

Large Print Guide

Brewers Towner International

15 October 2022 to 22 January 2023

[Enter Gallery 2 and view the text panel on your left]

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Exhibiting Artists

Nigel Caple

Graham Ellard and Stephen Johnstone

Ufuoma Essi

Hicham Gardaf

Steph Goodger

Sharon Haward

Maud Haya-Baviera

Kevin Hendley

Melanie Jackson

Amanda Kyritsopoulou

Dene Leigh

Christophe Lennox

Edward Liddle

Benjamin Phillips and Amy Fenton

Karen Russo

Lara Smithson

Harald Smykla

Public Programme Artists

Patrick Hough

Lucy

Felix Melia

Ramona Ponzini

Welcome to Brewers Towner International, an open call exhibition featuring artists working locally, nationally and internationally.

Artists were invited to submit works in response to the theme of sanctuary, an idea that can be interpreted as a place offering safe haven, asylum or refuge; it can be understood as an environment where endangered species are protected, diverse ecosystems flourish and life is preserved, it can also suggest a space of the imagination, a meditative mental space offering respite from the exterior world.

The open call is an opportunity to recognise and appreciate how artistic communities are reflecting and responding to the social, economic, cultural and environmental changes that are unfolding

in the contemporary moment. Events of the last two years have cast a long shadow and many of the works in the exhibition were created in the uniquely challenging circumstances of the global pandemic. Throughout this period, artists sought solace in the studio, the home and the landscape. The resulting exhibition brings together a community of artists, makers and storytellers exploring ideas of pattern, memory, trauma, healing, empowerment and transformation.

Artists were selected by an esteemed panel including Elizabeth Price (Turner Prize-winning artist), Sepake Angiama (Artistic Director, Iniva), and Noelle Collins (Exhibitions & Offsite Curator, Towner Eastbourne). The Brewers Towner Award of £10,000, sponsored by Brewers Decorator Centres, will be presented to one of the exhibiting artists along with mentoring from the Towner team.

Some artworks explore adult themes, please speak to a member of staff if you have any concerns.

For information on public programme screenings, talks and courses, please see the panels outside the exit doors.

[Walk across the gap to the second half of Gallery 2 and walk clockwise around the space. Start at the video work with headphones.]

Ufuoma Essi

Bodies In Dissent, 2021

Scanned Super8 and archive material, colour, stereo sound. 5 minutes, 51 seconds

Bodies In Dissent is an exploration of the body as a central site of remembrance and resistance. Song, spoken word, music, movement and dance combine to explore ideas around 'bodily insurgency', using the body as an archive, a point of return, a position of refusal and a broker between transgenerational life and histories.

In this work, Essi interweaves original footage with material from the British Film Institute's National Archive and the Black Journal – the first nationally televised public affairs programme produced for, about, and by African-Americans.

On loan from the artist

Edward Liddle

Wallpaper Study #44 (Grenier), 2021

Oil paint and lining paper

Edward Liddle's practice is concerned with the re-interpretation of motifs and patterns from a range of styles and eras. Sources include architectural and domestic objects, such as tiles, wallpaper scraps or fabric remnants, others – films or television programmes, first documented as screenshots.

Liddle's vibrant works *Wallpaper Study #44 (Grenier)* and *Wallpaper Study #56 (Chilcot)* drape from the gallery walls, becoming sculptural as they unfurl onto the floor. In these works, the artist invites viewers to think about the relationship between art, craft, design and the hierarchy of display.

On loan from the artist

Steph Goodger

The Motherland, 2019 - 2020

Triptych, oil on canvas

The Motherland, 2019 - 2020

Oil on canvas

Over the course of a year, Steph Goodger photographed a WW2 pillbox bunker near her childhood home in Fordcombe, Kent. Returning regularly, she recorded how an adjacent tree was engulfing the structure, roots grappling the redbrick fortification, river eroding the bank beneath – observations that became paintings in The Motherland series.

Through these works Goodger engages with her childhood memories of the area, the history of the Kent landscape and considerations of the natural environment and its resilience.

On loan from the artist

[View the artworks in the two display cases, starting with the display case that faces the introduction text.]

Harald Smykla's current practice is focused on 'rewilding' press images. His hand-painted floral compositions transform some of the most distressing newspaper reports into 'windows to imaginary ecosystems' that provide respite from 'bad news'.

Guided by the forms, colours and textures of the source material, Smykla covers areas of the newspaper clippings and enhances others with paints and pencils to reveal an underlying pictorial flora.

These 'floralisations' began in 2015 in response to a war of images that emerged between Western media and Islamist extremists. Smykla's work invites a more critical reading of reportage and reveals some of the biases at play in the mainstream media. The subjects on display here include the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, the far-right Hanau shootings, 2020 Streatham attack and multiple pandemic-related newspaper reports.

