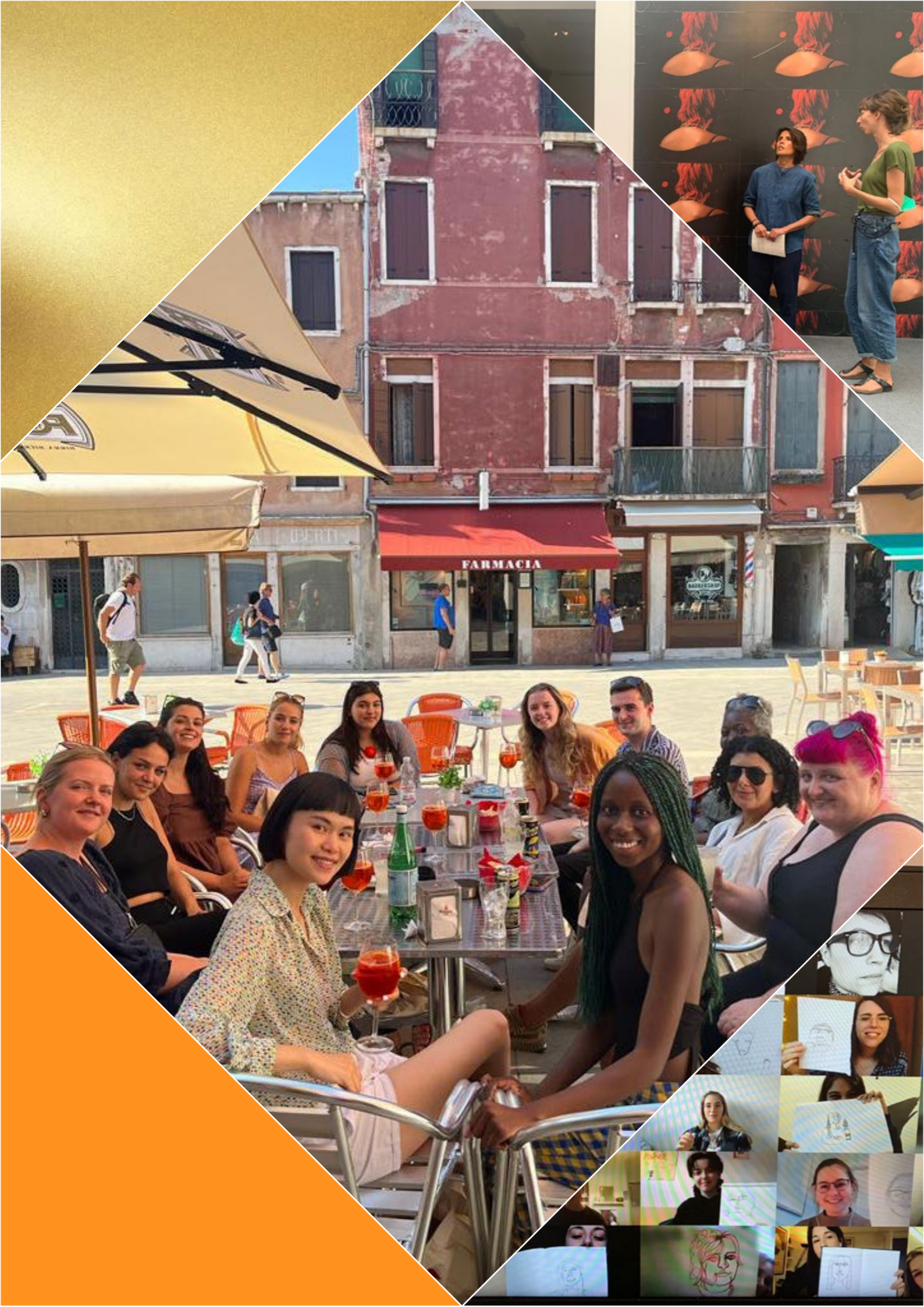
*Emma Fearon printing exhibition posters at Grafiche Elleme Venice, August 2022 © ISDTD team
Fellows visiting Ocean Space museum in Venice, April 2022, © Juliana Pepl
Audience participating in the “I Still Dream that Dream” exhibition at Zolfo Rosso Venice—artists Agnes Fouda, Khadeeja Hamid and Reezan Simbawa, curated by Emma Fearon and Jessica Wan, September 2022 © ISDTD team*

OUTCOMES

Of particular importance is the training Fellows receive in interacting with visitors in the exhibition space. They learn techniques for enhancing a visitor's understanding and expanding their perspectives on the show. Fellows appreciate the opportunity to engage deeply with an exhibition of international acclaim, often initiating discussion and exchange of views with those that visit it. In 2022, artist Sonia Boyce presented a solo exhibition at the British Pavilion. Her remarkable presentation *Feeling Her Way* was experimental and intuitive, foregrounding the improvised collaborative voices of five Black women artists. Recognising the contribution of Black women to the music industry, Boyce resisted their silenced history, presenting video works amongst tessellated wallpapers and gold geometric sculptures. Visitors to the exhibition praised the Fellows' knowledgeable and welcoming presence. Through their training, Fellows felt able to communicate and expand on the complex ideas in the exhibition in an accessible way. The stewarding experience provided them with valuable work experience and confidence in contributing to a gallery setting. 93% of visitors to the Pavilion in 2022 report excellent or good interactions with the Fellows. One visitor commented, *"The pavilion steward gave me an incredible backstory of the exhibition, how the artist put the piece together and she has an amazing understanding of the work which actually gave me a hint on how to understand and analyse contemporary art work. Thank you!"*



Tour with Sonia Boyce and Emma Ridgway at the British Pavilion, 2022 © Juliana Pepl



Alongside the crucial support Fellows offer the exhibition itself, they also develop a personal research or artistic project whilst in Venice. Their projects respond to the Biennale and British Pavilion themes, the city itself, its population and the practices of the other artists they meet. As seen in this yearbook, the creative projects demonstrate the strength and significance of the Fellows' practices and the extent to which their stay in Venice has inspired them. The projects themselves include practical work and research on a variety of themes including climate, migration & heritage, mapping & geopolitical art, digital & technology, participation & local voices and LGBTQIA+ communities. The programme offers the opportunity for young artists, architects and creatives to position their own work within this international context.

Perhaps some of the most remarkable outcomes sit outside of the expected parameters of the programme. Connections are formed which continue to this day, with Fellows interacting on creative and academic projects for years to come. Many of the benefits to participants are intangible, comprising personal confidence, new perspectives and more refined ambitions for their own career trajectories. Fellows remark not only on the benefits they saw to their professional development and network opportunities, but on their nuanced understanding of cultural and political issues, how art is experienced and the benefits of exploring collaboration with other creatives. *"The Venice Fellowships has allowed my creative world to expand. Collaborating with artists of many disciplines was an invaluable experience,"* said one Fellow in 2022. Another commented, *"This was an incredible opportunity that helped me develop a network and better understand my practice."*

"An amazing opportunity to spend time in a culturally rich environment encouraging networking, sharing and research with a diverse community of people."

2022 Fellow

Tanita Tikaram visit, 2022 © Delphine Campbell
Social drinks between Fellows from Group 4 and 5, 2022 © anonymous
Online Induction School Training, 2022 © Georgina Bednar, No Ordinary Experience

The art and architecture exhibitions in Venice not only reflect the incredible contemporary creative talent in the UK, they provide a platform for embracing, trusting and facilitating that talent to shine. Sonia Boyce's 2022 exhibition in Venice was awarded the prestigious Golden Lion in recognition of her artistic talent, her 40 year practice, the values and techniques she holds dear as well as the efforts of the whole team in working together to make the exhibition happen. We look forward to the architecture pavilion in 2023 which also promises to be influential on a global scale.

“My experience as Exhibition Ambassador allowed me to appreciate and understand the exhibition in a way I wouldn't have as a visitor, from spending so much time with it, which was really special. It also opened my eyes to many different points of views from visitors and allowed me to gain skills and confidence in explaining art works, as well as (my first) practice in interacting with the public within an 'art space'.”

2022 Fellow

The success and impact of the exhibitions is the result of collaboration and teamwork and is reliant on the generous contributions of sponsors. The Fellowships Programme itself is a key part of the British Council's presence in Venice, supporting the exhibition programme as well as being a platform for the development of new creative careers and future leaders. The Fellowships offers a unique opportunity for emerging creatives to represent the UK on an international level whilst broadening their perspective, making connections and developing their creative practice.

As Polly Brannan, Artistic Director of Open School East (supported by Turner Contemporary and ArtFund_), our 2022 partner explains, *“The opportunity for Open School East alumni artists to spend valuable time in a completely different context enables them to grow both their artistic practices and research pathways. These moments in artists' careers are integral to them, opening up networks and new ways of thinking and providing space for reflection as part of a wider international context.”*

*Tour with our Fellows Margarita Loze, May 2022 © Karin Li Wing Yan.
Tour with our Fellow Pearl Isa Bickersteth, May 2022 © Ellen Ranson.*



2022 FELLOWS SHOWCASE

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Installation Photography © Cristiano Corte



AGNES FOUDA

OH POOR, SI MUOVE...
Mapping the migrants' journey in Venice

I applied to the Fellowship via London Metropolitan University, while studying Undergraduate Design. Interested in migration and social justice, I have pledged to give a better exposure to the unsung. For this stance, I contended that "Migrants" are often seen as an aggregated blob, subjected to the oblivion that each one has a unique narrative and journey of displacement.

Drawing from Galileo Galilei's alleged remark about the Earth, I conceived "Oh Poor, Si Muove" as a collaborative project aimed at underlining the uniqueness of migrants' paths in Venice, a city that has been impacted by migration since it was founded by Italian refugees fleeing barbarian invaders. Throughout centuries, Venice has consolidated a leading position as a friendly abode albeit few instances have jeopardised this standing.

What remains unchanged is the constant movement:

tides, high and low,
thousands steps, up and down,
clothes hung at the balconies
swinging, back and forth,
whims of capricious breeze,
pigeons and seagulls swiftly yanking
some providential crumbs,
and in the horizon,
the disappearing silhouettes of vaporetos,
cruise ships and gondolas
that contributes to an eerie feeling of ephemerality.



London Metropolitan University
Instagram: @thefouda

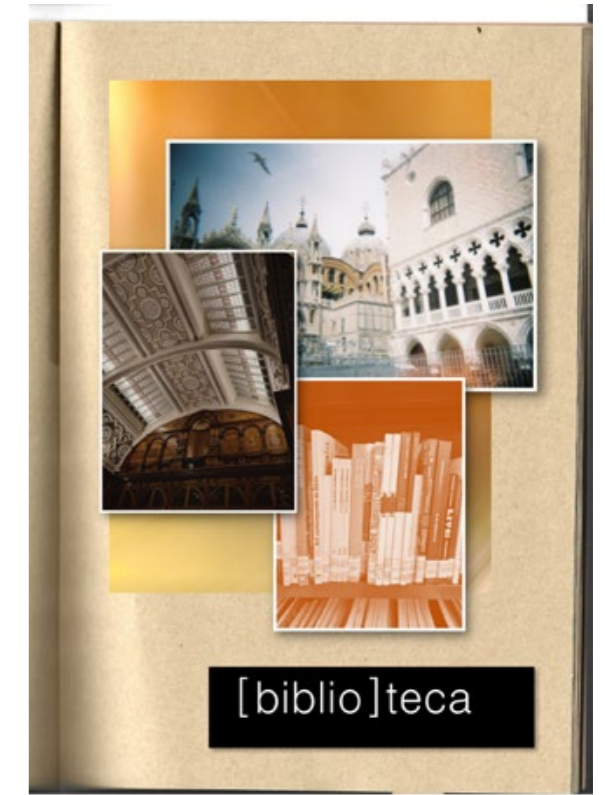
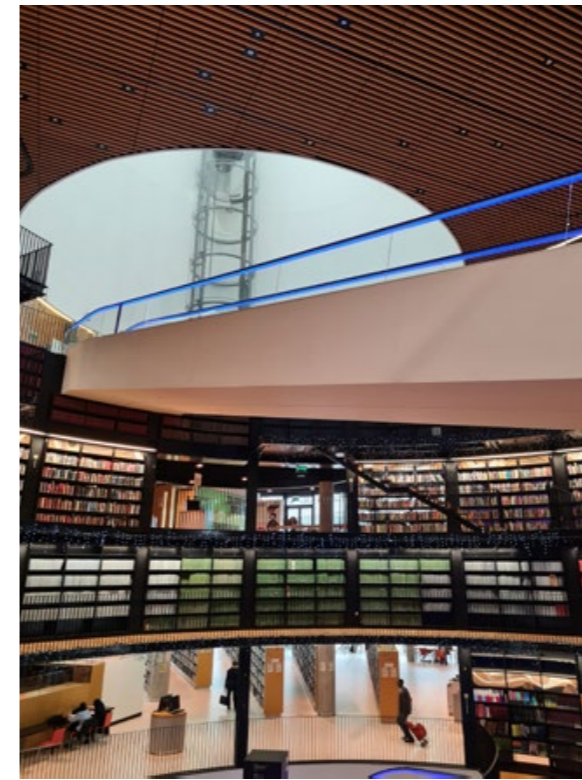
Yet nothing compares to the biggest motion of all : crowds pacing through the countless mazes, arrival for some, exodus for others. This ongoing flow is part of Venice's predicament ; according to research, the Serenissima is slowly sinking, turning, by extrapolation, every person into a migrant, the one who will remain not, in a city that might stay neither. Thus, what could testify of the trips between islands, the many walks, cartwheels and somersaults, the u-turns when one is lost in the sestieri? Manifesting such abstract instances is the idea behind the mapping of people's significant journeys.

My intent was to conduct research during the residency , and complete the practical work afterwards. However, Fellows Emma Fearon and Jess Wan, both curators, initiated an exhibition as part of their fellowship. My project, along with Khadeeja Hamid's and Razan Simbawa's, proved intellectually aligned for a cohesive display.

