

# artiq

The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this are several thin, black, abstract lines. One line starts near the top left, curves down and to the right, then loops back up and to the left. Another line starts near the top right, curves down and to the left, then loops back up and to the right. A third line is a simple vertical line extending downwards from the middle of the word 'artiq'. A fourth line is a large, irregular, rounded shape at the bottom of the page, resembling a wide, shallow bowl or a large letter 'S'.

Volume 1

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# Editor's Note

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I am incredibly excited to present the first-ever Artiq Annual. A huge thank you to every single contributor; this journal has been a long time in the making and is a showcase for what we, and our collaborators, are doing to create impact with culture.

Creativity is too often presented as a hobby, something you do on the side that doesn't make a career. Reading these stories, you'll discover that many people with creativity express it not only in their professional roles but as a key element at the core of who they are. You are guaranteed to be inspired by Will Gompertz, whose early experience working in a supermarket influenced his approach to leading the art direction of Europe's largest art complex, the Barbican, and by Yinka Ilori, whose community-centred practice proves the impact of art in untraditional spaces. We are also proud to present Almuth Tebbenhoff and Aisha Seriki in a cross-generational conversation about the realities of working as artists and how they have pursued their creative callings, despite surroundings and circumstances not always encouraging it.

To those of you in business reading this, you'll be able to see the tangible impact of engaging with creativity. We profile one of

the most significant mixed-use developments in London this year, The OWO, and the ambitious BID project with The City of London, City Vistas.

To the artists and creatives: we want to prove that the arts can be self-sustained. It can be your career, not just your side hustle.

And to the arts professionals working within this incredible industry, we hope to show that there are career paths of note within the sector that we all love so much; don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

In establishing this business now 13 years ago, my intention was to prove that the creative and cultural economy can stand on its own two feet. This publication is a collection of stories to show the impact Artiq is having and highlighting the fact we are not alone in our desire to put creativity at the centre of society.

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Patrick McCrae, Co-founder and CEO



# Why does the art world have *such* a gender pay gap problem?

*Marketplace misogyny or unconscious cooperation?  
Artiq Commercial Director Taxie Taysom on the issue  
of the gender pay gap in the art world, where artwork  
made by women is consistently undervalued.*

The art industry is often held in high esteem, pioneering change with its progressive values and encouragement of diversity. The 2021/22 report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) found that the sector with the largest gender median pay gap was construction, where female employees received 76p for every £1 earned by a man. In comparison, the industries found to hold the smallest gender pay gap were the arts, entertainment and recreation. Despite this, the art world still has an undisputable gender pay gap problem. Work by female artists continues to sell for a fraction of the price received for comparable works by male artists. The artist, academic and author of *Women Can't Paint*, Dr Helen Gorrill, studied

the selling prices of 5,000 paintings and found that for every £1 a male artist earns for his work, a woman earns a mere 10p. Likewise, a review of recent auction prices shows a clear disparity between record figures for male and female artists. In 2019, Jeff Koons' *Rabbit* sold for a cool \$91m (£78m), compared to the sale of Jenny Saville's *Propped* at \$12.4m only the year before. It's even been found that when men sign an artwork, it increases in value but when a woman does the same, the work decreases in value. Last year in the Netherlands, researchers studying gendered pricing bias in artwork conducted a project in which they presented a computer-generated artwork and asked study participants to provide a rating based



Contemporary artist Joanna Gilbert in her North London studio.

on how much they liked the painting. One half of the participants saw a female name listed as the artist and the other half, saw a male name. Despite all participants seeing the same painting, higher ratings were given by participants who saw the male name linked to the piece. Why is women's artwork consistently devalued? In a recent interview with Sky News Arts & Entertainment reporter Bethany Minelle, contemporary artist Joanna Gilbert said there is simply no reason for such a discrepancy: "If you're looking at something, it doesn't matter who it was made by. If you love what you see, then the value that it has should be the value that it is no matter what gender or who it has been created by."

There is clearly a stigma towards female artists and devaluation of artwork produced by women. The sector needs to actively work towards change to continue the important work of championing gender and sexual diversity within the art world. Diversity is vital to creating a vibrant, innovative and thriving arts sector.

Progress has already been made. For instance, the annual Art Basel and UBS survey found that female artists now make up 40 per cent of private collections, up from 33 per cent in 2018. Further to this, in a recent BBC Radio 4 broadcast, "Recalculating Art", featuring curators and experts from across the industry, it was established that secondary market prices for pieces by female artists are now rising 29 per cent faster than the prices for art by male artists.

Representation and the championing of women artists is being demanded by audiences in the UK and beyond, and this is an exciting moment of change; all stakeholders across the industry must support women artists, including institutions, museums, galleries and corporates alike.

Change is happening, but we cannot afford to lose momentum on addressing the gender pay

disparity across the industry. There also needs to be more support for female artists to remain active in the art world throughout their careers. As in many other industries, pregnancy bias exists, and we have a responsibility to support pregnant and child-rearing artists, putting provisions in place to ease their transition back into part-time or full-time careers.

Flexibility and a broadening wealth of options to capitalise on their practice help to provide women artists with viable options to increase their financial security, and there has been a surge in demand for leased art collections, which allow artists to make an income on their works while still remaining in full ownership of them.

The gender pay gap is an issue across all industries. In the art world, women have long been excluded; from the modesty inspired exclusion from life-drawing rooms in the 1700s to a lack of equal representation in galleries even now. Change is needed in the industry, and it's time to recognise that some of the most pivotal contributions made to the sector have been by women.

Progress is happening; this year the four shortlisted artists for the Turner Prize are all women, and Frieze's Spotlight 2022 Women Artists of the 20th Century, curated by Camille Morineau, highlighted women pioneers of modern art.

Working towards actively fixing the gender disparity crisis in the art world is vital to encourage the next generation of talent. Seeing is believing; representation, visibility and financial support are critical to the success of the industry.

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Tazie Taysom, Commercial Director

This is an excerpt from an article originally published in The Independent.



# For the *love* of art

*Artiq co-founder Patrick McCrae sits down with Will Gompertz, Barbican's Artistic Director, for a conversation on the future of creative careers and why science and art shouldn't be seen as separate.*

Patrick Will, a huge thanks for chatting with me today! Artistic Director of Barbican isn't a title you get overnight. In your book, I read about meetings with Fredrick Ashton whilst working backstage at Sadler's Wells, the Tate, BBC, and it got me curious about the journey from then to now. How did you get here?

Will I left school at 16 under a cloud without many qualifications. My first job was stacking shelves in a supermarket called Brookeways, owned by a lovely family who'd recently moved in and bought the shop. They had this infectious entrepreneurial spirit and ran their business not only with the purpose of making money but equally to serve the public. Both

my parents spent their working lives in the NHS, but until then I hadn't realised you could have that same mentality of service within a commercial environment, like a supermarket. Because I had retail experience, I was able to get a job in a record store on Tottenham Court Road. Musicians and artists of all kinds would pop in to buy the latest albums; listen to the latest releases - it ended up being my first toe into the arts. I managed to get a job as a stagehand at Sadler's Wells, which back then was home to the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet. We, the stage crew, made sure the shows were up and running before disappearing next-door to the pub until the a well-placed bar bell called us in for the interval scene changes!







When the final curtain came down everybody would head back to the pub, including the dancers, actors, and musicians; it was just extraordinary. That's where I met Fredrick Ashton and Ninette de Valois, two giants from the world of dance and choreography, by simply working on the stage. But I never saw daylight! So, I moved on and became a runner in a production company. There I happened to meet someone I got along well with, and we ended up setting up a business together, promoting and publishing short films from around the world. It worked very well, eventually, and we sold it in due course to a major publisher. During this time I got to know some of the folks at the Tate, who suggested I apply for a job there. I thought I'd last 5 minutes, but it turned out to be 7 years. It was life changing. You'd secretly hope meetings would get cancelled just to wander around the exhibitions and displays; I fell in love with art.

I started a department called Tate Media, which was responsible for digital and some public programme. We set up a production company to make TV and films, including a feature with Aardman animation, which was finished after I had left to join the BBC as its first Art Editor. What a great job that was! It was a privilege. The BBC is not perfect but it is utterly brilliant in many ways and needs to be supported and cherished. I had eleven very happy years reporting across the arts forms: music, theatre, film, performance, and fine arts. But when the opportunity arose to join the Barbican as its Artistic Director, I couldn't resist – it has so much potential.

Patrick What an incredible career! In the past you've spoken about the need for museums to be disruptive, funny, and engaging. Now that you're in, you have the power to influence what is happening here at the Barbican.

Will The joy of the Barbican is the opportunity of working with arts in all its different forms. I am not one for composing themes because the really interesting stuff starts to happen if you stand back and observe.

When coming out of the Covid-lockdown in May 2021, we presented *Anything Goes* in the Barbican Theatre. That might not feel like a typical Barbican show, but it suited the moment perfectly. At that time, everyone just wanted joy. Here we had Sutton Foster, one of the great Broadway acts, leading the cast in this extraordinary production co-written by P.G. Wodehouse with lyrics by Cole Porter - it was sensational! And this autumn and winter, we are showing works by Iranian artist Soheila Sokhanvari in *The Curve* exhibition space. She's looking at female intellectuals and artists in Iran before the Revolution in 1979. And that clearly speaks to this moment. As an arts centre, you must be connected to what's happening. It can be historical, but how can it be relevant if it doesn't connect with the now? Barbican has the privilege to do this because of our ability to explore through so many different art forms, something few other places can do. It's the eclecticism of having, say, *Boy Blue* in theatre, *Sibelius* in concert, *Noguchi* in the Gallery, and *Blonde* in Cinema. When there are awkward combinations, there are surprising collaborations, and that's when it feels very Barbican to me.

*“You'd secretly hope meetings would get cancelled just to wander around the exhibitions”*



**Patrick** One thing I have noticed throughout your career, and it features quite significantly in your writing, is the need to think like an artist. Reading about it in one of your books, I felt if you just take that word - artist - and replace it with leader, one can see huge parallels to descriptions of good leadership often found in more business-focused books. The best artists see both the bigger picture and the details; they don't "fail" but pause for thought. What I have noticed throughout my career, and I am sure you must have too, is how creativity is valued second to business and other professions in our society. Why do you think this is?

**Will** There's a comment by Andy Warhol that business is the best art. It's a little facetious, but not wholly, and he was a brilliant businessman in so many ways. Setting up a business is hard; making it succeed is even harder. You've got a business; I had a business; it doesn't exist until the idea comes about, and you make it happen, creating something out of nothing. To me, that could be called art; it is undoubtedly a great act of imagination and creativity.

The issue is that we love to compartmentalise everything. You see this in education, with STEM and STEAM, the fact that science and art are separated. Science is an art, and art is a science. Look at Leonardo DaVinci or Piero della Francesca: these great characters of the past didn't differentiate the basic notion of using the human imagination to create something that didn't exist beforehand, be it a painting or a helicopter!

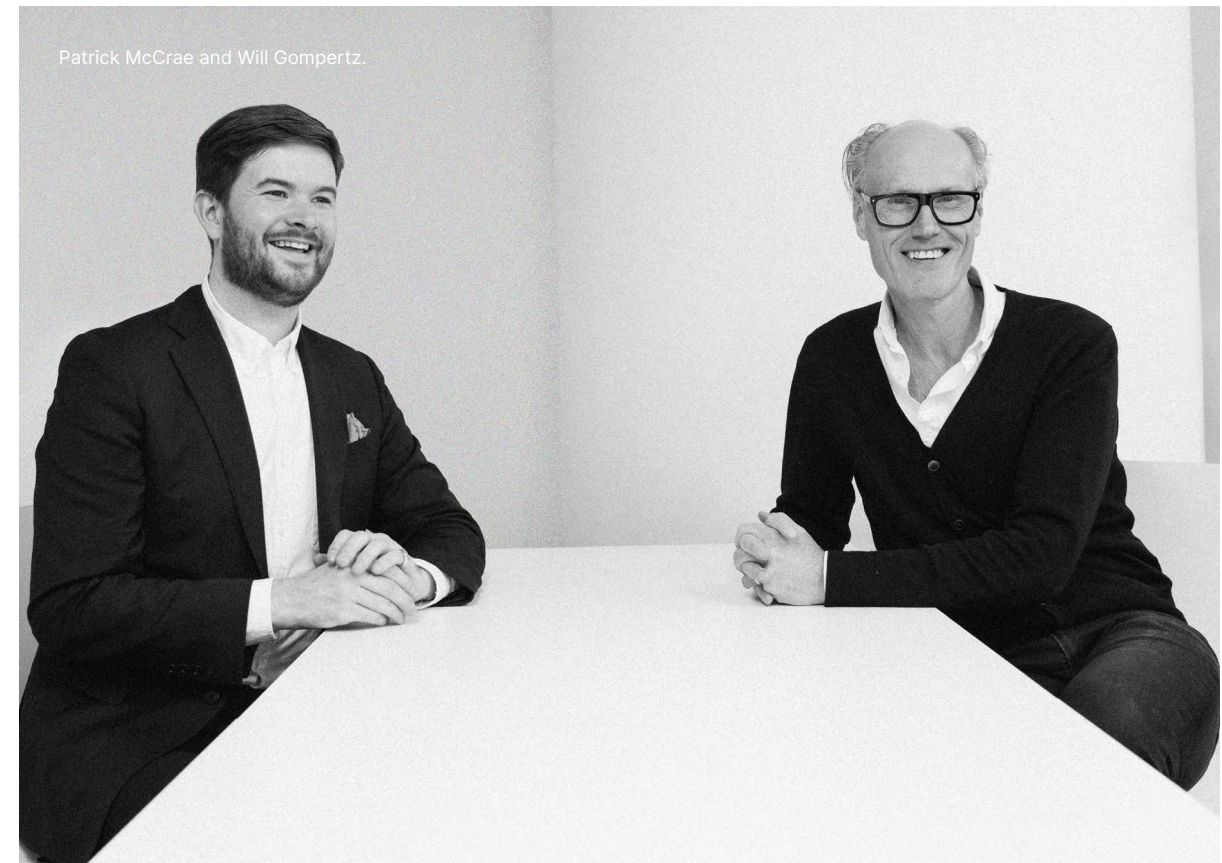
**Patrick** Is it more a question of changing the narrative? When leaving university and trying to imagine a future career, I thought that the arts probably weren't for me because of a worry about not being able to make money and support myself. Comparing that to embarking

on a legal career, it is much easier to envision that potential journey and where it might take you. But if we as a society change the narrative around the notion of creativity and the fact it is everywhere, perhaps it would start to pay off?

