



Creative
Lancashire

BRITISH TEXTILE BIENNIAL

CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY
AUTUMN 2019





COVER IMAGE: GROUND – THREAD BEARING WITNESS, ALICE KETTLE

Credits: Alice Kettle with contributions from Pipka/Lesvos Solidarity; Ahmed Ali, Somaya Hossaini; Yakob & many other residents at Calais refugee camp working with Suzanne Partridge; Nahomie Bokasa, Sahira Khan and Ai Ling with Linda Leroy at the Helen Bamber Foundation; Nisrin Albyrouty, Khouloud Alkurd, Heba Almuni. Heidi Ambruster, Marwa Ammar, Amal Ayoubi, Stella Charman, Susan Colverson, Jenny Cuffw, Lama Hamami, Miriam Jones, Asmaa Kamar Aldin, Ruth le Mesurier, Vanessa Rolf, Samar Sobeih, Chaymae Yousf and many children from English Chat Winchester; Farhia Ahmed Ali, Nawad Hersi Duale, Amran Mohamud Ismail with Refugee Action working with artists Jenny Eden and Richard Harris; Shahireh Sharif with Travelling Heritage Group; Julie Firman, Victoria Hartley, Louise Jung, Susan Kamara, Saamiullah Khan.

Cotton, rayon and metallic thread, life jacket material on printed canvas. 8m x 3m, 2018
Courtesy the artist and Candida Stevens Gallery. Photo: Michael Pollard

BRITISH TEXTILE BIENNIAL

CUT FROM A DIFFERENT CLOTH

Conversations[©]
in Creativity



The identity of Pennine Lancashire is crafted by its relationship to its textiles heritage.

The Fabrications programme of 2017 curated by Super Slow Way, offered an artistic response to this industrial legacy. For Super Slow Way, who've been developing artistic interventions woven into the social fabric of the area since 2014, Fabrications represented an opportunity to work with local and global collaborators on an ambitious range of projects. Even prior to the success of Fabrications it was key to Super Slow Way's vision to establish a recurring biennial and a means of developing a social legacy for the future.

"I don't think of heritage as history so much as what is in people's DNA. The response to Fabrications was so immediate and enthusiastic... The canal has been a really useful metaphor as well as a material resource, and so have textiles. There's aesthetic qualities and possibilities in terms of evolution of modern methods of fabrication, scientific possibilities and digital outputs."
Laurie Peake, Director Super Slow Way

The vision is realised in the first **British Textile Biennal** (3 Oct – 3 Nov). Over the following pages you can gain an insight into the work and careers of some of the individuals connected to the exhibits, events, performances, installations and workshops, and whose work is woven into the social fabric of the area.

One of those collaborators is **Jamie Holman** who is also our guest editor for this publication. Jamie presents **Transform and escape the Dogs** (Church St, Blackburn), a series of new works celebrating a history of radical gatherings where the working class youth resisted, rejected, and finally reclaimed the spaces that cotton made and then abandoned. In his extended piece, **Politics of Collaboration** (page 10), Jamie gives an insight into his process and the individuals he works with for his commission and practice as an artist.

The festival showcases textile inspired work conceived locally as well as commissions by national and international artists including **Alice Kettle's Thread Bearing Witness** (Gawthorpe Hall), a series of large-scale embroideries that represents a moving reflection on cultural heritage, refugee displacement and movement. Alice also features on our front cover, and in a conversation with artist and researcher **Gemma Potter** at Padham Town Hall (Oct 17).

Politics feature prominently on other highlights from our talks programme. Leading fashion historian and broadcaster, **Amber Butchart**, leads a panel discussion exploring fashion and textiles as an expression of contemporary activism at Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery (30 Oct).

On the day that Britain could exit the European Community, we return to the museum for an extended roundtable with Business of Fashion, Textiles and Technology (BFTT), to share and discuss initial findings to the recent nationwide industry consultation to help shape the future sustainable development of fashion and textiles in the UK. Contributors include **Lipi Bugum** (Research Fellow, London College of Fashion, UAL), and representatives from all aspects of the textiles ecosystem including leading industrialists, sector bodies and academics (31 Oct).

Super Slow Way is one of two organisations in Lancashire supported by Arts Council's Creative People & Places programme. The other is **LeftCoast** who deliver across the Fylde Coast. We profile LeftCoast's latest project, **Painting The Town**. Developed out of an artist commission delivered by artist, **Laura Sheavaun Green**, the project aims to revitalise Blackpool and reinvigorate its community by Painting The Town, one room, one home and one business at time... starting with Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

By the end of the 19th century the area, stretching along the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, produced 85% of the world's cotton goods. It brought workers to the region to fuel the mill industries, building a creative, industrious and diverse population that shapes the area today. Possibly that's why so many of the artists and makers featured in this publication constantly strive to innovate through exploring new ways to tell stories and experiment with material. They are cut from a different cloth. Whether it's through collaboration with international artists relating to textile production and related craft, when viewed through an artist's creative lens there is the potential for the new and unexpected.

"It's what is in the DNA".

Ed Matthews-Gentle FRS
Creative Lancashire

A FESTIVAL CELEBRATING THE POWER OF TEXTILES THROUGH ART, DESIGN & PERFORMANCE

LAURIE PEAKE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The politics of cloth will be explored by artists, designers and makers in exhibitions, performances and events in the first British Textile Biennial this autumn.

The inaugural Biennial programme highlights the nation's creation, innovation and expression in textiles against the backdrop of the impressive infrastructure of the cotton industry in Pennine Lancashire. With its epic mills, grandiose civic architecture along the country's longest waterway, the Leeds & Liverpool canal, this landscape tells the story of textiles. This Biennial festival celebrates that story while showcasing its contemporary expression with the community that has textiles in its DNA.

The British Textile Biennial is sited in some of the magnificent and often hidden gems of that heritage including Blackburn Cotton Exchange, Brierfield Mill in Pendle, Mr. Gatty's Experiment Shed in Accrington and the outstanding textile collection at Gawthorpe Hall in Burnley, all following the great waterway that originally supported it, the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.

We have invited artists, designers and makers to look at how cloth, that most fundamental of human fabrications, is used as a vehicle for cultural expression and identity while throwing a spotlight on the nation's creation, innovation and expression in textiles against the backdrop of the landscape tells that story.

Banners have long been used as vehicles for personal and collective expression, from traditional 19th century processional banners to contemporary D.I.Y. messages of protest. Banner Culture is a mass staging of these iconic cloths in the epic spaces of Northlight, the former Brierfield Mill, in Pendle brought together by a national call-out to heritage collections and campaigning groups across the UK in partnership with Mid Pennine Arts and Pendle Radicals.



Queen Street Mill in Burnley, made famous as a location for period films, provides the setting for Heirloom, a display of shirts embroidered by local men, telling personal stories of textiles and migration, alongside works by Daksha Patel, Anna Ray and Raisa Kabir developed from their Art in Manufacturing residencies in factories across the area. The mill will also provide the backdrop for a film by Dhaka artist, Reetu Sattar, who has been working with the local Bangladeshi community.

Showing in the magnificent barn at Gawthorpe Hall, Burnley, home of the famous textile collection, Alice Kettle's Thread Bearing Witness is a major series of large-scale embroideries that represents a moving reflection on cultural heritage, refugee displacement and movement.

Artist Claire Wellesley Smith has been working for two years with local residents exploring Frederick Gatty's historic experimental dye house at Elmfield Hall, Accrington and the innovations in dye techniques he pioneered, such as the Khaki dyes used in manufacturing uniforms for the troops during WW1. In the bicentenary year of Gatty's birth, this new work reimagines the abandoned dye house as it might have been when he was alive.

IMAGES: T-SHIRT: CULT | CULTURE | SUBVERSION EXHIBIT, BANNER BY JAMIE HOLMAN, KATAB: QUILTING STORIES, ANNA RAY: AIM INSTALLATION.



In the crypt of Blackburn Cathedral, T-Shirt: Cult | Culture | Subversion charts the history, culture and subversion of the most affordable and popular item of clothing on the planet which, since its earliest incarnation at the start of the 20th century, has served as a means to broadcast social, musical and political passions.

Across the way, in Blackburn's magnificent Cotton Exchange, the adidas SPEZIAL exhibition celebrates the training shoe and its legacy as an important marker of when the young working classes found cultural expression in one item of clothing. The 80s in Blackburn saw the emergence of the cult of the adidas trainer on the football terraces, the dancefloors and abandoned mills and warehouses of the town.

Finally, BTB artist-in-residence, Jamie Holman's new work gives us a far-reaching insight into the cultural products of Blackburn's working classes starting with workers' banners through to the creative outpouring in the warehouse raves of the 1980s when the grandchildren of cotton mill workers transformed former workplaces into spaces of joy and liberation.

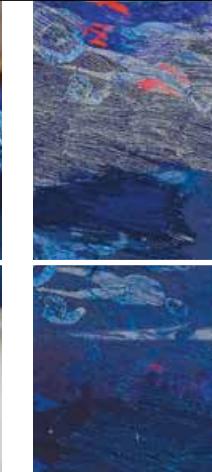
The British Textile Biennial strikes a balance between high art, community conversation, cultural regeneration and place-making in ways that are exciting and promising for the future.

Laurie Peake is Artistic Director of British Textile Biennial and Super Slow Way, the ambitious programme in Pennine Lancashire that aims to transform lives and communities through art.



THREAD BEARING WITNESS

ALICE KETTLE, ARTIST



Alice Kettle is a contemporary textile/fibre artist based in the UK and has established an internationally regarded unique area of practice. Her stitched works, many the size of huge figurative tapestries, exploit the textures and effects made possible through the harnessing of a mechanical process to intuitive, conceptual and creative ends. Her works use thread as a drawing tool and as a means to narrate contemporary events, often in large scale participatory collaborative projects. Alice is Professor in Textile Arts at Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University. She is also Visiting Professor at the University of Winchester and Chair of the Embroiderers Guild.

Her work is represented in various public collections including the Crafts Council London, the Whitworth in Manchester, Museo Internazionale delle Arti Applicate Oggi, Turin, Italy, Museum of Decorative Art and Design, Riga, Latvia. Commissions include the National Library of Australia, The Scottish High Court in Edinburgh, Gloucester and Winchester Cathedrals, Winchester Discovery Centre, Lloyd's Register and the School of Music & Drama at Manchester University. She has co authored Hand Stitch Perspectives, Machine Stitch Perspectives, Collaboration through Craft, The Erotic Cloth with Bloomsbury and Making Stories Ibook with Electricimprint.

alicekettle.co.uk
threadbearingwitness.com

SEA – THREAD BEARING WITNESS, ALICE KETTLE

Cotton, rayon and metallic thread on printed canvas.
8m x 3m, 2017. Courtesy the artist and Candida Stevens Gallery.
Photo: Michael Pollard



"I LOVE THE POTENTIAL OF THREAD, THAT YOU CAN DO ANYTHING WITH IT, THAT IT IS A BEGINNING, IT CAN WRAP, TIE, DRAW, TWIST. IT IS USEFUL AND IT IS MAGICAL."