I exhibited a mock-up of the design process during the exhibition "I still Dream that Dream" held at Zolfo Rosso Space in Venice on 3-5 September 2022. While the initial focus was on migrants per se, the participatory project became further inclusive, welcoming everyone in a place of caring, sharing, making.

The response was overwhelmingly enthusiastic and I gathered dozens of drawings and stories. Pendants of these individual journeys, an array of materials, shapes and colours, weave together intriguing and undefinable patterns. The final outcome, which completion is still in progress, consists of those patterns stitched by hand onto a sturdy support.

The whole experience in Venice was formidable. In addition to a network of mind like individuals, I gained insight about invigilation, curation, and exhibitions; they are compelling skills for my career and my current projects, one of them being the opening of a Cultural space in the Eastern coast of Africa. Awesome Blossom.



BA Liberal Arts, Birkbeck, University of London
Website: www.anastasiageorgousis.com
Instagram: @thefeelings_mutual

ANASTASIA GEORGIOUSIS

[biblio]teca

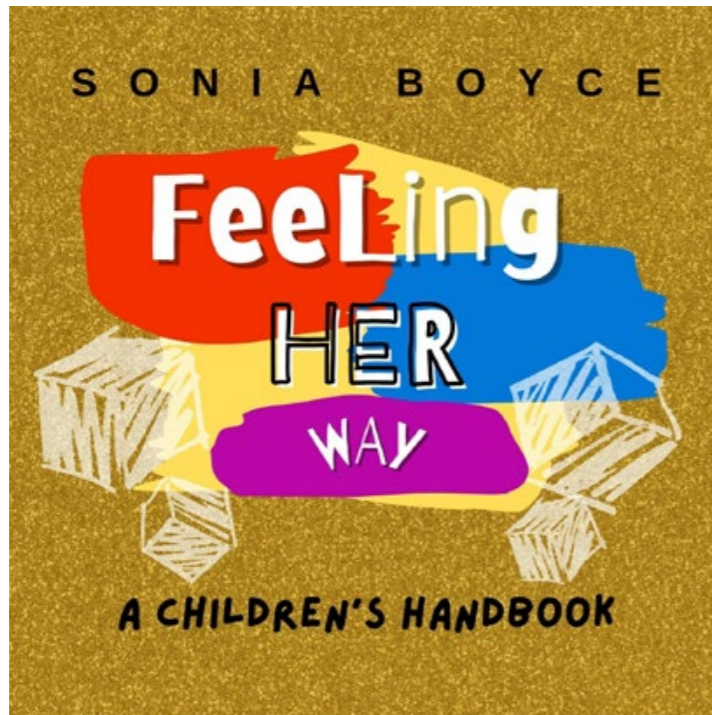
[biblio]teca is a zine project that considers and reimagines the library of the future as a site of intercultural interaction. Venice's Biblioteca Marciana was founded by a Greek Byzantine scholar in the 15th century, to preserve Byzantine Greek literature and make it accessible to a new influx of Greek refugees in the city. Taking Biblioteca Marciana as my cue, I wanted to explore the library as a social space where cultural knowledge is shared, in contrast to the common conception of the library as a site for the solitary study of privileged knowledge.

I am interested in diaspora communities, hybridity, and cultural identity as a result of my Greek British heritage and connections to the multicultural cities of Birmingham, London and Athens. These cities have long grappled with their multicultural status and are now dealing with this in the climate of increasing anti-refugee and anti-migrant rhetoric in European politics, which is also relevant to Venice and Italy. Therefore, the zine features spaces in these cities that aim to be welcoming communal spaces and promote intercultural knowledge exchange between their city's old and new inhabitants, and visitors. In interviews with those involved in these spaces, I have considered the questions such as: what should a contemporary Biblioteca Marciana be? How is multicultural knowledge shared in our cities? What other types of communal spaces can facilitate this meeting of people, cultures and ideas? The pandemic also raised the question of if physical spaces are necessary to build communities and bring people together.

In the course of my research, I discovered the nuances of each city's multicultural makeup, and how each location's unique history and current political situation has impacted their present approach to multiculturalism. While in many cases, the discourse has become somewhat frustratingly regressive, the spaces and organisations I have featured present us with opportunities for optimism and hope.

[biblio]teca will be available as a digital zine, and with physical copies placed in cultural spaces. I hope to raise awareness of the featured organizations and create links between them. Particularly in the context of many community, arts and cultural spaces under threat of closure due to lack of funding, gentrification or legal challenges, it is crucial to chronicle and promote these spaces, as well as share learnings and encourage new spaces to open. [biblio]teca will then become an ongoing project with further issues exploring other organisations and cities, with the ability for [biblio]teca to be replaced to enable exploration of other types of spaces beyond the library.

I am extremely grateful to the Fellowships programme for enabling me to have time, resources and support to explore my interest and develop this project. It was a privilege to learn from the other Fellows and experience undertaking creative work and research beyond the UK. I am also very appreciative of the structure of the Fellowship programme which makes it accessible to those of different backgrounds, including working-class and mature students and creatives like myself.



CLAIRE MALONEY

Arts University Bournemouth
 Website: <https://www.clairemaloneyartist.com>
 Email: claire.m.artist@gmail.com
 Instagram: [@cla.ire.art](https://www.instagram.com/cla.ire.art)

EBB, by Claire Maloney is the final outcome of discoveries made from representing Arts University Bournemouth on the Venice Fellowship Programme. Prior to becoming a Fellow of the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, Claire Maloney's practice has always revolved around the movement of people. Focal points include how proxemics between artwork and viewer can create a more engaging and interesting viewing experience. She uses her work to promote unlikely bodily choreography in a formal built environment, and to reconsider the typical use of a gallery space.

The project, EBB, was born from the desire to explore the ways in which water affects movement: considering not only adaptations, but also bodily proxemics and choreography when in close proximity to water. Throughout the project, this acknowledgement of changing behaviour around water has been constant, leading to the idea development for the final work. Within the work, movement around the gallery space is being

explored as it is situated on the floor, causing paths through the gallery to be blocked or redirected by the work itself. With EBB, Claire hopes the work will emulate movement and avoidance around a space in the same way people move in response to water.

EBB is created from a metre square solid plaster tile. The decision to use plaster comes from considerations of the slow degradation of architecture around the city of Venice, acknowledging the culture that will be lost as a result of rising sea levels. Plaster itself is often known as a building material, yet succumbs to fragility in certain environments, meaning the work will slowly erode over time, in the same way as the historic city of Venice. The making process of EBB honours traditional craft, observed while in Venice, utilising hand carving techniques. These techniques have continued within Claire's practice, most recently creating sculptures in collaboration with her studio to explore and highlight the collaborative environment in which artists make work.

CAROLINE CHUNRENYI LIU

University of Exeter
 Email: Liuchunrenyi@gmail.com
 Instagram: [@liu_chunrenyi](https://www.instagram.com/liu_chunrenyi)

Instagram of the two artists
 Liza Ivanova: [@lizaivanova_iad](https://www.instagram.com/lizaivanova_iad)
 Izzy Douglas: [@uuh_izzy_art](https://www.instagram.com/uuh_izzy_art)

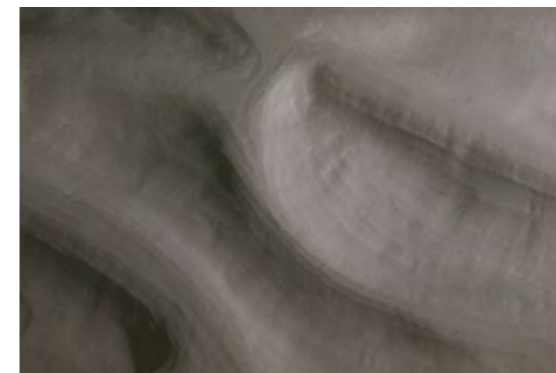
I am Caroline Liu, an art history student studying at the University of Exeter. My Venice project was about collaborating with young people and young artists to create a Children's Handbook for Sonia Boyce's exhibition *Feeling Her Way*. The project was inspired by the book and the title for the 59th biennale exhibition *The Milk of Dreams*, a book full of fascinating, absurd and bizarre stories, but it is also a reminder of how different children's experiences and perspectives of the world are in comparison to adults. I wanted to develop a handbook that children could easily understand, that can guide them towards seeing and understanding the exhibition in a creative and fun way, and encourage their families to bring them to the exhibition space.

In Venice, I focused on doing detailed research to use later in the design process. I planned out two methods of primary research: empirical observation and written responses. The first method was accomplished with the help of other fellows: we documented the reaction of the children each day inside the exhibition space, and it was wonderful to witness the honest reactions of the children inside the space. Some of the responses included: dancing inside the space, mimicking the sound from the singers, and running around the rooms several times. The second method was challenging, considering the exhibition was full of children of different ages and cultures, so I planned to give the children coloured pencils and pens to draw or write down

opinions directly. I followed the health and safety guidelines from my university and gathered consent from the parents on these drawings, and I was left with many beautiful drawings and insightful comments.

After Venice, I started to combine all my research and put my ideas into action. Rather than contacting professional illustration designers, I wanted to give young artists a chance to participate in this project. I reached out to local A-level art students, and eventually found two young individuals that wanted to collaborate and help me with the design: Liza Ivanova and Izzy Douglas. We had regular meetings inside a local cafe shop and shared ideas and plans with each other, it felt comfortable and safe and the way we communicated and corresponded with each other, almost felt like the process in "*Feeling Her Way*." The two girls are now further pursuing their studies at the Arts University Bournemouth, and due to our studies, the progression has been slow and steady, but we are all excited to continue the project and hopefully will be able to showcase it in the exhibition itself in the future.

The fellowship programme was truly an inspiring and memorable experience, it gave me an opportunity to try something that was completely new to me, and it allowed me to make friends from all over the world, from Fellows to colleagues from other pavilions in the biennale. I am forever grateful for this chance, and I will continue to pursue my interest in the museum and art sector.



DANAI-GEORGIA MILIARAKI

Birkbeck, University of London
 Email: miliaraki.danaig3@gmail.com
 Telephone: +44 7927199297

Unsee

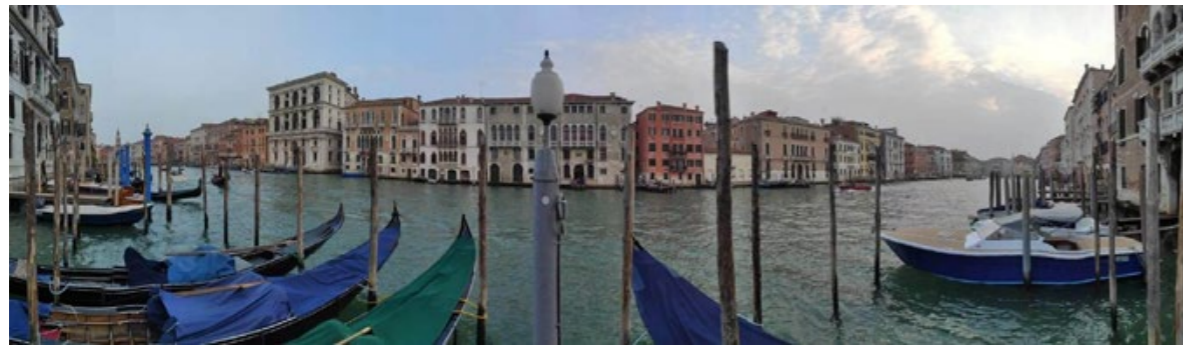
Being part of an international cultural exhibition isn't just inspiring for one's own practice. It is a chance to blend in the world of art not just from the perspective of the creator or from a theoretical stance. The British Council Venice Biennale Fellowship that was awarded to me while studying at Birkbeck University, was an actual opportunity for observation of the visitors' reactions and engagement with the exhibits and their way of approaching art overall. And just like that, amongst shifts and chatting with visitors, colleagues and peer fellows, my own artistic project was developed. Unsee, is a performative interactive piece adaptable for exhibition spaces.

The art that's kept inside walls is sometimes consumed within those walls and then forgotten without a further impact on visitors. Especially with art that needs a particular skill-set and background to be understood, there's always the fear that people will not take the time to experience, feel and understand it. The actor in my performance embodies the trapped art herself. She blends in with the visitors and goes through three emotional and performative stages: Gazing, Intervening and Deconstructing. The actor is initially part of the audience, as another visitor, experiencing a given exhibition. Gradually she starts interacting with people in a more and more performative way, asking questions and drawing people's attention not just on her, but on the surroundings. "Would you dream of this painting tonight?" the actor may ask,

interrupting the known observatory activity. As a woman herself she interrupts the gazing and gives art a voice. A voice that depending on the interaction with the audience will provoke them to think and be part of the performance themselves. Yet, the last stage of the piece will be the deconstruction of this "dialogue". Eventually the actor is invited to incorporate more physicality, imitate the exhibits' shape, juxtapose it, intensify her movement, interact with the surroundings and ends up asking the visitors if they will just leave without taking her home with them. She doesn't want to physically go with them, she wants her memory to stop being trapped inside the exhibition walls, the same way all art should be taken away so that the whole way of approaching art should be "unseen".

Driven by the idea that art is still sterilized and approached in constructed ways, as well as by the fact that socio-politically art is traditionally consumed by a few, Unsee tries to become a bridge between art and the audience and opens a playful dialogue on how art is treated. It is the narrative of a woman who, same as the art, fights to go beyond the gaze, tries to essentially redefine her existence and invite you to "unsee" her so that in the end you can essentially approach her.

I consider my performance a work in progress that given the appropriate circumstances will develop more. In its current form though, it will travel to Belgrade and be hosted by the U10 Art Space Exhibition in April.



DELPHINE ANASTASIA CAMPBELL

Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford
 Email: delphicampbell@aol.com
 Website: www.delphicampbell.com
 Instagram: @delphicampbell
 Collaborator Details: Abby Collins, @collins.photograbby

Venice is not an easy city to see as a wheelchair user, and Crippled in Venice was conceived as a way for me to see Venice through Abby Collins's eyes; for me to exist in Venice through her.