**Will** You're making such an important point: this is one of the reasons the arts are not as diverse and inclusive as they should be. When people at a school-leaving age are advised that they won't be able to make any money in the arts or have a proper career, that's then seen as a risky move. If you're wealthy, you can afford to take a punt; if you're not wealthy, you can't. Therefore, you end up with a self-selecting group of people who are in the arts, who run the arts, and it's not reflective of society as a whole. It is a partial affair for an area of activity often funded by the taxpayer, which is unacceptable. You're absolutely right; we need to change the narrative and make those pathways much more clear. We need to show that careers in the arts are viable choices, whether in arts administration, as a producer, or whatever it might be. It is a career choice that can pay, maybe not as much as a lawyer, but enough to have a good quality of life and give some form of financial security.

**Patrick** That's the foundation of Artiq - showing that creativity pays. Both that one can have a viable business and show that the career of an artist can also be financially viable. We're currently sitting in the Barbican, which is in the heart of the City of London, one of the largest financial institutions in the world. There are also tens of thousands of pieces of art around us on the walls of these City buildings, in corporate art collections. You've said we need to make every school an art school and every office an artist studio, which is a beautiful idea. What is the next step in achieving that?

Patrick McCrae and Will Gompertz.



**Will** I think it's doable in schools. The current system is based on a ridiculous exam culture, which is intrinsically negative and anxiety-inducing and has this perceived binary outcome of success or failure. Imagine if the approach focused on collaboration, creativity and curiosity; students are taught to ask exciting questions rather than regurgitating facts you can easily find on Google. There are enough people interested in this to move the agenda, not changing the curriculum but changing how it's taught. Applying this thought to the workplace is harder, but let's look at the Barbican as an example: Barbican celebrates its 40th birthday this year, and for that entire time, it's done much the same thing; exhibitions in the hall, concerts and plays in the theatre, film in the cinema. Today, this requires wading through trillions of emails, bureaucracy and noise,

yet we're doing the same thing that was done 40 years ago. There used to be more time for consideration, collaboration and gestation. We need to find a way to slow down and change the culture of constant digital communication, reducing it to something resembling more of a conversation, a collaborative practice.

**Patrick** In praise of slow. I quite agree. Finally, I want to ask about Barbican becoming a business incubator for creative businesses; something I read was a plan. Is this happening, and do you need a hand?

**Will** One thing that makes Barbican unique is where it is; we're in the City of London, funded by the City of London, essentially a product of the City of London. Settled by the Romans in 47 AD, it's always been mercantile, always looked out to the world and had an exchange



with it. It has goods and services; Barbican has artists and ideas. There's a sense of enterprise within the DNA of the mud that Barbican is built on. And artists, as we have discovered, are incredibly enterprising. We're in a position where we could support artists to develop ideas that have commercial potential, with businesses in the City of London offering their skills and services to support, whether financial, legal or whatever it may be. We could build something from the grassroots, from our local community, to give people a platform and a voice they don't have, but also a career. This is a serious part of what we intend to do in the coming years, not just being an arts centre but an arts education and enterprise centre, creating new pathways into the arts.

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# Art and Power: The Impact of Cultural Enrichment on our Workplaces

Since the 1950s, it has been written and understood that creativity is a powerful factor in the human psyche, and throughout the 21st century, numerous studies have honed these explorations producing tangible results that show the positive impact art has on us. In particular, the study of art and wellbeing in the workplace has allowed artists and agencies to focus their attention on the importance of delivering cultural and creative programming for productivity, happiness and feelings of belonging. Post-pandemic, those feelings of belonging and enrichment are uniquely explored in a recent study by Brookfield Properties and The School of Life. In their research, they discovered that 75% of those with enriched offices (a significant art offering within the office) preferred working in their office to their home, compared to

just 53% of those in so-called 'lean office' environments (corporate branding on display and limited artistic intervention). There is now it seems a rationale for art and cultural enrichment in the working environment not only as a tool for wellbeing and productivity but as a mechanism for connection to community and people, something to be utilised in encouraging a relationship between public and private spaces. This isn't a nice to have either - it's a necessity. The City of London has lost 14% of its restaurants since 2020, and in August this year, London office space availability hit its highest peak in fifteen years. Without a consistent uptick in the number of employees engaging and using their workplaces to work - and consequently eat, entertain themselves, explore and critically spend - we

will not succeed in credible and sustained occupancy in our cities post-pandemic. It seems art is one way to advance our journey there. Saff Williams, Curatorial Director at Brookfield Properties Europe says: "I have witnessed first-hand the positive impact that a culturally enriched environment can have on both occupiers and the wider community, and the importance of the use of art and culture to create a workspace that inspires and provides people with a sense of pride and increased levels of happiness."

The business case for investing in art and culture across the workspace landscape is irrefutable. It improves our wellbeing by up to 32%; it's being prescribed by the NHS to help with mental health and degenerative conditions, and enriched working environments are tempting workers back to our cities that desperately need economic stability.

It must become inherent in our planning of workplaces and spaces to incorporate art and culture. Sourcing from the local community and engaging with public and private audiences allows for a shared sense of belonging and ownership. Ultimately, it helps to generate a shared responsibility fostering successful work and leisure environments.

Tazie Taysom, Commercial Director

Below: *Queer Frontiers: An Exhibition Celebrating the Work of Ashton Attisz* was a month-long exhibition celebrating Pride London 2022. Installed at Brookfield Properties' Citypoint, it was co-curated by Artiq and Saff Williams of Arts Brookfield.

Photography courtesy of David Parry/PA Wire.







In the

mean

while

RIVERSIDE HOUSE



*Meanwhile placemaking is a transformative way of approaching empty spaces that is changing our perception of vacant buildings and is laying the foundation for a new industry.*

Cities are constantly in flux; they are ever-evolving and never cease to develop. Yet, there are many buildings, sometimes entire areas, that remain vacant for extended periods of time. Sometimes, this results from the decline of a whole industry, forcing businesses to shut down and people to move. In cities, it is more commonly due to speculation about future increases in value or delays and disputes around planning. Many are not suitable to be lived in, but they can function as temporary offices or creative workspaces.

The idea of utilising empty spaces before permanent developing plans are set in motion or during the time between tenancies is nothing new. During the 1970s, New York's Soho became paradigmatic for cities around the world by proving the benefits of allowing artists to live and work in old warehouses and decaying tenement districts, slowly transforming them into valuable real estate, the most celebrated (and notorious) example being the Chelsea Hotel.

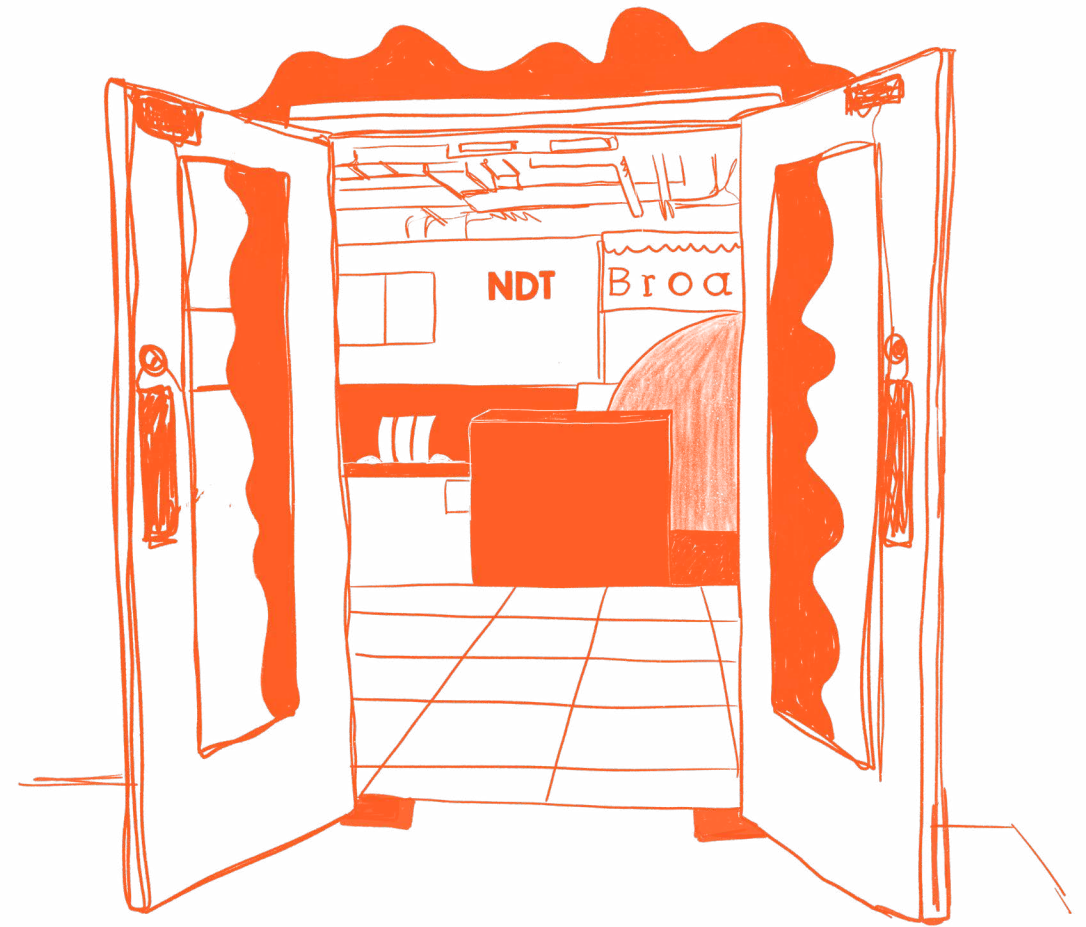
Half a decade later, meanwhile use of empty spaces has become a lot more common, especially in large metropolitan areas where the increasing property prices are showing no signs of slowing down.

However, one of the differences in 2022 compared to the 1970s is the ever-growing emphasis on ESG priorities. The link between consumer values and brand purpose has grown significantly in the last decade, and global events such as the Covid-19 Pandemic and concerns about climate change have only sped

this up<sup>1</sup>. It is no longer enough to deliver good products or services; businesses should ideally prove their dedication to specific ethical criteria; they need to do good while making money.

NDT Broadgate is a brilliant example from recent years of what can be accomplished when vibrant and energetic artistic organisations and landowners work together. The first of its kind, NDT Broadgate was a project in a partnership between New Diorama Theatre and British Land made possible through investments from Arts Council England and Jerwood Arts.

British Land is a leading UK property company with sustainability and social value embedded in every aspect of its operations. New Diorama Theatre, one of the most influential studio theatres in the UK, saw its industry shattered by the pandemic. Once the world slowly started opening up again, practitioners within theatre went from focusing on surviving to recovering. Launched in August 2021, NDT Broadgate was a 20,000 sq ft rehearsal complex offering free space to independent artists and organisations in the City of London. Based at British Land's Broadgate campus, it was an extension of the site's existing social programme focusing on access to opportunities and commitment to sustainability. During the one-year temporary occupancy, 108,924 h of free space was gifted out, and 9-months into the residence, 656 companies and groups had produced 213 new shows<sup>2</sup>. Tenants and funding were selected via randomised lottery, eliminating individual



biases, nepotism, and levelling barriers to access.

Before vacating the space in July 2022, New Diorama Theatre and British Land published 'Notes from an Impossible Space: NDT Broadgate and the Future of Artist Support': a blueprint of this project, encouraging similar partnerships to be replicated globally.

Another success story is that of SET Studios, a community organisation that financially and creatively supports grassroots artistic production, offering affordable studios to over 500 artists. In March 2021, SET Studios opened a 140,000 sq ft site in Woolwich in Riverside House - the former Greenwich Council and HMRC offices. One of the largest meanwhile spaces in London, it is one of the most affordable for artists to rent, with the

250 studios priced from £0.9 per sq ft PCM<sup>3</sup>. The authority sold the building in 2017. The first development plan was filed in 2018 but went nowhere, with a second application to develop submitted in 2020. SET moved into the building shortly after for an initial guaranteed 18-month period, thanks to partnering with LOWE, a London-based guardian housing and vacant property management specialist. Simon Hall, director of the building owner MDPL, said how "[our] priority for the duration of the project elaboration period is to maximise social value for the community" and "on a wider scale, as one of the largest studio spaces in London, we can see changes to the social landscape contributing to improving the image of Woolwich. As it is in our best business interests, we see our cooperation with LOWE

as the perfect example of a win-win solution."

Johanna De Verdier is an artist and a tenant at Riverside House. As a recent graduate, having a studio after university is far from a guarantee: "being at SET has made a massive difference for me. I have been able to explore what my studio practice is outside of the institutional context."

When speaking about how many artists are opting to leave London due to the high living costs, she insists the cost-saving aspect outweighs the temporary nature of the contract: "I've been at SET for two years now, and although it is a meanwhile contract that could technically end with short notice, what it has given me far outweighs the potential stress of a sudden move. But all benefits aside, I wish more actions were taken to lower the price of working spaces for creatives in London; organisations like SET are great; they create space that enables early-career artists to function in this city. However, it's sprung from a rather desperate situation. The possibility of being able to afford a studio space depends on how quickly buildings are being developed into housing you most likely will never be able to afford yourself; it can make you feel a bit cynical. I'd love to see more initiatives that value giving artists a sense of safety and security."

Explaining the perks of meanwhile use to occupants is an easy pitch: the lease might be temporary, but you will be paying under average commercial rates, which for many emerging creative practitioners, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations is a dealbreaker to whether they can take a leap of faith to realise their dreams.

Arguing the case of meanwhile use to landowners and property developers should be equally easy to assert as it also holds significant benefits for them. There are great financial overhead costs associated with empty sites, especially in urban areas, which the property owner is likely to bear. Insurers often consider a vacant property to represent a greater risk than one occupied; it is more prone to vandalism and squatters, requiring additional security to be arranged and paid for. In some areas, councils have the right to charge up to 50% extra on the standard rate of council tax if your property has been empty and unfurnished for two years or more<sup>4</sup>.

Beyond financial benefits, showing interest and understanding of local needs can foster a better relationship between developers and the local community. Thinking and acting on ESG proactively, rather than reactive, is key to future-proofing your business and increasing its long-term value. Proving your company's values-based commitments through practical



A snapshot from Johanna De Verdier's studio in SET Woolwich, Riverside House.

and genuine interventions that benefit the communities important to your stakeholders will lead to their increased engagement. It can also distinguish your business in the changing talent landscape, where attracting and retaining skilled employees is becoming increasingly more difficult. Nonetheless, allowing for meanwhile use of empty spaces is not the antidote to bad development, nor should it be limited to very short-term interventions. If done carelessly, meanwhile placemaking can be useful in the short term to those operating them but fail to connect in any way to the long-term development of the places where they pop up. However, if done intentionally, it can have immense potential to create both social and economic value<sup>5</sup>. Providing social infrastructure can help creativity to flourish, and focusing on ways to localise and share the

benefits more widely within the community can facilitate more inclusive economic growth. Enhancing the attractiveness of an area (which is not exclusively related to appearance, but the increasing importance placed on community and wellbeing) will eventually lead to rising land value, thus benefiting future developments. There are benefits and detriments of both short and long-term interventions and investments; adapting a meanwhile approach allows for the perks of both. It is here for a good time, just not a very long time.