What was your first memory of creativity?

My mum was always making, we had fabrics and paints in every cupboard and drawer. She always had some project about painting the house bright colours or making amazing clothes. She also took us to endless exhibitions which we complained about at the time but now I am so grateful. I remember climbing on Henry Moore sculptures and marvelling at the story of the stained glass that had been broken in the Reformation in Winchester Cathedral and then just replaced as broken pieces in a random collage.

"THOSE AROUND ME INSPIRE COURAGE, SELF-BELIEF, RISK-TAKING AND INDIVIDUALISM... THEY ARE INCREDIBLE, ACCOMPLISHED AND HONOURABLE PEOPLE."

What was your creative journey to get to where you are?

I did a fine art degree in painting. It was at the end of the era of Abstract expressionism. I was in the colour studio and we were encouraged to make vast canvases with gestural brush strokes. I had a crisis while I was there and stepped out for a bit and started to do figurative works. I started to think I needed to find my own content. I went to Goldsmiths in London and did postgraduate Textile Art. I just started to stitch as I had been painting, I stitched all the stories in my head that my father had told me.

What impact if any have big name clients or high profile commissions had on your career?

I have done amazing commissions. I did a huge one 16 x 3m for the Winchester Discovery centre and another recently for Lloyds Register, the shipping company. Both times I made them in public, which meant the people came and watched and discussed the making. As it takes me so long this evolved over months. In both cases I met incredible people and learnt about ship engineering and water sustainability.

How do you establish your own style over a period of time and still stay relevant?

That is a hard question. I think I can only do what I do. Stitch carries its own voice and in recent work opening it to other contributions and images that become the content of the work, has shown how material absorbs and presents its own style

and message that other voices can enter. My work is all about story-telling, so the material becomes part of the narration. Stories are always powerful when they are authentic. Working with refugees and asylum seekers has brought rich and varied voices into the work. It is important that it represents us all.

Does your work/process develop thematically, or is it more distinctive and random?

I have ideas and stories in my head, which become realised through the making, they are rarely planned but evolve over a long period of time. Stitch allows you to take apart and reconfigure, to cut and rejoin. It is a way that you can explore the stories through the actual making.

What or who has been the biggest influence on your work and why?

My teachers and my colleagues and those I meet. I have just come back from Pakistan and met women with skill, who sew much better than me. Some had never left the villages they live in before but we spoke through stitching.

Those around me inspire courage, self-belief, risk-taking and individualism. It is hard to work for months on one piece and sustain faith in yourself. But then you meet someone extraordinary, and you realise that you are like one thread amongst many that can interconnect and become more. I love young people. I am so lucky to meet amazing students and young people. I am blown away and humbled by the refugees I have met. They are incredible, accomplished and honourable people.

What inspires you or provokes the motivation towards creativity within?

Life itself. I like the idea you can make more, make things better, make things change, make things.

What is it you love most about what you do?

I love the potential of thread, that you can do anything with it, that it is a beginning, it can wrap, tie, draw, twist. It is useful and it is magical.

ALICE KETTLE WILL BE A FEATURED GUEST IN A CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY TALK WITH HOST GEMMA POTTER (ARTIST & ACADEMIC AT MMU), TAKING PLACE AT 5PM ON THURSDAY 17TH OCTOBER AT PADIHAM TOWN HALL. THE THREAD BEARING WITNESS EXHIBIT RUNS AT GAWTHORPE HALL, BURNLEY FROM 3RD OCTOBER TO 3RD NOVEMBER.



THE POLITICS OF COLLABORATION

JAMIE HOLMAN, ARTIST & CURATOR



Jamie Holman is an artist, writer and lecturer who achieved critical acclaim after exhibiting in Bloomberg New Contemporaries 1996 at Tate Gallery Liverpool and Camden Arts Centre London. In January 2017, Jamie became a commissioned artist for the ground-breaking 'Art In Manufacturing' project, as part of the first ever National Festival of Making. He is now a non-executive director of The National Festival of Making, a director of PRISM Contemporary gallery and studios in Blackburn, and is currently Artist in Residence for The British Textiles Biennial.

The working title for my residency on The British Textile Biennial is the 'Politics of Cloth' but, from the very first output at Lancashire Encounter Festival last September, and in performances at The Harris Museum over the same weekend, the work I've made has been collaborative, and often fabricated outside of my own studio. The commission has been as much about the politics of collaboration, as it has been the politics of cloth.

This seems fitting as the industrial revolution saw the mills and factories surrounded by forges, workshops and crafts people of all types supporting the production of textiles in Lancashire. What I became interested in, were the unexpected outcomes of this brutal industry. The poets, painters, film makers inspired by their surroundings and later the dis-enfranchised dancers who would re-imagine these spaces after cotton collapsed.

This involved months of research and testing, before developing into a complex and multi-faceted chronology of making that immediately embraced other makers, artists, designers, curators, producers and fabricators.

As a consequence, my studio is rarely just me working in isolation. I work closely with Steve Baldwin who manages the studios and gallery at Prism In Blackburn, and with Alex Zawadzki who produces the projects I deliver. Together, we work as a team to manage the detail, and creative solutions that are needed to realise large works with complex narratives with full engagement strategies. We often co-produce work together, making sure that the ideas I have are finished to the highest possible standard. This core team help me make my work happen, and are often involved from start to finish.

I also regularly work with the same freelance team - Tim Bridges who produces design solutions for me, Lee Smillie who photographs work for me, Bill Kelly making ceramics, Aaron Dunleavy who makes films and Lydia McCaig and Emma Colbert who assist day to day in the studio. There are others of course, and all of these people have their own practices, they produce other projects, have exhibitions and collaborate with other artists and commissioners as well as with me.

This list is not exhaustive, when I've proposed a piece, and made the drawings or initial plans, I will seek out specialist crafts people, makers or fabricators to realise each piece; whether that's in steel, neon, concrete or even music and performance.

My work for The British Textile Biennial includes stained glass, hand painted silk trade union banners, a vinyl record, industrial sculpture, and a film. This is in addition to prints, drawings and photographs, all of which have been produced with the assistance of others, most of whom are featured in this publication in order to make visible their own practices, skills and profiles in the true spirit of collaboration, with the intention to credit their contributions to my work.

This process of making visible is critical to me. Aspects of collaboration can be challenging – Whilst my art is the only constant in all of my work, others contribute, some regularly, some as one off collaborations, when my practice crosses theirs.

Collaboration is a broad concept, I am sometimes asking for something specific to be made or designed; but rely on the expertise of that person to advise me in achieving my ideas to their best capacity. I had many telephone calls, and several studio visits with Emma and Edgar at Durham Banner Makers, and without Emma's guidance on silk stock, colour and even what the banners mean, then they wouldn't be the successful works that they are. Similarly, almost everything I have printed or made passes through Tim Bridges Design Studio, and is often delivered as a scribble on the back of a beer mat, but always comes back as the appropriate file format and ready for fabrication or print. Tim knows what I want and what I like, although I often receive an email from Tim, (and others) saying "you can't do that", we always find a solution together.

My job is to say, "why ?" or "let's try" – But ultimately I am paying for something to be made, and I take responsibility for it, albeit respecting the knowledge of their craft, and listening to their advice.

"POLITICS OF CLOTH IS THE WORKING TITLE FOR MY RESIDENCY. FREQUENTLY THE WORK I'VE MADE HAS BEEN COLLABORATIVE, AND OFTEN FABRICATED OUTSIDE OF MY OWN STUDIO. THE COMMISSION HAS BEEN AS MUCH ABOUT THE POLITICS OF COLLABORATION... AS A CONSEQUENCE, MY STUDIO IS RARELY JUST ME WORKING IN ISOLATION."

Ultimately, I know what I want to do, and the relationship is a 'creative transaction,' and one that can be straight forward. This was true of the work Lee Walsh has made with me for The British Textile Biennial. I wanted to make a recording/playback booth that referenced industrial materials and aesthetics. Lee works in Prism studios and makes incredible pieces of industrial furniture. I told Lee the idea, passed him the budget directly, and he designed and fabricated the booth element of the piece. A clean and simple collaboration.

This is the benefit of working across a community of practice in shared spaces. We can utilise each others skill sets, to realise ambitious works. Collaborations of this kind are a joy to work on, and are useful in raising the profile of all who contribute.

The other collaborative model I favour, is to invite artists to contribute to the work directly. This may be a long term collaboration, as it has been with Alan Outram and the music he has made with me and the performances we deliver together; or a temporary collision of aesthetics and ideas, as with Mark Aspin whose beautiful Hare's head I used as a key visual reference in one of the three banners. Whilst I orchestrate the work with absolute clarity on what I want, the proposition I am making, and the context in which the work functions, I am compelled to be transparent about their contribution as it often references their own practice directly. These works often lead to more collaboration, as with both Mark and Alan, who are now contributing and collaborating on a public performance that will close the Textile Biennial as artists in their own right, working together in the spaces where our interests and practices overlap. This model of working challenges some perceptions, or pre-conceived notions as to what an artist does or, indeed 'should' do when making work. It can cause people to question the authorship of works, from those who retain a traditional expectation of what art can be, particularly in the 'heroic' model where the artist is expected to have mastery of all the craft they engage with.

This would not only be impossible for me, as my work is so diverse, but is also in opposition to my art school training, which instilled in me the 'studio concept' used by many artists from renaissance studios through to Marcel Duchamp and British conceptual artists of the 60s and 70s. I can't learn every craft I need for each piece I make, but this way of working is not new and given the century that has passed since Duchamp's 'ready mades' - it seems strange to me that authorship could still be an issue.

Equally, I'm not suggesting that all artists should, or would, work in this way. Artists work in whatever ways that suit their own practice and there is no hierarchy as far as I'm concerned. The only question should be - is the work any good.

In truth, I locate all of my work as collage. I'm just pulling pieces together, trying to make new images, ideas and stories out of what I find around me. This might be acid house Banners, impulse recordings of empty mills, stained glass windows of ravers, public performances with hares and gunslingers, or transforming into a hare myself and time travelling through paintings.

It's all my work which I often need a team to make happen. Not the time travelling though or running as a hare in the night, that, I do alone.

jamieholman.com

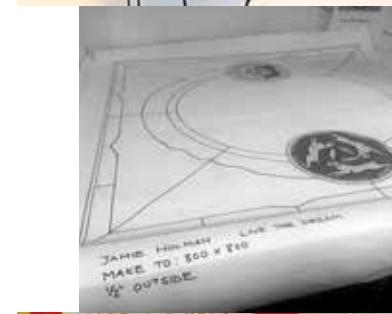
Credits: "Transform and Escape the Dogs"

Mark Aspin – Hare Head costume and Performance
Steven Baldwin – Studio management
Tim Bridges – Graphic Design
Durham Banner Makers – Banner Production
Joe Fossard – Impulse Recording
Lightworks – Stained Glass Fabrication
Alan Outram – Music Production and Performance
Lee Smillie – Photography
Mia Wilson – Voice Over
Alex Zawadzki – Creative Producer

JAMIE HOLMAN TAKES PART IN SEW WHAT?, A PANEL DISCUSSION, HOSTED BY AMBER BUTCHART, EXPLORING FASHION & TEXTILES AS AN EXPRESSION OF ACTIVISM, TAKING PLACE AT 6PM ON WEDNESDAY 30TH OCTOBER AT BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY.
TRANSFORM AND ESCAPE THE DOGS RUNS FROM 3 OCTOBER TO 3 NOVEMBER (CHURCH STREET, BLACKBURN).