Collins' photographs of Venice have been melded with my watercolour self-portraits, creating distorted, out-of-scale versions of myself that contort to the architecture of Venice. My painted selves are able to squeeze into places that cannot accommodate my wheelchair, to see the Piazza San Marco, and able to exist in a version of Venice through a digital lens. Collins and I have produced 10 prints together, each attempting to challenge our

perceptions of robotic melding and virtual presence. The prints establish a connection between the landscapes grounded reality, and my imagined Venice, with a watercolour Delphi that can hang herself out to dry with the rest of the laundry.

I intend to resume my research in mechanical proxies, human and digital connection, and hopefully continue developing this collaboration with Collins. After my stay in Venice, where I worked with the most amazing other Fellows, I am excited to pursue my PhD in Fine Art and resume my exhibiting practice from Cardiff.

Left Delphi Campbell & Abigail Collins, "San Giorgio dei Greci", 2022.
 Right Delphi Campbell, Egg Sack, 2022.



“The British Council’s Fellowships programme offers a unique opportunity for early stage creatives and emerging professionals to engage with the most significant international art and architecture exhibition in the world, the Venice Biennale. The aim is to provide a platform for these individuals to connect with the wider international arts community in Venice and to develop their own creative thinking and practice while also gaining invaluable work-experience. The British Council’s Fellowships programme is truly innovative and has been used as a model for other national pavilions looking to engage students and professionals in their exhibitions. The programme further contributes to the landscape of Venice and the Biennale through a cultural relations approach by engaging new groups of people who may not otherwise have an opportunity to be present in the city or visit a major international art event.”

Sevra Davis
Director of Architecture Design and Fashion at British Council

ELINOR BLACK

Manchester School of Art
 Email: elinorblack2255@gmail.com
 Instagram: @elinor.black

Initial Aims

The main focus of my research was to compile a visual record of artist-led 'mark making exercises' inside The Biennale. The purpose of the participatory rudimentary marks was to prompt discussion into the last marks that will be made by human hands and to encourage conversations about the fragility of the life of the Earth.

Changes

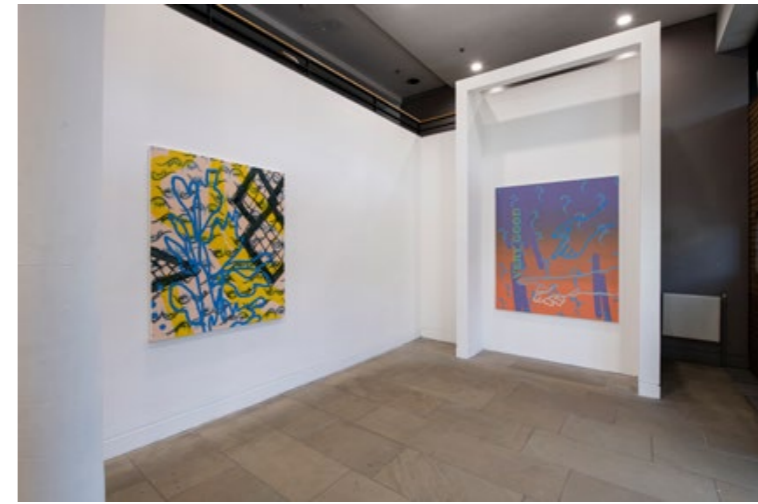
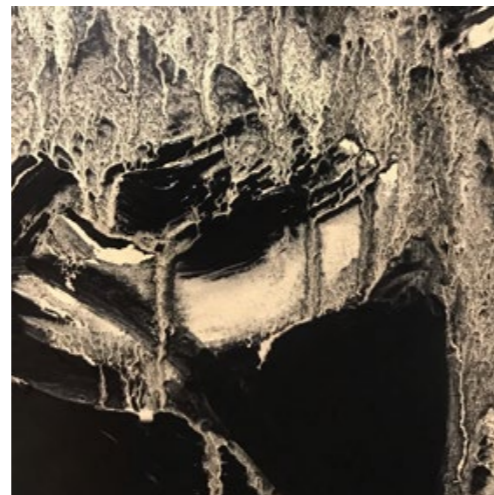
Due to logistics it became favourable for me to engage with peers over Biennale visitors. This choice led to many rich, inspiring and wonderful discussions concerning the direction of my research. I visited the beautiful island of Sant' Erasmo where conversations developed into progression and changes were instigated. I began to read 'The Edge of the Sea' by Rachel Carson.

Cycles and Implementing Changes

My focus sharply shifted to the cyclical. I became entranced by the majesty of the ecological shifts and cycles occurring in Venice.

Where to next?

How are natural cycles instated and disrupted? How do thoughts change to action? How does action lead to ecological change? My new body of work will draw inspiration from the cyclical nature of human beings and their relationship with the Earth. I will create a series of performative drawings and paintings as an embodiment of 'truthaction' inspired by the visually cyclical which I researched in Venice. I will explore thought, truth and action using the medium of performance and drawing as precursor to change. I view this 'truthaction' space as an actively truth seeking place where real insight and change can occur via action.



ELLEN RANSON

Teesside University, School of Arts & Creative Industries
 Website: www.ellenranson.co.uk
 Instagram: @ellenranson

During my time spent in Venice as part of the British Council Fellowship Programme (2022), I collected imagery, drawings, colour, motifs, patterns, writing and reflections. All of these supported the creation of a new body of paintings, forming my MA final exhibition. More recently I have a solo exhibition in the Gala Gallery in Durham City (Jan – April 2023). As part of this exhibition I was commissioned to create a 11.5 x 3m wall painting, my most ambitious work to date. All of the work in this exhibition has been developed as part of the Venice Fellowship programme.

Ellen Ranson (b.1996) is an abstract painter, she lives and works in the North East of England. She received a BA in Fine Art from Northumbria University in 2018, and her MA in Fine Art from Teesside University, School of Arts & Creative Industries in 2022. She was the Paint fellow at Northumbria University (2018), and

was awarded the John Crisp Prize for Innovative work in Painting (2018). She is a British Council Venice Fellow, 2022.

The physically powerful, expressive works capture the artist's hunger and desire for greater recognition and a rebalancing of female representation and voices within abstract painting. Adding to the growing conversation around reclaiming and rearticulating women's voices.

Imagery taken from the artist's everyday experiences, patriarchal pasts and presents, memories, surroundings, ancient landscapes and other sources is manipulated and abstracted, through a seemingly digital process, resulting in a hand made abstraction.

The interrogation of colour, layering, motif, pattern and application of paint simultaneously creates new environments and reflections on the world around us.

Top Ellen Ranson, (L) sixteen sixth eight and (R) 3 euro spritz, both 2022. Credit: Colin Davison
 Bottom Ellen Ranson, Moonlight Dance on Warm Cement, 2023. Credit: Colin Davison



GIUSEPPINA SANTORO

Cambridge School of Art, Anglia Ruskin University Cambridge
 Website: www.figtreeartstudio.com, <https://www.axisweb.org/p/pinasantoro/>
 Instagram: @Pina_santorofigtreeart

My research interests are defined by an overarching concern with the significance of Sicilian folk art practices and the exploration of belonging and displacement. In Venice, I am particularly interested in reflecting on how one specific folk art practice from Anglo/Sicilian culture provides

possibilities for deepening our understanding of how human beings engage with and relate to and/or express folk art practice in their daily lives. While my primary focus is Sicilian Folk Art practices, I also explore the Italian overlaps and places of Witchcraft and the healing arts within them.



EMMA KATIE PATRICIA FEARON

I Still Dream That Dream

The research I had initially planned to undertake was developing my D/deaf-focused curation on an international scale while considering innovative forms of access. A lot of my interest in D/deaf-focused curation comes from my own family background but also the desire to support trans-cultural understanding in art, specifically from under-represented groups.

After arriving in Venice, I immediately connected with several artists/Fellows there due to their own research projects, which fascinated me. I felt it would be a missed opportunity to not learn directly from them and work more closely to see how we could collaborate, sensitively. Thus, I co-curated an exhibition called *I Still Dream That Dream*, taking its title from the works of bell hooks. The exhibition was a showcase of multi-media works from Khadeeja Hamid, Reezan Simbawa, and Agnes Fouda with all art and exhibition materials being produced during the fellowship.

Each of the artists' research/artworks were informed by different histories and cultures, and yet, they came together through their underlying warmth and tenderness that allowed for a natural intertwinement. There was an intergenerational support system between them that carried through the practice, and I think could be felt in the result. Together, they presented three major aspects of migration: placeholder homes, creating temporary sacred spaces, and individual passages, rooted in Venice.

University of Exeter

Working with each artist and supporting their practice in an environment like Venice was simply unforgettable; from rather entertaining language barriers at the print shop, seemingly resolved by saturated gesturing, to last-minute running over seemingly hundreds (likely five) of bridges with furniture (alongside Khadeeja) to finish a tight install. Despite all the stress, the support from the artists for the exhibition-making and being able to support their creative outputs was a pleasure I cannot understate.

While working on this exhibition, accessibility still remained essential as conversations were had and welcomed about solidarity between minorities and the importance of showing up every time whether you can predict a specific audience or not. Therefore, I ensured all film works had accompanying transcripts that the artists can retain for future showings.

During this time, many other Fellows who were not directly involved offered much support (especially the steward managers), be it emotionally, intellectually, or physically aiding the exhibition. This collective support made the exhibition possible and has excitingly transpired into a future reimagining, taking place in the UK (2023) at the facilitation of Ruth Jones and The Old Waterworks.

The conversations had with each artist, my fellows, and those attending this brief burst of an exhibition, are conversations I will carry throughout my career and personal life.

GOLD MARIA AKANBI

Ruskin School of Art
Website: www.GoldMariaAkanbi.com/Research

Musings

All the things know, but unsaid
Looks of shame and of consequence
Osun's Navel
Yemoja's Centre
A presence so familiar, that it is unfelt.
Unseen.
It's oh so daunting, to these men.
It was created, just for them.
Do my echoes cause you discomfort.
Do my bellows
You look at me like I am no one's child.
It is the counting, For Me.
It's the scores
The fool sees not the truth,
He only sees Gold.
And the fool says 'it is so beautiful'
Without acknowledging
the truth.
His truth
Our truth.
The Eternal dimension of...
...
of truths.
Is it too much?

All this gold?

It's so flashy, so shiny and altogether too
much, like The Sun.

But it's the best – or one of the best.

At hiding... tragedies, blood, pillaging,
violence and addiction.

There is so much in this history.

In our histories.

But we remain,
forever wild.

Reminiscent, of the place we are found
A score, for every body ever bartered or sold
Even Gold has no value, in the face of souls.

Spectral Dust
Carry Me Away
Will I be so bold, as to tell you
My body cannot be sold.

You can barter over my soul
But I cannot be bought or souled.
We finally gained the privilege

We finally set the scene.

You cannot force this interaction.

You cannot make me sin
You are too much...

It is all too much...

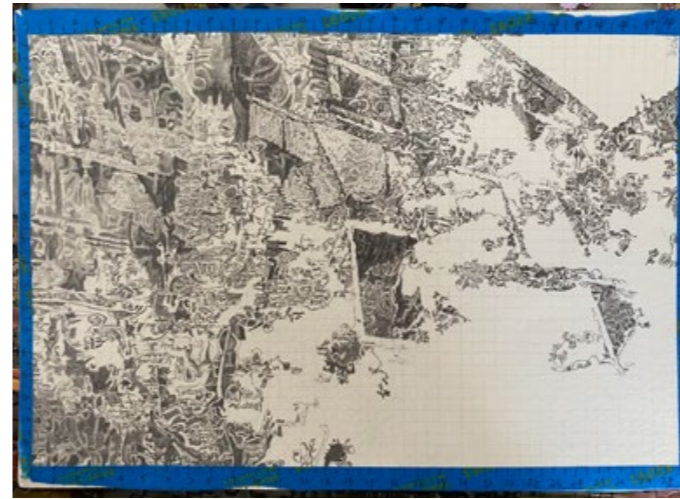
Will nature heal all she has been through?

This precious
Gold metal?

Does it need to heal?

Or is it strong enough to deal?

Am I strong enough to deal?



GRACELIN PEARL VENPIN

Oxford Brookes University
Instagram: @gracelincreates
Email: gracelincreates@gmail.com

During my final year of university, I created 3 drawings based off pinhole photographs I produced that were transformed into image transfers using acetone. These images are what I drew using pencil on paper and utilizing grids as technique to get accurate details. All these processes were results of trying to express *sonder* through my practice. I went through a similar process for my Venice project but used a disposable camera instead of pinhole photography to obtain the source imagery.

I thought drawing would be the best way to show my identity as an artist by staying true to my craft and at the same time, capture and document my time on the floating city in my own style. I couldn't bring myself to complete the drawing as I felt the time frame for it to be completed ended when I left Venice. It shall remain this way indefinitely. Not completing it and looking back at it makes me ponder about my journey there and how it is now somewhat a token of it, encapsulated on this A4 paper. It made me realize that location and time play an important role in my practice. This project was a vessel that allowed me to explore and settle in a whole new city and appreciate the mundane things I came across. The opportunity to have been able to communicate with such a variety of interesting people visiting the British Pavilion made me

feel a strong sense of *sonder* several times. It felt like full circle, from starting and developing a project based on that feeling, to feeling it throughout that one month so strongly.

I am now back home, in Mauritius and starting up as a professional artist. I am taking on commissions and creating artworks I want to create on the side, navigating my way through becoming someone who successfully lives off doing what she loves most, creating. My experience as an Exhibition Ambassador taught me how to interact with the audience first-hand and pass on the enthusiasm and questions that might arise with a piece of work. It also showed me how essential teamwork is to be able to complete tasks effectively within a work environment. Having had the opportunity to step foot into the professional art world at such a prestigious venue right after finishing university was an exceptional opportunity and I carry and shall carry with me this one-month journey, not only in my professional life as an artist but also as a human being, longing and looking forward to making those intimate and one on one connections with the world, for a very long time. *Sonder* has and will probably continue to mark my life, and Venice was an extraordinary passageway to explore it.