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Lovisa Ranta, Digital Executive



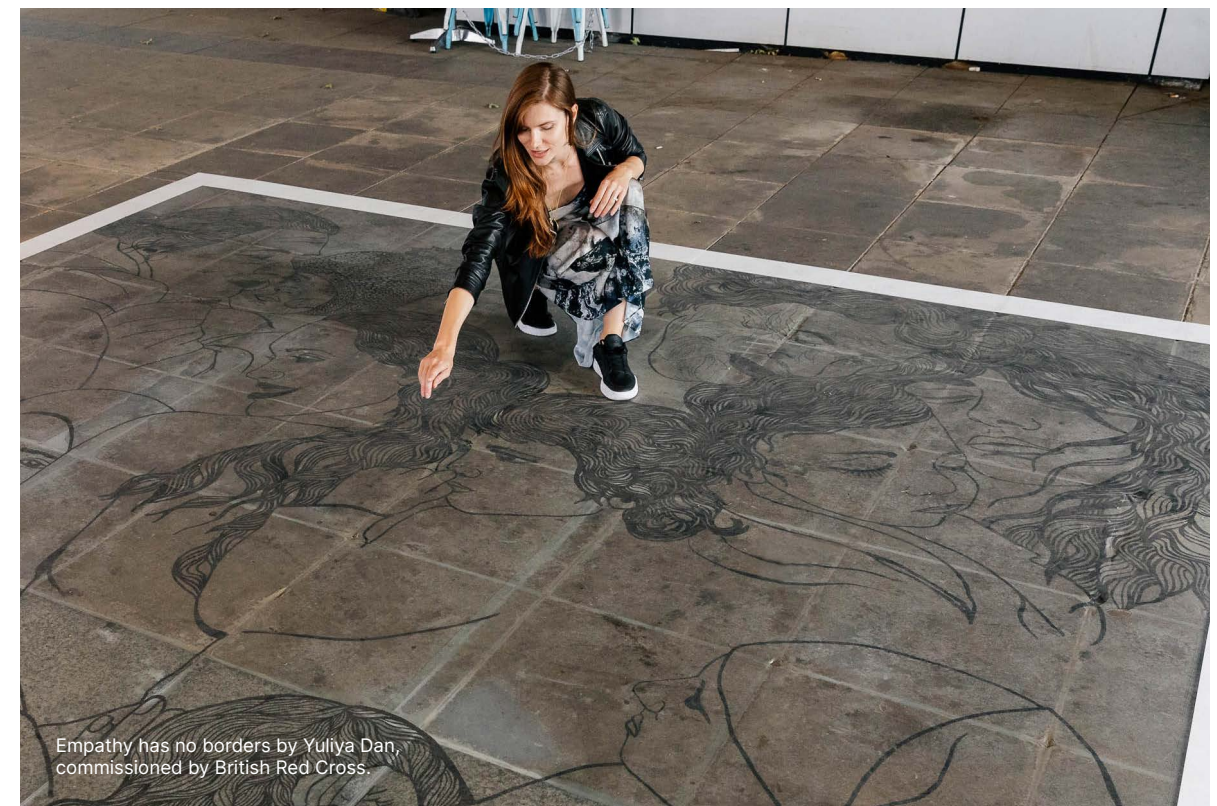
# Public display of expression

*City Vistas was an inspiring street-level exhibition spanning a range of businesses and offices across the Culture Mile Business Partnership District.*



From multi-national banks and international law firms to charity organisations, a beauty salon and a cocktail bar, each of these businesses had the opportunity to showcase their interests and values through the art in their windows. Curated by Artiq and delivered by Culture Mile in partnership with the City of London Corporation, the aim of City Vistas was to encourage office workers to return to the City and for the public to come and enjoy the area by following the trail of artwork. These spaces exhibited emerging artists as part of an overarching initiative to increase footfall in the area after the pandemic. Running from July until October 2022, the summer pop-up exhibition saw two differing sectors, art and business, come together for an inspiring alliance creating a vibrant and revived central business district<sup>1</sup>.

Where passers-by were present, they may not have previously engaged with these powerful, sometimes overbearing buildings; City Vistas was a channel in which businesses were able to help people gain a little insight into their principles and social intentions, giving them a personality. Each company that took part in the exhibition was able to, through their choice of artist, showcase the organisation's interests or Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) priorities, creating an installation that demonstrated their values and shone a light on the diverse companies operating in the area. For many, the City can be a place that feels as though it belongs only to those working there. The high-rise buildings can be intimidating, and while there is a buzz, the area very much flows with the 9 to 5 workers. Some shops and restaurants are only open Monday to Friday in the area. With more people working from home for some, if not most, of the week following the pandemic, the area further feels like a product of its use. Culture Mile and the City of London took this as a fresh start to encourage





Interpreter VI by Betty Leung,  
installed at One Bartholomew.



engagement and use of the City. City Vistas was an exciting initiative, using creativity as a draw to get people visiting and taking part in the area as well as livening up the lobbies for its main subscribers.

Selected artists included, amongst others, Betty Leung. Through sculpture, installation, photography and video, her practice is concerned with social, economic and political complexities and can be read as an ongoing investigation into human behaviour. She creates hybrid imagery using AI tools and prints it on fabric, resulting in large-scale textile sculptures, one of which was installed at One Bartholomew in partnership with banking company BNP Paribas.

Ukrainian artist Yuliya Dan was commissioned by the Red Cross to create a mural in response to the attack on her home country. Installed as a floor mural outside Leaps & Grounds, a speciality coffee social enterprise supporting refugee women to take steps towards their dream careers, it featured a Ukrainian mother holding her child; a family consisting of three generations of women paying tribute to a family killed during an attack on Odesa. Others were deliberately left faceless for the audience to imagine that for every person we see, there are thousands that we don't.

Displayed at 125 London Wall, Naomi Vona is a London-based Italian mixed media artist. Her collages combine found objects such as vinyl covers, photos and postcards with playful or ultra-contemporary interventions to create a new context for the original shots. Using pens, paper, coloured tape and stickers, Naomi transforms each image through the lens of her interpretation and experiences. Installed in a temporary empty retail unit along London Wall, her work echoes the space's original purpose, adding life and colour for the passers-by to enjoy.

Introducing these emerging artists into the area attracted members of both communities - visitors and office workers - to the shared

space and promoted an exciting and welcoming environment.

This public-realm installation, made open and available to everybody through the external street-level outside lobbies, receptions, or storefront windows, perfectly embodies Artiq's core goal; creating impact with culture. Indeed, this three-month exhibition impacted both artists and audiences, with both sides gaining exposure within sectors that may not previously have been readily available to them, all while injecting intrigue and vibrance into the City.

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Sophie Viet-Jacobsen, Creative Designer

Photography by Odera Okoye, courtesy of Culture Mile.





Betty Leung is a London-based Australian multidisciplinary artist of Chinese heritage. Twisting and tactile, with endless permutations, each piece embodies fragments of the artist's identity, including the migration experience. Exploring different kinds of tension; between chance and control; between digital and human; between different cultures, Betty's work speaks of a push-pull experience common amongst people who grow up across multiple countries and cultures, trying to navigate the differences and subtleties in customs and sensibilities. The very digital or artificial elements act as a time stamp for the work, capturing a particular point in AI development and human-computer collaboration.



# The Rise & Impact of the Emerging Artist & Collector on the Art Market

The art market can be described as a rhythmic, fluctuating and oftentimes a highly volatile shape shifter, that responds and reacts to the trends and motions pulled from the social, political, and economic affairs of the world. Catalysed by the global Covid-19 pandemic, the continuous advancements in technology and digital opportunities as well as key social events, such as the Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements, we are now witnessing a powerful growth and desire for ownership of the works of young and emerging artists seen not only by collectors and galleries but also within auction houses too, a change in the market that arguably can be attributed to the power of consumer demand.

The consumer demand arguably fuelling this transitional rise in art historical literature and emphasising the prominence of emerging artists at auction, is that of the Millennial Collector – a broad term, but roughly identifying those born between 1981 and 1996. A 2021 report from Art Basel and UBS found that millennial collectors were in fact the

highest spenders on fine art in 2020, with 30% having spent over \$1 million on art, with an average spend of \$228,000.

Millennial spenders have not seen perhaps the easiest time in accumulating wealth when compared to the same time frame as the previous generation, known as the Boomers, mostly due to recessions and other global events causing uncertainty. However, this does not seem to be detracting this demographic from engaging with and influencing a high value and elitist marketplace. In fact, young collectors in general tend to place greater emphasis on experiential purchases rather than accumulating items that will accrue wealth or form a sense of legacy. Additionally, greater spending has been linked to money saved during the pandemic and by the increase of young professionals choosing out of inner city living.

Other prominent factors influencing young collectors towards spending on art can be seen through their increased use of digital platforms.

A 2020 Hiscox Online Trading Report found that 69% of Millennials had purchased art online from March to September and 92% of buyers under the age of 35 regularly use Instagram for art related purposes – emphasising the power of this social media tool for connecting with and discovering new talent. The rise of the digital space within the art world has also led to greater accessibility for young collectors. Traditionally, an understanding of the historical canon, the auction house structures, and a desire to attend prestigious gallery events would reduce the numbers of people feeling comfortable to explore their own tastes and interests within the art world. Today, we are seeing young people taking ownership of the digital realm and influencing others to become more aware of art and artists often taking alternative viewpoints and stances side stepping the one-note European teachings of Art History. Examples include Katy Hessel, the founder of The Great Women Artist's platform that now has an Instagram following of 298,000, and Alayo Akinkugbe, the curator of the platform A Black Art History which has risen to a followership of 55,500. These are only a few examples of digital spaces that have invited a wider spectrum of viewers to lean into the arts whilst inspiring wider, deeper, and bolder conversations to take place. Often this broader engagement has allowed marginalised and under-represented communities of artists to step into the light and rightfully be seen. A shift in values and motives is another key factor associated with the rise of the young collector and their sway on the demand for the Ultra-Contemporary. Twenty and thirty-something collectors often seek a deeper and more profound connection or emotional experience with the art they purchase – they are more socially conscious consumers in general. Due to this, they may be less likely to invest in Old Masters and other classical pieces, of which collectors are often advised to invest

in due to their stable placement in the market being seen as a more solid investment when set against inflation. Instead, we're seeing a confidence to buy contemporary pieces that utilise unconventional materials, championing the lesser celebrated artists whose works are offering narratives and visual reflections, that can connect us to real people and real world events – thus amplifying the political or moral views of the collector.

This autumn the annual report, published by Artprice, Frieze London, Paris+ and Art Basel simultaneously, observed astounding data to solidify the placement of young artists within the market, their highlights were as follows:

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## \$420 million

was generated by Ultra-Contemporary artworks (July 2021-June 2022) which saw a 28% increase compared to the previous year.

## 8

places are held by women in the Top 10 artists under 40

## 2,670

artists under 40 at auction: 5 times more than there were 20 years ago

## \$618,000 → \$4.9 million

The increase of average price of the 5 best results

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Perhaps understandably this hike in sales for the younger and more emerging artist has been called into question and speculated with some trepidation as to whether it is and can be sustainable, and whether it is altogether right, given the speed at which the art history of today appears to be being written.

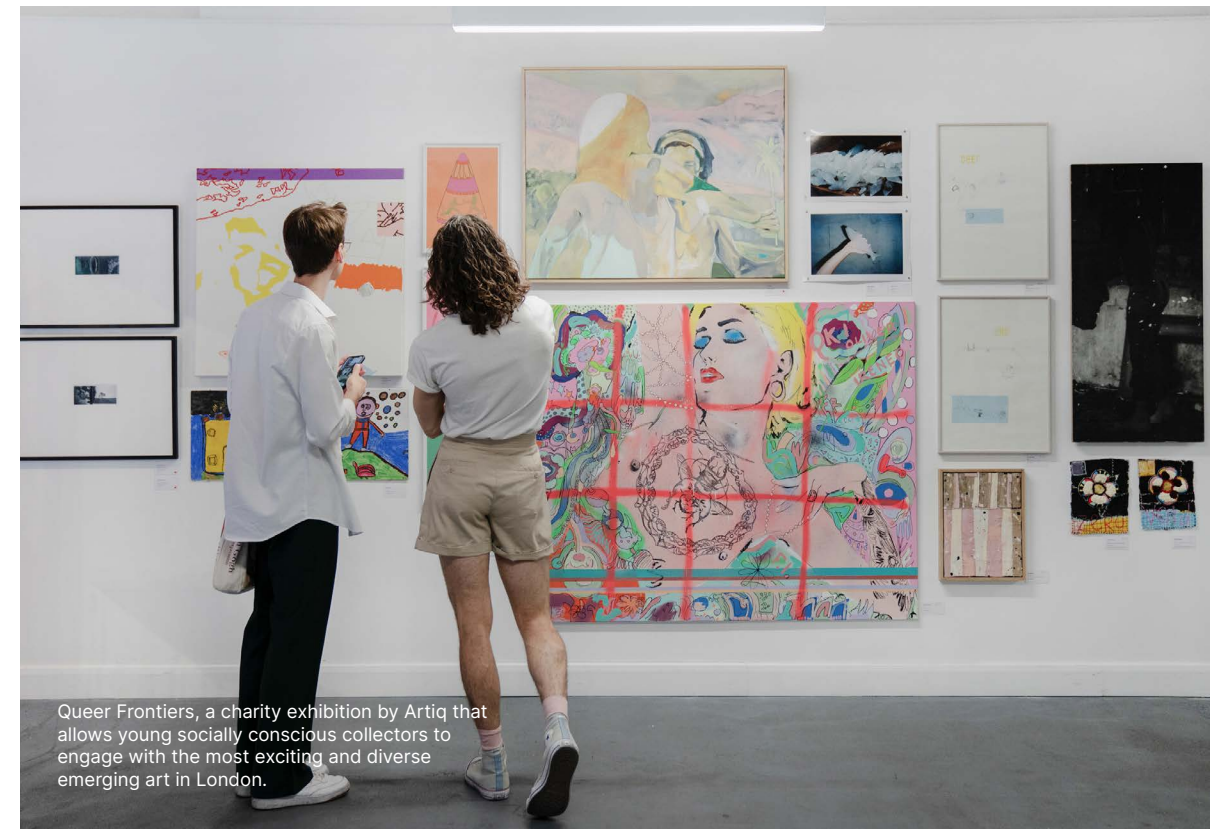
A leading concern is the lack of art world criticism being documented to support such rapid changes, for example the term Ultra-Contemporary is not recognised as a critical term but more of a market label assigned to serve this new segment that takes up only 2.7%. Historically, art criticism would help to form the basis in which an artist's career could be stabilised allowing them to be positioned on within the primary market with greater financial assurance. Furthermore, the artist's studio is now linked more directly to the auction house meaning that there is a blurred line happening between the primary and secondary markets.