IMAGE CREDITS

Jamie Holman 'Procession' By Lisa O'Loughlin, 'Sunday Morning' Stained Glass Window, detail and drawing. Banner Parade video shoot and Joe Fossard in the Mill.



ALAN OUTRAM

ELECTRONIC MUSIC ARTIST



I am an electronic music artist with a strong DIY ethic which I have carried with me over the last 10 years.

Starting with a vintage analogue Roland SH09 picked up cheap somewhere back in 2006 and with an assortment of instruments borrowed from a primary school such as glockenspiels, recorders, melodica and bells I made an album in a tiny cottage in South East london.

Under the name Woodcraft Folk the album harking back to my upbringing in Lancashire was titled Trough Of Bowland. Released on The Earworm label, the album picked up plays on Radio 3 and Radio 6, with shows following at Green Man festival and the Big Chill.

I began to invent new groups for my recordings with invented band members, omitting my own name completely, but choosing names including Karen Novotny X (late 70s Post punk experimental synth group from east London), Groupuscule (1970's French political duo making perfect pop), Volume Group (electronic primary school PE soundtracks), XYZips (Early 80s Sheffield squatters), Diane Cools and the Distortion (NY Raw synth) the list goes on or maybe doesn't even exist. Always with the support of Dom Martin at the wonderful Polytechnic Youth label.

Since late 2018 I have been collaborating with Jamie Hollman on his Politics of Cloth project and the upcoming Textile Biennale.

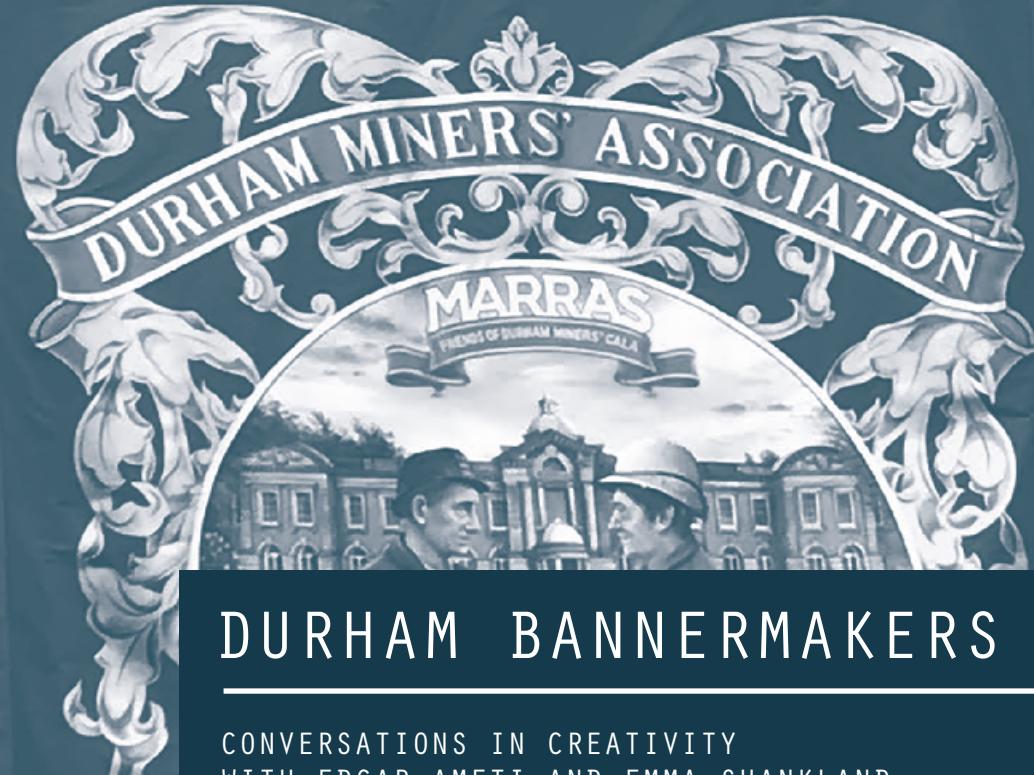
This has given me the opportunity to consider my complete ignorance of acid house music.

I was always aware of acid house but never indulged (ha) myself. I was excited at the prospect of making my own version of acid house. I deliberately avoided listening back to anything but just set about creating what I imagined. I wanted to create something darker and with echo.

Using a Roland 808 and Roland 101 together with a Korg MS20 (acid sacrifice!) and space echo. Collaborating with Mia Wilson and using the words Of Jamie Hollman we have created a ghostly acid soundtrack to compliment the work in the Textile Biennale.

I've long been a fan of the Kindred of the Kibbo Kift. A camping, hiking and handicraft group founded in the 1920's. I wanted to take some of those principals into this project particularly the costumes they wore. Together with artist Andrea Joynson I have been adding stitched designs to a "folk" cloak and headgear which I wear for any performances within this project.

instagram.com/baxterfront



DURHAM BANNERMAKERS

CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY
WITH EDGAR AMETI AND EMMA SHANKLAND



After more than a decade of banner painting with groups and communities, arts worker and activist Lotte Shankland was joined by husband Hugh in the 1990's to produce their first of many banners for the Durham Coalfield's. The singular art form is continued and progressed by daughter Emma and son-in-law Edgar who took over the family business in 2012.

Training from a young age at Albania's finest art schools including The Liceu Artistic, Jordan Misja and The university of Fine Arts in Tirana, Edgar Ameti moved to Canada in the 1990's and eventually continued his studies alongside Emma at the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto. Before studying at OCAD Emma apprenticed as a costume builder at the Stratford Festival in Ontario gaining a rich knowledge and increased love of fabrics and their functions which she now applies to both the banners and her own work as a textile artist. On returning to the UK in 2010 she received a Masters in Art Museum and Gallery Education from Newcastle University.



Alongside exploring the rich possibilities that the tradition of banner painting offers communities both artists continue to create and exhibit independently in Canada and Europe.

To be a banner artist you need to understand the materials, the history and the soul that lives in the language of the art form. A banner is at its finest when it flies free, living on the wind and spreading messages of hope and unity. They belong to all who march alongside them and all who remember the giants, family members and friends who marched with the banners that came before.

durhambannermakers.co.uk



EMMA SHANKLAND

COMMUNITY ARTIST

Continuing to use textiles as storytellers Shankland is currently enjoying the unexpected revelations to be found in the art of hand embroidery. By equal measures the restrictive and enabling nature of hand embroidery forces the narrative to appear cautiously. This slow reveal has turned out to be the ideal gateway to encourage a lack of inhibition and facilitate a freedom of expression not previously realised.

What was your first memory of creativity?

Patterns on patterns, doodles in margins, bullrushes and grasses. Psychedelic paper fashions, alphabetised, labeled and lost. CND placards, dollhouse furnishings, and to begin there's music. The ecstasy and flight of singing. Explosive notes and rambling arias so clear and loud that nothing outside of that moment mattered. I'm still trying to recapture the feeling.

What was your creative journey to get to where you are?

An amalgamation of unexpected opportunities, experiences and exploration. Growing up in a creative family meant exposure at an extremely early age to great masters and local talent alike. Travelling for several years effected the way I see, heightened colours, and gave me narratives whose threads continue to weave my work. Attending art school late in life gave me the ability to produce unimpeded by full time work constraints and continuous financial stress. Leaving art school reversed much of the impact as daily obligations and the long awaited arrival of my daughter brought reality to the forefront again. It's only recently that I'm allowing myself the freedom to see the other reality again.

How do you establish your own style over a period of time and still stay relevant?

I've never been effected by the cult of the original. Relevance and uniqueness lies in how we see things and no two interpretations or view points are 100% identical.

Correspondingly I avoid making work with a single interpretation preferring the viewer to expand the narratives according to their own experiences. Although I've always worked with tactile materials my usage and manipulation of them changes according to circumstance. As a late bloomer I think it's only now that I'm beginning to see my true identity as an artist arrive.

Does your work/process develop thematically, or is it more distinctive and random?

A combination of all. Hand embroidery is allowing intuition and unconscious themes to develop at random and forcing me to realise the outcome progressively. It has a lot in common with storytelling, allowing the full picture to emerge phrase by phrase. This is in direct contrast to my employment as a banner painter where the work follows very particular structures and confines.

What/who has been the biggest influence on your work?

Like all women with children I can't deny the enormous impact my daughter's had on my process. A fine thread hangs between her transformative ability to act as a time stealer, fear monger and creator of breathtaking awakenings.

I've always been effected by politics, music and words, but they've touched my visual output in subtle ways. Other influences would be dramatic landscapes and the challenges of living and working overseas away from familiarities and family.

What inspires you or provokes the motivation towards creativity within?

A long time ago I realised I'd never be able to make anything as rich and inspiring as what naturally exists. This has benefitted me in that I'm not overly precious about what I make and understand it's not necessarily the outcome but the process of creativity that excites me most.

What is it you love most about what you do?

Having the ability to create something that's never existed before is an exceptional gift. Ultimately it's the grand tour of escapism. Colours are brighter and the focus is on individual sounds rather than a cacophony of attention seeking murmurs. These moments are fleeting and rare and priceless.

emmashankland.co.uk



EDGAR AMETI

ARTIST

Principle to Ameti's work is the precarious balance between existence and erasure in the ongoing experiences of day-to-day life. His often large-scale formations allow us to experience absence and revelation hand in hand, intensifying our encounter with the present while opening new ways of engaging with the past. The media used reflect a tension between the ordinary and extraordinary, allowing for the manipulation of the common functionality of everyday materials to extraordinary effect.

What was your first memory of creativity?

Sitting on the large window sill of the family living room drawing on the white washed walls with a pencil. The outcome wasn't well received or appreciated.

What was your creative journey to get to where you are?

The creative journey's been long and frequently paused due to displacement, misplacement and economic instability.

What impact have big name clients had on your career?

The experience has been overpowering and a huge boost to my confidence.

How do you establish your own style over a period of time and still stay relevant?

You don't choose your style, it comes over a period of time through exploration and is ever changing.

Does your work/process develop thematically, or is it more distinctive and random?

It's a cocktail of all three and more.

What/who has been the biggest influence on your work?

My childhood memories, surrounding landscapes.

What inspires you or provokes the motivation towards creativity within?

Textures, happenings, stains, new findings.

Which artists/designers do you admire or inspire you the most?

Childrens' and natures' marks.