Left Gracelin Venpin, *1,795 minutes and counting*, 2022. Photo: Gracelin Venpin
Right Gracelin Venpin, *Sonder in Venice Through Disposable Camera*, 2022. Photo: Gracelin Venpin

“The Fellowships Programme built a temporary community of creative people seeking adventure, contemplation and stretch together in the exquisite city of Venice. Conversations with Fellows suggest this led to an abundance of discovery – self-discovery, new experiences, and finding unexpected friendships. With the Fellow’s own projects, new areas of confidence have been revealed. Welcoming visitors to Feeling Her Way, and sitting within the exhibition’s emotive soundscape will have imprinted on them in ways only they can know. Heart-felt thanks to the Fellows and Fellowships team for contributing their dynamic energy to Feeling Her Way in the British Pavilion.”

Emma Ridgway
Curator for the British Pavilion at the 59th International Art
Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia





HANNAH HONEYWILL

artist and PhD researcher at Coventry University

While I was on stewarding duties, I was fascinated by the reaction of visitors as they approached the British Pavilion. I observed that when they noticed the Gran Bretagna sign over the entrance to the pavilion, most people had a response. These ranged from a raised eyebrow or eye roll at the idea that Britain still saw itself as ‘great’ to conversations around Brexit, colonialism, and contemporary British identity. There was also nostalgia for an imperial image of ‘old Britain’ and even requests to take afternoon tea on the terrace. My response was to take a rubbing or frottage of the marble-carved Gran Bretagna sign. I chose the technique of frottage due to its multiple meanings; it is a method of recording text and pattern on memorials and gravestones, and the surrealist artist Max Ernst used it as a printing process. It is a forensic technique to reveal evidence of previous writing on paper. Frottage is also a term for the sexual practice of rubbing genitalia through clothing to receive pleasure. For me, there is an entanglement of all these definitions regarding the fetishisation of art and the artist as a giver of aesthetic pleasure. Rubbing without touching seemed a good analogy of what happens with conversations around queer and decolonial practices: the monolith is put under pressure, but

Waves the Rules Britannia
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPMoaARBugg>
Frottaging Gran Bretagna
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOHPrOO2tLY&t=35s>

the paper/cloth/privilege is a barrier between damage or erasure – I can take a copy, but the original remains in place. I also made a film called *Waves the Rules Britannia*. The film documents the walk through the Giardini to the British Pavilion, and the soundtrack is the song Rule Britannia sung backwards to the original music. Fellows Katie Harrison and Issy Stone generously gave their voices and time to the project. I aim to queer the monumentality of both the architecture of the British pavilion and the song Rule Britannia.

My second research outcome is my response to Venice and its unstable future due to the climate crisis and heavy tourism. I created a maquette for a monumental sculptural installation based on the bricole posts used as navigational markers in the Venetian lagoon and a historic fixture of Venice since the 1400s. The sculpture takes the form of paper rolls drawn on to recreate the look of the posts, and they stand on a floor of cracked clay, suggesting a speculative time in the future when water no longer flows in the lagoon.

I will produce an exhibition of this work, and it will also be part of my PhD submission in 2024.

Top Hannah Honeywill, Gran Bretagna Crayon on Paper, 2022.

Left Hannah Honeywill, Bricole Maquette, 2022.

Right Hannah Honeywill, Frottaging Gran Bretagna, 2022. Photo: Levi Hibbert

IRMA VESTERLUND

The death of the Biennale

“The death of the Biennale” focus on one of the questions brought up by Cecilia Alemani when she explained the theme of the 57th Biennale: “What are our responsibilities towards the planet, other people, and other organisms we live with?”

Part of the study of architecture is think about the obsolescence of buildings. We live in a world with a changing environment, and the design industry needs to take its responsibility. By 2050 the goal is to live in a net zero society. For architecture this will mean that nothing new can be built, the future is in adaptive re-use, and the temporality of the Venice Biennale might be too unsustainable. To tackle these questions, I have investigated the relationship between permanence and impermanence in the British pavilion and in Venice itself to understand what permanence in Venice is and what effect might the temporal and impermanent biennale have on Venice environment?

The Biennale have a huge impact on Venetian environment and economy. But the event is taking over, and the local

Interior Architecture BA – Middlesex University
 Website: <https://irmavesterlund.cargo.site/>

population is pushed out of the areas they have previously been invited to. The Giardini Park, which was previously a public area, is now fenced of and is only entered at a fee or closed of entirely parts of the year. The pavilions which function as cultural embassies are pushing the small local population even further away.

The city has a fragile future and eventually the Biennale will have to die. My project looks at with the new function for the pavilions might be and how the Giardini Park can be given back to the Venetians. In this re-adaptation the pavilions can still function as cultural embassies but with a permanence that match the slow-paced life of Venice.

My research has given me a new understanding of permanence and I aim to continue my research of an alternative future for the architecture of the Biennale. I am interested in extending my project to look at how to re-structure and adapt architecture and interiors from fast tourism to instead support sustainable local communities.

Left Layered stairs, 220727. Photo: Irma Vesterlund
 Right Double doorway, 220714. Photo: Irma Vesterlund



ISABELLA TESSIER

Newcastle University
Instagram: @isabella.tessier

My Art Practice:

My practice centres around a methodology of drawing and printing as a form of visual research into capturing performative actions. I am excited by the immediacy of drawing and the world building potential of printing. In my work I explore the transmission between movement, drawing and print, positioned to work from both archival footage of dance as well as live performance. Through gestural drawings, mono printing and lithography I capture bodily movements and explore the unique relationships between the performer and the viewer.

Research project:

As a Venice Biennale fellow (June-July 2022) I was able to experience and draw from the rich dance culture within the Venice Biennale. I was particularly inspired by the work of Ralph Lemon's 'In Proximity' as part of the *Dancing Studies* programme and the performances from the Croatian Pavilion that occurred within the Giardini and Arsenale.

My fellowship research project was based around the translation of performance into drawing and the reperformance of these drawings through print. The first-hand drawn impression

documenting 'In Proximity' and the dance performances of the Croatian Pavilion are transformed into monoprints that include my half remembering of the space around the performances and specific repeated movements they use.

Through using expressionist marks and a mono-printing technique, I seek to engage my recollection of performance and to intermingle it with the depictions of the human body. I enjoy the strange amalgamations of the figure in movement, sometimes humanised and other times reduced to deconstructed movement marks.

Continued Research in Newcastle:

My research has continued during my final year of studying a BA Fine Art degree at Newcastle University to understand how drawing and printing allows me to 're-perform' the experience of watching movement and performance. I have collaborated with several local theatre companies in and around Newcastle such as Alphabetti Theatre and Theatre Space to produce drawing installations. My work can be seen on my instagram @isabella.tessier. Please get in touch if interested in collaborating together or discussing performance drawing.



44 JADE AYINO
BLK ERTH
VENICE
2022



44 JADE AYINO
BLK ERTH
VENICE
2022



34 JADE AYINO
BLK ERTH
VENICE
2022

JADE AYINO

University Of West England, Bristol
Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/4yino>
Website: www.ayino.org

During my time in Venice working for the British council, I took the opportunity to celebrate and respond to the heavy black and afrofuturism presence that was situated during the Venice biennale, 2022

In the name of representation and innovation I decided to take photos of black women and non binary folk during my time in Venice, the message behind this being that I simply wanted to capture variations of dynamic creativity and effortless mannerism that black women and black non binary people possess.

Directing light on, around and in the sovereignty that we have as black people to bounce back through time.

The British fellowships programme was such an incredible experience and what a pleasure it is to be sharing some of my photography results from my time at the Venice biennale 2022. In collaboration with Loop Retreat Italy 2022

Starting this photograph project has been a platform for me to refine my ideas around race, womanhood and sexuality, As well as helping me to find out how these concepts interplay with my creative expression as a black queer woman.

My work often explores themes of fragility within social constructs, the autonomy in femininity, and the introspectiveness of intersectionality.

The aim of my work is to blur, bend and bounce the boundaries between creative disciplines, creating focus on shifting art culture to be more immersive and accessible whilst curiously finding new ways to entertain, educate and influence myself along with future and past generations.

Above Sonia Boyce, BLK ERTH, Oct, 2022 by Jade Ayino



Still from animation



Interview with my mum

JAKE PATTERSON

My name is Jake Patterson and I was completing a BA in Illustration Animation at Kingston when I was informed about the Venice Fellowship Programme 2022 and applied—and got it!

I proposed that I wanted to explore my trans identity and provide representation for the underrepresented.

While experimenting with possible ideas, I conducted an interview with my mum asking her how she felt when I first came out vs. how she feels about my transition now—8 years on.

I found this to be the most interesting piece of research because of the sharp contrast in how she felt vs. now. I thought this to be an important message to portray, as it highlights the journey of emotions you can go through when facing a seemingly life changing event. I also felt this project could be a useful resource for families who have a child who has come out as transgender.

I felt animation was the best way to present this interview. While it is very much in the works still, I will have it available via my social media this year. I plan to submit it to various animation film festivals and afterwards I will be able to post it online.

During my time in Venice, I was influenced by the other fellows' projects and their exploration into identity, representation of the body and exploration of misrepresented communities. I met some wonderful people and was able to share and exchange

Kingston School of Art
Email: jakepatte.art@gmail.com
Instagram: [@jakepatte.art](https://www.instagram.com/jakepatte.art)

artwork and artists that I loved with other Fellows during my time. As well as this, being able to go to the Biennale as part of the programme was so inspiring. The theme this year meant that a lot of the artwork I saw surrounded topics including sexuality, gender identity and the human form. I discovered artists I had not known prior and have found their work to have informed my practice as an artist.

Researching the Black Arts movement was very influential to my project as it explored ideas of safety, representation and identity. The image depicting my research and initial concept art was inspired by work I saw at the Biennale 2022, the "Life Between Islands" exhibit at the Tate and a talk Sonia Boyce did with us Fellows on her influences and practice as an artist.

I am so thankful to have had this opportunity, it was the best experience I have had as a young artist so far. To be able to meet other artists, live in Venice for a month while working at the Biennale was an invaluable influential experience.

My plans since completing the fellowship is to continue to make and share my artwork.

For further enquiries or just to have a chat, please feel free to email me at jakepatte.art@gmail.com or I can be found @ [@jakepatte.art](https://www.instagram.com/jakepatte.art) on Instagram. Thank you!

JANE MARIE ZELENIK

For my project I explored the concept of "threshold fear"—the physical and programmatic barriers that make it difficult for the uninitiated to experience a museum or gallery—and considered what can be done to tackle this anxiety.

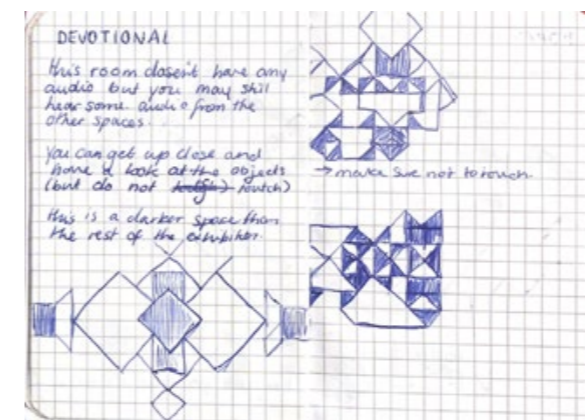
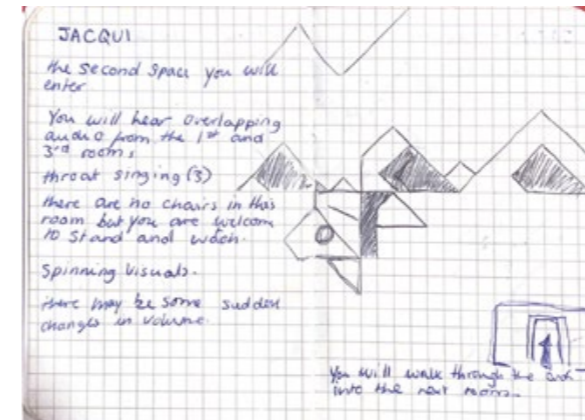
When arriving in Venice I felt that something missing from many of the pavilions was guidance on what visitors could expect in each space. Something I had discussed with the visitor services team at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, and doing further research, was the importance of visual stories and sensory guides which are created by museums and galleries to prepare people for their visits. Sensory guides are important for informing visitors what sensory stimuli or challenges they may face while visiting an unfamiliar location. A sensory guide provides information on what visitors will experience while still allowing the artwork to be a surprise. This enables viewers to plan for an enjoyable visit. Given the multimedia nature of the Sonya Boyce installation, I developed a sensory guide for the British Pavilion. I

University of Exeter
Website: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jane-marie-zelenik/>

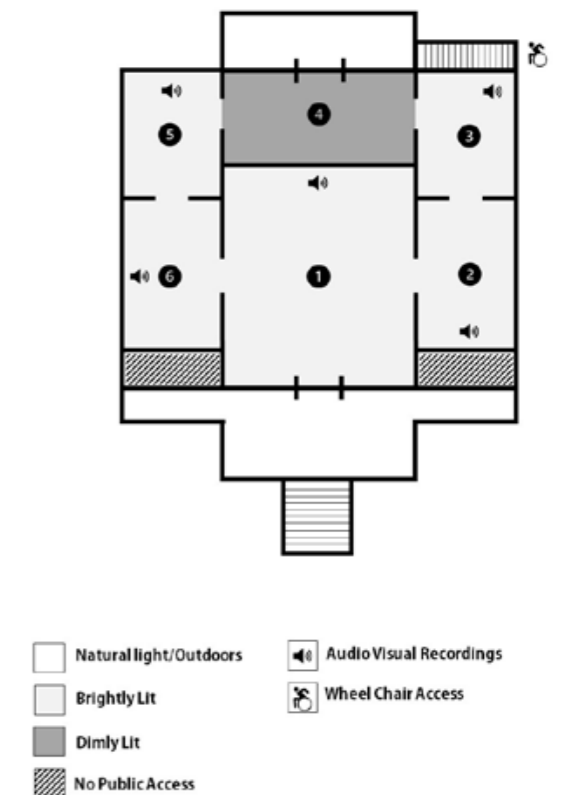
have included an image of one page of the guide, as well as some of my preparatory explorations developed in the pavilion.