Harald Smykla

Artworks listed top to bottom, left to right

c/Ovid Press Rewilding: Virus War, 2020

c/Ovid Press Rewilding: La Peste, 2020

c/Ovid Press Rewilding: Heading out, 2020

c/Ovid Press Rewilding: Unlocked, 2020

c/Ovid Press Rewilding: Scenic scrub, 2020

c/Ovid Press Rewilding: Gun lobby, 2020

Mixed media on press clippings and paper

c/Ovid Press Government Rewilding: Sunshine trip, 2021

**c/Ovid Press Government Rewilding: Suited and booted,
2021**

Ink and coloured pencils on press clippings and paper

On loan from the artist

Harald Smykla

Artworks listed left to right

**Iconoclash Press Bloom: The Hanau Attack (Face of Evil),
2020**

Above:

Iconoclash Press Flowers: Seeking safety, 2021

Below:

Iconoclash Press Flowers: Forced to flee, 2021

Iconoclash Press Bloom: Al Qaeda Leader Killed, 2022

**Iconoclash Press Bloom: The Streatham Attack 3: Kill mode /
Terror threat, 2020**

All mixed media on press clipping/paper.

On loan from the artist

Edward Liddle

Wallpaper Study #56 (Chilcot), 2021

Oil paint and lining paper

As seen in Edward Liddle's other 'wallpaper study' opposite, he finds inspiration for artwork from a variety of places, including films or television.

Wallpaper Study #56 (Chilcot) references a yellow wallpaper that provided the backdrop to former Prime Minister Tony Blair as he defended his decision to go to war with Iraq in a reaction to the publication of the Chilcot report broadcast by the media.

Released in 2016, the report was the culmination of a seven-year independent inquiry into the UK's involvement in the Iraq War.

On loan from the artist

[View the work on the floor-based video monitor.]

Graham Ellard and Stephen Johnstone

Pattern, 2021

16mm film transferred to HD video, colour, silent. 16 minutes

Pattern is a suite of three intently observed portraits – of a woodworker making a complex joint, the maker of a hand-built geodesic dome and a gardener shaping the future growth of a tree, as they create, envisage and describe things they are intimately close to and understand intuitively.

Focussing on bodies, hands, gestures and glances, Pattern emphasises the subjects' complete absorption in their tasks and draws the viewer into that same meditative immersion.

On loan from the artists

[Turn around and cross to Room 2 on your left through the gap.]

[Room 2: walk around the room clockwise from the wooden framework on your left.]

Sharon Haward

A Story of Sex and Real Estate, 2021

Wood

Sharon Haward's practice spans sculpture, painting and installation. The relationship between the body, architecture and the built environment are key themes in her work – often created in response to site-specific cues.

Haward's work grows out of her interest in architecture and the contributions made by women designers, artists and architects to Modernism. Sources of inspiration include photographs and drawings gathered over many years and research trips to iconic buildings such as E1027 in France, designed by Eileen Gray, Villa Sommerfeld and Villa Savoye.

You'll find further artworks by Haward on the ground floor, in the front window and stairwell.

On loan from the artist

Melanie Jackson

Artworks left to right:

Ladder 1, 2022

Hand-finished print on cut out plywood

Ladder 2, 2022

Hand-finished print on cut out plywood

Spekyng Rybawdy, 2020

Animated video, colour with sound.

10 minutes, 10 seconds

Hoodwinked 1-5, 2022

5 vulcanised ceramic heads

A Third Leg, 2022

Hand-finished print on cut out plywood

On loan from the artist

Melanie Jackson's animated video *Spekyng Rybawdy* and the surrounding installation are inspired by a particular set of medieval 'obscenities'.

Pilgrim Badges were small cast tin or lead alloy brooches that were mass-produced, easily affordable and part of a vast and profitable pan-European trade.

A group of these, of which little was written or acknowledged but many made and found, are known as the bawdy badges, secular badges, sexual badges or erotic pins. They often depict fantastical sex organs with legs, wings and crowns.

Jackson recreates and animates these images/objects as part of a large body of work that explores the lineage of visual methods and vocabularies of dissent, resistance and humour.

Kevin Hendley

The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian, 2022

5 oil on wood panels, with LEDs

Artworks left to right:

The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian I (after Delaroche)

The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian II (after Guido Reni)

The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian III (after Ribera)

The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian IV (after Caravaggio)

The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian V (after Rubens)

On loan from the artist

Kevin Hendley's *The Five Ecstasies of Saint Sebastian* (2022) is modelled after artists – Delaroche, Reni, Ribera, Caravaggio and Rubens. Inspired by neon signs and European chapels where sacred artworks are illuminated for contemplation, Hendley surrounds each painting with glowing LEDs.

Sources say that during the third-century Christian persecution by Roman Emperor Diocletian, Sebastian served in Diocletian's personal bodyguard while secretly a Christian. When his beliefs were discovered, he was shot with arrows, survived, and later beaten to death. His arrow-wounds survival led to his veneration as a saint that protects from plagues and illnesses. The story of his martyrdom has captured the imagination of artists for centuries.