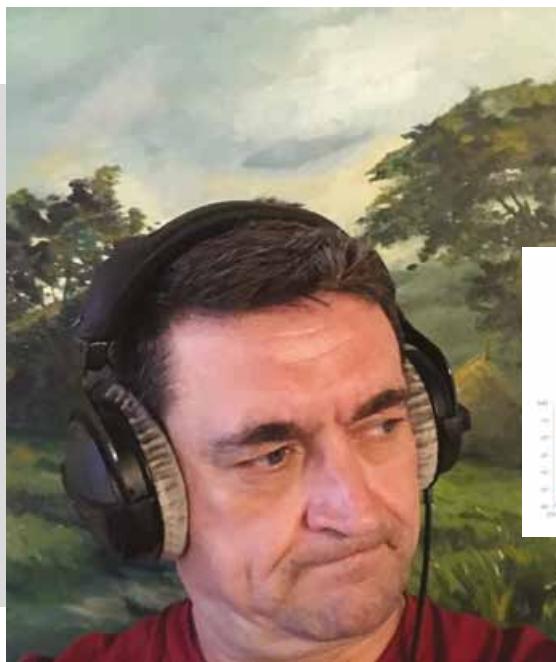
What is it you love most about what you do?

Exploring and sometimes coming across something that I've never seen before.

durhambannermakers.co.uk

JOE FOSSARD

SOUND ENGINEER



Joe Fossard has been a Sound engineer since 1986. He installed the sound systems for the majority of the Blackburn raves in 1989/90.

He has been involved in acoustic design and building of recording studios since the mid 80s. He has a large catalogue of studio recordings, live recordings and remixes which include many international signed artists. His interest in Sonic Art began while studying a BA (hons) at UCLan 2014. His currently project is recording and cataloguing the sonic space of buildings significant to the heritage of Blackburn, with the plan of being able to reproduce the space sonically at any location via software.

This installation involves capturing the sound of rooms and reproducing them in a sonic art form accompanied by a graphical representation gathered from technical data gathered, in this case, from warehouses used for the Blackburn raves 30 years ago. This particular piece recreates the sound of Unit 7 Haslingden from impulses readings taken from the warehouse.

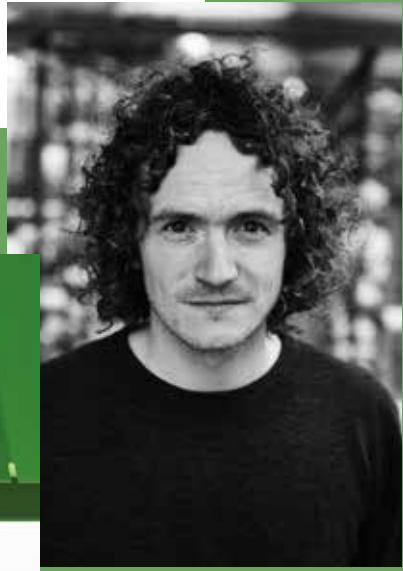
Jamie Holman invited me to collaborate on a film where my impulse trigger would allow him to insert visual memories in his film using video footage, his own soundtrack and his 'hare' motif. Jamie will also play back a piece of audio art he has made, through the unit 7 impulse reading in order to locate his work in the memory of the physical space.

discogs.com/artist/275647-Joe-Fossard



LEE WALSH

ARTIST & DESIGNER



I was thirteen when britpop was about to explode; all I wanted was to be in a band. As far as I was concerned musicians went to art school, which infuriated some of my teachers; if you were from Blackburn and you did well at school then you just might be able to escape the dogs, and the creative arts apparently wasn't the way to do that.

I was convinced I'd be a painter, but I actually gravitated towards sculpture. By the time I finished at Blackburn College I'd started to explore a crossover of art and furniture - "Practical Sculpture".

Musical aspirations became a brief reality just as I was about to leave Blackburn to study Design; our band "The 'Burn", signed to Virgin Subsidiary Hut Recordings, home to The Verve and The Smashing Pumpkins, and we were invited to support Paul Weller, Ian Brown, Oasis and The Rolling Stones.

In 2003 EMI bought Virgin and dropped any acts that weren't profitable and when we eventually disbanded and I returned to art education at Manchester School of Art. Their design course had a distinct Bauhaus feel,

covering everything from Furniture to Glass Blowing and Silversmithing.

After uni I was lost without a brief, until I recognised a subconscious theme in my work; each piece was defined by how it was made - Form Follows Construction. I also discovered that if I took visual inspiration from sculpture, instead of design, then furniture could go beyond trend and assert a sculptural presence.

Sculpture Seven is an endless series; a family of sculptural objects with a signature modern industrial visual aesthetic, and my collaboration with Jamie Holman for the National Textiles Biennial is no exception. Inspired by an early audio sketch of Jamie's "I was a hare, and as a hare I ran" recording; "North Light" is a structure which directly references factory warehouse architecture in materials and form, and will be used as a recording booth to create a historic archive during the event. It's a one-off piece, but unmistakably part of the *Sculpture Seven* family.

sculptureseven.com



LEE SMILLIE

PHOTOGRAPHER

Smillie is a Glasgow born artist based in the northwest of England, a recent graduate from BA (hons) Fine Art at Blackburn College.

His practice is a mix of photography, poetry and performance; using his self as the canvas he combines these elements, to express how he views the world around him. (PLACE) is a strong factor within his work, questioning where do we belong? and why? Not a local to Blackburn but Smillie feels he has always lived there, as the community opened his eyes to a new home. This has made the meaning of (PLACE), the environment we live in so important within his work. This may manifest as a photograph, poem or performance; there will always have a strong connection with place. Covered from head to toe in tattoos, with a thick Glaswegian accent; Smillie himself could be argued as a constant performance Artist, adding an extra talking layer to conversations regarding his work.

"My recent body of work is based around Blackburn in the North West of England, I've always focused my work on Easterhouse in Glasgow where I grew up, till this past year, focusing on the past. 'Never looking at the Now' this work focuses on the thoughts of Blackburn, not as the town but the people, asking questions like -



If I'm in another town, but with the community from Blackburn - are we not still in Blackburn?

When we eat the same food in another town, are we not still in Blackburn?

When we are having the same conversations in another town, are we not still in Blackburn?

When we are in another town, talking to other communities, are we not still in Blackburn?

The people of Blackburn are the town. I'm trying to capture the essence of the people through my poetry, revealing the places and experiences I've had since moving to the town, the poems will sit along side photographs of towns that have a connection to Blackburn through a person, someone from Blackburn.

My work with Jamie Holman allows me to develop my own work and contribute to commissions that introduce me to a broader community of practice."

instagram.com/leesmillie_1981



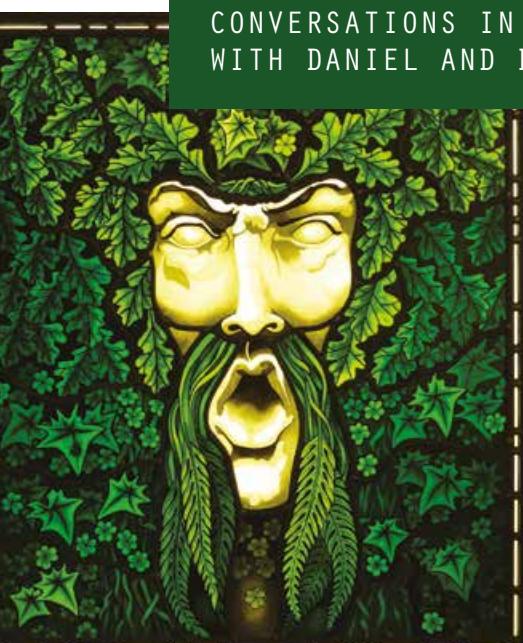
Founded in 1998 by brother and sister team of Daniel and Deborah Burke, Lightworks is a professional studio covering all aspects of the craft of stained glass including the repair, restoration, conservation and protection of historic glazing and the design, production and installation of new high-end bespoke commissions.

Based in Clitheroe, Lancashire, the company is made up of a small but highly dedicated team of artists, craftsmen and craftswomen with clients include private homeowners, churches, listed and historic property owners, public buildings, architects, designers, heritage contractors and English Heritage. Work is undertaken by the company nationally and internationally.

lightworksstainedglass.co.uk

LIGHTWORKS STAINED GLASS

CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY
WITH DANIEL AND DEBORAH BURKE



A question we are regularly asked by prospective clients is "Is it possible to do this?" To which the answer is invariably "Yes - anything's possible!"

Having already been brought on board to restore the James Sharples window at Blackburn Colleges Victoria Building (under the umbrella of the National Festival of Making) we were delighted to then be invited to collaborate on a piece of work with Jamie Holman celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Rave Culture. Not only was it a pleasure to work with Jamie to create a singularly unique and joyful piece of work, but also, as former students of the Art and Design School of Blackburn, a real honour to be able to contribute to an exhibition so proudly connected to the town.

What was your first memory of creativity?

As a young kid growing up in the 1970's, I remember spending hours each day filling endless A4 pads with drawings of fantastical creatures, vehicles and scenes; also of religiously playing my treasured set of Tupperware "drums" along to my (parents) Police and Led Zeppelin records. The twin passions of producing visual arts and making music remain with me to this day, all-be-it taking somewhat different forms to those of my early youth.

What was your creative journey to get to where you are?

Having completed higher education courses in Art & Design and Design (Photography) at Blackburn and Bradford, I was fortunate to be offered a position within an established stained glass studio based in Lancashire. My sister Deborah had already been employed by the same company as an apprentice on completion of her A-levels and it was during our time there that the seeds were sown for setting up our own studio together. This became a reality in 1998 when we founded Lightworks Stained Glass - so beginning the next stage of a creative journey together that is now in its 21st year.

How do you establish your own style over a period of time and still stay relevant?

Creative and practical challenges are set (by ourselves and our clients) almost daily in terms of both design and execution. In meeting and solving these challenges our style continues to develop as our skills, knowledge and experience expand. We view this development as a lifetime process.

In 2017, Deborah and I were invited to London having been shortlisted as finalists for the "Made in Britain Award" at the Heritage Crafts Association Awards. There we met practitioners of a huge range of heritage crafts and were struck by the vital need for the continuation of these skills and crafts. While embracing social media and all of today's modern tools at Lightworks, we are proud to be able to contribute to the continuation of a skill that, like all

heritage crafts, remains defiantly analogue in a digital age. Thankfully, this genuinely appears to carry a great deal of relevance to many.

Does your work/process develop thematically, or is it more distinctive and random?

Being very much client driven, our work can vary hugely depending on their specific requirements. Random would be a very apt way to describe it. From week to week we could be designing and producing bespoke commissions as varied as a three meter diameter dome for a restaurant in Edgware, a huge scheme for the staircase of a 1920's residence in the High Peak District, a set of panels for the chapel of a church in Minnesota or a collaborative exhibition piece celebrating the 30 year anniversary of rave culture.

What/Who has been the biggest influence on your work?