Following my Fellowship in Venice I secured an audience development internship at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter. As part of this role, I have been using the skills from the Venice project to update and create the museum's visual stories. As I am in my final year of university I have also been further exploring the concept of threshold fear in my dissertation on the role of art installation and have been inspired by some of the works I saw in Venice.

After graduation I'm not sure where I will be heading. I hope to pursue a career in the museum education and audience development field and may explore this while visiting family in the States. Whatever I do next I have an increased confidence of living in another country after my experience in Venice as it helped me grow both career-wise and as a person.



SENSORY MAP





“I really hope that the British Council Fellowships Programme has been as invaluable as it has seemed. It is such a treat to read and experience the individual thought processes here in this yearbook and I am delighted that students were able to not only engage with the Pavilion, the Biennale, the city of Venice, and most importantly each other. The training process for the Fellowships Programme seemed holistic and deeply supportive. Each time I was able to meet Fellows I was impressed by their thoughtfulness, commitment, and sheer energy. May the benefits of their experience take them far.”

Sonia Boyce
British Pavilion Artist 2022

JANE SCOBIE

The *Vindication of the Rights of Nature* is a set of 20 handmade plates, glazed in Venetian colours and each decorated by a different artist visiting the 2022 Venice Biennale. The plates reflect the artists' relationship with the non-human world. They have been used for shared meals and discussions between artists, scientists and others working on climate justice issues.

The *Vindication Plates* are an ongoing resource for use by community and arts organisations. The group 6 cohort of Venice Fellows are planning a joint exhibition and meal which will include the *Vindication of the Rights of Nature Plates*. The main impact of the fellowship has been the strong connections made in

Middlesex University
 Website: www.janescobie.com
 Instagram: @janescobieartist

Venice which will continue beyond the fellowship and my evolving interest in the shoreline, where the land meets the sea.

As an interdisciplinary artist whose work explores care and the politics of interdependence, I use a wide range of media. Engagement and collaboration are central to my practice. I am currently studying for an MA in Arts and Science at Central Saint Martins, London. My current research explores *The Edge of the Sea*; what is happening on the beach and in the temperate reefs that surround the UK coast.

Left Jane Scobie, *The Vindication Plates*, 2022. Photo: Jane Scobie
 Right Jane Scobie, *The Vindication Plates Dinner*, 2022. Photo: Jane Scobie



JESSICA WAN KA PO

University of the Arts London, Camberwell and Chelsea Colleges of Arts
 Website: www.jessicawan.art
 Instagram: @jesswan

I could feel the sea in the breezing wind, brushing my face in the bright and humid August. Putting on a morning tune *Amore Disperato* by Nada, I cross canals, hop off the stonebridge and arrive at Giardini before the British Pavilion opens to the public.

The 2022 Venice Biennale, *Milk of the dreams* has attracted over 800,000 visitors to thousands of commissioned artworks from all over the globe. The idea of a flamboyant international art exhibition fronted with national pavilions still feels odd to me, knowing that the biennale begins at Caffè Florian, a small coffee house where local artists and thinkers used to gather, explore ideas and show works together. Opened in 1720, the Florian became a meeting place drawing notable regulars such as Marcel Proust and Charles Dickens and a home to display works from artists of the time. In 1907, the first national pavilion opened in the Giardini di Castello, converting the public garden at Venice's eastern edge into a ticketed exhibition site. Residents could visit the Biennale for free on an assigned day, usually in November before the show closes, with no access to the garden for the rest of the year.

Jessica Wan is a Hong Kong-born, London-based independent curator and writer. She is a lecturer at the Chelsea College of Arts (UAL) and contributes to various publications. Her recent curatorial research focuses on British-born and British-based visual artists who engage with contemporary non-western practice, diasporic culture, feminist technoscience and transnationalism.

For centuries, Venice has been a hub for transatlantic trade and resettlements. In a city foregrounded by transnational and transcultural connections, I'd like to think of one's national identity as constantly evolving as opposed to fixated. *Feeling her way* by Sonia Boyce is a multimedia and improvised presentation gathering four women jazz musicians into a social and reciprocal setting. The mesmerising sounds clashing with stylistic wallpaper rendered from studio images and playful cubes mimicking pyrite hold a bold space for experimentation and tender resistance. The work was sensorial, unexpected and empowering. At the pavilion, I was often asked by visitors to give explanations on the identity of the featured musicians being 'Black' while not having a darker skin tone. This raised the question: "What do you expect to be British, Black, White, European, Asian, or American today?" Here, one's perceptions of appearance and cultural heritage are subverted and challenged.

Left *I still dream that dream*, 2022. Installation View. Photo Credit: Jessica Wan
 Right Tea Ceremony workshop led by Khadeeja Hamid, 2022. *I still dream that dream*, 2022. Installation View. Photo Credit: Jessica Wan



JULIA LISBETH SORENSEN

M.A., B.A.—Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh Scotland
 Website: www.juliasorensen.com
 Instagram: @juliasorensen

Summary phrase

Experiences of an Exhibit Attendant is about what happens when you make room to look and talk back.

A Bit about the Project

While working in Sonia Boyce's *Feeling Her Way* at the British Pavilion in the 2022 Venice Biennale, I became interested in documenting the sometimes wonderful, sometimes offensive, sometimes hilarious and often absurd responses of the exhibit attendees, particularly when they believed no one was watching. I noted down observations, behaviours, outbursts and conversations, thematically cataloguing them and recording them as spoken word work, ultimately producing an spoken word/ambient music album *available on Spotify*. Its structure is inspired by Simon & Garfunkel's *Bookends* (1968) and playfully explores the institution of the Venice Biennale and how people conduct themselves within it.

What Comes Next

As a published writer, musician, visual artist and poet laureate from Treaty Six territory in Canada, the Fellowship Programme had an immeasurable impact on my practice. Being able to work at the Biennale whilst simultaneously tasked with creative research and making something meant I was able to explore the aspect of my work I want to elaborate on—combining music with poetry—in an intensely creative space. I intend to take what I learned while writing this album and make more things like it. I want to delve further into particular experiences, for example the experiences of city commuter cycling, as well as more personal, rehearsed work like I did in the co-written album *to love and to be loved*.

Spotify music album



JONATHAN WASSON

Ulster University

The research project aimed to analyse if the canals of Venice acted as a physical barrier between the Venetians and the tourists, in a similar way that the so called 'peace walls' divide Catholic and Protestant communities in Belfast. In a time where Venice is mockingly referred to as Disneyland and the local Venetian population is in constant decline, this research would provide an opportunity to assess the impact of tourism on local community and if/how they actively segregate themselves from the tourists.

The learnings from the research provided a complex image of the canals, the canals do not act as a divide between tourists and locals, in retrospect, the canals are the only 'safe space' left for the Venetians. A space that is in jeopardy due to political decision making, generational differences and local emigration. There is a phrase often overused by the locals I spoke with to describe tourists, 'can't live with them, cant live without them'. Tourists have populated these islands, the real Venice lies within

its canals, truly accessible only to those who are local. Venetians now socialise on their boats, from a simple coffee amongst friends, docking outside restaurants and having the table carried on board to the teenagers partying on boats to 3am. This is the new Venice for Venetians, a power dynamic between the city and the canals; its people and its tourists.

The Fellowship has greatly impacted my academic and personal development. Whilst there are no plans to develop this particular research in its current form, the project provoked questions to the issues back home in Belfast. This has provided a starting point for my MArch thesis project, that aims to address the spaces 'in between' and if architecture can act to integrate the two communities in Belfast. Above all, the greatest impact from the fellowship is the new friendships made, the conversations, the laughter and unforgettable memories.

KARIN LI WING YAN

University of Leicester, Art Museum and Gallery Studies MA

I am grateful for the opportunity offered by the British Council for Fellows to test out ideas while staying in Venice. I came to the Art Museum and Gallery Studies MA program at the University of Leicester with little background in poetry. However, prompted by a poetry writing experience I had, I decided to invite visitors to write poems/prose in response to Sonia Boyce's installation *Feeling Her Way*, as an attempt to understand their understanding. As a form of writing, it exorcises emotions and promotes human connection. Poetry offers a potential method to reach a deeper understanding and allows dialogue to develop. It is interesting to interact with the participants and look at their feedback. I have included a few responses here. While some people get creative straight away, I also offered some participants the lyrics that the singers sang to make a poem to make it easier for them to get started (thanks to another fellow's suggestion). I have also received a very creative sound drawing!

(1)
Am I worth this royalty
Is it just about bodies and women's—
Am I valuable for who I am
whoever it will be?
Or is my shape,
my voice—my spirit
too, too loud
for you—to say
I deserve to show the audacity of a Queen?
I am, indeed.

-ERICA RODIGHIERO

(2)
He's so sad that some people
feel lonely, especially if they are
not accepted from the society
But everyone should fight to
feel free and accepted from the others.
One day I hope there won't be
people differences
I wanna be positive.

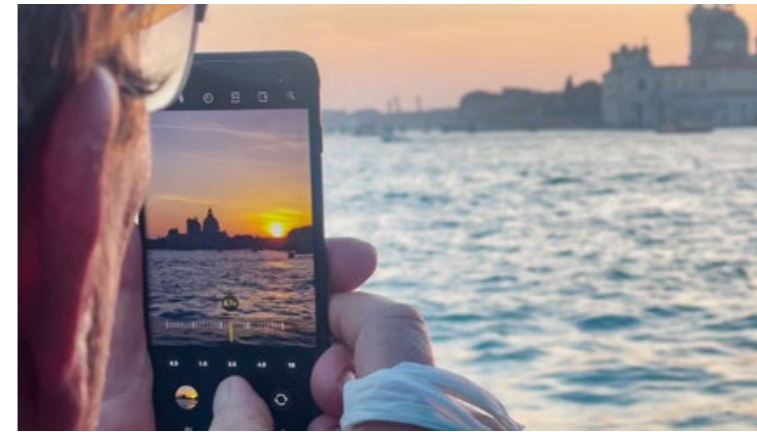
*This is rewritten from the lyrics sung by
Tanita Tikaram.

(3)
It scares us
It scares us to see, hear and
Feel women like this
Loud, raw, screaming ...
The people want to escape – they escape
I want to see it, everything of it!
I want to hear you
Just like you
ARE

I don't want to close my eyes.

(4)
I'm feeling flooded by female power!
I'm feeling entertained!
I'm good.
I'm feeling empowered.
I'm a woman.
Strong, creative colourful,
My mother.

(5)
A life ahead Is that what you see?
Or do fight in the present,
to change people like me?
Perhaps it's neither
Perhaps it's both
All I know is you do change me
with each note.



KATARZYNA PERLAK

I dedicated the fellowship period to researching the notion of 'wish landscape'. I was particularly interested in the image of the horizon and its proximity to affects of hope and longing. My research enquired into the historical development of utopias and the shift from an ontologically static series of utopian visions and programs based on geographical locations and society orders to more recent, phenomenologically influenced positions that emphasize the fluidity and affectual modes of seeing and feeling.

One of the historical thinkers I was reading through was Ernst Bloch, a German Marxist philosopher who created an important bridge between a modern era utopianism and contemporary notions of utopia. In his *Principle of Hope* and *The Spirit of Utopia* whilst constructing his own blueprint he discusses all forms of utopia including, but not limited to, social, literary, technological, medical and geographical.

For him utopia is far from a literary genre or topographical location. On the contrary, it is a much more complex principle, an expression of 'anticipatory consciousness', a utopian impulse and mode of seeing. Not a place but what takes place, not elsewhere, but right now and here.

This impulse has its source in a dissatisfaction with the current state of things and therefore has a critical function of pointing at 'something that is missing'. Bloch's utopianism revolves around the concept of not-yet-here and no-longer-conscious. The not-yet is the driving force of utopian impulse, an aspiration, a principle that transforms 'wishful thinking' to 'wilful thinking', which generates a critical imagination of the future.

Bloch's notion of not-yet-there has been foundational for many contemporary utopian discourses. It is defined as a mode of being and feeling that is not present but nonetheless an opening, an act of imagining transformation.

Bloch initiates the shift from the notion of 'utopian program' to 'utopian wish' and while putting a particular emphasis on analysing utopia in the context of art—including painting, opera and music – he introduces the notion of 'wish landscape'. A concept which I found particularly useful when contextualising the utopian potentiality of the horizon.

Hope is an essential element of the concept of 'wish landscape', where both may be attained through want of the other. As he states, an imagined idea of 'something better' is instinctively followed by an act of wishing that is then projected into a wishful image.

The wish landscape is classified by him as 'outlined utopia' and instead of representing a particular visualised image of utopia they generate a utopian feeling (a utopian sense of longing), which he describes as a 'deeply inward- and outwards- looking realism of possibility'. Bloch believes that projecting the utopian feeling into the wishful images gives us an ontological distance 'as the here and now stands too close to us.'

In addition to theoretical research I was also gathering visual, moving image material that was capturing multiple images of horizons (in Venice landscape as well as in pictorial art representations), and I also filmed people capturing the horizon. This material is part of an ongoing video collection that will be incorporated into a new moving image work.

Partner : New Contemporaries



Promotional flyer, 2022. Design: Wong Chi Lam

“The Fellowships Programme was hugely significant part of my personal and professional growth; creating a springboard into my career which I will always be thankful for. Being surrounded by the energy of the Venice Biennale inspired me to challenge myself by undertaking the opportunities that were presented during this period. Engaging with the British Council created a foundation to take a step forward and realise my potential in the art world. It is a truly a programme that allows you to get out what you put into it!”

Jordan Page—Past Fellow



LEAH BRYDON ROBERTS

I am an artist that is North-East based, whose work considers, nostalgia, travelling and taboo subjects, with elements of politics and race, through book binding, screen printing, photography and film work. My work stems from memories and important landmarks to help with travel.

My current project, 23 minutes away, is a never-ending cluster of art mediums in a way to show how I solo travelled around the labyrinth we call Venice. Showing images throughout I captures on my iPhone 13 Pro Max and created them into art pieces. The meaning behind this work was me documenting my travel

to work and using distinctive landmarks to remember how to get home. Also in relation to how it has a personal meaning behind it. The colours I used were a mixture between colours that complimented each other on the colour wheel, but also what worked and what didn't. But also what colours were nostalgic to my trip away.