Due to the demand for emerging artists the auction houses have begun selling the work of artists in the style of the primary market, taking work straight from the studio, boycotting critical acclaim whilst building greater links to galleries and feeding what has been described as a 'feeding frenzy'. In 2005 Christie's inaugurated their First Open sales. Phillips followed in 2015 launching their New Now sales which was designed to offer emerging artists alongside blue-chip names to now, as Sotheby's in 2021 introduced The Now evening auction, described as the most coveted, cutting edge works on the market. In their sale on March 2nd of this year, 10 of the 22 lots were by emerging artists whose works were made between 2018 and 2021, identifying the demand in buyers for something worthy of the humorous label 'wet-painting', reserved for the newest of the new on the market!

The perhaps tumultuous impact of the auction houses selling young emerging artists is that

their prices are often highly inflated, blown up to staggering and eye-watering highs that are extremely hard to maintain placing pressure on these young artists in a crowded marketplace. Sarah Douglas, ArtNews Magazine's editor-in-chief, conducted a study in which she tracked the period between 2013 and 2015 that saw the prices of many young painters in their 20s and 30s skyrocket, then followed their steep drop in prices in 2016 when the hype surrounding their work wore off. She explains that the growth was driven by buyers who saw the work of emerging artists as a financial investment rather than by collectors interested in supporting the artist's long-term success. With the boom of what we're seeing for these emerging artists now, galleries have not had the time to carefully inch the prices of their young talents up gradually to ensure their stability and ultimately their longevity. Instead, when the demand for 'trending' artists outweighs the supply, the galleries will prioritise reputable collectors who they feel will hold onto the works and institutions they believe will add distinction to the artist – leaving the remaining works to be fought over at auction, pushing prices way past what would be accepted in the gallery setting.

Worthwhile Magazine identifies examples of this rise and fall citing the sale of *The Breastfeeding Talk*, 2021 a painting by Loie Hollowell sold at Frieze London in October 2021 by Pace Gallery for \$175,000, while her *Portrait of a Woman with Green Hair*, 2015 sold in 2021 at Sotheby's in Hong Kong for \$1,032,874. Prominent artists such as Jade Fadojutimi, Avery Singer, Amoako Bofo and Flora Yukhnovich all follow similar patterns. The Art Newspaper identified many who have vocalised their scepticism. The artist Issy Wood took to Instagram to denounce the 'scumbags' auctioning her works. Giles Huxley-Parlour says the current trend 'will not hold steady in the long term'. He continues by stating, 'for



Queer Frontiers, a charity exhibition by Artiq that allows young socially conscious collectors to engage with the most exciting and diverse emerging art in London.

every flash in the pan, there is still a very solid market for historically important artists whose prices are consistent and have been going up for decades.' Marc Glimcher, president, and chief executive of Pace Gallery agrees yet suggests, 'that's not to say there's not real consensus around some of these artist's work; when Picasso was in his 40s, there was real consensus around his work.' With mounting evidence to suggest our current art world buzz and trend around the emerging artist will not be sustained, especially, one might add, with potential financial difficulties awaiting the UK moving into 2023... It is important to celebrate what this boom has meant for the representation of art and artists. The Ultra-Contemporary market is, in contrary to traditional models, being led by women and black artists, fiercely unrepresented in the history books and in our global museums and institutions, they are in this moment being

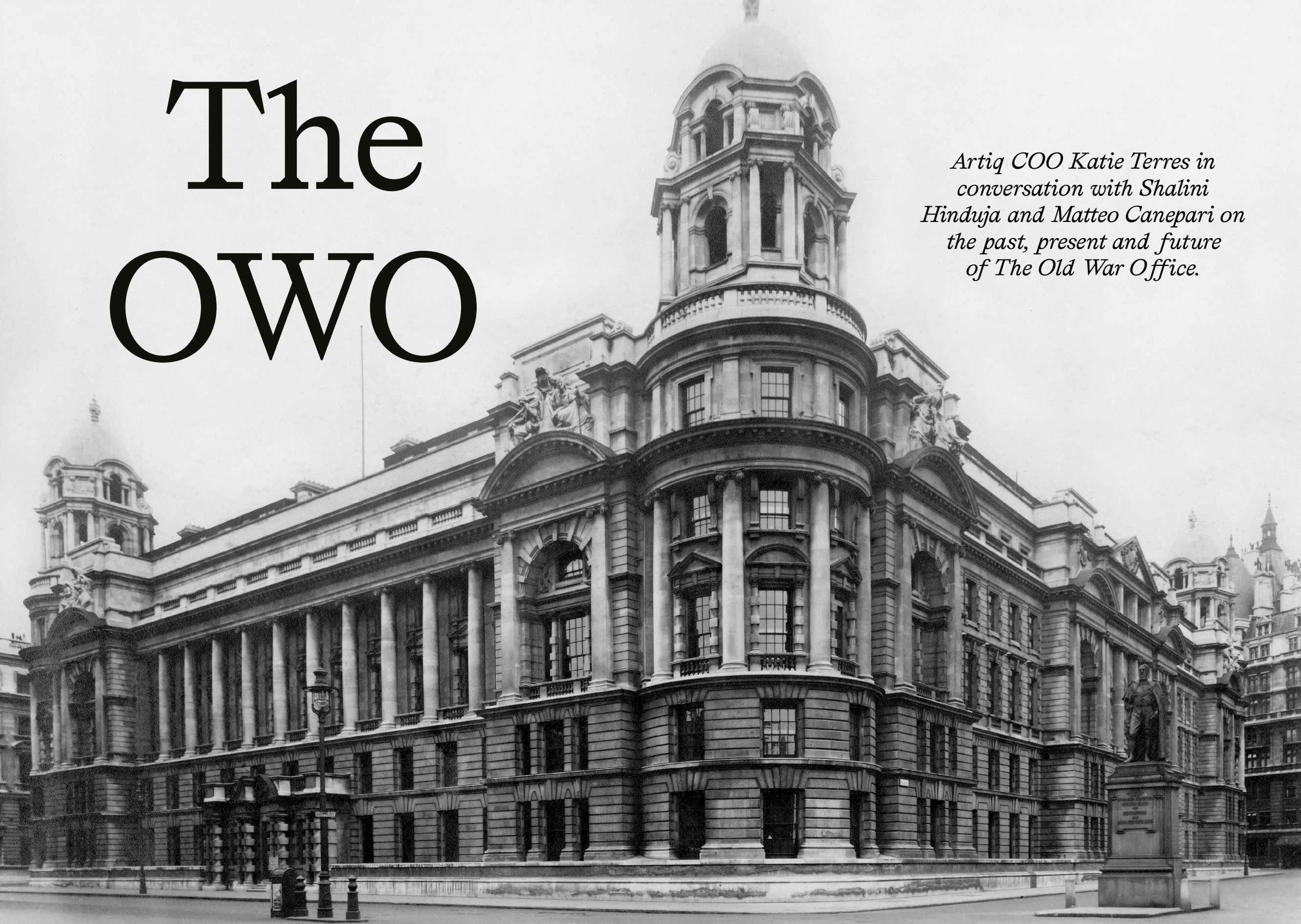
acknowledged fully in art history. Marking their emergence by being leaders within the market sales of auctions, fairs and in galleries – this is the critical component of what must be maintained and given leverage to survive. Demand for women and black artists must be observed and allowed to permeate into gallery models, auction sales, art historical teachings and curatorial practises not only to attract a wider, younger, more global consumer base but to support the continuation of these artist's careers, the ones who are observing and recording the extraordinary era of development, advancement and change that we're all living through. It is arguable that this trend of generational support for artists – the young collectors supporting the artists of their peer group – will continue to be seen as those new generations question and seek their place and their voice within global communities.

Beth Fleming, Lead Curator



# The OWO

*Artiq COO Katie Terres in  
conversation with Shalini  
Hinduja and Matteo Canepari on  
the past, present and future  
of The Old War Office.*





**Katie** Shalini and Matteo - How did you become involved in the Old War Office, and what are your roles in transforming the building from government powerhouse into the luxury destination that will be The OWO?

**Shalini** I represent the shareholders who invested in the project when it was acquired in 2014. I also oversee key aspects of the project, particularly the interior design, the art collection, marketing and some of the other visual elements of the project.

**Matteo** I am an architect, and am Head of Design and Planning for The OWO. I was brought into this project immediately after the acquisition in 2015. It's the first time that I've been involved in a project from day one until completion. I started as a consultant initially and then during the journey, switched to the other side of the table as one of the project staff. So I have been able to see the project from different angles.

**Katie** Well, it's certainly an exciting project to work on. It will be the first Raffles hotel to open in the UK. How did The OWO and Raffles partnership come about? How did this collaboration feel right for the building and its history?

**Matteo** This is a mixed-use development. Alongside the first Raffles Hotel in London, there are 85 private apartments with their own dedicated residential amenities. We carried out many feasibility studies at the beginning of the project and we ended up with a 50/50 split between the hotel and residences - this excludes the areas set aside for restaurants and bars. The design of the hotel component began without the input of any external hotel operator partner. Raffles came on board later and Shalini can talk a little bit more about the selection process for this, but we had a

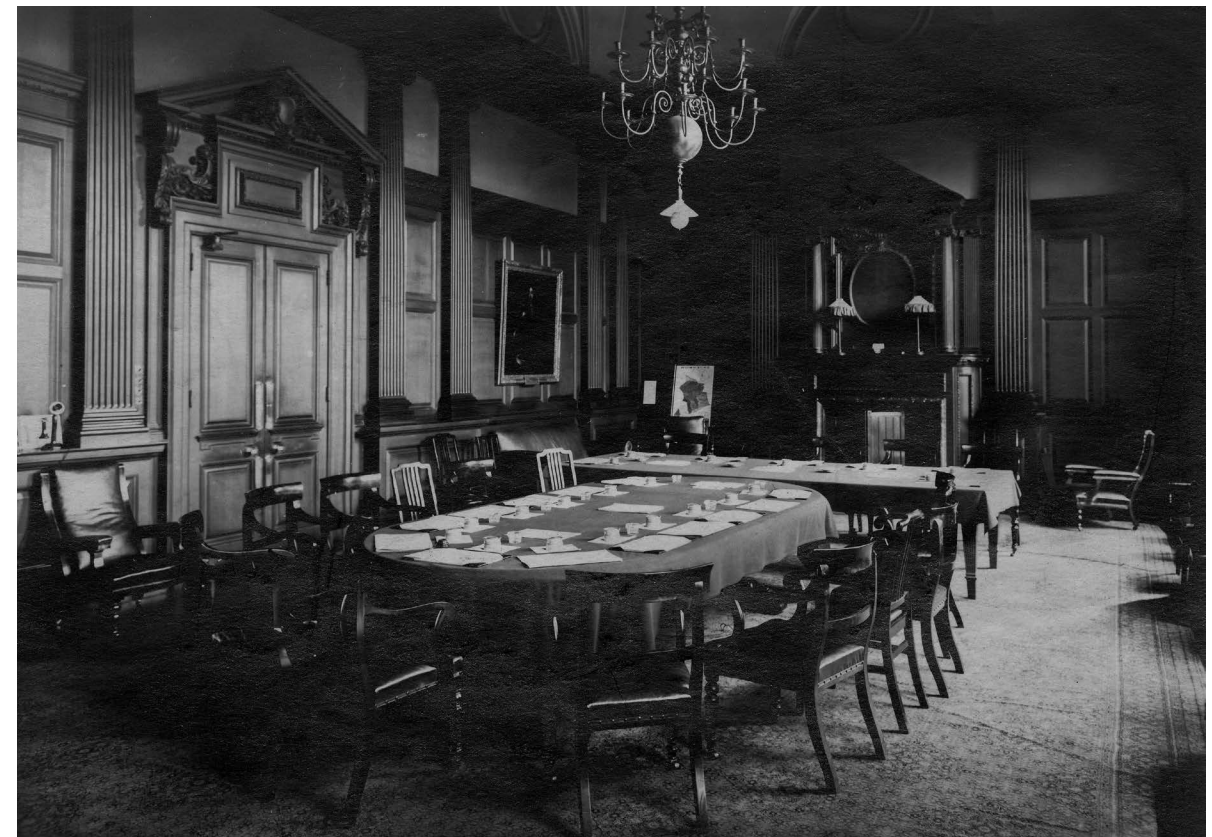
clear vision from the beginning. The idea of respecting the history of the building and trying to give something back to society was core. And so, when Raffles came along, they embraced our vision.

**Shalini** Normally, one would approach a hotel operator and together select the hotel designer, but we did it the other way around. So, we had our hotel designer on board (Thierry Despont) in early 2016 and then there was a selection process that we went through to choose the hotel operator. We had lots of different operators come and present to us. Raffles was the clear winner because of the brand's experience and connection with unique architecture. If you look at all the properties in the Raffles portfolio, they have something distinct about them.

**Katie** It does seem like the perfect choice. Can you tell us a little bit more about your interaction, your interest in, and your participation in the art world?

**Shalini** I don't have an art background, but I've always had a keen eye for it and I have become involved in various institutions over the last ten or fifteen years, such as the Tate South Asian Acquisition Committee, which I joined about seven years ago. London is an amazing city to be in - we're sitting in the heart of an area surrounded by institutions like the Royal Academy and the National Gallery. Working with Matteo has been great because he's also got a keen interest in art and has a very, very good eye. We have very different tastes, but we have been able to put them together.

**Matteo** When we started looking at artworks, if there were two options, usually Shalini liked the one on the right, and I the one on the left. Now we generally ask for three options...we've found a good balance!





**Katie** Yes, finding a happy medium is important! Has there been anything that stuck out and guided your consideration in this way?