The biggest influence on my work would have to be my sister and fellow Lightworks co-founder/Director; Deborah. We bounce off each other creatively, practically and technically on a daily basis to solve the continual creative challenges posed by our client's requirements. Where one might be struggling to find a particular solution to a specific challenge, it is almost certain the other will find that solution.

Working closely with a sibling might not necessarily be for everyone but with the differing skill sets we bring, it works for us.

Which artists/designers do you admire or inspire you the most?

I've viewed and greatly admired many examples by historic practitioners widely acknowledged as masters of the craft of stained glass. These include work by Edward Burne-Jones, Christopher Whall, John Hayward and Henry Holiday; all of which cannot fail to inspire. Of modern artists I find myself drawn to the beautiful, free, painterly work of Grace Ayson as typified by her Damson Tree commission for Canterbury Cathedral. All of these pale to a degree for me however when compared to the genius of Dublin's Harry Clarke. I was fortunate to be granted the opportunity to view the collection of original Clarkes at St. Oswald & St. Edmund in Ashton-in-Makerfield and was left literally dumbfounded by their other-worldly brilliance.

What is it you love most about what you do?

Designing and producing stained glass can be an incredibly lengthy and time consuming process. Weeks, months and in some cases, years can be spent in the design and production of a single piece of work. The payoff for this investment comes in the form of the tremendous sense of achievement gained when the finished work is installed and you are able to stand before it as light pours through and literally brings the piece to life.

MARK ASPIN

ARTIST



I am an Illustrator, sculptor, painter, animated film maker and also make stop motion puppets, sets, models, and costumes.

I have always had an interest in making things and I have always had an interest in social history and illustration. From illustrations in children books, to the creatures that appear in folklore and legend, anthropomorphic characters have held fascination with young and old down the generations. The original idea behind 'Echo the Hare' was to create a wearable costume, inspired by the spirit familiars of the Pendle Witches, and the fable characters of my childhood, taking him from the pages of books and making him tangible.

The fables, always seemed to be set in a rural idyll. As a 'Townie' I wanted Echo to represent the working class and the disenfranchised and to be a Townie also! I wanted him to be a familiar for generation X.

To date, Echo has appeared at numerous festivals, events and protests, drawing attention to causes and putting big smiles on faces wherever he goes!

On meeting with Jamie Holman about his work for the British Textile Biennial, I learnt of his ideas and loved how he was tying together the unsung heroes and the epic events, of Pennine Lancashire's past . Several other elements to Jamie's current work have also always been very close to my heart as a Blackburner, so Echo and I, were delighted to be asked to be contributors to this beautiful, multi faceted, celebration of East Lancashire's industrial and cultural, past and present.

markaspin.com

STEVE BALDWIN

ARTIST & CURATOR



Steven Baldwin is an artist, curator, educator and one of the founders of Prism Contemporary Gallery.

Baldwin's work is located in the spaces that emerge between memory and direct observation. He works from images of the subject and introduces motifs, symbolic references and colours that are specific to the experiences of the subject; these often identify the most personal elements of memory translating them through layers of marks that are built up over a period of interrogation and translation using a variety of mediums. The ultimate ambition of the work is that each painting should function as a personal proposition.

To date Baldwin has sourced and curated over 30 exhibitions

Baldwin's role/contribution to Holman's projects manifest in many layers, from studio assisting, studio management, install and finish of works, and critique and problem-solving around the exhibition out puts.

instagram.com/steven_baldwin_



DK: You need no introduction Aziz but in order to set out the personal context for the origins of the project it's probably useful to remind people that you were born in Longsight, Manchester of Pakistani parents and that this, your latest project "EWP, The East West Proletariat" comes from sharing strong emotional responses to both the Peterloo massacre of 1819 in the town of your birth, and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre also known as the Amritsar massacre in 1919.

AI: Yes, and the latter is the birth place of my parents. After Partition it became off limits to them and myself or only accessible through special permission from the Indian government. Manchester Histories had commissioned me as part of the Peterloo commemorations of 2019 to create an artistic response. Originally they suggested the Mary Fylde archive at Archives + but I felt compelled to explore an angle that I was passionate about and that would be inclusive of the South Asian community in Greater Manchester & Lancashire. I wanted to draw interest in the Peterloo massacre by direct comparison to the Jallian Wala Bagh massacre. The more and more I looked at the parallels the more I could see that the people were one and the same, protesting for the same rights and struggling for the same causes. Freedom of speech, fighting unjust laws and protesting for better living conditions.

After the first Artivist session in Central Library Manchester and meeting all the other commissioned artists, the music and lyrics would have been enough but I also saw a strong visual element to the project even in at its inception. To under-promise and over-deliver is my policy. My initial feelings were to explore the words that resonated in both struggles through exploration of typography and I knew exactly who to go to for that!

DK: When we first spoke about the project I was struck by how complex and nuanced it is. Also how incendiary it could be with the searching questions it demands us to ask about class, race, power and protest especially in these tense times.

AI: I really wanted to create something that would make working class people realise that they were one and the same regardless of country. Although a hundred years apart, there was no difference in their plight. I see the segregation of communities in the United Kingdom today and think that these two events and so many others around the world, are such valuable lessons to us all. A symbol was necessary to rally our thoughts and minds worthy of the words that represent the struggle and show unity between what has become a divided world.

It all seemed to come together in a very profound way during that month to six weeks when I lost myself in the project. Made up such grand plans in my head and came back to you with an avalanche of ideas and source material. I felt like I was living simultaneously in 1819, 1919 and 2019. It was a new experience. My partner had mentioned the word 'proletariat' as I was looking for alternatives to 'working class' and that just opened the flood gates in my imagination.

The genesis of the music was suggesting new ideas that encouraged us to look more carefully at the visual work. I'd already put together an entourage of young Irish, dual heritage, Indian and Pakistani origins to perform at Manchester Central and in a very contemporary genre of music. It's inevitable that this will be recorded and will demand a video too but I wanted more for the content.

DK: By using multiple languages we are clearly stating that we want to have an equal and open conversation rather than talking at people we want a dialogue. I don't know how this will play out practically but it feels right to face up to language barriers rather than ignore them.

AI: We're genuinely reaching out in peace and hope. I wanted to demonstrate that we are serious about unity. You can't force somebody into a joint action. They'll turn their backs and walk away, especially if you're using the language of an oppression.

Music, the instruments and their rhythms know no boundaries and music doesn't require a passport. It was finding a natural freedom from conventions around east west and the avoidance of generalisation and stereotype in words like 'fusion'. It was a dialogue without prejudice, a multilingual musical synthesis

DK: We had the immediate need for a stage backdrop for your performance in Manchester which needed to feel as 'pop-up' as jumping on the back of a cart or gathering together in a spontaneous way. This was where the conversations really became about wanting as authentic an expression of a mid point between Peterloo and Amritsar as possible.

It must not be over designed nor should it speak through particular typographic or illustrative vernaculars. We wanted something evocative but neutral. Something that could speak of and for East and West, 1819 and 1919, Manchester and Amritsar. The strongest links we could find were fabric and colour. In one place we had the soft whites, pinks, greens and blues of the flags of protest and the working clothes of everyday people in stark contrast to the soldiers' uniforms in the other we had whites

AI: We agreed very early on that we must be as invisible as possible in order to pay due respect to those who fell and were injured or lost friends and family members at both massacres. We didn't want to play mind games with obvious motifs. There was a real risk of being vulgar by laying our storyline over the real events. We wanted to search out the things that bound the protestors together because they are the self same things that bind people together today.

DK: Armbands were much more common in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We liked how both sides of a protest would have their own armbands. They are still widely used. They can be as utilitarian as a symbol of recognition as evocative as a symbol of grief and as provocative as a political statement. They seemed to be the perfect device for a street march and spontaneous gathering.

AI: During the Peterloo commemoration performance I was amazed how many people were intrigued by the arm bands and how many actually wanted to buy or order one for themselves! The colours were so effective and representative of both tragic events. Most of all the banner and armbands were so dominant on the day, or was that me in my militant attire lol.

DK: We wanted to screen print the banners and armbands on to dyed cotton but had neither the time nor budget so we looked for alternatives. This opened a door on to a whole new stream of ideas around contemporary protest because we realised we were now looking at all of the same things protesters are doing today with armbands, bibs, scarves, and of course T shirts. Protesters are in many ways mirroring authorities. They're dressing in the same street uniforms.

AI: We've talked about looking to evolve EWP by making time to research the materials and processes of visual protest across the East and West. It's strange how I've always been surrounded by fabrics growing up. My mum was a machinist from the 60's through to the 80's and beyond for personal garments. Constantly making garments day and night at breakneck speed. We still have her original 60's and 70's industrial and portable sewing machines! The touch and feel of materials for garments have always been around me and although I'm not in that industry myself, I'm fully aware of the impact and processes of manufacture. Both with eastern and western fabrics.

DK: What's next for the project?

AI: Manufacturing of banners and arm bands has lit a fire inside me. Fabrics as I've said have always surrounded me at home and I feel I've found a direction for myself.

aziz.co.uk
davekirkwood.com



AZIZ IBRAHIM TAKES PART IN SEW WHAT?, A PANEL DISCUSSION, HOSTED BY AMBER BUTCHART, EXPLORING FASHION & TEXTILES AS AN EXPRESSION OF ACTIVISM, TAKING PLACE AT 6PM ON WEDNESDAY 30TH OCTOBER AT BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY.
THE EVENT INCLUDES A PERFORMANCE OF MUSIC CREATED FOR HIS RECENT PETERLOO FESTIVAL COMMISSION.

ALEX ZAWADZKI

CREATIVE PRODUCER & CURATOR



Alex Zawadzki is a Creative Producer & Curator working on projects such as The National Festival of Making, Live the Dream, Vintage by the Sea and The British Textiles Biennial. Alex has worked with Jamie Holman since the early stages of the project to manage the technical and curate the visual.

The narrative of her creative practice focuses on contemporary approaches to social phenomena by exploring the weird and wonderful cultural factors that make us who we are; and the impact of transient folklore & rituals; in particular the use of masks, costumes and disguises. Her exploration for unique cultures has taken her from the North Pole to North Borneo, and engaged her in projects from the photography of Britains secret ceremonies with Charles Freger for his Wilder Mann series; to the curation of Industrialised, an exhibition exploring responses by artists to making and manufacturing stories.

Essentially 'making stuff happen,' her role as a freelance Creative Producer entails establishing exciting, considered artistic and cultural projects that are delivered effectively and efficiently. She works broadly across all aspects of project delivery; establishing creative concepts, planning their logistics, developing strategies for engagement, researching, curating and programming cultural events across workshops, exhibitions, performance and outreach.

She is also a Director of Prism Contemporary, an artist-led gallery and artists studio space in Blackburn.