These images are made from screen prints I created when back in the UK in my studio where I used different techniques to indicate my journey.

Left Leah Brydon Roberts, Photography/Screen Print, 23 minutes away, 2022.

Right Leah Brydon Roberts, Photography/Screen Print/Book Binding, 23 minutes away, 2022.



KATIE HARRISON

Manchester School of Architecture
Instagram: @kaharch

My project began by aiming to explore what a reimagined Venice would look like, without the financial wealth of its historic slave trade. Would it exist as we know it? A personal aim for the project was to enjoy creating art again, as academic pressure has created a disconnect with my passion for it.

As I explored Venice and the many collateral Biennale exhibitions, my scope began to widen to consider the city through a wide range of eventualities. The potential impact of the climate on fragile Venice is unavoidable, highlighted by exhibitions such as Ocean Space. At La Fucina del Futuro I was told about the work of SUMus in developing Venice as a city for the future—particularly with and for young people. Exhibitions at community spaces highlighted the lack of local facilities in central Venice. This absence was attributed in part to the physical limitations of the island by a representative at La Fucina—I witnessed only renovation projects around the city. Marks of colonialism were evident in every monument I visited—stolen wealth, art, flags and icons. The juxtaposition with the celebratory monument of identity in Sonia Boyce's work was clear. This all lead me to consider a wide range of 'futures': Venice underwater; Venice rebuilt today; Venice without wealth, religious influence or

water. Much of my remaining time was spent recording the city to develop these ideas as paintings and recording video footage to share the experience through Everything International Manchester School of Architecture (@everythinginternationalmsa on Instagram).

The time in Venice both inspired me to think about these concerns in my home cities, but also reaffirmed the importance of art and artists in discussing these issues—something that, as an architecture student, I had somewhat forgotten! To explore my themes further, I am now working with the Manchester School of Architecture Debate Union (@msadebateunion on Instagram) to organise a discussion event on the legacies of colonialism in our built environment, which should take place in the new year. Unfortunately, due to family illness then the recommencing of university, my artistic outputs have not been fully realised yet but I intend to continue to develop them. In the future I hope to work in scenic arts, and this experience has given me confidence and understanding of a proposal and project development process. It has also been invaluable for meeting some incredible friends and artists that I hope to stay in touch with well into the future.



LEVI HIBBERT

University of East London
 Instagram and Twitter: @LeviHibbert
 Website: www.lxvi.ooo

My name is Levi Hibbert. I'm a PhD Student at the University of East London. My doctoral research project is titled "The performativity of nightlife: Clubs, stages and everything in-between in the diasporic Black queer experience". It focuses on Black queer identity formations and the cultural architecture of nightlife that up-hold, challenge, create and remix Black performativity and notions of "Afropeanness". For more information about me and my practice you can connect with me on Instagram and Twitter, @LeviHibbert and my website www.lxvi.ooo.

As part of my Biennale project, I wanted to visit Black queer spaces in Venice specifically to connect with other Black interdisciplinary artists within nightlife and performing arts trying to better understand their histories and similarities to other marginalised groups in Europe and the UK. I aim to put forth my artistic vision of imagined community through a live-performance-based art installation.

Drawing from my own and the shared experience found between Black communities, my final piece as part of the Biennale Fellowship Programme will work with projection, digital technologies and live performance centred on the story of Othello in my 'safe space', exploring the play's undertones of homosocial and homosexual desire.

Is it just mere jealousy between Iago and Othello, or is there something more? Queer chemistry. Time to bring 'Othello' to the club. – Throw it into the "architecture" of nightlife and Black masculinity.

My name is Levi Hibbert. I'm a PhD Student at the University of East London. My doctoral research project is titled "The performativity of nightlife: Clubs, stages and everything in-between in the diasporic black queer experience". It focuses on black queer identity formations and the cultural architecture of nightlife that up-hold, challenge, create and remix black performativity and notions of "Afropeanness".

McCune, a queer ethnographer, states "architecture" is a "spaces physical frame and the texture of the space which encompass the ideological frames of gender", 'Queer Nightlife' by Kemi Adeyemi also points to the architecture of nightlife space and the need to understand the performance within in it. Therefore, this led to much of my investigation in Venice.

During my time in Venice, I worked on Venice Island but commuted from Mestre. This enabled me to explore and find the hidden staples of Black communities not present on Venice Island such as the Black barbershop. My investigation concluded that nightlife in Venice Island has more of an aperitif vibe, with no major clubs or bars open late, Black music and community was hard to find. However, after researching Black Italian performance online I discovered an interview from the cast of the Afrosurrealist/Afrofuturist Netflix series 'Zero' which discussed the difficulties posed at the intersectionality of being "Afro-Italian". Much of the context of this interview has similar and parallel arguments to the struggles of Black British identity. Therefore, I found myself questioning whether the reason Black nightlife in Venice is so limited is because of similar reasons at play to the restrictive governance once posed on Black nightlife in the UK. This has become a further point of investigation.

The two nightlife venues I did find sit beautifully between Venice Island and Mestre. Both are tucked away and hidden by the liberty bridge. They are Argo16 and Molocinque. I wish to continue to develop my idea and put forth Black queer nightlife into these venues to help bridge Black communities and Black shared experiences of Afro-Italians and Black Britain.



MADINA AW TALL

Middlesex University
 Instagram: @itsmadinaart
 Email: itsmadinaart@gmail.com

As an artist who takes inspiration from working creatively with others to address issues of social relevance with a view of creating a change, I was delighted to see this reflected in the theme of imaginatively re-envisioning life in this Biennale. My work most recently has been with society's most oppressed communities to bring these voices into the public domain, and as a part of this, I have been studying Sonia Boyce's practice. Her more recent collaborative and participatory work was inspirational for me, which nevertheless remains rooted in her concerns over race, class and gender, which closely reflect my own.

At first, my Venice Biennale proposal was a continuation of a social project that I started in the UK, titled Enen Project, which focuses on the cultural identity of the black diaspora. So a series of workshops was created where, as a group, we were able to share experiences and find a means of self-expression through the realization of collages made individually and in small groups.

I intended to run a similar workshop in Venice; this process would broaden the participants' horizons, being an ideal

opportunity to allow these groups to link up through the work and feel a sense of connection through recognizing parallels in experience, despite their different geographical locations. Working visually; will also enable them to express and create an understanding beyond language.

However, while in Venice, I had to adapt to the resources that I had available at that time the proposal ended up having a more theoretical impact. I took advantage of my role as an exhibition ambassador at the British Pavilion to make a further exploration of Boyce's work, Feeling Her Way. It was exciting to extract the thoughts and visions the black female visitors had regarding the piece as a reflection of themselves.

I am grateful for this memorable experience, which has helped me enormously to expand my critical thinking. I gained inside knowledge of what makes the Biennale unique and got a sense of what it means to be part of this global event. It helped me to develop a strong network with creative peers from Venice and other countries.

Left Madina Aw Tall, *Dessings de baa*, 2022. Collage.
 Right Madina Aw Tall, *Conclusions*, 2022. Mixed media.

MARIA ISABEL CONDE TKATCHENKO

University of the Arts London, Camberwell and Chelsea Colleges of Arts

In October 2022, I travelled to Venice for a month for the residency, where I worked at the British Pavilion as an Exhibition Ambassador, and also developed my own personal project, which I proposed in response to Sonia Boyce's work. I was inspired by Sonia Boyce's engagement with discourse on surrounding contemporary issues. My projects outside of this residency aim to create a space for meaningful and lasting dialogue, and encourage political and social engagement through the arts. My most recent project is my organisation Create on the Estate. I was keen to exchange knowledge with like-minded creatives and take the experience with me into the future as a producer of inventive, inspiring and inclusive public programmes. In Venice, I wanted

to connect with and learn from local art groups discussing social, political and culturally relevant issues and advocating a cause to spur change at local, national, or international levels. My project aimed to identify what structures currently exist to support social activism and the different ways in which social activism exists. Some of the local art groups I interacted with included BarDaDino, Casa Punto Croce, Il Laboratorio Occupato Morion, Ocean Space and The Picnic Pavilion. A publication informed by this experience will be ready early next year. Around these activities, I also connected with other Fellows from the UK, and began working on exhibitions together in response to our experiences during that month as Venice Fellows.



MARGARITA LOZE

Kingston School of Art London, MFA Fine Art
Website: www.margaritaieva.com

My name is Margarita Frančeska Ieva Loze (Kingston School of Art London, MFA Fine Art) and I am an artist working with hand-drawn stop motion, drawing, writing, embroidery and sculpture. Cross-disciplinary, I further explore the poetic world wandering, intimacy and memories through the narratology of discontinuous remembrances and myths. In the 2022 Fellowships Programme, I was collaborating with two Fellows from my group, Sara Eng-Carlyle and Karin Li Wing Yan, to further write a book *City Built of Mythology*.

Venice surprised me with its mesmerism and majesty, its truly unique architecture and the symbolism seen on its buildings. During my wanderings, as many others, I began to think about what happened here in the past. It seemed that Venice captures all historic eras, merging and layering together ancient history with nowadays. In the streets, where many tourists walk trying to take photographs of corners of the gondolas, I imagined old stories with royals talking, ships arriving and many young children just sitting at the canal doing their homework. I also imagined more mythical stories about how the lion with wings came alive from the statue and how the structure below the water was made with the help of magical creatures. Somehow this was the only city I could imagine, where these fairy tales and legends could have actually existed and this feeling made me curious to learn the history and values of Venice throughout its legends and myths.

With these short stories, which can be found through the

pages, I have been reflecting my thoughts on 28 different legends, that have their origin in Venice. I have been playing with creatures who live as symbols on the architectural walls by imagining what they would think about. Also, I have been writing poems, capturing narratives based on legends or my complete invention of mythical situations that could have happened in the past. I was immediately fascinated by how tragic and spiritual these legends are, going hand in hand with life and death. In this book too, I have tried to capture these two sides of Venice by combining admiration and beauty in the illustrations and the choice of characters, and also sorrow and humorous absurdity in the writing.

Participation in the 2022 Fellowships Programme has been unforgettable. It has been an exciting whirlwind of new impressions, knowledge and warmly gained friendships. To be so close to Sonia Boyce's artwork at the British Pavilion, to be part of its presence, and to see how it comes to life through conversations and experiences, has been truly breathtaking. Even today, I remember and re-live these moments every time I think about Venice.

The research material that I have collected, has been feeding my practice from many angles. To continue this project, I am further developing a script for a hand-drawn stop motion. I hope that the legends and stories from the book will intermingle with the video, and together they will give a truly Venetian experience for its viewer.



“As an Exhibition Ambassador, I gained valuable insight into the world of the artist Sonia Boyce, which might not have been the case otherwise. I learned about her backstory and found it inspiring. The role provided me with an outstanding experience in invigilation: to deal with such a big audience and scores of questions were no easy task, but the challenge is what made it interesting. The social and cultural aspects are not the least: I was able to make many connections, expand my network and of course enjoy the city of Venice for a once in a lifetime opportunity. Regarding my project, I am entirely satisfied. I am still working on the output, but it is coming together even better than what I had envisioned at the time of my application. I am very much interested in certain topics like migration, transnationalism, social design, etc. Thus, my project intends to give voice to the migrants in Venice by mapping out their journey through the city. I participated in an exhibition in Venice that 2 of my co-fellows curated together. The response from the public was unbelievable. I benefited from the discussions and insights of my cohort of Fellows, and that lead to me improving the concept and the delivery of my project which is participatory, sensory and interactive. Overall, I must say that my experience in Venice was fulfilling, outstanding and unfortunately came to an end. I highly recommend it to anyone.”

2022 Fellow

NANCY-VIOLET DOWNS

Arts University Bournemouth
Instagram: @nancyvioletartist

My time in Venice was one of the most inspirational and enjoyable months of my life. Being the first Venice Biennale to exhibit a majority of female of gender non-conforming artists, the *Milk of Dreams* curated by Cecilia Alemani was a breath of fresh air and a shock wave of inspiration all at once. Invigilating *Feeling Her Way* was truly a beautiful moment as a female artist. It felt like a historical moment for women in art was happening all around us, and it's fair to say it was an emotive experience.

What did I research?

The focus of my research was ecofeminism, which explores the parallels between our connection with the earth as humans, and the gender structures in societies. I was particularly pulling at the strand of "the connection between our bodies and the earth", from Alemani's curatorial vision.

Day in the life

I spent my days invigilating Sonia Boyce's *Feeling Her Way*, getting to know the artwork through discussion with colleagues and visitors. It was insightful to see how people received the work in different ways, and very special to see people connect with it. It was an incredible opportunity to spend so much time exploring the Giardini and Arsenale, where I drew so much inspiration, especially from the beautifully curated central exhibitions. It was there that I further researched *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* (a short and very readable essay by Ursula K Le Guin, give it a read!) which has influenced a lot of my work. On my days off I was

visiting the collateral events as well as the Giardini and Arsenale, and exploring surrounding areas rich in organic nature, such as Sant Erasmus, with artists I collaborated with.

What did I make?

During my trips to surrounding islands, I explored our connection as humans with the land. As a textile artist who is passionate about sustainability, you can imagine my joy when I found a piece of discarded fabric on Murano (on a spritz stop on our way back from a day on Sant Erasmo).

