

Conversations in Creativity
Explorations in inspiration

Urban Room • July 2016



Creative Lancashire



Conversations in Creativity

In 2011, Creative Lancashire with local design agencies Wash and JP74 launched 'Conversations in Creativity' - a network and series of events where creatives from across the crafts, trades and creative disciplines explore how inspiration from around the world informs process. Previous events have featured Hemingway Design, Gary Aspden (Adidas), Pete Fowler (Animator & Artist), Donna Wilson (Designer), Cherry Ghost, I am Kloot, Nick Park (Aardman), Lemn Sissay (Poet) and Jeanette Winterson (Author) - hosted by Dave Haslam & John Robb.



Who's Involved



www.wash-design.co.uk



www.jp74.co.uk



A Woman's Place

Following the loss of world-renowned architect Zaha Hadid, we have been inspired to increase awareness of women working in architecture, the built environment and place-making. This male dominated sector can sometimes overlook the woman so it was great when Hadid won the RIBA Gold medal, the first woman to have done so.

A Woman's Place will consider a range of roles women are championing in place-based context. Transferring local actions to a larger arena, women like Hadid, Martha Schwartz (artist and landscape architect), the late Jane Jacobs (urban planner), and Suzanne Lacy (artist and social activist), the female place-enabler is worth a conversation!

A Woman's Place introduces idle women duo Rachel Anderson and Cis O'Boyle, artist Hayley Welsh and Kate Stewart. idle women host a series of artists-in-residence, workshops & events for women on the water. Hayley Welsh has recently delivered Blackburn Open Walls, a self-initiated street art exhibition working with six talented female street artists. Kate Stewart is co-Founder of We Make Places and is leading on the development of the ambitious creative programme The Flyover Liverpool.

We are pleased to co-host this conversation with Creative Lancashire which forms part of Urban Room Blackburn, a month long celebration of art, architecture and public space with a focus on urban culture, experimentation and innovative practices to inspire new ways of thinking about place-making and the urban environment.

Claire Tymon
Urban Room Blackburn Curator + Director for Placeshakers

www.urbanroomblackburn.co.uk

Placeshakers

Placeshakers is a social enterprise with a mission to regenerate areas of social need through the innovative re-use of unloved buildings, abandoned spaces and underused assets whilst engaging the whole community, to develop new ideas and uses.

www.placeshakers.co.uk



Urban Rooms Network

About us

We are a network of Urban Rooms across the country, chaired by Carolyn Butterworth from Sheffield University. As well as sharing practice and offering support, we work together to promote the value of urban rooms to others.

We are working towards a shared definition of Urban Rooms:

Every town and city should have a physical space where people can go to understand, debate and get involved in the past, present and future of where they live, work and play. The purpose of these Urban Rooms is to foster meaningful connections between people and place, using creative methods of engagement to encourage active participation in the future of our buildings, streets and neighbourhoods.

www.urbanroomsnetwork.wordpress.com



Hayley Welsh – Blackburn Open Wall

Blackburn Open Walls (BOW) is an artist run initiative designed to bring communities together in conversation and creative inspiration through street art. BOW 2016 is Blackburn's first walking street arts festival, curated by Blackburn born artist Hayley Welsh, who creates large scale street art and exhibits internationally.

Hayley's vision started in 2014 when she first created a piece of street art on Blackburn's Exchange building 'Be happy in this moment. This moment is your life'.

"While I was painting, people were stopping and talking about the artwork. The creative conversations between held strangers was really special. Whether people liked or didn't like the painting, didn't really matter, it was just the engaging and coming together of communities I loved, and street art is so special to be able to make those moments happen."

The positive public response to the live painting and engagement from the local residents, inspired Hayley to create more public art within Blackburn, but this time on a larger scale, inviting five other female artists from across the UK to join her.

"This is a chance for people who have lived here their whole life to see Blackburn in a new light and colour. I really want people to be proud of where they live and what the beauty of Blackburn, and show the work of incredible female street artists. There aren't many female street artists out there – the street art scene is still quite a masculine genre, so we want to inspire girls and show them that we can climb scaffolding and ride scissorlifts, and create large things too."

Over 6 days from 20-26th June 2016, residents and visitors to Blackburn town were invited to enjoy an array of public artwork installations, created by world class female artists.

Through skill and hard work, the project aimed to make Blackburn beautiful, with street art, colour and creativity alongside a 'Limited Edition' Print Exhibition curated by local artist and BOW contributor Alexandra Gallagher, which celebrated the work of female artists from across the globe.

www.blackburnopenwalls.com



Artwork by Anatomix



Artwork by Faunagraphic



Artwork by Nomad Clan



Artwork by Alexandra Gallagher



Artwork by Lucy McLauchlan



Artwork by Hayley Welsh

idle women (on the water)

idle women addresses the urgent need for womens space – for a radical redress of power, acknowledgement and voice.

idle women (on the water) is a two year journey in seven parts, inviting seven women to join us on the water as resident artists alongside a family of associate artists, writers, historians, visitors and allies we are growing a broad network of women through ideas, conversation, exploration and friendship along the canal.