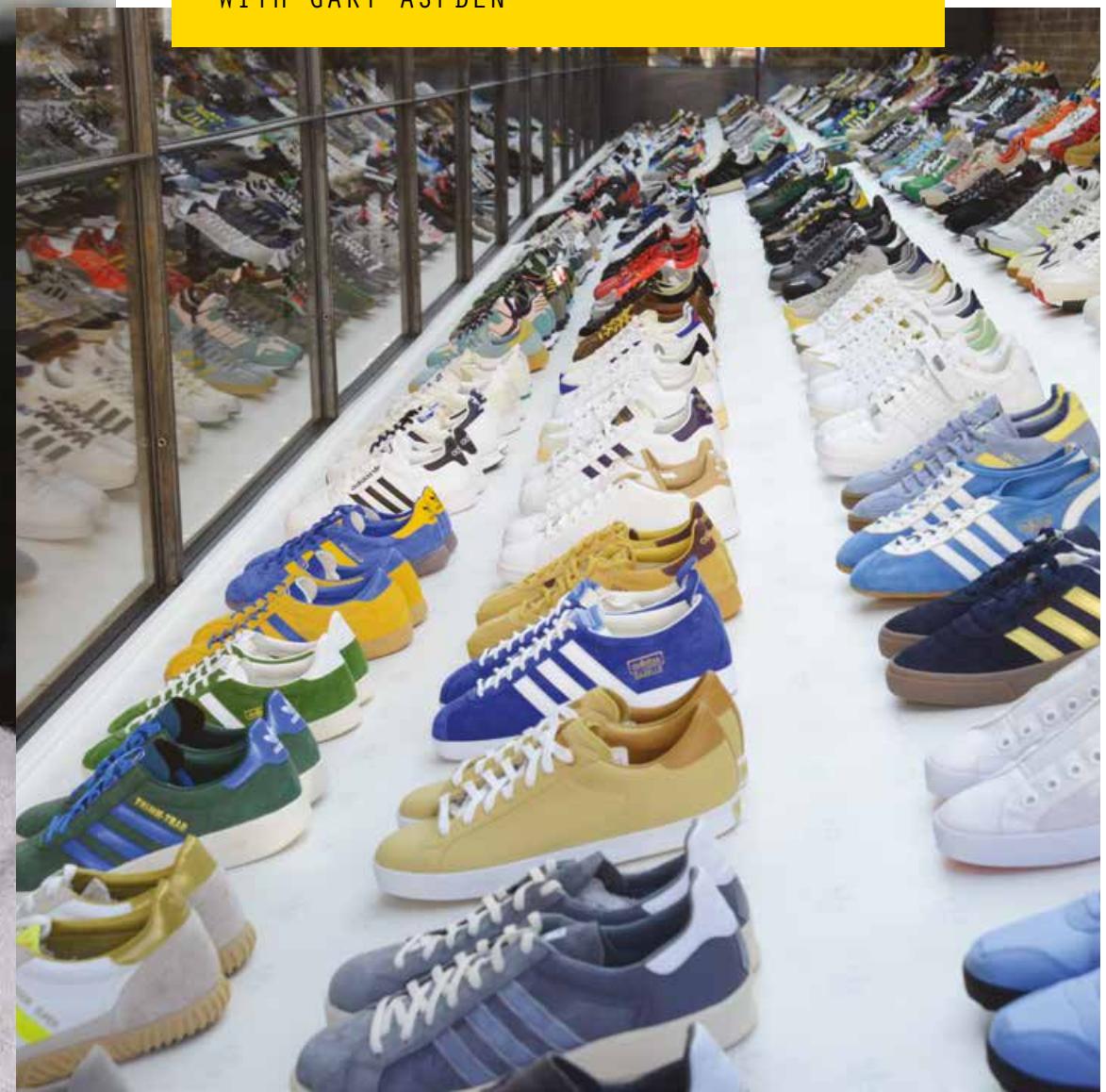
instagram.com/t.h.e.r.e.d

CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY



ADIDAS SPEZIAL EXHIBITION

CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY
WITH GARY ASPDEN



Curated by Gary Aspden, adidas brand consultant and designer of the adidas SPEZIAL range, the exhibition features over a thousand rare shoes from his personal archive and those of other fellow collectors.

Gary was also the subject of the first ever Conversations in Creativity event in 2011. We caught up with Gary again ahead of his return to his home town for this milestone exhibition and the launch of 'adidas Blackburn' - the latest addition to the SPEZIAL range.

What was your first memory of creativity?

My brother taking my pocket money off me in return for drawing lessons. It was money well spent.

What was your creative journey to get to where you are?

I studied a foundation course in art at Blackburn College and chanced my way into a BA in Fashion Design in Manchester. I was advised to apply by a girl I was having a fling with. She knew I liked clothes and told me that not many men applied for fashion courses so it would put me in with a strong chance of getting a place. I got on the course at Manchester Polytechnic, but it was 1988 and I was far more interested in acid house than pattern cutting. I dropped out after 6 months to eventually reapply five years later to the University of Central Lancashire to study a BA in Fashion Promotion. After a probationary period (the course tutors weren't sure if I would adapt back into academia given my history) I got into it and had a year out doing unpaid internships in London at the age of 27. I worked hard and graduated in the late 90s with first class honours. I was signing on for 8 months before landing my first job at adidas. I worked for them as an employee in communications and marketing before going freelance. I have now been retained by them as a consultant for over a decade so it's been over 20 years that I have been with them. In 2013 I proposed to them that I curate a range called adidas Spezial which has been a lot of on the job learning. In many ways with Spezial we have built a brand within a brand and it has a cultish following particularly in the UK and Northern Europe.

Much of what I do is instinctive and is very much informed by my experiences outside of the education system but my education allowed me to refine that knowledge into a skill base.

What impact if any have big name clients or high profile commissions had on your career?

Only positive I guess - but nobody likes a name dropper.

How do you establish your own style over a period of time and still stay relevant?

Know your audience. Stay out of 'trends'. Have a strong point of view. My interest in fashion is essentially rooted in my interest in culture. The fashion that interests me is a bi-product of culture. I find fashion for fashion's sake dreadful.

Does your work or process develop thematically, or is it more distinctive and random?

Well, adidas always like their to be a story that underpins each collection as it makes it easier for them to explain and sell in. I always try to give that - some seasons the references are more overt than others.

What or who has been the biggest influence on your work and why?

The people I grew up around I guess. Regular kids who looked great. That is a reference I always find myself coming back to - it's in the past but the mind-set that underpins it is as relevant as ever. I firmly believe that if you lose your faith in youth, then you've got nothing.

What inspires you or provokes the motivation towards creativity within?

I do not know. Maybe it comes from without?

Which artists/designers do you admire or inspire you the most and why?

Adi Dassler, Massimo Osti, Ian Brown, Peter Saville, Jacques Chassaing, Tony Wilson, David Bowie, Guy Debord, New Order, 3D, the Sex Pistols, Seen, Central Station, Iggy Pop, Lee Scratch Perry, Ken Swift, Chronixx, the Happy Mondays, Public Enemy ... I could go on ...

What is it you love most about what you do?

Going to football stadiums and seeing people wearing products I have been involved in the creation of. It's the ultimate compliment. It doesn't get much better than that.

THE ADIDAS SPEZIAL EXHIBITION AT BLACKBURN COTTON EXCHANGE RUNS FROM 4TH TO 20TH OCTOBER 2019



THE ARTIFICIAL DIVIDE BETWEEN FINE ART & TEXTILES IS A GENDERED ISSUE

AMBER BUTCHART, FASHION HISTORIAN,
AUTHOR AND BROADCASTER



"...POLITICS AND TEXTILES FOR ME ARE INTERTWINED, THEY'RE NOT SEPARATE."

Amber Butchart is a fashion historian, author and broadcaster who specialises in the historical intersections between dress, politics and culture. She was the presenter of BBC4's six-part series 'A Stitch in Time' that fused biography and art to explore the lives of historical figures through the clothes they wore. Her latest book is *The Fashion Chronicles: style stories of history's best dressed*.

Anni Albers marked a momentous step for fibre arts when the former Bauhaus student became the first weaver to have a significant solo show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1949.

Nearly 70 years later there has been a resurgence of textile arts on gallery walls, and last year's Albers exhibition at Tate Modern is part of their commitment to showing artists working in this medium. In 2015 they held a retrospective of abstract artist Sonia Delaunay who worked across a number of areas including textiles and clothing. Around the country there has also been an increase in the display of textiles.

In 2017 'Entangled: Threads and Making' at the Turner Contemporary challenged the classifications of fine art, design and craft through the work of more than 40 female artists whose work included disciplines ranging from embroidery and weaving to wood carving.

Artforms using textiles have existed for millennia but have not always been held in such high esteem in the art world. The artificial divide that exists between fine art and textiles is a gendered issue.

'Textiles have always suffered as an art media because of their association with domesticity and femininity,' says Hannah Lamb of The 62 Group of Textile Artists, an artist-led pressure group that has been promoting textiles as a fine art for nearly 60 years. Historically, textiles have been labelled 'women's work', and dismissed as inferior to pursuits such as painting and sculpture. But this has not always been the case.

Medieval English embroidery known as Opus Anglicanum was prized at royal courts and was commissioned by ecclesiastics for use on liturgical vestments. During the Renaissance the separation of art and craft became more apparent. The Royal Academy was founded in 1768, and less than 18 months later a rule was passed that regulated what could be admitted. Needlework was banned, outlawed from the realm of high art along with shell work and artificial flowers.

Competence with a needle had become a marker of fashionably refined middle and upper-class femininity by the 19th century, something the feminist art historian Rozsika Parker made clear in her book *The Subversive Stitch* (1984). 'To know the history of embroidery' she wrote, 'is to know the history of women.' At the time Parker was writing, this notion was being challenged by Second Wave feminist artists who attempted to reclaim stitch away from its associations with oppression, showing it could instead be used as a tool to fight the patriarchy, and to give a voice to previously voiceless groups.

In my documentary, *In Stitches*, for BBC Radio 4, I explored a current wave of contemporary artists who are again transforming the image of embroidery, challenging historical and cultural preconceptions and making progressive, often political work.

Textile and performance artist Raisa Kabir was trained as a weaver and incorporates sound and video into her work. She highlights how the gendering of embroidery in European history not only marginalizes the practice through sexism, but also ignores global histories and experiences of people of colour, turning it into a radically political artform.

The notion that it's inherently about white feminism and embroidery is this Victorian white, Western phenomenon – I don't resent it, I just think that's a misconception ... politics and textiles for me are intertwined, they're not separate.'

Pre-dating Opus Anglicanum, the Bayeux Tapestry (technically an embroidery, not a tapestry) is arguably the most celebrated example of Anglo-Saxon art. There is political ambiguity throughout the piece, at times it appears sympathetic to King Harold, although it's likely meant to function as a form of Norman propaganda. The embroidery was long believed to have been the work of Queen Mathilda, William the Conqueror's wife. But this has been superseded by the argument that it was produced by English needleworkers, likely women.

The time invested in hand embroidery lends a permanence and gravitas to messages conveyed in this way, and it became a medium of choice for political banners. The Artists' Suffrage League, founded by Mary Lowndes in 1907, created embroidered banners for the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies that were carried in some of the earliest large-scale demonstrations held in support of women's enfranchisement. Embroidered banners were also used by Trade Unions and the cooperative movement.