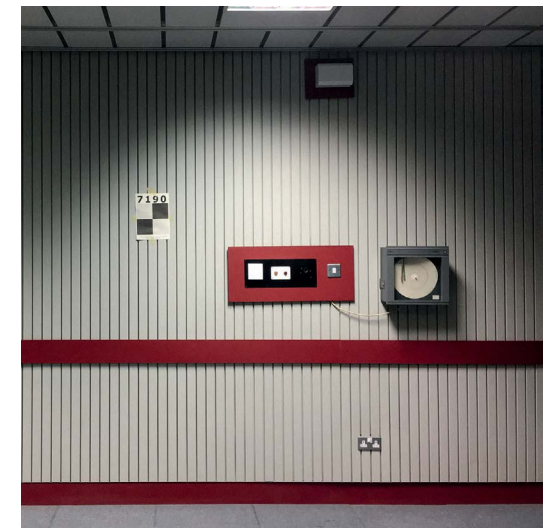
**Matteo** The inspiration for this project has been the building itself and the fascinating people who worked in it. It's been extremely stimulating. It has been great exploring what people were doing at the time the building was still in use as Britain's War Office and thinking about how we could re-imagine the spaces in a completely different environment and era. It has been a secret building in the past, which will open next year for the first time to the public. Most of our designers took a lot of inspiration from all these stories.

**Shalini** I think for us, subliminally, the building spoke to us very early on, partly because it has amazing architecture, but also, every time you walk into the building, you feel the energy of the past. This is the strongest inspiration.

A good example would be our Champagne Lounge. I remember when we looked at this triple-height ceiling and said, "what do we do?" Through an exciting collaboration, and after spending time with the designers and showing them the space, we've commissioned an incredible light installation.

**Katie** I think one of my most wonderful moments in the building, was when one of the artists, Jyoti Bharwani, was walking around the building, and we were in a Corner Suite and she stood back and said how she was never going to forget this moment. She was so excited by the history and presence of the building.

**Shalini** The experience for every individual is unique. The fact that we can keep going back into the building and never get tired of it, makes you realise just how many layers of substance there are in the building for us to keep discovering.



Remnants of the past: photographs taken on site by Matteo Canepari before construction began.

**Matteo** We always wanted to create meaningful connections with the building's history. Even if the art is something that is very contemporary, there is still a connection with the history of the building. We want to honour it, and respect it with an eye to the future.

**Katie** There are several themes that run through the art collection such as innovation during the war and return to nature. With the considerable amount of thought given to the narrative that is told through the artwork, could you tell us why the art collection at The OWO is so important?

**Shalini** I think, when we first met Artiq, you'll remember we needed some sort of theoretical framework and identified four themes. So, we chose well, and that's very much a credit to you and your guidance. You start with a larger vision, then you split that into further little sections. Those sections helped us tremendously.

**Matteo** This is a commercial project and we needed to find the right balance between aspirations and cost. We needed to cover the residential component, the guestrooms, and the public areas. That has meant structuring the collection whilst having these areas in mind, and understanding where we can afford to be more ambitious.

**Shalini** One of the things I remember feeling quite daunted about at first, and less so now, is scale. There was artwork that I loved, but I knew that you'd need a magnifying glass walking down the corridor to be able to see it. We had to disqualify some things because the building is so very large. The ceiling height in some places is extremely high and we're talking about a three-meter-wide corridor. So, when you're walking down the corridor in the centre

of those three meters - it's quite a distance away from the wall.

**Matteo** At the same time, it gave us the opportunity to open up a discussion around major works where it's not often easy to find spaces for. The OWO can accommodate large pieces.

**Katie** With that in mind, what has been the biggest challenge, and conversely, the most exciting aspect of building the art collection?

**Matteo** Time. In the sense that it's been a very long journey. Everything we started discussing with you, with other artists, with entities, we started maybe three or four years ago. And it takes all these years to get to a point where you have something in place and even when you don't have the physical artwork, you know that is going to happen. But the resilience we have is not just the two of us, it's the entire team. Without this commitment and shared vision, it's very hard. Having such a well-balanced team help keep up the momentum.

**Shalini** And you know, art is something that everyone usually leaves for the end - we didn't do that. It was very much a profound strategy that for me especially, came from my heart. I was very clear that I wanted it to be special and to stand out. Bringing on Artiq, making studio visits and meeting with artists individually was great. I think things like that have just added to the repertoire of experiences.

**Katie** So, a bit more about the building and the history of the building. It's obviously a landmark and has such a presence, as we've discussed. Were there any specific aspects that you were influenced by in the structure of the building?

**Matteo** The old black and white photographs

of the building, showing how it was once used, were certainly an influence.

**Shalini** We obviously inherited the building when it was empty and then we saw these legacy photographs. You kind of imagine the building when it was inhabited and the activities that took place - the typewriters, the noise and also the energy, it was a tense time for its occupants. I think it's interesting that we've been able to take those photographs and bring them into the future so they have their place.

**Shalini** There are 85 unique apartments - no two apartments are the same - it's not something you usually find in modern developments. For example, the corridor mosaic, some of it is original, some of it had to be copied. You realise you are the caretaker for this beautiful building, giving it a new life.

**Matteo** The incorporation of original elements into the design makes the building so unique.

**Katie** Bearing in mind that history, I think what I really want to touch on is how you balanced that with the female artists and the artists of different backgrounds?

**Matteo** First, the building was the War Office, and then in 1964 it became the Old War Office, and now it has become The OWO. To me it was quite natural that we were already jumping on a train that was going in this transformative direction.

**Shalini** The building was obsolete and it needed refueling with new resources. We were able to give it a new life and we were also led very much by the stakeholders. We had Historic England and the local council, all thinking about what the right use for this building was. They definitely didn't want offices!

*“You realise you are the caretaker for this beautiful building, giving it a new life”*

**Katie** We actually have some several hundred pieces of art here that we chose with you. One of the things that we've really loved throughout this project is the volume of women we have and women at every stage of their career. How important and how deliberate was that focus for you?

**Shalini** I never intended to force that in any way. I think I was one of the only women working on the project from the shareholder side. But I think it happened organically. When we started doing some research into the history, we came across female spies, and other female protagonists that had worked in the building and it was decided that we would dedicate some of the naming of the hotel suites to celebrate the contribution these women had made. We decided to work on commissions with you and rather coincidentally, it felt right to focus on female artists. I'm really pleased it's happened because that's probably the best contribution we could have made to something relevant in today's day and age. I know my daughter, family and friends will all be grateful for the women involved in this project.

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All photography courtesy of The Ministry of Defence, The OWO Archive.

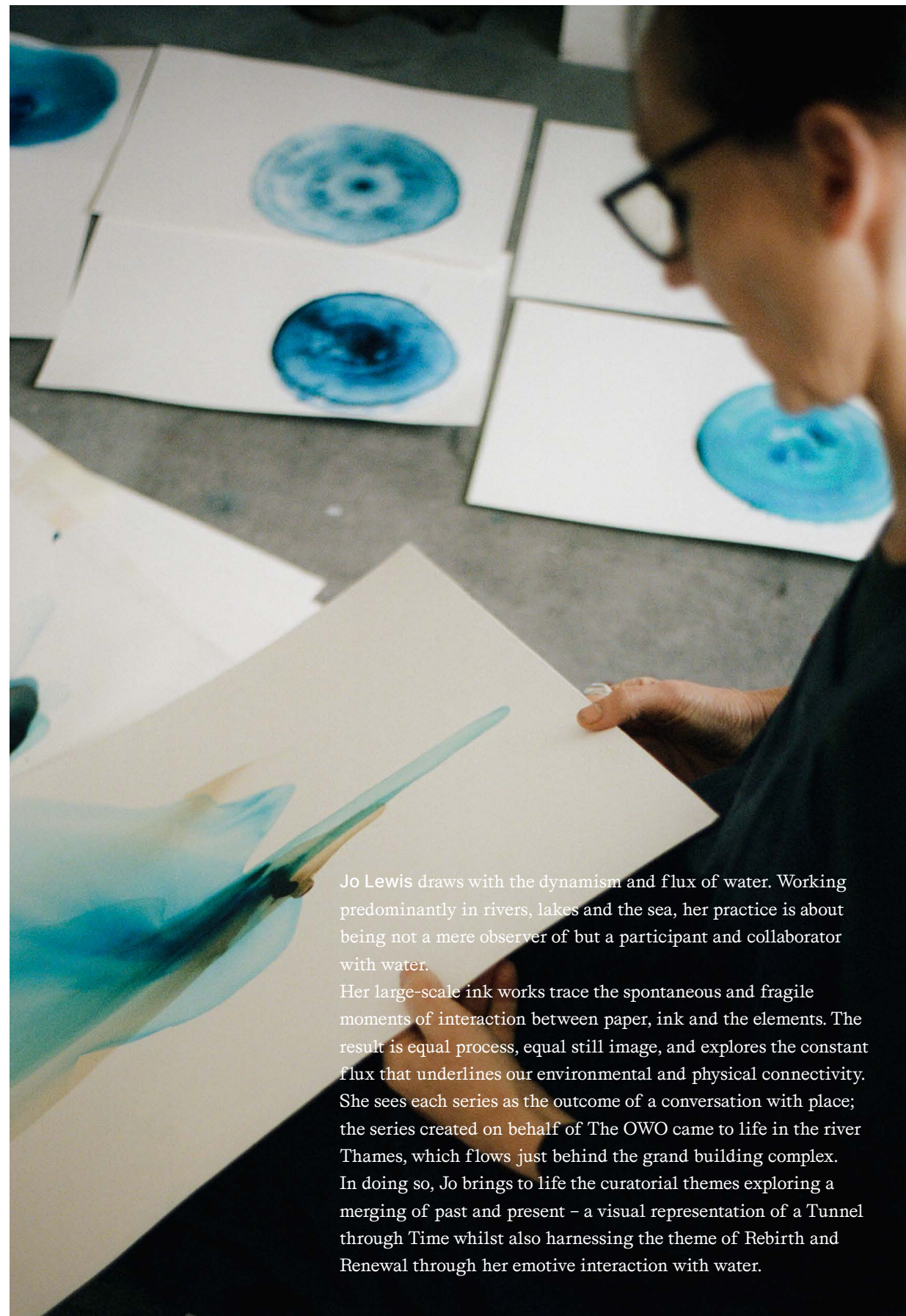


# *Making a mark*

*Presenting Jo Lewis, Jyoti Bharwani and Phoebe  
Boddy - the artists whose work represents  
a new era at The OWO.*







Jo Lewis draws with the dynamism and flux of water. Working predominantly in rivers, lakes and the sea, her practice is about being not a mere observer of but a participant and collaborator with water.

Her large-scale ink works trace the spontaneous and fragile moments of interaction between paper, ink and the elements. The result is equal process, equal still image, and explores the constant flux that underlines our environmental and physical connectivity. She sees each series as the outcome of a conversation with place; the series created on behalf of The OWO came to life in the river Thames, which flows just behind the grand building complex. In doing so, Jo brings to life the curatorial themes exploring a merging of past and present - a visual representation of a Tunnel through Time whilst also harnessing the theme of Rebirth and Renewal through her emotive interaction with water.





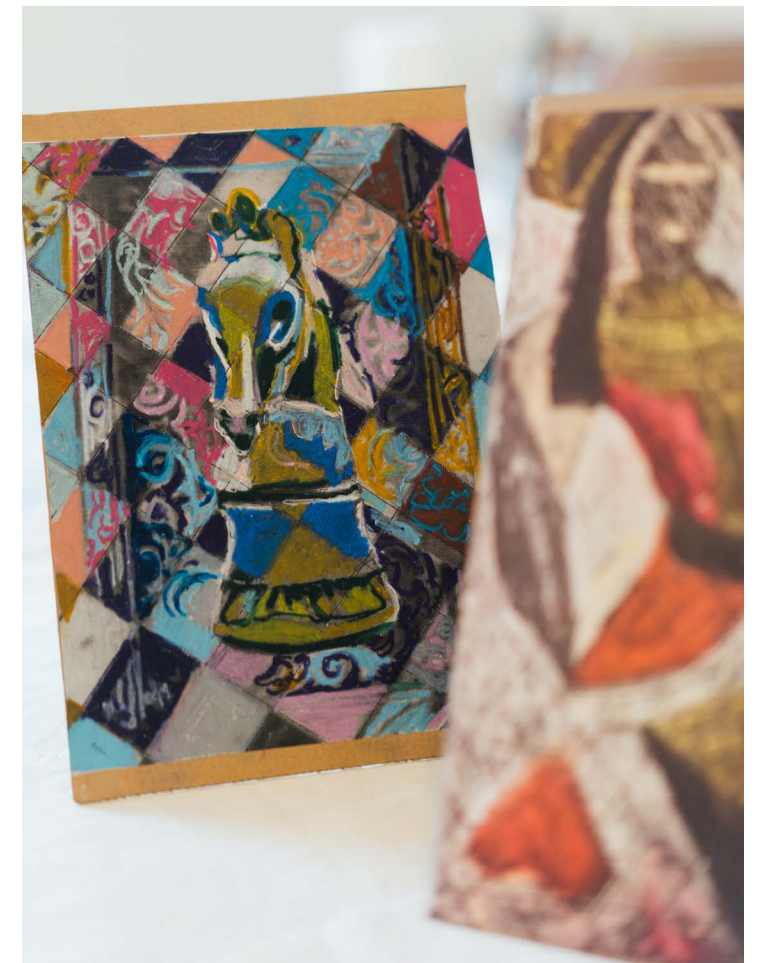




Jyoti Bharwani creates work that draws attention to the vital materiality present in reality, which we have little control over but are wholly part of. By exploring ideas of boundaries and control, her practice investigates the inherent beauty of materials and how they can form a deep connection with us.

Drawing on Eastern philosophies and new materialist theories that emphasise the fluid and interdependent connections between humans, materials and the planet, her creative expression is based on their holistic and cosmological worldviews, aiming to make work with a less human-centred approach.

Displayed within the walls of The OWO, this new series was created specifically with the building's history in mind. Referencing the visual characteristics of counters and board games, it questions the parallels between strategic decisions in games and war. The balance with a feminine, or yin, energy includes a more collaborative, creative and receptive nature allowing for an openness to change with endless possibilities. Jyoti's work embodies a thematic direction to look closer at Innovation, Industrialisation and Craft in connection to the unique narrative of this impressive property.