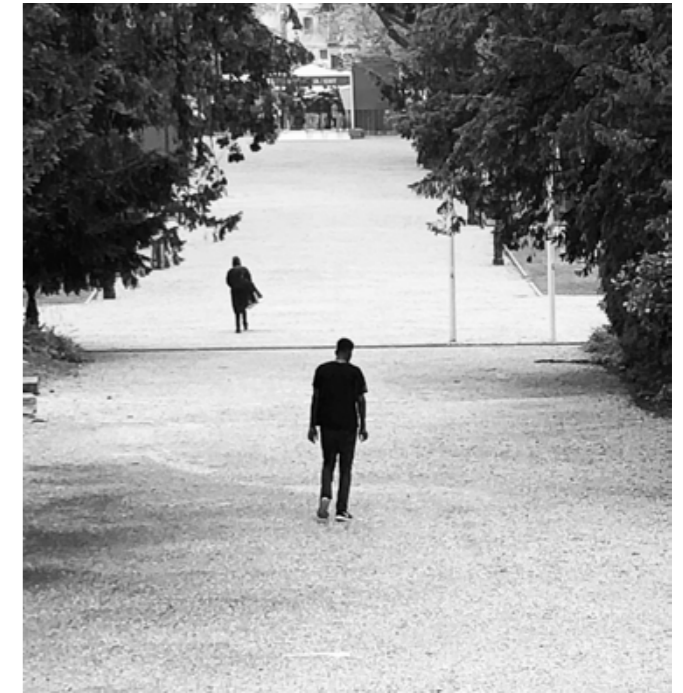
I dyed this fabric with natural pigments found or purchased in Venice. I did this in the sea water in Pelestrina, and then embellished it with motifs symbolizing our connection with our surrounding environments. This piece of work is titled *Words of the Other Story*, a phrase sampled from *The Carrier Bag Theory*.

What have I done since?

The work I made in Venice informed my latest work, *Room in the Bag of Stars*, drawing on a feminine connection with the land, from a spiritual perspective.

Where will I go next?

I thank my time in Venice for inspiring a stronger connection with the earth, and even strengthening my belief in feminism (who knew it was possible?). I will continue to explore the connection between these themes in my work.



PEARL ISA BICKERSTETH

Kingston School of Art

Pearl Bickersteth is a project management professional with experience working with individuals and organizations within the creative industry, managing diverse projects, events, and engagements. She possesses skills ranging from program management, event management, fundraising, donor relations, logistics, and hands-on operational support. She holds a Master of Science in Project Management for Creative Practitioners from Kingston University London, and a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art from the University of Virginia, with a concentration in Painting.

During the British Council Venice Fellowships Programme 2022 she used the Design Thinking process, with elements of the Agile Scrum Methodology, to develop her proposed project from

her time in the Fellowship Programme. What started as an idea for a live event centered around the experiences of the Black traveler morphed into something completely different through the process. The insights collected through extensive Design Thinking research while in Venice, led to the September 2022 launch of *La Flâneuse*, a blog that captures and shares the unique adventures of Black travelers around the world. The *La Flâneuse* blog's mission is to create a place that captures the experiences of Black travelers from all over the world. Posts from *La Flâneuse* and contributions from fellow Black travelers provide unique stories that encourage Black people to travel the globe.

REBECCA DENYSE ROWAN

My Songlines, 2022

My project reflects a personal document of journey, memory and movement through space in Venice.

The work is inspired by 1987, Bruce Chatwin's novel 'The Songlines', which is about how Aboriginals "sing the world into existence". Through singing they are mapping their land, using it as a medium of exchange and many more.

The map presented resembles the journey from my accommodation in Venice to the Venice Biennale, inspired by aboriginal art and mapping. Different symbols represent different meanings such as bridges, food, accommodation of friends. To moments on the journey that caught my attention, such as, an

older lady hugging a couple goodbye to graffiti of a cat placed on a wall that helped me locate where I was in Venice. The map also showcases soundwaves and highlights the volume of noise on the journey. There are many more symbols that are hard to understand, however there is something sacred, powerful and personal about this map which connects to only a small number of people, whom I shared the experience with, that understand the art without an explanation.

"The land must first exist as a concept in the mind""only then it be said to exist"

—1987, Bruce Chatwin's, The Songlines

Rebecca Denyse Rowan, *My songlines*, 2022.



REEZAN SIMBAWA

University of Liverpool
 Email: r.simbawa@liverpool.ac.uk
 Instagram: @humanscale_r

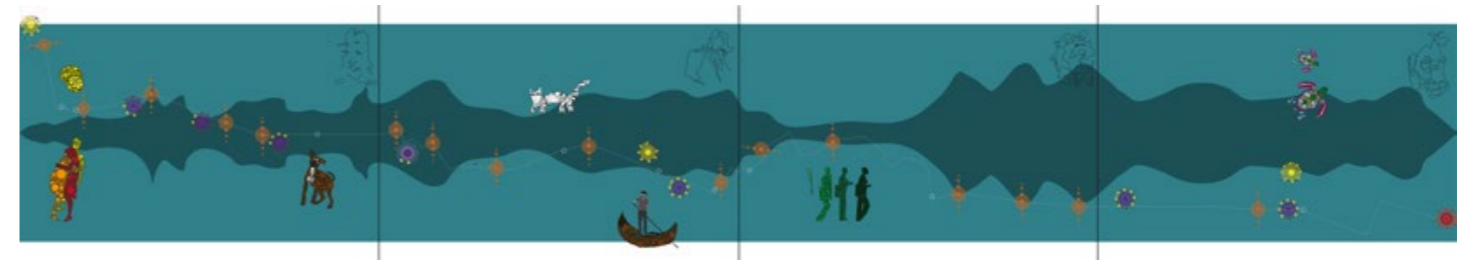
It was a great honor to be selected by the university of Liverpool to be amongst the Fellows joining the British Council in Venice. My background in Architecture, research, and as a current PhD student helped me in using this amazing opportunity to admire the architecture of Venice and the Art Biennale, something I have never experienced before.

Here I was in Venice, where everything is different. Though I have been to other Italian cities, this was different. It looked different, smelled different, and felt different. It was a city that did not feel or taste like any other. I entered the small apartment on the canal, and heard the waves all night and thought, did I just enter a novel? Everything felt very poetic.

I was always curious about how sacred spaces are formed in any urban setting. Before going to Venice, I conducted a research paper about temporary sacred spaces in concentration to Muslims. Practicing faith in different temporary places in the city that are not confined by a designated mosque or prayer room. When talking about my project on the first day, I was approached by Emma, Khadeeja, Ruth, and Jess. They wanted to do an

exhibition and thought I would fit in the dialogue. We had many conversations about migration, memory, and sacredness. We related our work to our own deep life experiences. Those talks are the most I miss.

Walking from one pathway to another, I looked for Muslims living in the area and talked to them about practicing their faith. Muslims pray five times a day which crosses path with their day-to-day routine. With the lack of proper mosque on the Island and most of them being in Mestre, they explained to me that they pray in their shops, restaurants, or even outside by the canal. The people were extremely nice and humble. My project turned out to be a series of photographic images that were printed on canvas in a small 60-year-old printing shop discovered by the two curators Emma and Jess. I also displayed a short clip of a man praying while the church's bells were on, and the street musician was playing. The man praying was in full concentration though all the people and noise was around him. Here I still pose the question of what makes a place sacred?



RIM YASSINE KASSAB

University of Liverpool
 Mail: Rim.yassinekassab@gmail.com
 Instagram: @rim.yk
 Website (in construction): www.rim-yk.com

Venice representations

Venice is the most recognizable city in the world. But its representation is mainly dominated by the tourist: he pictures an idealized past, a feeling of nostalgia for a time he never lived. For this reason, Venice seems like an unreal fantasy city frozen in time. My aim is to make other representations and stories about Venice emerge.

The tourist, the inhabitant and I

I interviewed some inhabitants of Venice to understand more about what makes the city so unique for them. The result is three collages of a surreal Venice. Each shows a different narrative for the city: the tourist, the inhabitant, and my own vision. Colours are a big part of my project.

In the tourist collage, the bridge is holding the most known elements of Venice together, and the brown-red is the impression I used to have from Venice when I saw touristic cards. The water background is to show the immersion of Venice in water, that surrounds all representations of the city.

The inhabitants highlighted the lagoon and the cemetery, both represented by blue, the color of tranquillity. This was the exact emotion I felt when I visited them.

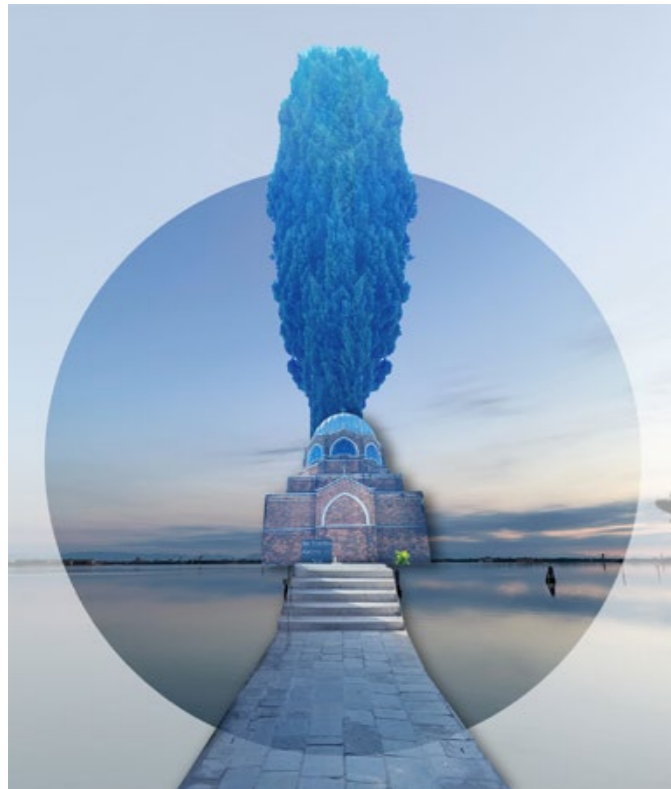
I finished with my own vision of Venice. I expected the blue of the water to be the most memorable, but what struck me was the green of the Biennale. I was also mesmerized by the ceilings, thus the theatre ceiling I put in the middle.

What's your story?

The concept of the dominant discourse is used in my thesis and I had to experience it while in Venice. It definitely had a positive impact on my academic work.

I am also thinking of making this project more international. The idea of the collage that tells your story of a place can be replicated in every city you visit. You just need to print some pictures of your travel. Then make a collage of what interested you the most.

And then you have your own vision of the city! What's yours?



RUTH KATHRYN JONES

University of East London
 Instagram: @ruthkathrynjones
 Website: www.ruthkathrynjones.co.uk

Ruth Jones is a visual artist, independent curator, collaborative practitioner and Director of The Old Waterworks, an artist charity based in Southend, Essex. She is currently in the final year of her Professional Doctorate in Fine Art at the University of East London. In 2017 she founded the Agency of Visible Women, an intersectional, feminist artist network. In 2021 she was awarded a residency with Metal and was commissioned by Focal Point Gallery for an FPG Sounds project in 2022.

The biennale is a sprawling entity, one that insists that the audience structure their own organising principle in order to experience it, and as such it maintains its own agency. This disobedient body, tied together through the nervous system of the major exhibitions at Arsenale and Giardini, forces us to make our own connections and relationships as we endeavour to untangle the complex, interconnected web of artists, works, countries and ideas.

This is a theme that scales across the entire biennale, and is apparent in Cecilia Alemani's intentions for the curation of The Milk of Dreams. Post-humanist considerations of our entangled world, intersectional feminist strategies for existing within that web and dystopian and utopian projections for our future come together within the sphere of the biennale.

At the British Pavilion, Sonia Boyce's Golden Lion winning exhibition, *Feeling Her Way*, presents a subset of the overarching theme of the biennale and its approach to the complex issue in which we are called upon to "...trace kinships and affinities across difference..." (Fossa Margutti and Achenbach, 2022)

Feeling Her Way intuitively explores new ways of valuing Black women's cultural contributions, taking and holding space for their experimentation and expression, a bold moment of tender resistance in the face of existing oppressions and appropriations that seek to extract and eradicate their voices. Loud and

disobedient, the women featured in Boyce's work feel out sonic methods of co-existing in these contradictory conditions.

The British Council Fellowship hosts a cohort of academics invited to support the reception of the British Pavilion at the biennale, introducing us to a broad network of peers and arts industry professionals working internationally and nationally, and encouraging the development of independent projects in the context of Venice.

Amongst group five of the fellows, I discuss the spirit of *The Milk of Dreams* and my own understanding of the disobedient body to review the exhibition I still dream that dream, the project developed by five of my fellows.

The dynamic of the biennale alongside the experience of the fellowship provided a rich environment for exploration of cultures and relationships, that sharply highlighted the necessity for forging kinships and affinities across our many differences.

References

Fossa Margutti, F. and Achenbach, I. (eds) (2022) *The milk of dreams: Biennale Arte 2022: short guide*. First edition. Biennale di Venezia, Rom: SIAE.

Read the full paper, *Biennale and Body* through this [link](#)

“My experience at the Venice Biennale and living in Venice was one of the best months of my life. I learned so much about art, how people interact with it, and about my own art. Sonia Boyce’s Feeling Her Way exhibition and Cecilia Alemani curation of the Biennale were both incredible, and it made me grateful to be entering the art world at this time.”

2022 Fellow

“My experience as an Exhibition Ambassador improved my artistic confidence tenfold. Discussing the exhibition with so many members of the public, from so many different backgrounds, pushed me to understand how art is experienced globally. As a result, I am now able to critique and consider my own work on a much deeper level through my newfound understanding.”

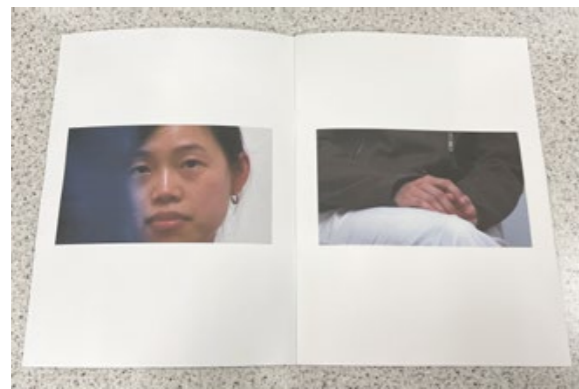
2022 Fellow

Fellow Rim Yassine Kassab being interviewed by a local TV, April 2022 © Anja Dimitrijevic



SARAH VIKTORIA RADU

University of Portsmouth
 Email: sarahradu13@gmail.com
 UP2019722@myport.ac.uk
 Telephone: +44 75394 88050



Capturing sceneries in their prime lighting and compositions was my main aim, each telling a solitary story through the expression of human activity in the space and the relationship between architecture and its functions for the society. I wanted to capture moments of peace and tranquillity and with the use of time I feel I have achieved to communicate the detailing of building elements such as flowers hanging off window sills and balconies, door frame column engravings to even cracks on walls due to the humid air. I wanted to accent the buildings features, textures and colours because I personally believe it's one of the reasons that makes the city of Venice so unique and distinctive to others and why it was so memorable to me personally too.