The subversion of embroidery for political purposes belies its dominant purpose within fashion history as an expensive and decorative marker of the wealthy and elite. Yet exploring hidden histories and questioning the established hierarchy of art and craft is also reaching fashion ateliers. Hand & Lock is an embroidery brand which has roots tracing back to 1767. Based in London, they produce embroidery for the British military, the Royal Family, Savile Row tailors and European fashion houses. In 2000 they initiated an embroidery prize to support new generations of stitchers, and in 2016 introduced a Textile Art category which now receives more submissions than the Fashion category. 'This increasing trend continues to blur the line between craft and art' says Sophie Carr, the Prize Co-ordinator at Hand & Lock. 'We often see submissions that contain meaningful messages about the transient state of the modern world conveyed through stitch.'

AMBER BUTCHART IS PARTICIPATING IN SEW WHAT?, A PANEL DISCUSSION EXPLORING FASHION & TEXTILES AS AN EXPRESSION OF ACTIVISM, TAKING PLACE AT 6PM ON WEDNESDAY 30TH OCTOBER AT BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY.

The full version of this article appeared in *Frieze* magazine (Nov 2018). Reproduced with permission. frieze.com

THE FABRIC OF OUR TIMES

PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE FOR UK FASHION AND TEXTILES

UK FASHION AND TEXTILES HAS A UNIQUE SPIRIT AND ENERGY THAT IGNITES THE IMAGINATION OF THE WORLD. IT IS CRUCIAL TO TELLING THE STORY OF OUR WORLD- LEADING CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND CONTRIBUTES BILLIONS TO THE ANNUAL ECONOMY. FROM ITS CUTTING-EDGE TRAILBLAZERS TO THE REFINED CRAFTSMANSHIP OF ITS STAR DESIGNERS, THE ORIGINALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM FOUND IN THE UK MAKE IT ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FASHION AND TEXTILES HUBS IN THE WORLD. HOWEVER, THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF UK FASHION AND TEXTILES RELIES ON FUTURE GENERATIONS HAVING THE RIGHT SKILLS AND TRAINING THAT BUSINESSES NEED.

The UK Fashion industries contributes over £32 billion to the UK economy, growing at a faster rate than the economy as a whole – and employs 890,000 people across design manufacturing, retail and related sectors - from agriculture to advertising. This wide range of activity is increasingly driven by new technology – ‘fashion tech’ including VR/AI in consumer experience and retail, to e-sizing and advanced design & manufacturing. Fashion is therefore not limited to designer-fashion and catwalks, however the treatment of fashion in the creative industries (e.g. by DCMS, NESTA) is limited, and this breadth of creative activity needs better measurement and understanding in terms of the fashion ecosystem and how innovation can be nurtured and creative SMEs be better supported in order to grow.

As part of the government’s Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, several Creative Industry Clusters have been supported over 5 years to develop R&D with industry to help create growth. The Business of Fashion Textiles & Technology Creative R&D Partnership has been established to develop a range of R&D initiatives from sustainable materials development, new business models, to a £2m+ programme of R&D funding for SMEs to develop new products & services. Led by the London College of Fashion, at the University of the Arts London, the first step is to respond to this knowledge deficit on the FTT sector through a nationwide survey which will help shape the future sustainable development of the fashion industry. Aimed at creative business owners/founders up and down the country working in all aspects of fashion, textiles and related technology – from designers/makers, workspace providers, textiles producers, to fashion publishers, stylists, photographers and specialist retailers.

London College of Fashion, UAL in Partnership with the UK Industrial Strategy recently launched a nationwide survey consultation to help shape the future sustainable development of the fashion industry. We invite reactions to the initial findings and perspectives from key contributors representing all aspects of the textiles ecosystem and related industries including apparel & textiles industrialists, sector bodies and academic institutions. Taking place on the day that Britain is set to exit the European Union we also explore the implications and future sustainability for the industry in the UK and R&D.



Dr Lipi Begum, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at London College of Fashion, UAL will present finding from the survey and recent research in a roundtable taking place on the day that Britain is set to exit the European Union. The session will also explore the implications and future sustainability for the industry in the UK and R&D.

In association with Business of Fashion, Textiles and Technology (BFTT).

Business of Fashion, Textiles and Technology is supported by the Creative Industries Clusters Programme managed by the Arts & Humanities Research Council as part of the Industrial Strategy.



THE FABRIC OF OUR TIMES:
PERSPECTIVES ON THE
FUTURE FOR UK FASHION AND
TEXTILES (ROUNDTABLE)

Date: Thursday 31 October 2019
Time: 2-4pm
Venue: Victorian Gallery,
Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery,
Museum Street, BB1 7AJ

FREE to attend –
Pre registration essential
via Eventbrite.

PAINTING THE TOWN

A BLACKPOOL COLOUR STORY

"PAINTING THE TOWN IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BLACKPOOL RESIDENTS TO RECLAIM THE NARRATIVE OF THE TOWN THROUGH STORYTELLING... IT'S ABOUT THE PLACES THAT HOLD SPECIAL MEANING TO THEM."

LAURA SHEVAUN GREEN



PAINTING THE TOWN



The resident and business communities of Blackpool are making their comeback.

Driven by LeftCoast, a flagship Creative People & Places Organisation, and in partnership with Leyland Paints, Blackpool has developed its own range of 30 decorative paint colours called 'Painting The Town' which forms the beating heart of a grand scale cross-sector placemaking initiative that delivers at a very personal level.

The project was originally developed and conceived out of a commission for LeftCoast delivered by Blackpool based artist, Laura Shevaun Green.

For the artist Blackpool represents a vibrant and diverse town with an array of unique attractions and spaces. It is unlike any other place in the UK. News coverage of the town has left many individuals feeling hopeless and unrecognised. For Laura the narrative is worn out, redundant and unhelpful, and failed to reflect the hard work of individuals.

Armed with their memories, Laura visited these locations to explore the landscape and capture the colours that she would record to create a paint range.

"This paint range will celebrate the vibrancy that can be found in every corner of the town!"

Built around 10 core colour stories – each a homage to the individual experiences collected from residents and 20 harmonising shades - inspired by the light and tones of Blackpool's ever changing coastline and weather front, Painting The Town is a new big picture enterprise fostering civic connections and building social capital in a town that has been labelled 'left behind'.

The aim is to do exactly what it says on the paint tin and literally get people 'Painting The Town', one room, one home and one business at time...starting with the Pleasure Beach.

This Autumn, 10 of the iconic, colourful Ocean Boulevard units along the Golden Mile will be given a new lease of life with a lick of Ghost Train Purple and a tale of star-crossed colleagues, a splash of Seagull Grey and a memory of one last stroll along the prom and a riot of eight other richly evocative colour stories inspired by the real lives of Blackpool's residents.

Through the very physical, iterative action of painting the town and the cross-sector collaborations it creates, the Painting The Town programme will not only nourish Blackpool and its communities, but will empower local businesses to explore the impact of how working together to apply a more colourful approach to Blackpool's built environment can reshape resident, visitor and investor perceptions for the long term.

However, plans for Painting The Town don't just stop at Bispham. If able to secure investment, LeftCoast will eventually offer every town and every person in the UK a splash of the authentic Blackpool experience that they can enjoy in the comfort of their home or business. Fond memories of being spun around Blackpool Tower Ballroom? There's a colour story to match and it would look great in the kitchen. What about that unforgettable family day at Stanley Park? There's a colour story to match that too and it's perfect for your living room.

Whatever your experience of Blackpool, the Painting The Town range enables you to reconnect with it, and reconnect with the town and its community, whenever you want and wherever you want thanks to LeftCoast's innovative partnership with Lancashire's own, Leyland Paints, and its 1,222 Decorating Centres across the UK.

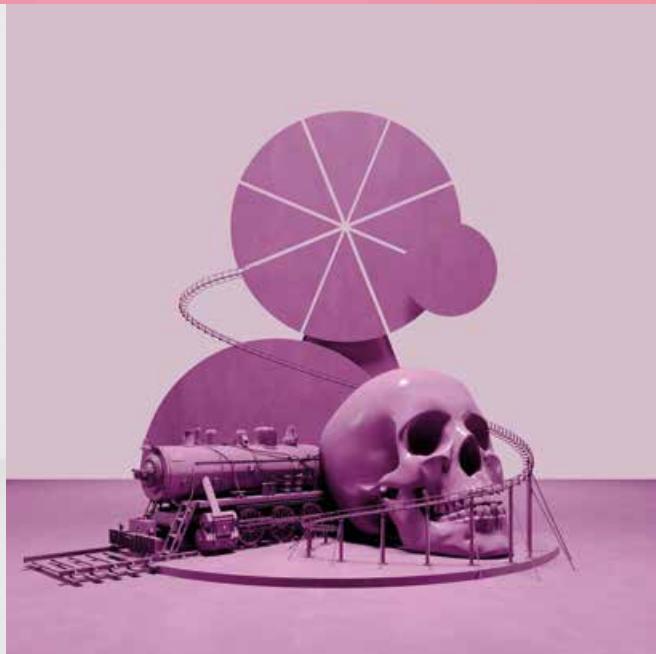
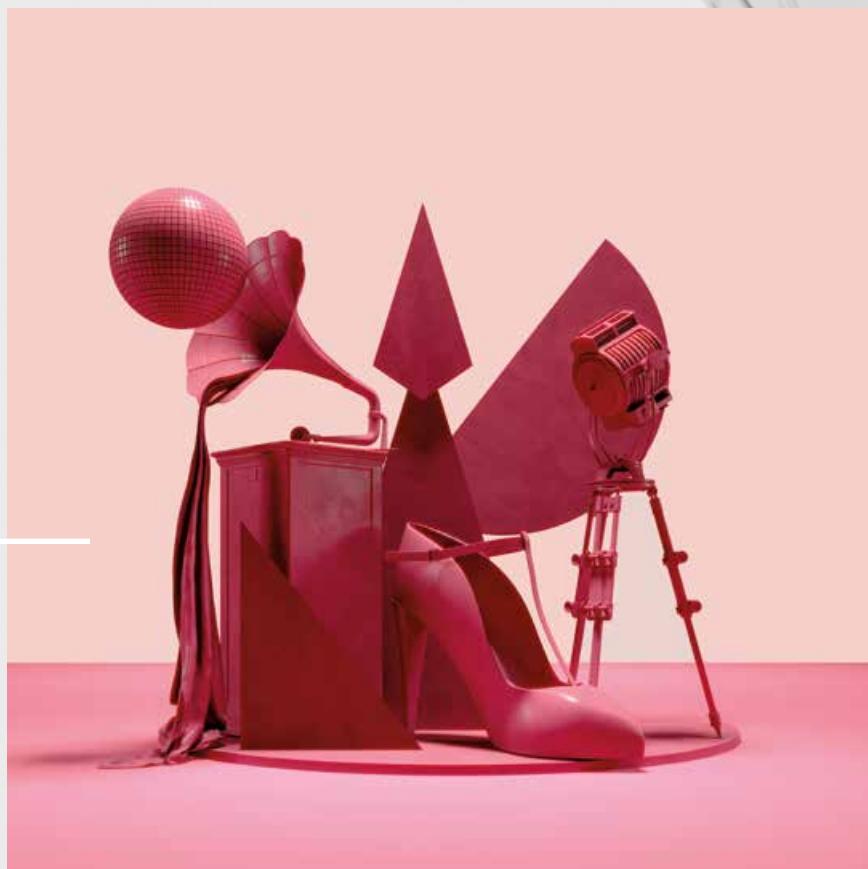
Through this innovative idea and this innovative business model, LeftCoast are helping the people of Blackpool paint a new picture for the town and for themselves - a picture that speaks in 30 different shades about Blackpool's generosity of spirit and its capacity to keep on lifting you up whenever life pulls you down.