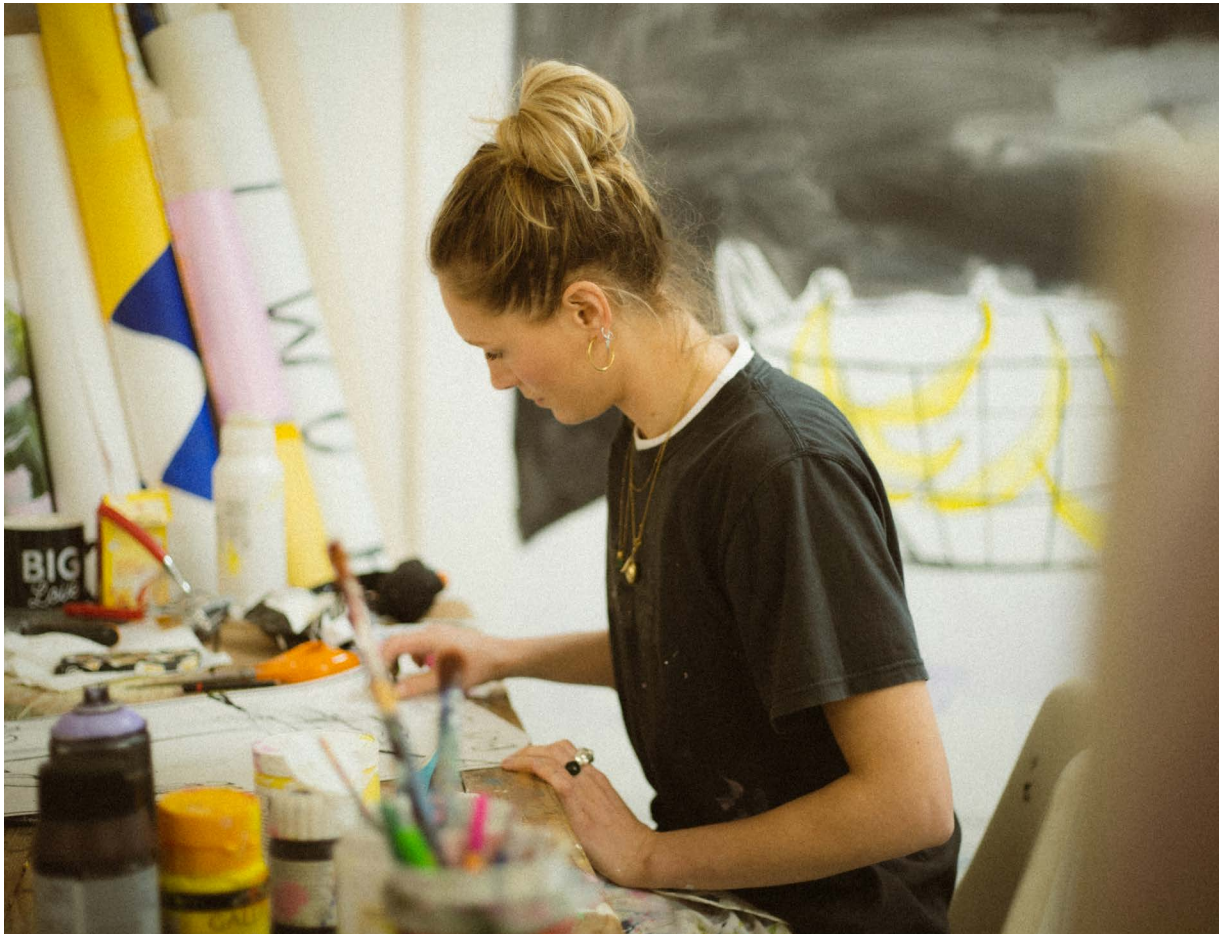


Phoebe Boddy's practice is stimulated by food and flavour, using the process of abstract painting to express the emotional and sensual pleasures of taste.

By storing personal recollections and experiences she encounters with food, she recreates these memories in the studio through abstract interpretative painting. The result is playful, often humorous, involving energised brushstrokes, infused with bold use of colour and form.

Phoebe's commission for The OWO draws on her more abstract and expressive compositions that often combine materials such as spray paint, watercolour and charcoal; the layering technique provides a fluid yet powerful final visual effect. At the heart of The OWO art collection is a celebration of contemporary creativity and talent in London, and Phoebe personifies this important theme.

Phoebe is also the co-founder of Palette Dining, a concept hosting unique dining experiences exploring the sensory connections between food and art.





# *Blurred lines:* Cultural placemaking and gentrification

In cities, it's normal to see change everywhere. They are constantly expanding, increasing in density and all the while, rising in cost. Most of us know what gentrification is but do we know the clear difference between it and cultural placemaking? Do we interchange the terms? There is a visible difference between the two and while we may recognise them in name, we may confuse them in practice, leading us to believe that one is akin to the other.

It is the aim of this annual to document and celebrate cultural placemaking in many forms. However, to clearly demonstrate that cultural placemaking and gentrification overlap is as important as highlighting the differences. Both practices of development make big changes to the environment in question. The importance of discussing the difference is so that we don't wonder whether a redevelopment is gentrification disguised as cultural placemaking.

Gentrification makes changes to an existing

environment and community by introducing new shops and cafés to the local area. While it's convenient to have a supermarket closer by or a big chain cafe to meet friends, there is arguably an element of arrogance. Attracted to the area because of low costs, these developments are created without much interaction with the local community. Yes, research is carried out but more likely the results will show potential for profit rather than community engagement and safety.

Cultural placemaking builds upon and adds to an existing area in response to research that looks into what could benefit the area, transforming it into a place that in turn, will be used more. Immediately, we can see the overlap. Cultural placemaking changes and develops areas, sometimes beyond recognition. Gentrification does the same. The difference lies in the area in question and the motive behind the development. Gentrification glazes over the needs of the area and sees



opportunity for profit. Where developers ignore the existing community, introducing new establishments without consideration for its surroundings, the people involved in cultural placemaking actively curate a space based on the environment, drawing upon their extensive research. Cultural placemaking refers to the act of generating cultural attraction. This could be in the form of pop-up events, exhibitions, markets, or shops. If a space is disused or lacks footfall, the council, wider government, or local businesses will come together to generate ideas on how to create engagement with the community. At the core of cultural placemaking is engagement through a sense of ownership. It looks at what is needed and wanted by the community. Unfortunately, while we may enjoy the amenities provided by gentrification, it is this kind of development that removes a sense of ownership from the user by skipping the conversation between developer and community member. Cultural placemaking can make the spaces safer and more enjoyable for its users, as it creates a busier environment, brings more people to the streets and is as a result, frequented by its community more deliberately. A brilliant example of this is the transformation of Exchange Place in Broadgate, London. "Health and wellbeing form a vital part of the £1.5 billion investment in Broadgate to create an environment that brings people together to work, shop, drink and dine."<sup>1</sup> The area was already a central spot for workers and passers through, being one of London's busiest areas for foot traffic. The investment in the space to bring quadruple the amount of greenery to the space as well as bring more cafes and shops has not only positively demonstrated commitment to the natural environment, but also to the people who commute, work and live around the area. Broadgate Circle has long been a site of positive development and the commitment to

cultural engagement is an example of how cultural placemaking evolves based on its surroundings and grows to support its users. In 2010, Broadgate began its bi-monthly farmer's markets. In November 2017, their first Christmas market was installed. In 2012, Broadgate announced the Broadgate Art Trail exhibiting 16 artworks across the 32-acre area. Received positively, architect firm Maylim was appointed by British Land as Principal Contractor for the 1.5-acre scheme. This purposeful placemaking is an example of user-research-driven development. The area was previously heaving with commuters and workers but this high-energy became similar to a wind tunnel, loud and unpleasant to pass through<sup>2</sup>. The new expansive landscaping scheme features a mix of smaller plants and trees; encouraging wildlife and providing a versatile and sustainable outdoor space for people to come together and enjoy. Another great example of successful cultural placemaking is the earlier spotlighted City Vistas. The underlying driver for this project was the notion of making attractive an area that had declined in popularity post-pandemic. A map and checkpoints were established to instil a sense of journey and hopefully take people along a path of the City that they would feel was something of their own. Through the breakdown of each type of development, we are made aware of the crossovers. Cultural placemaking is arguably a better solution to the redevelopment of a space but as previously stated, it's about doing it usefully by taking into consideration the users of the space and the true benefits that will come out of the redevelopment. In short, both are approaches to the redevelopment of an area by adding something. Gentrification will give us something to do but cultural placemaking will give us something to enjoy.

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Sophie Viet-Jacobsen, Creative Designer



# Yinka Ilori: *Beyond Aesthetics*

*Whatever the form, Yinka Ilori's work is uplifting and inclusive, the style unmistakably his own. Raising critical questions in playful ways, his practice acts as an invitation wherever it appears, encouraging new meetings and connections amongst the people who engage with it.*



Photography by Lewis Khan,  
courtesy of Yinka Ilori Studio.



**Artiq** How has the fusion of your British and Nigerian heritage inspired your work?

**Yinka** Growing up, I was introduced to colour and pattern at a young age. Seeing my parents and their friends dressed in bright colours and rich textiles. This left a really strong impression on me and has since become an important part of my work. Through colour and texture, I try and create an emotional response or transport audiences somewhere else. My parents also loved to tell stories. Parables, or African 'words of wisdom', which I've held onto and which always remind me of the power of stories; I often interpret these lessons and have brought them into my work and the objects I've created.

My work is also centred around community. I grew up in a council estate in North London, which was a real melting pot. Our home was always open, and neighbours would pop in for food or to catch up. These ideas of communal space and how we come together can often be seen in my public projects that aim to create a sense of connection.

**Artiq** How does your public art installation affect the communities they appear within, and which community has inspired you and your practice most?

**Yinka** My work has always been about community and inclusivity. In creating public art, I hope to create spaces where people feel that they belong and have a voice that is listened to. Through community interventions, I hope to reflect the stories of the people in the local area and to create something that is accessible to everyone, is uplifting and brings a smile to faces. The community I grew up in, Marquess Estate in North London, has inspired my practice the most because they showed me that it's okay to be content and celebrate what you have.

**Artiq** Similar to Artiq, part of your practice takes place outside the traditional gallery space, where art doesn't 'typically' belong, further confirming the power and impact of art in untraditional spaces. Do you believe this is the most effective way to democratise the experience of engaging with art and culture? Or, what would you suggest is the best way to diversify these sectors, both in terms of active participants and audiences?

**Yinka** I believe art and design should be for everybody. Public art is key to getting as wide an audience to engage with and discover something new. Many people feel they don't belong inside formal art institutions, but when you bring it into communities and create something which they can not only view but participate in and see themselves reflected in, we start to break down those barriers. Public art allows people who may never think about setting foot inside a museum to start learning about what they've seen and connect with different narratives.

My work also often starts with workshops with local residents or features interactive or playful elements in the hope that through this, we can start to get young people engaged.

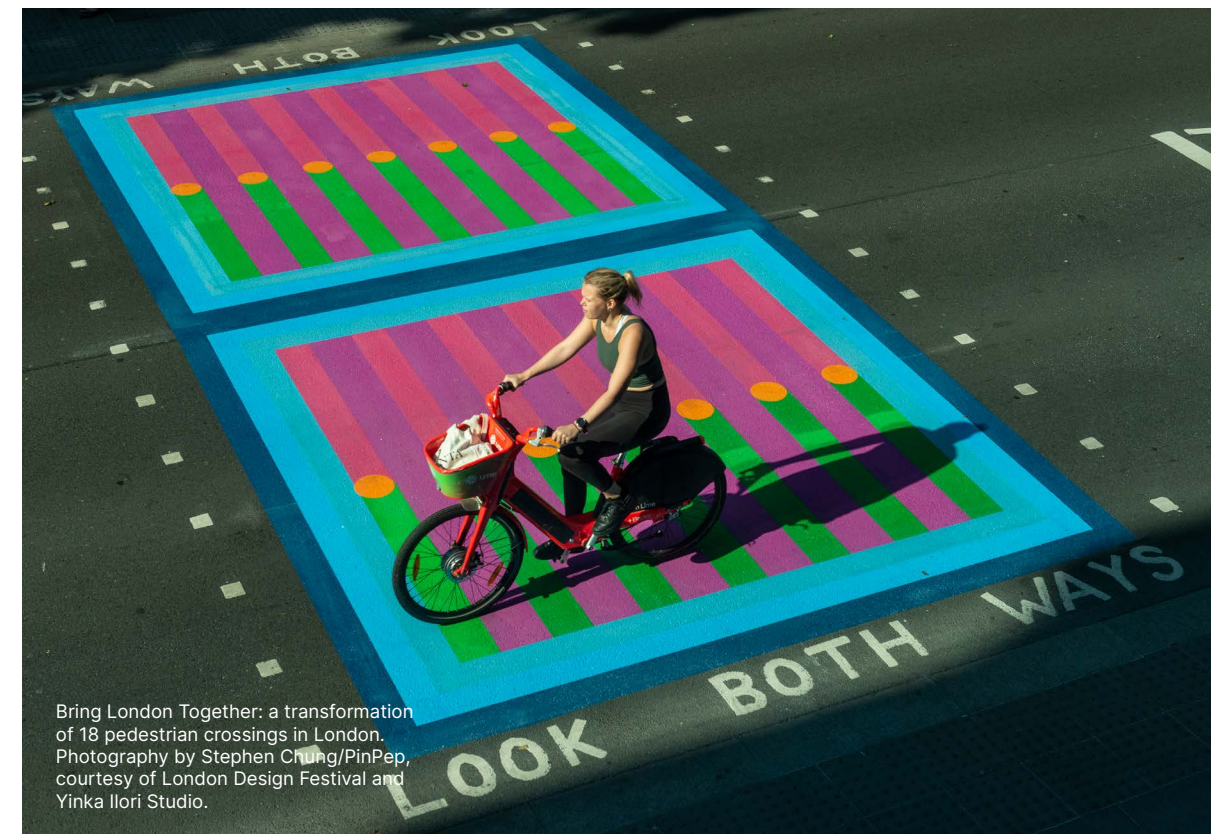
So, when it comes to making a decision about what they want to study or pursue a career in, they might decide to give art a go.

The best way to diversify the sector is to make young people feel they belong there. They need to see themselves reflected in today's artists and arts professionals.

**Artiq** Many of your installations require more than the audience's attention to reach their full potential: they call for people's engagement and participation. And not just cognitive engagement but often also physical, encouraging audiences of all ages to interact and experience the art rather than observe it. A great example is your installation. Listening



Love Always Wins, a mural for Harrow Council. Photography by Andy Stagg, courtesy of Yinka Ilori Studio



Bring London Together: a transformation of 18 pedestrian crossings in London. Photography by Stephen Chung/PinPep, courtesy of London Design Festival and Yinka Ilori Studio.



to 'Joy' at V&A Dundee from last year. How much of the audience's response can you predict beforehand, and how much of it surprises you?

**Yinka** With the work I create, I always give consideration to how I think the audience will participate or respond to a work. But once you put something into the public realm, it becomes part of that space and the ownership transfers from me to the community. I want them to be able to use it in ways that bring them joy. Sometimes this can be quite surprising, but it's always extremely exciting to see. For example, 'In Plants We Trust', a project in Mayfair celebrating plants and nature, the stepped exterior was used by skateboarders to do tricks; it was a really incredible thing to see. It shows me how people imagine the spaces around them.

**Artiq** There are a lot of playful elements reflected in your work. There are many theories about the benefits of play, especially for children and young people, but also for adults. What is your process when essentially designing a space for play? And why are adults generally so bad at playing?