Architects of women place was the first part of the idle women journey. With help, support, labour and encouragement of many women we conceived and created a tailormade narrow boat which serves as a touring womens arts centre.

Co-dependent on its sister motorboat this vehicle will navigate the north of England via the 'cut', the wound carved into the earth to serve the Industrial Revolution owing credit to thousands of unsung women. This arts centre is built in the context of the mass closure of specialist womens services, refuges, safe houses, and social spaces and the never changing lack of womens place in the arts.

Architects of womens place names the systems both historical and present day, which seek to form women into unnatural shapes, contain and contort our past and our future, and the women who resist, create, fight and thrive inspite of this.

Exploring the architecture of our place through a womanist lens, excavating the buried truth of women's histories is our spiritual osteopathy, the process releases memory muscles held in unnatural positions and grants us movement.

idle women is a place for all women and girls to belong, a growing network of connections, friendships and co-creation. This is (another) beginning.

idle women
Leeds to Liverpool canal, July 2016

www.idlewomen.org

idle women (on the water) will be in Accrington until September, Nelson from Sept – Dec, Dewsbury from March- June (2017), Manchester from June- Aug and St Helens Sept-Nov.





Kate Stewart + Toria Buzza We Make Places – Liverpool

Kate and Toria co-founded We Make Places, a social enterprise (CiC) set up to provoke debate, make, design collaboratively and bring about positive change in our city's urban environment and communities.

The Flyover is one of the first in a series of 'Provocations for the City' by We Make Places and was created by friends who work in design, regeneration and architecture and who all care passionately about Liverpool and its future. The vision of the Flyover is to transform it into a unique urban park and venue, this vision was a response to city proposals that the highway and walkways beneath them would be demolished at a cost of £4 million. The group felt that instead of demolition, the city could have an amazing public space that would connect the city centre to the north, creating a new route residents and visitors. Kate ran a high profile crowdfund campaign, raising over £40k to kick start the project with the necessary reports and creative community engagement activity and Toria was engaged through this process.

We Make Places projects are about reconsidering ignored, underused or condemned places in a new light, to allow them to rise again and become healthy, happy, active and loved. As Designers, Communicators and Makers they make long-term change happen with speed and passion.

www.wemakeplaces.org

www.friendsoftheflyover.org.uk



Case Studies of inspiring woman

Elaine Speight – The Expanded City, In Certain Places

The Expanded City is a three-year programme of artworks and events, designed to raise questions and generate debate about the City Deal - a national scheme, which aims to deliver new jobs and housing, by addressing strategic transport, environmental, community and cultural infrastructure challenges - alongside wider issues associated with contemporary approaches to urban planning. As curator of In Certain Places, Elaine has been responsible for developing and implementing the project, alongside her colleagues Professor Charles Quick and Rachel Bartholomew.

Elaine Speight is a research associate at the University of Central Lancashire, where she co-runs the In Certain Places project. Her research interests include the capacity of art to interrogate, mediate and critique the connections between people and place, and the relationship between art practice and research.

www.incertainplaces.org



Suzanne Lacy – Shapes Of Water, Sounds Of Hope – In Situ/Super Slow Way

Suzanne Lacy is a visual artist whose prolific career includes performances, video and photographic installation, critical writing and public practices in communities. She is best known as one of the Los Angeles performance artists who became active in the Seventies and shaped and emergent art of social engagement.

Suzanne is working with local communities in Pendle to create a mass participation performance at Brierfield Mill in September.

As a pioneer of embedded working in communities, Suzanne is bringing together around 1,000 residents from Pendle to share food, culture, and experiences; culminating in a mass community celebration at the former Smith & Nephews Mill in Brierfield. It is open to all, and draws on vocal traditions including Shape Note, 19th-century folk ballads and Sufi chanting, giving participants the opportunity to sing, write songs about their lives and experiences, share food and participate in the production aspects of the final event in the mill.

www.superslowway.org.uk



Hannah Fox – Derby Silk Mill + Re:Make the Museum

In 2011, Derby City Council took the decision to close the doors of Derby Silk Mill and transfer its collection to a new Trust. In 2012 Hannah was appointed consultant with a brief to re-invent the concept for the site. If the Silk Mill was ever to open again, it would have to be for a purpose beyond the industrial museum it had been for 40 years. It needed to become a place which celebrated Derby's on-going story of manufacturing and innovation, kick-started 300 years ago when the Silk Mill was built as the world's first fully mechanised 'manu'factory.