This palette is initially being released as a trade product only to Blackpool based organisations as well as North West architects, surveyors and building contractors with a track record of working in Blackpool as part of a placemaking strategy for Blackpool which is being led by LeftCoast.

The success of this placemaking strategy is dependent on local businesses and tradesmen being aware of the range and its specific connection to Blackpool, and on them being familiar with the paints' quality and technical abilities as well as Johnston's Paints reputation for outstanding, premium products.

leftcoast.org.uk

LEFTCOAST



PAINTING THE TOWN

Visual interpretations of the Blackpool Colour Stories by Wash Studio. CGI work by Wearelut.

EXHIBITIONS AND PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



ADIDAS SPEZIAL EXHIBITION

The evolution of adidas footwear past and present will be presented in all its glory at the **adidas SPEZIAL exhibition** in Blackburn's magnificent Cotton Exchange. Curated by Gary Aspden (adidas brand consultant and designer of the adidas SPEZIAL range), the exhibition features shoes from his personal archive alongside those of other fellow adidas collectors. The showcase will feature over 1200 pairs of rare adidas trainers. Highlights of the exhibition will be numerous versions of the vintage adidas 'City Series' models with a full archive of the adidas SPEZIAL range.

DATES: FRIDAY 4TH – SUNDAY 20TH OCTOBER

TIMES: (VISIT SPEZIALBLACKBURN.COM FOR EXTENDED OPENING HOURS)

VENUE: BLACKBURN COTTON EXCHANGE, BLACKBURN

FOR FULL PROGRAMME VISIT
BRITISHTEXTILEBIENNIAL.CO.UK

TRANSFORM AND ESCAPE THE DOGS



Transform and escape the Dogs is a series of new works by artist Jamie Holman, celebrating a history of radical gatherings where the working class youth of the north resisted, rejected, and finally reclaimed the spaces that cotton made and then abandoned. From Malkin tower to Mill Hill; a defiant history of witches, hand loom poets, blacksmith painters, football casuals, and pioneer film makers, challenging accepted notions of textiles heritage, and of those people and events that have shaped us.

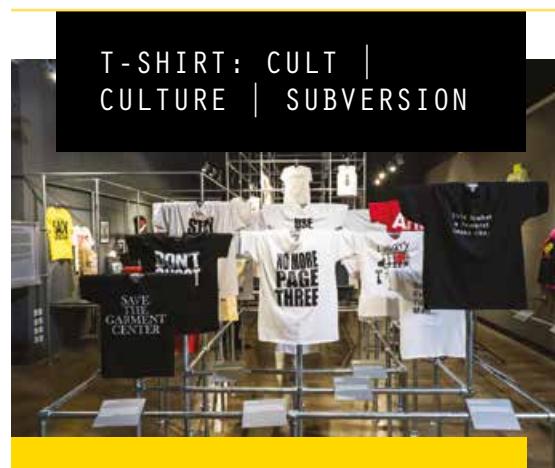
These works propose a counter narrative of creativity, rebellion, and magic; exploring the real Industrial Revolution, a revolution of the soul that seeks to remind us: 'when we gather, we become powerful. We cannot be kept down.'

DATES: THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER – SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

TIMES: WEDS – SUN, 10AM – 5PM

VENUE: CHURCH STREET, BLACKBURN

ENTRY: FREE



T-SHIRT: CULT | CULTURE | SUBVERSION

Explore the T-shirt in the 20th Century through this inspirational exhibition; over two sites the exhibition charts the history, culture and subversion of the most affordable and popular item of clothing on the planet. T-SHIRT: CULT – CULTURE – SUBVERSION highlights the multi-faceted role of this humble garment Through punk and politics to luxury fashion item, T-shirts broadcast who we are and who we want to be.

The exhibition will feature a private collection of Vivienne Westwood t-shirts from the early days of Let it Rock, Sex, and Seditionaries, through to the designers most recent collections, Active Resistance to Propaganda and Climate Revolution.

DATES: THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER – SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

TIMES: WEDS – SUN, 12PM – 5PM

VENUE: BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL AND PRISM CONTEMPORARY

ENTRY: FREE

THREAD BEARING WITNESS



Shown at Gawthorpe Hall, Alice Kettle's Thread Bearing Witness is a major series of large textiles that consider issues of cultural heritage, refugee displacement and movement, while engaging with individual migrants and their creativity within the wider context of the global refugee crisis. The works present the individual and collective textile narratives of refugees and asylum seekers.

Sea, Ground and Sky, the three works that form the immersive installation of Thread Bearing Witness, embrace both the personal testimonies of the refugees Kettle has met and textiles' role, from the domestic to the spectacular, to encourage understanding in a chronicle of shared making. Kettle worked with individuals and groups of refugees and asylum seekers, in the UK and in camps in Europe, asking them to contribute to and inform these large artworks through the common language of stitch.

DATES: THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER – SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

TIMES: WEDS – SUN, 12PM – 4.30PM

VENUE: GAWTHORPE HALL

ENTRY: FREE BUT ENTRY CHARGES TO GAWTHORPE HALL APPLY (SEE THEIR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS)

MR GATTY'S EXPERIMENT SHED



Mr Gatty's Experiment Shed is a new work by Bradford-based artist Claire Wellesley-Smith exploring the layered histories of a former industrial site in Accrington, East Lancashire, the purpose built 'experiment shed' of F.A Gatty, 19th century textile industrialist and dye innovator.

DATES: FRIDAY 25TH & SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER

VENUE: ELMFIELD HALL, GATTY PARK, ACCRINGTON

TIMES: 10AM – 4PM

ENTRY: FREE

KATAB: QUILTING STORIES



Since 2014, Katab: Not Only Money has worked collaboratively with a group of women artisans in the migrant communities scattered across the city of Ahmedabad, Western India. Traditionally, women from these communities practised the craft of katab (applique), making domestic household decorations with recycled waste fabrics.

For the Biennial, the project brings a series of quilts created by its participants which are inspired by iconic films (both Hollywood and Bollywood) and Hindi TV series. The quilts are exhibited alongside items from the Museum's South Asian collection including a quilt inspired by Gandhi's 1931 visit to Lancashire by Lokesh Ghai, one of the project leaders, during his museum residency in 2012 as part of the cotton exchange project.

DATES: THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER – SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER
TIMES: WEDS – SUN, 12PM – 5PM
VENUE: BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY
ENTRY: FREE

EGGS COLLECTIVE – MATERIAL



Marking 150 years since its grand opening, Material is a unique, one-off night in Accrington's iconic market hall.

In 2019, writer-performers Eggs Collective worked in residence at the Market Hall, running a clothes stall trading in conversation, not cash. Inspired by the stories of its traders and customers, Material is an attempt to weave together the story of the market, capturing its spirit a century and half after it opened its doors. Using Eggs Collective's trademark sharp observation and subversive humour, this is a rare opportunity to see an everyday place in an unusual way.

DATE: SUNDAY 26TH OCTOBER
VENUE: ACCRINGTON MARKET HALL

AARON DUNLEAVY – COMMUNITY CLOTHING



DATES: THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER – SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER
TIMES: WEDS – SUN, 12PM – 5PM
VENUE: BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY
ENTRY: FREE

A new film collaboration between this award winning young film maker and designer Patrick Grant's social enterprise Community Clothing, uncovering the lives & families of Blackburn's textile factory workers at Cookson & Clegg.

BRITISH TEXTILE BIENNIAL TALKS

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE TO ATTEND, BUT PRE-REGISTRATION IS ESSENTIAL VIA EVENTBRITE

THE FABRIC OF OUR TIMES

Perspectives on the future for UK fashion and textiles.

London College of Fashion, UAL with the support from UK Industrial Strategy recently launched a nationwide survey consultation to help shape the future sustainable development of the fashion industry. We invite reactions to the initial findings and perspectives from key contributors representing all aspects of the textiles ecosystem and related industries including apparel & textiles industrialists, sector bodies and academic institutions. Taking place on the day that Britain is set to exit the European Union we also explore the implications and future sustainability for the industry in the UK and R&D.

DATE: THURSDAY 31ST OCTOBER
TIME: 2PM – 4PM
VENUE: VICTORIAN GALLERY,
BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY,
MUSEUM STREET, BB1 7AJ

SEW WHAT?

Exploring the portrayal of ideas and activism in fashion and textiles and its relationship with contemporary cultures.

With: Amber Butchart, Aziz Ibrahim, Carole Hunt, Emma Shankland, Craig Oldham and Jamie Holman.

This panel discussion led by fashion historian, author and broadcaster, Amber Butchart explores how through time, fashion and textiles is frequently appropriated as a platform to highlight protest, politics, cultural movements of change and a powerful self-expression of ideas. Individually and collectively we articulate our voices through stitched messaging or the decisions we make about what we wear.

CONVERSATIONS IN CREATIVITY: ALICE KETTLE

One of the highlights of British Textile Biennial is Alice Kettle's Thread Bearing Witness, a series of large-scale embroideries that represents a moving reflection on cultural heritage, refugee displacement and movement.

Alice will also share insights and inspirations from her journey to establishing her global reputation as a highly regarded contemporary artist focused upon stitched textiles, as a powerful medium to explore these ideas.

In conversation with Gemma Potter, inter-disciplinary artist and researcher at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Includes free shuttle bus service between Burnley Manchester Road Train Station, Padiham Town Hall and exhibition at Gawthorpe Hall (Last bus leaves Gawthorpe Hall at 4.30pm, last admission to exhibition - 5pm.)

DATE: THURSDAY 17TH OCTOBER
TIME: 5PM – 7PM (REGISTRATION FROM 4.30PM)
VENUE: THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
PADIHAM TOWN HALL, 83 BURNLEY ROAD, PADIHAM, BURNLEY BB12

DATE: WEDNESDAY 30TH OCTOBER
TIME: 6PM – 8PM (REGISTRATION FROM 5.30PM)
VENUE: VICTORIAN GALLERY,
BLACKBURN MUSEUM & ART GALLERY,
MUSEUM STREET, BB1 7AJ

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

WE'D LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS
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Lancashire

SUPERSLOWWAY

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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



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