**Yinka** Play is such an important aspect of learning when we're young, how we engage with each other and collaborate together. It helps build our imagination and creativity as well as helps with our well-being. As we get older, everyday life and work get in the way, and we find less and less time to be playful. Through my work, I want to remind people of the power of play and encourage them to take some time for themselves; I want to create spaces that give adults the opportunity to play and tap into their inner child. Each project has a different approach and starting point. I like to get an understanding of the area and how I can create something authentic for the space.

Each project has to reflect the local community or audience.

**Artiq** Your first solo exhibition in London, 'Parables for Happiness', is currently underway at the Design Museum. This is an opportunity for visitors to gain insight into the power of design within your practice, which in turn is influenced and expressed through London's rich blend of identities. Can you share with us the process of selecting the objects on show and what you want audiences to take away from this exhibition?

**Yinka** My exhibition at the Design Museum charts my career, inspiration and creative journey as I transitioned from furniture design to community-driven public installations. I worked closely with the Museum's Head of Curatorial, Priya Khanchandani, to bring together a mix of furniture, models, personal items as well as artworks, fabrics, music and reference materials that have inspired my work. Through the exhibition, we are trying to tell the story of how I developed my visual language. Priya really wanted to give audiences a glimpse into how I think, imagine and create, and we wanted people to understand the cultural references and fusions in my work. We wanted to go beyond simply looking at my work as colourful.

**Artiq** Your studio has developed into a team of architects, designers and more. What does your internal collaboration look like? And how important is this exchange in the making of new ideas and works?

**Yinka** The studio has grown quite a bit over the last few years, and I'm very lucky to have an incredibly passionate team who help me bring ideas, both big and small, to life. Collaboration is at the centre of my practice; we have even built the studio in a way that puts collaboration



Parables of Happiness at the Design Museum is open until June 25th, 2023. Photography by Felix Speller, courtesy of the Design Museum and Yinka Ilori Studio.

and communication at the heart.

I like my team to feel inspired and involved in every stage of a project. There's always dialogue - we brainstorm ideas together and come up with solutions to challenges together.

**Artiq** If dreaming freely - is there a particular area or community in the world for which you would love to create work?

**Yinka** Yes, I would love to create a public installation for the estate I grew up in because the people and the community gave me so much.

**Artiq** What's your favourite colour?

**Yinka** Pink.



# License *to print*



*The Victoria and Albert Museum is regarded as one of the most trusted cultural institutions; its esteemed Brand Licensing team is responsible for furthering the reach of the museum's vast collections by collaborating with brands around the world. Marta Di Gioia, Brand Licensing Researcher, invites us behind the scenes.*





The V&A's National Art Library.

**Artiq** The V&A is renowned for its award-winning licensing programme, founded on the creation of beautiful products inspired by the museum's rich archive. You offer inspiration and expertise to designers, editors, and researchers across all media sectors, from publishing to broadcast and advertising. How do you select your partners?

**Marta** We collaborate with companies that share our values of innovation, high quality design and craftsmanship. The V&A's licensing programme started over 25 years ago, and today we collaborate with over 95 licensed partners worldwide. The global programme reaches across product categories, from wall art, homeware, apparel, and jewellery to stationery, crafting and everything in between. Our key territories include the UK, Europe, Japan, China, South Korea, USA and Australia. As

the world's leading museum of art, design and performance, the V&A celebrates creativity and champions excellence in design. That is why we are delighted to collaborate with Artiq and respond to each carefully curated design brief with the most appropriate research.

**Artiq** The V&A is regarded as one of the most trusted cultural institutions; the museum's licensing department has access to its world-class collections, including over 500,000 prints and one of the world's largest and most important photography archives. What can you tell us about your process?

**Marta** The Brand Licensing team provides a bespoke research service to designers and partners across the world by acting as an interface between the museum's collections and the retail industry. When designers start

their creative journey, they may already have a concept in mind, be planning to revisit popular assets, or be looking for suggestions of which they are not already aware. A lot of my time is spent discussing with clients and colleagues the best way for licensees to develop the V&A's assets into repeat designs for fashion, furnishing fabrics, paper products and packaging. We meet with companies who are working with the V&A's intellectual property all over the world. They usually give us a brief or a moodboard as a starting point and we pull together ideas to inspire them further and develop them into the V&A branded ranges that are sold through independents and high street department stores. As a picture researcher, I'm always on the hunt for strong and appealing images to inspire our licensees working in all areas of the marketplace, from fair-trade fashion to bespoke British handmade furniture to print on demand personalised stationery. Often when looking at historical patterns, we rely on our licensees to envisage an exciting way to repurpose it, to reinvigorate the original artwork for a contemporary customer. Ultimately, it's up to the licensee to choose whether to replicate the pattern much as it was originally intended or transform it with a stylistic 21st-century colour trend, but it's always a collaborative process between the licensee, its creatives and the V&A team, working closely together to ensure that we keep the integrity of the original object and tell the story behind it. By the end of the process, a new range endorsed with the V&A trademark will have emerged, and all profits made through these collaborations will be returned to the museum.

**Artiq** It may not be common knowledge quite how vast this department is. What areas of expertise are needed to carry out your work?

**Marta** The tailor-made research and design service offered by the V&A Brand Licensing team traces its roots back to Prince Albert and Henry Cole and operates under the founding mission to provide design resources to manufacturing and retail partners across the world. When international designers and manufacturers meet the Licensing team – onsite, offsite or online – and start the journey of creating a new product range, they may already have a pattern, technique or art movement in mind. Combining an awareness of current market trends with an in-depth understanding of the museum's galleries, stores and archives, we bring together a selection of the most appealing and appropriate floral designs, figurative artworks, geometric prints or narrative surface pattern. All will be presented with a compelling story and images with universal appeal.

In fact, the team is relatively small but with huge productivity! Anyone with a creative mind and a passion for detail would be well suited for this role.

**Artiq** Licensed products and prints are a great way to reach broader audiences. With ongoing licensing partnerships all over the world, how does it feel to see the works you all know so well take on so many different forms, ending up in dialogue with such vastly different communities?

**Marta** Our licensing activity goes far beyond the museum. Working with licensees across the globe offers a myriad of opportunities. On the one hand, they offer commercial opportunities at a time when revenue diversification is essential to arts and cultural organisations, and on the other, they offer a chance to raise awareness through previously untapped marketing channels to engage new audiences in the brand.





The V&A's Ceramic Staircase, completed in 1871.



Archive inspiration and creative process.

**Artiq** Has there been a particular project that you feel epitomises the benefits of licensing works from the V&A to contemporary partners for them to re-imagine and re-distribute?

**Marta** The V&A's collection of textiles, decorations, wallpapers and prints are a great source for designers and print inspiration. We love to see creatives and makers select patterns with a long history, or designs that are embedded in the foundation of the museum at South Kensington, and transform them by recolouring and changing the scale. For our first product range with Sofas & Stuff, we took inspiration from shapes of furniture held at the V&A. For the fabrics, the creative team was drawn to the illustrations of fruit and vegetables by key figures in botanical art and developed a collaged pattern which connected back to the history that the ground in London's South Kensington, where the V&A now stands, was once a market garden.

Another influential figure in the museum's history is William Morris. Delving into our extensive collection of Arts and Crafts wallpaper and textile designs, Blinds2go launched a successful range of curtains and blinds that featured classic Morris patterns in linens and velvets that were adapted to harmonise with modern domestic realities.

**Artiq** How long have you held this role at the V&A Licensing department? What initially attracted you to this role?

**Marta** I've been working at the V&A since 2013 and found myself in the role of Licensing Researcher five years ago after working as E-commerce Assistant, specialising in the Print on Demand side of the business. The variety and richness of the collections and the ever-changing array of exhibitions combined with archive research and product development keep us all so engaged. A casual glance around

the museum might take in anything from a Flemish hunting tapestry to a brightly coloured enamelled jewel or 16th-Century marble sculpture. It's the combination of these valuable designs with more recognisable, eye-catching pieces such as 60s fashion and Tupperware that makes it such a friendly museum and an un-intimidating way to access decorative art and design.

Exploring the museum's collections, looking for unique assets with great stories and imagining how fresh and contemporary they could look once revisited in the expert hands of the creative teams we collaborate with is at the heart of what we do. It's thrilling to be able to share aspects of one of the greatest museums of decorative art with all our partners and customers.

**Artiq** The licensing team plays a crucial role in navigating through a vast archive. Are there any periods from your archives that are particularly popular?

**Marta** Period styles are a great resource for product collection inspiration. Besides inspiring us, we can learn much from historical styles and patterns. By exploring the designs of the past, we can pick the elements and techniques that especially speak to us and, with that, create something new and original. Classic styles from the late 19th and early 20th Centuries have lived on in people's hearts, homes and clothing for decades and centuries. Stylised flora and fauna designs are a defining feature of the Arts and Crafts Movement and remain perennially popular. Adding wall decor depicting designs by William Morris and Walter Crane is a quick and easy way to bring nature into the home.

Art Deco is another rich period of interior design history with so much to inspire. One of the first global design movements, Deco transformed the design of furniture, ceramics,



glassware, fashion, textiles, architecture, prints and ocean liners internationally. The V&A holds colourful pattern books used to create templates for designers to transfer to fabric and wallpaper, as well as fashion journals full of illustrations by the leading artists of the era.

**Artiq** Is there an artist or brand you admire the most?

**Marta** I find Cressida Bell's beautiful and colourful designs irresistible, and the illustrations of Carlo Stanga make me really happy! As I have an interest in product design, I would go for Vitra, a powerhouse of the design industry, and as someone obsessed with stationery, I covet most of the collection from the Japanese design house, Hightide.

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Images © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

*“We love to see creatives and makers select patterns with a long history, or designs that are embedded in the foundation of the museum at South Kensington, and transform them by recolouring and changing the scale”*



V&A Pugin sofa in Brompton Collection  
Floral Scroll Chilli by Sofas & Stuff.





# Breaking the mould

*A conversation between Aisha Seriki  
& Almuth Tebbenhoff*



Today's hyper-digitised society has trained us to search the internet for answers to everything. Who hasn't downloaded Duolingo in an attempt to learn [enter desired language here]; Interested in learning how to code? There are brilliant tutorials on Youtube for that.

But much of the learning and perspective needed to succeed long-term in any career is rarely found in data on the internet but through conversations and personal relationships with people in and around the workplace. Being an artist can be a solitary profession, and with the isolating experience of the pandemic still lingering in the rearview mirror, we wanted to create an opportunity for a face-to-face conversation with a peer.

Almuth Tebbenhoff is a sculptor inspired by process. She aims to uncover the structure and nature of known materials, such as clay, steel and marble. Through destruction and alteration, she offers a reflection on the human condition and encourages the viewer to challenge ideas of the known.

Inspired by both imagination and experience, Aisha Seriki uses photography to portray women in a light they have been kept out of for too long. Centred around global social issues, her work addresses blackness, gender, migration, class and the many points of intersection within all four.

We invited these two inspiring artists, who embarked on their creative journeys nearly five decades apart, to explore the differences and similarities in their experiences of working as artists and breaking the moulds of society's preconceived expectations.



Sculptor Almuth Tebbenhoff.





Photographer Aisha Seriki.

**Almuth** I want to start with a question for you, Aisha. Since you decided to become an artist, how much support have you felt? Have you had support from your family, friends, teachers - all of that?

**Aisha** This is mainly a solo venture sort of thing for me. My parents know I take photos, but I don't speak to them much about what I do. I show them my work sometimes, and they think it's cool, but I don't think they understand. As long as I can make some money from it, that's enough for them. I get more support from my younger sister; she does fashion, so she understands the creative aspect of it. In school I was taught about amazing artists but most of them were all old, so it wasn't relatable and didn't feel like something someone my age could do. Speaking to teachers about being interested in arts, they just said well that's nice but never told me it was something you could pursue as a career. It wasn't until I attended 'Develop' at The Photographers Gallery, a programme for people between 14 to 24 interested in photography. They shared stories and advice from within the photography industry, and it was only then that I thought "oh you can actually do this as a career." How about you?

**Almuth** I grew up on a remote farm in Germany where there was no art whatsoever, but I was lucky to have a rich aunt who had heard about Documenta, an arts festival in Kassel. We lived in a cultural desert, but she was rich and could indulge in these things. She said I'm taking the kids and you can come along if you want. I was 14 years old and, for the first time, experiencing art that had no other function than being exciting to look at and taking your mind somewhere else; it blew my mind! My aunt was laughing, calling the artists 'lunatics' because they were painting messy, smudgy paintings that didn't look like

anything at all. Little did she know I was thinking this is what I'm going to do. Have you experienced that? Was there a particular work of art that blew your socks off and made you think oh my god, what if I could do that?

**Aisha** I discovered Barbara Kreuger's and Cindy Sherman's work in my late teens. I always liked theatrics and beautiful imagery, so when I saw Cindy's work, it made sense to me; it felt doable. But I want to know what happened after you went to Documenta. How did you go from there?

**Almuth** In those days, art was made by men, especially sculpture. There were female artists, but it required so much of them in addition to their talent, like extraordinary beauty or power, to propel them into an arena where they would still only mildly be taken seriously. I experienced it too for a long time, the feeling of being marginalised. Not until reaching my sixties did I feel I had finally gotten somewhere. That's a real danger because you almost stop taking yourself seriously.

**Aisha** How did you keep going despite feeling sidelined; that no one was taking your work seriously?

**Almuth** You can't give yourself an alternative. We have to be flexible, especially in times like these when everything feels up in the air. Be flexible, but don't stop being your glorious human self. Make art with love because people will always respond to that. But this is something already shining through in your work! I have seen the photographs where you celebrate your friends, which are so generous and beautiful. How did that come about?

**Aisha** I was tired of never seeing myself in the world. I know the feeling when you finally do - it's transformative and gives you the permission



*“I was 14 years old and, for the first time, experiencing art that had no other function than being exciting to look at and taking your mind somewhere else; it blew my mind”*





to dream and expand your imagination of what is possible. I am making work for the younger me, for that person that never saw themselves in the world, and because our society rarely celebrates it. Things are getting better, even though it feels a bit superficial sometimes. A lot of places are saying I'm gonna platform these people, but they are just chucking money around randomly; that's not real. That's also why it was always difficult to envision myself ever working as an artist. There weren't that many female artists to look up to, and even fewer black artists on top of that.

At my age now there is a growing community of black female artists in London. For example, with Latoya [Okuneye], who I was recently in an exhibition with at Brookfield Properties, there's a sort of bond there, like I see you, you see me. We need to allow for different voices so it's not always the same narrative. Everyone's so different and has so many different experiences that they should be able to bring into spaces. We are constantly being put in a box of what we can or can't do, so allowing for those differences and offering support to each other is so important. How were things when you started out? Did you meet someone working as a sculptor that made it feel like a realistic dream?