Being a 2nd Year Architecture BA student at the University of Portsmouth, when enrolling through my institution for the Venice Fellowship Program I was especially interested in the construction of the city and how it is dealing with current environmental issues such as the sinkage of the architecture and pollution of the canals. My experience in Venice over the course of the month was indescribable and I was overjoyed to work part time in the British Pavilion, Biennale. As an architecture student, I felt an urge to

photographically record the beauty of the building designs and my journey across bridges and alleyways in the city. Everywhere I went I was in awe of the use of materiality and the interconnected arrangements of the city's foundations floating above water.

I plan to continue my research and potentially revisit the delightful city again. I also strive to furthermore record and analyse buildings wherever I travel in the future. The British Council offering me this opportunity certainly enabled me to widen my knowledge on historic architecture and its importance to the human society, how even historic buildings were fabricated to continue withstanding the external forces of today and rear future and how one can approach the idea of architectural design, such as building from the water up on a manmade island. It has brought out my inner child of endless possibilities and creativity and I aspire to adopt the mindsets of the previous generations in my field of work.

I am now able to continue my course in a new light and hope to enrol in more oversea project programmes such as The Venice Fellowship Program if possible.



SARA ENG-CARLYLE

Middlesex University

As an employee and research fellow at the Venice Biennale 2022, I observe the infrastructure of the city at a time where global attention is focused on the prestigious art world. Engaging with colleagues, visitors and residents I examine different communities within Venice, as a means to confront viewers with encounters from everyday life. Counter-viewing the widely projected image of the Biennale, I observe the unobserved. Those who are working in the background. Herewith, presenting everyday situations as well as objects deemed as unimportant and portray these in line with the aesthetics and composition of artworks, which people would look at within a gallery.

Using both video and still images, I explore the conflation of these mediums. Extending the duration in which scenes are captured. The project uses video and plays with ideas of

improvisation and the concept of time to create a narrative. Herewith, exploring the potential of a collaborative process. The subject is able to challenge and in return look back at the camera or at me. Capturing moments which allow for scenes of which lack in pose or facade. Furthermore, scenes of workers or residents living out daily routines are observed from a far creating a window into peoples lives, which continue on the side lines of the Biennale.

I am interested in examining ideas of the work place and my position within it. Situating myself within these working communities I have access and lived experience within this particular environment. Through researching the aforementioned themes, I created a video of Karin, a gallery invigilator at the Venice Biennale. Where we simply watch her sitting within the space at the British Pavillion.

TEGEN-MOR TOSSELL

Postcard Anon

Whilst in Venice I looked at the history of Venice as a trading post, a place where people and things have passed through. The Biennale has held onto the same sense of movement; people passing through each pavilion taking a little of each country's culture with them. I wanted the project to capture this transient nature and to record the stories of the people I met along the way.

I used postcards to look at these connections, handing them out to visitors and asking them to take them away and write back to me. It gave me a way of communicating and engaging with people visiting the Biennale. Postcards are intimate yet vulnerable, accessible to anyone who's hands they pass through.

MA Arts & Place, Dartington Arts School
Instagram: @arts_and_place
Website: <https://campus.dartington.org/arts-and-place>

They are picked to be displayed—a memory of a trip, a quick note home, often bought at galleries and museums to be used as a bookmark or taped above a bed—an affordable way of taking art home with you.

The responses I received were funny, sweet and some were deeply moving—by creating a project that gave people anonymity it allowed them to share things that perhaps they hadn't before. Each response has felt like a gift from the sender, not knowing what to expect or how many responses I would receive has been an important act of surrendering my own control of the outcome to others.



TITASH SEN

Statement for Venice Fellowship

I was enrolled in MA Fine Art (Computational Arts) at Camberwell College of Arts (University of the Arts London) when I qualified for the Venice Fellowship Programme in 2022. For a number of years now, my practice has wrestled with the relationship between people's identities and their lived experiences. So, my project for Venice was an extension of this line of enquiry. It also fit well with the larger themes of the Biennale.

Through a series of experimental processes inspired by Sonia Boyce's work at the Venice Biennale, I produced a moving image work titled *There are so many people here I don't know how we'll ever get along*. This piece is a multi-layered installation that consists of a projection that is mapped through a layer of clear perspex. The projection is made of various 3D-modelled characters that represent the various identities that exist within me. It is both an autobiographical piece and an ode to the interpersonal relationships I have shared with a number of feminists and artists.

This work brings together identity and experience. It explores how, within the confines of our selves, our identities are mutable. In making this work, I wanted to meditate on the various selves that live within us – the parts of us we embrace and the parts of

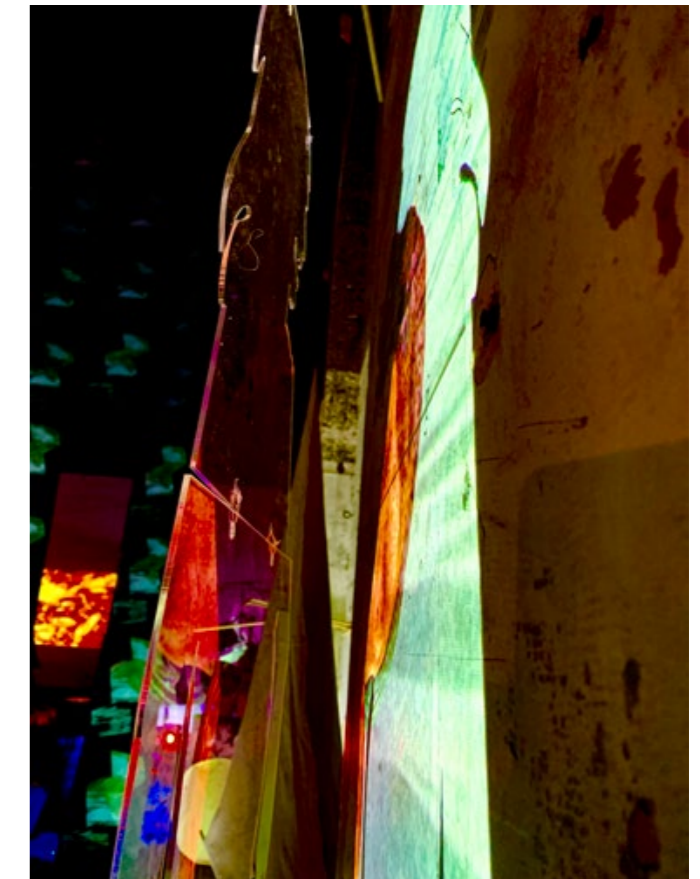
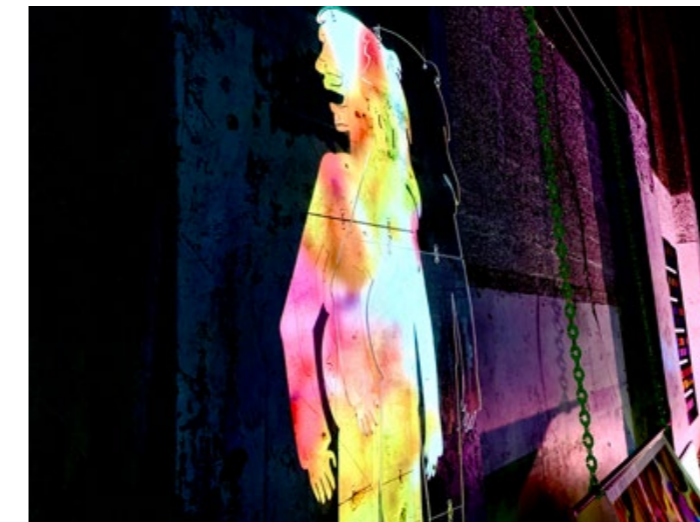
University of the Arts London, Camberwell College of Arts
Instagram: @unzeroed
Website: titashsen.com

us we are not able to fully embody. The laser-cut perspex, it's shadow hold the projection within a defined physical boundary in the way our bodies contain our selves. The movements of the creatures inside the projection might suggest the roles they play in shaping me, and also the feelings each identity invokes for me. The projection through the clear perspex might suggest our movement in time with our multi-layered selves – and the shadow is that ethereal thing that connects all the different people we are, temporally.

I did experimental workshops that helped to develop my ideas. Thereafter, during my time in Venice, I interacted with a variety of artists and their works. I also had a number of deeply meaningful conversations that contributed directly to the solidification of my work. Eventually, in November 2022, I was able to show *There are so many people here I don't know how we'll ever get along* at the Dilston Gallery in London.

Apart from this specific project, there were several other ideas I was able to develop as a result of my experiences in Venice. I look forward to making these works and developing them further. Personally, the opportunity to experience Venice almost like a local is one I will cherish. I'm sure there is lots I have taken away that will fuel my practice in the years to come.

Titash Sen, *There are so many people here I don't know how we'll ever get along* installed at Dilston Gallery, London, 2022. Photo: Titash Sen



THOMAS STAINER

Sacred Space

My project is the exploration of sacred space, and its ability to transcend identity. I have spent my time in Venice visiting all the different art installations at the Biennale, many churches, and some unique collections of housed art. All of which use different

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methods and approaches to hold space for the sacred. With these notes I intend to create my own installation of sacred space focused around cave art and its cross cultural primordial origin. The goal being to create an experience of liminality where the participants are not constrained by any notion of identity or border.

ZOË VICTORIA GIBSON

Ulster University: Belfast School of Architecture
 Email: zoe.gibson4@btinternet.com
 Instagram: @zv.arch
 Telephone: +44 7880 234860

The Cartography of Drawing: In a Sea of Archipelagos
 Archipelago – An extensive group of Islands located in a sea or stretch of water

Venice is comprised of over 120 archipelagos, each with its own identity. Starting in the summer of 2022, I began to create an Dossier dell'Archipelago by hand drawing each island to create an awareness of each Isola; it's architecture, it's landscape, it's ecologies and its communities.

My drawings by nature are abstract and unique, encouraging the viewer to engage with each illustration at an intimate level, and also from a distance to view the drawings as one combined art piece. The project creates user awareness of islands and their ecology, realising that humans are a part of a much bigger biodiversity than we tend to believe or admit to believing.

Isole Veneziane

This Venetian Experience was inspired and heavily influenced by my recent completion of my Master of Architecture. My Final Year Thesis explored Rathlin Island; the most Northerly Archipelago of Ireland, situated on the North Coast. The nature of the thesis saw the archipelago explored through drawing, communicating with the viewer, and the unique identities of the Isola Irlandese. The Thesis was awarded the highest architectural, postgraduate award in Northern Ireland; The Royal Society of Ulster Architects Silver Medal, and it was

highly commended for the same award with the Royal Institute of Irish Architects across Ireland, due to the complexity of the hand-drawings as a communication tool, exploring the artists own cartographies.

Finito

Upon returning to University as a PhD Student in Architecture, one of my roles is to partake in studio teaching within the Belfast School of Architecture. Through my architectural education, we have always been encouraged to draw and express our creativity through artistic mediums. I have been able to compile a Dossier dell'Archipelago to translate my studies, my methods of drawing and my Venetian experience to students currently enrolled in the course. The project has been well received throughout the school, affirming the link of creativity that we have with the School of Art and the School of Architecture, tying the two disciplines together in an innovative manner. Drawing is a part of my everyday life. Investigating islands and landscapes through artistic mediums and being able to display these, has encouraged me to further my research into the Isole Irlandese, and seek ways to display this to a wider audience. So often in today's fast paced lifestyle, we forget to pause and appreciate the world around us that we are situated within. When one takes the time to visually explore these landscapes, we realise the beauty behind the identity of a place.



TOLU OSHODI

Website: www.toluoshodi.com
 Instagram: @lupreme

I am a Nigerian-British visual artist with a multidisciplinary practice combined of dance, photography and film. Special interests in my movement practice are based around navigating the Black femme experience of sexual politics. I'm particularly driven to create emotive work that is rooted in our shared human experience, exploring notions of self, relationships and community. I was an Alumni of Open School East during the time of my 2022 Fellowship.

Remnants is a continuing body of work exploring the cyclical nature of cell regeneration occurring over a seven-year time span. The work is an inquiry into how this process relates to the human body and the intimate physical encounters we have in our lifetime. Directed and Choreographed by Tolu, *Remnants* takes the viewer on a visual journey through the landscape of the body. It uses movement, colour and sound to depict two bodies navigating the delicate exchange of power dynamics inherent in intimate relationships.

While in Venice I led two socially engaged dance workshops in the British Council Basement. They focused on using movement as a guide for non verbal communication between people who may not usually consider their bodies as a means for expression. Using a range of paired exercises, participants were encouraged to intuitively explore the space and their bodies in relation to each other.

As a result, on both occasions participants repeated a similar gesture between themselves, posing the question of a “gestural language” that may exist within varying intimate relationships. In continuing the research I am intrigued to uncover the commonalities we share in different relationships and how these shared gestures can contribute to a choreographic language. I will be using my findings from these workshops to inform the choreographic development of the next iteration of *Remnants*.





“I am hoping that the experience in general will inspire Fellows to pursue careers in the arts and certainly cement the value of cultural exchange through creative expression. Many of the Fellows I meet tell me that the experience has been life transforming and offers a place to work, reflect and make long lasting friendships and links which will help in the immediate and long term future.”

Skinder Hundal
Director Arts at British Council

Sonia Boyce: *Feeling Her Way* was commissioned by the British Council for the British Pavilion at the 59th International Art Exhibition—La Biennale di Venezia 23 April to 27 November 022.

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