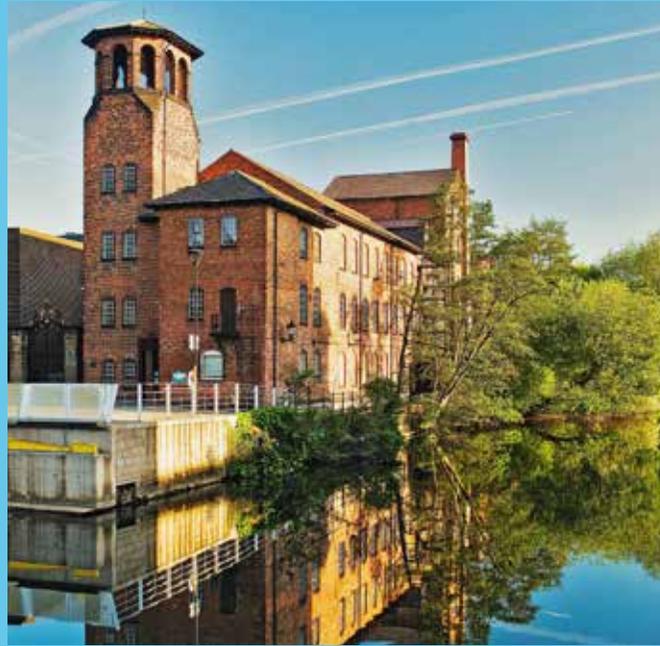
We did not want to just showcase the city's past, we wanted to encourage visitors to be creative and explore thinking, making and innovating - the qualities that built modern-day Derby.

Directed by Hannah Fox, the Silk Mill concept was prototyped through a participatory project called 'Remake', and is now undergoing a £17m programme to create an inspirational and active Museum of Making - locally designed and delivered; globally significant. The Museum of Making will be

co-produced and made with local communities, inspiring future generations of makers, creators and innovators.

Hannah is frequently featured as a speaker at national and international conferences, presenting on themes of creative place-shaping and participatory practice, particularly human-centred design approaches for museums.

www.derbysilkmill.tumblr.com
www.remakemuseum.tumblr.com



Diana Hamilton + Abi Gilmore Brewing Culture – Macclesfield Heritage + Culture Partnership

Both Diana and Abi live in Macclesfield and are investing their skills and energy to create an identity for the town by working with local people, businesses and Macclesfield's rich textile heritage. As part of the established Barnaby Festival this year, Diana and Abi organised an alternative tour of 'Macc' which celebrated the brewing heritage and talking about the ingredients of a great town (perception, play/leisure, houses and town planning).

Conversations were recorded and facilitated in creative ways (cartoons, love letters, blank beer mats, Lego towns, pub games) resulting in a very visual 'Manifesto for Macc'. The event was an attempt to explore how history and future can be connected by the present, and to engage with people who aren't necessarily the first in the queue when it comes to cultural planning. We were excited to learn about the historical role of brewing and selling beer in the town, and its importance to local economies and well-being, in creating social spaces for people to come together.

Abi Gilmore is a Senior Lecturer in Arts Management & Cultural Policy at the University of Manchester: Abi's research is on arts and cultural policy, cultural value and everyday participation. Diana Hamilton is the Director of the Hamilton Project, and manages cultural projects and is leading the Macclesfield Culture and Heritage Strategy.



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www.creativelancashire.org



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Upcoming Events

A selection of creative
outings on the horizon from
around the North West

POWWOW – Summer Social Creative Lancashire in association with Wash Design & Cotton Court 20.07.16 Preston

POWWOW is our regular creative social happening bringing together businesses, freelancers and students. Complimentary drinks, food & networking.

www.creativelancashire.org

Cloudspotting Festival 2016 29.07.16–31.07.16 Stephen Park, Forest of Bowland

Cloudspotting Festival of music and the arts reaches the milestone of its 6th year in 2016, returning to the stunning location in the heart of the forest of Gisburn.

www.cloudspotting-festival.co.uk

Super Slow Way KINARA FESTIVAL 08.07.16–24.07.16

The Kinara Festival will take place at venues across Pennine Lancashire in July 2016 to explore and celebrate culture, music and performance from across the Muslim world.

www.superslowway.org.uk

Design Manchester 16 12.10.16–22.10.16 Manchester

DM16 is an annual festival celebrating creativity, collaboration and inclusivity in art, design, film, music and more

www.designmcr.com

Conversations[©] in Creativity

URBAN
ROOM
BLACKBURN

Creative
Lancashire

source.

Wash

EST 2003



Credit:
Illustrations taken from
Creative Capital, a student
live project by Sheffield
School of Architecture –
November 2015