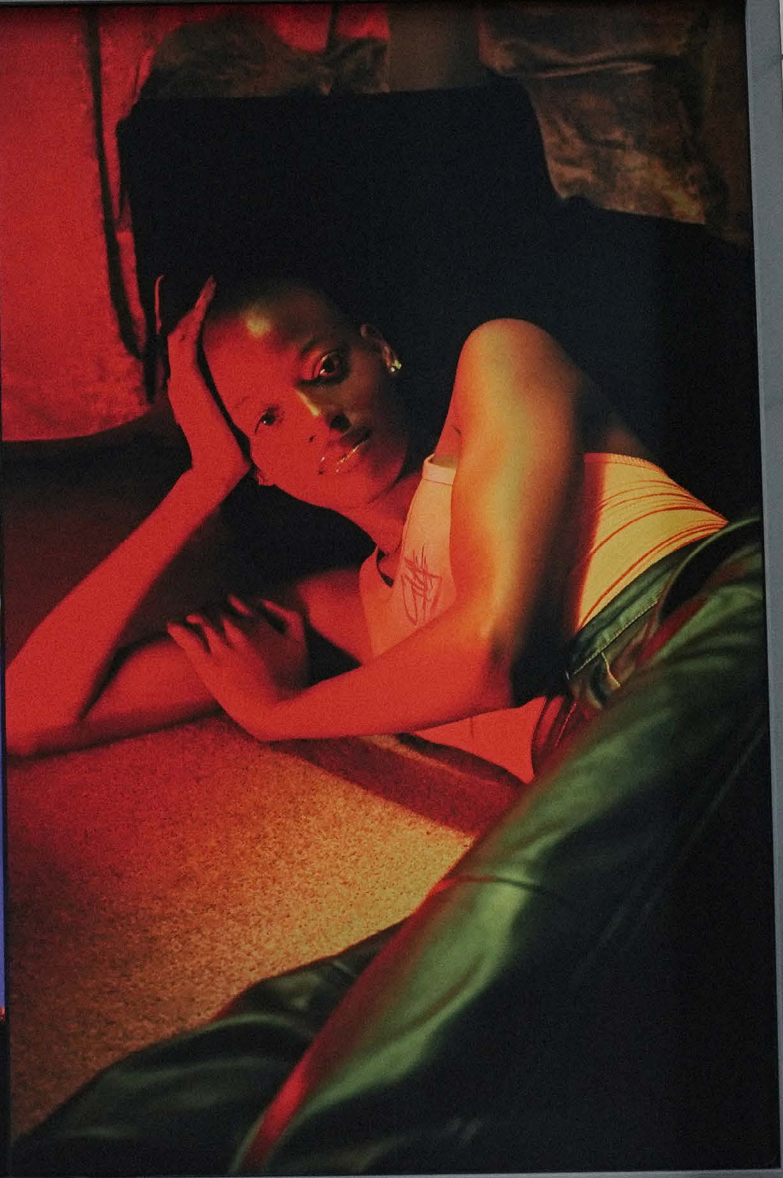
**Almuth** Not really, because they were all guys. It wasn't helpful when it was a famous artist saying I'll help you, you're so talented but then he tries to stick his tongue down your throat, which ruins everything because then it is not about what you want, but what he wants. However, seeing the work of Louise Bourgeois and Dorothea Tanning was extraordinary. The way their work is both playful and psychologically quite disturbing; to see that in big museum shows and in the market space encouraged me not to become a cardboard cut-out of a woman artist. I do remember a particular time seeing a woman at a pottery

*“I am making work for the younger me, for that person that never saw themselves in the world”*

*Our Lives - Perception, Experience, Celebration*, an exhibition featuring work by Aisha Seriki and Latoya Okuneye. Located at 30 Fenchurch Street, it was curated in partnership between Brookfield Properties and Artiq.









shop. She sat at the wheel; it was spinning, it was messy, it was fabulous, and I instantly felt drawn to it. Today, the core of my creativity is still clay; getting my hands dirty, and squeezing it into new form. What about you and photography? How did that start?

**Aisha** My dad has been obsessed with taking photos for as long as I can remember. Because there were always cameras in our house, I was already comfortable with it, making it feel more accessible. Also, I was way too impatient to draw or paint. But with photography, it was accessible and quick - I could quickly tell a story and quickly share a message. I have always wanted to communicate ideas to people, and it made sense to use photography as the medium for that.

**Almuth** You say your family supports you but doesn't fully understand the particularities of what you do. Do you have a community of other creatives around you to ask for advice or be inspired and supported by?

**Aisha** I had more of a community a few years ago, but the pandemic really affected that. You meet so many people while studying at university, but as soon as I started working full-time, it became much more isolated. That's why I decided to do a master's. I was worried that if I didn't take the jump and believed in myself, I might get stuck. Being here [Royal College of Arts] has been really good; there's a lot of support here from other students in that regard.

**Almuth** I know the feeling. I have been lucky to have this wonderful studio for a long time, but it meant I've always worked alone, and for a while, I got a bit pot-bound. A few years ago, I got a scholarship to work in Italy in a large studio with a bunch of artists - we were eating together, cycling around together, working







Almuth at Studio Sem, a studio collaborating with sculptors from around the world to produce work in marble and granite.  
Photo courtesy of Studio Sem Archives.

side by side. It made me appreciate just how important it is for us to be around other artists. When we spend too much time alone, the ego can get a bit out of sync. We see it in the world, both in and out of the art world; people who lose touch with reality. Whereas if you are working side by side with colleagues doing the same thing but differently, that is really to be encouraged. And that basic friendship is crucial, for our development, for our sanity and for good art.

**Aisha** Yeah, just having the space to bounce your ideas around.

**Almuth** Exactly! There are spaces where you can do that, but maybe I'd rather ring you up, Aisha, and say I have this new idea; I need completely fresh eyes on it - come over and have a look!

**Aisha** I'd be so down for that, and you are not far from here?

**Almuth** No, I'm quite close by. And I make a good coffee as well.

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# Paying for creativity

Over a decade ago, I established Artiq with the then unorthodox idea of paying artists a regular income for exhibiting their work. I've always found it strange that artists are rarely paid to show their work, the same way one would pay to rent a film or music, or for a taxi journey or legal advice. For visual artists, exposure is often offered in lieu of payment; it is the equivalent of offering to rate your Uber driver five stars for a free ride. Artiq was established not to protest or shout but to show the genuine mutual benefit of paying for an art collection. Indeed, back in 2009 when I established the business, I hoped that maybe, with enough support and interest from the

corporate and arts sector, we could, with fair pay, as well as exposure, start making the arts a more economically viable career for artists. I am privileged to have grown up around arts and culture. I have experienced both the difficulty of making a regular income as an artist and the fulfilment and wellbeing of making, consuming and engaging with the arts. Therefore, I have made it my mission to show that creativity is more than just a hobby, that it can be a career too. To show society that creativity is everywhere and giving the artists, creatives compost, funds and encouragement is not only the right thing to do, but reaps huge rewards for everyone who experiences their

output. To do this, to prove this, my business has not taken money from arts councils or from philanthropists. It has stood on its own two feet, without funding or venture capital, showing a creative business can bring art to new audiences and hit the mission of showing creativity pays. The Artiq concept is one of mutual benefit, where creativity is paid for with actual money. We operate as an art agency, working with creatives across the world and with a client base that includes multinational banks, cutting-edge tech firms, hospitality groups and universities. This model ensures all stakeholders win: the artist, the client and the Artiq team. Our pitch

to artists is simple: we will pay you to exhibit your work and take on the risk of installation and insurance. By the end of 2022, we will have paid around £4.5mn to artists, makers and institutions since the start of the pandemic. The client wins because they can exhibit an art collection that reflects and represents their values, messaging and ethics; support the local economy; and engage their key stakeholders, clients, team and shareholders. The Artiq team generates profit, jobs and career trajectory for the team through a model that has purpose at its heart. Our team is passionate about making the arts a more equitable and inclusive industry.



If more art businesses do not start to focus on representation and, critically, paying properly, the arts could fade into obsolescence. At Artiq, we have huge diversity in the artists we represent, and our paid internship programmes and school-age work experience schemes have encouraged candidates from low-income and diverse backgrounds to consider creative careers. Our desire to nurture and train the team from within means those who approach the business with an entrepreneurial attitude will succeed; historically, most of our interns have gone on to full-time positions and we have many examples of people at management and board level who joined the company and grasped opportunity with both hands. Being self-sufficient from the beginning meant there were two key hurdles. First was breaking into a new market: 98% of our clients had never rented art before. The second was building and maintaining project momentum: renting art collections at a fraction of the sale price requires volume to be financially sustainable. Once we achieved both these goals, our next big challenge was scaling the team, and at the same time building an inclusive culture with ambitious, passionate members, motivated and dedicated to Artiq's purpose. Our team today is incredible, and we encourage each other to be more innovative and creative. Therefore, this year, we are implementing a technology system to streamline processes and have more time for creativity and human interaction.

The coronavirus pandemic ravaged many businesses in the art world: artists, freelancers and creatives found themselves slipping through the cracks of government support. However, our support did not stop. I believe we were able to navigate the pandemic for three reasons. First, we kept an extremely close eye on cash flow; took advantage of government support; and, vitally, focused the team's efforts on projects that had paid.

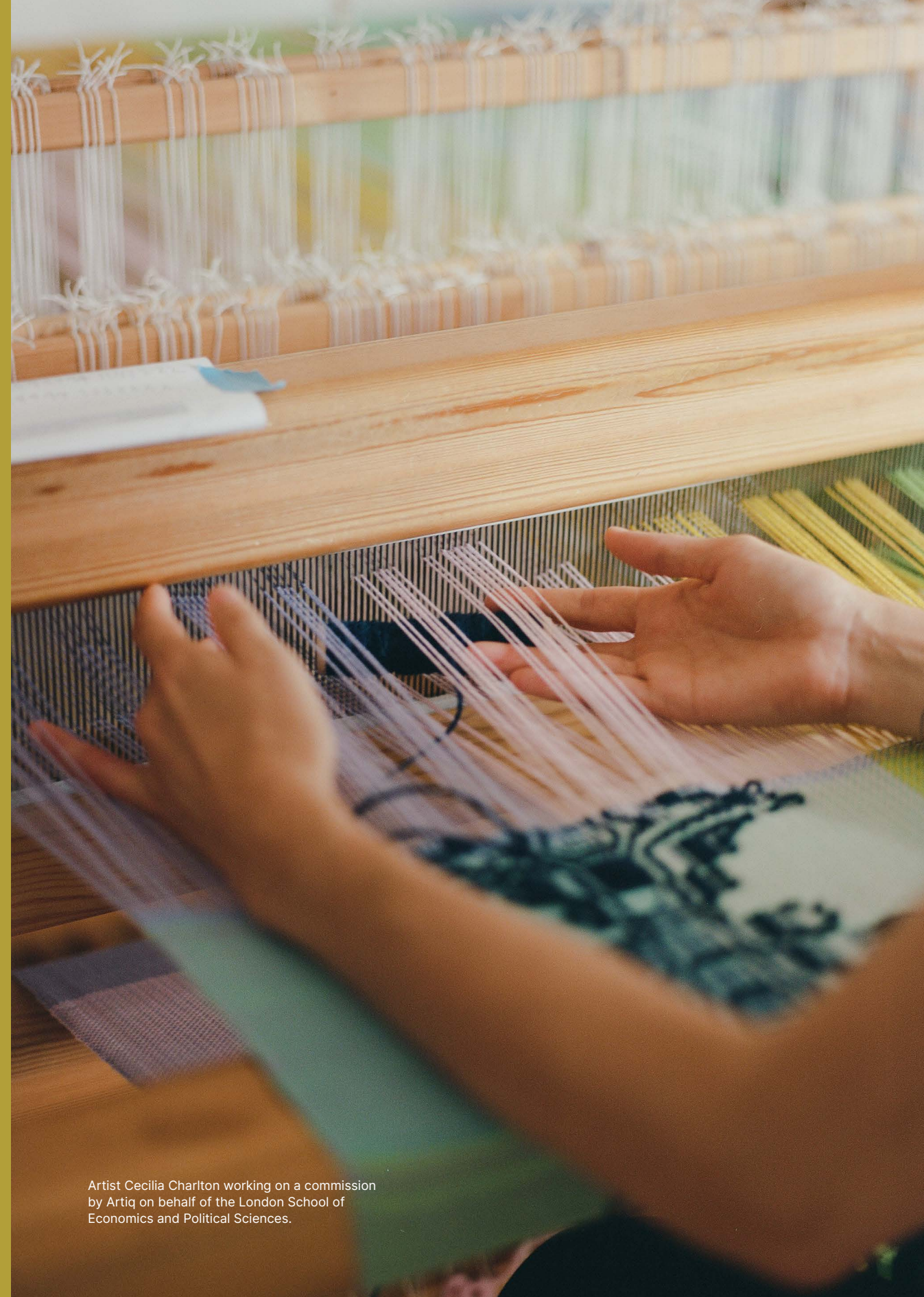
Second, we continued to embody our value of upfront, honest communication with all stakeholders; no sugar coating and no unnecessary drama. I believe this built ownership, trust and kindness. The third was that our clients stood by us, and we by them. Arts and culture broke through the monotony of the pandemic. We provided moments of creativity and human interaction by establishing an online programme of classes, artist talks, and conversations. Culture is vital, especially in a time of crisis. Today, from a £10,000 start-up loan, we are a multi-million-pound business with projects in 20 countries, working with hundreds of artists. In the last two years, Artiq has undertaken almost 700 projects, showing art to new and diverse audiences. Even though the business has been established for a decade, this is really just the beginning. We weathered the pandemic and emerged stronger and more connected, reconfirming the viability of our mission. We will have succeeded in this mission if paying for art and culture becomes as normal as paying for any other service.

Artiq has always confused people. It's not a gallery, it's not a service business, it's not a social enterprise or a charity. It's a business that exists to bring economic viability to the arts, from the makers creating to the team delivering the projects, and to show consumers and businesses that creativity is important and vital.

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Patrick McCrae

This is an excerpt from an article published in 2021 in *Creativity, Culture and Capital*, as part of a collection of essays commissioned by Nesta UK, Fundacion Compromiso, Portugal and Upstart Co-Labs USA, by voices in the culture sector from across the world.



Artist Cecilia Charlton working on a commission by Artiq on behalf of the London School of Economics and Political Sciences.



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Our business creates more opportunities for artists, more art experiences for people and is fostering a sustainable arts economy in which creatives can grow and thrive.

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