The installation makes a dramatic statement, combining classical and contemporary references, clashing the sacred and secular.

[Enter the video room.]

Karen Russo

Junkerhaus, 2019

16mm film transferred to digital, black and white. 7 minutes, 30 seconds

The architect Karl Junker (1850-1912) dedicated his life to building a house in Germany that he filled with incredible wood carvings. In Junkerhaus, Karen Russo uses haunting audio and experimental film editing to emphasise the porousness between imagination and reality in Junker's fantastic world.

Shots of branches and brambles echo Junker's carved interiors and reflections, and projections and changes in light animate surfaces and structures. The result produces a psychological portrait of the house that offers a new appreciation of Junker's architecture as a mystical and visionary experience.

Contains flashing lights

On loan from the artist

Hicham Gardaf

The Cinnamon Hut (Apparition), 2021

Framed silver gelatin hand prints mounted on aluminium
(quadriptych)

Gardaf developed *The Cinnamon Hut (Apparition)* during the peak of the pandemic, which saw social distancing, national lockdowns and travel bans.

Gardaf states, 'The project emerged as a response to my struggle with homesickness (as a Moroccan immigrant living in the UK) and it gave me the possibility to find solace in everyday objects when all means to return home were obstructed. The hut-like structure was built entirely from materials found commonly in my childhood house — such as cinnamon sticks and wool, triggering memories of intimacy, warmth and protection. The act of building the hut, engaged the sense of touch and smell and became a healing process itself.'

Courtesy Hicham Gardaf and Galerie 127

[Walk out of Room 2 and cross Room 1 through to Room 3.]

[Room 3: Walk around the room clockwise starting at the paintings on your left.]

Christophe Lennox

The beekeeper, 2021

Spring garden in Tøyen, 2021

Drinking table, 2021

Still life with coffee cups, 2021

All works oil on canvas

Christophe Lennox lives in Oslo, Norway and works intuitively, painting from memory and imagination.

Having struggled with depression and addiction, he returned to painting as a form of sanctuary during the pandemic.

He describes visiting a communal garden and observing the transformation of rhododendrons through the changing seasons – from glossy leaves to barren branches – a process that became a metaphor for personal transformation.

On loan from the artist

[Enter the video room.]

Maud Haya-Baviera

Things Fall Apart, 2020

4K video. 5 minutes, 25 seconds

Maud Haya-Baviera works with a variety of media and methods, including video, photography, sculpture and installation, employing the strategies of appropriation, performance and participation.

During the pandemic, Haya-Baviera sought comfort in what as a child she'd thought, 'an exciting survivor's guide to isolation': Daniel Defoe's 18th-century novel Robinson Crusoe. On re-reading as an adult, it appalled her with its racism, leading to this video work. Made in homage to the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe's 1958 work of the same name, Things Fall Apart combines archive footage, holiday advertisements and manipulated arias to reveal how the myth of the paradisaical tropical island is linked to historical exploitation.

On loan from the artist

Dene Leigh

Recollected, 2021

Oil paint and pen on paper

Recollections, 2021

Mixed Media

Dismantled, 2021

Oil paint on linen

Backdrop, 2018

Oil paint on linen

Leigh's work springs from an urge to unearth and preserve history and memories. This motivation came after his grandfather experienced severe memory loss, caused by stroke. His grandfather became unable to grasp language, understand the function and perception of objects, or recognise once familiar faces.

On loan from the artist

Lara Smithson

Lungs, 2021

Pencil on Polyfilla and foam

On the floor plinth:

Shroud 1: Moving left, 2021

Shroud 2: Moving right & left, 2021

Shroud 3: Moving right, 2021

Costume/Drawing, soft pastel and pencil on reflective fabric

Smithson's work references medical imaging that allows us to see connections between neurological and anatomical systems. In Lungs, arrows, ribbons and bubbles hint at how incorporeal parts of a human – voice, thought or soul – manifest themselves physically.

The Shrouds were made for a film and performance project examining Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing: therapy used to treat PTSD by stimulating the left and right sides of the brain through eye or body movements.

All artworks on loan from the artist

Amanda Kyritsopoulou

Artworks left to right, top to bottom:

Doreen would like to know who is responsible, 2021

Giclee print on archival paper

Nan would like to know how much of her is air, 2021

Giclee print on archival paper

Bill is wondering if a strong mind is also heavy, 2021

Giclee print on archival paper

Jon is wondering if it's just him, 2021

Giclee print on archival paper

On loan from the artist

Amanda Kyritsopoulou's prints are from a body of work using images sourced online over a long period of time. The images were collected in thumbnail-sized pixelated form, projected onto a large wall and re-photographed with a soft focus.

In keeping with the theme of sanctuary, these images of people lying face down, supported by various cushions can suggest rest

and relaxation, but Kyritsopoulou maintains a level of ambiguity that allows for multiple readings.

She cites the American writer Raymond Carver's (1938-1988) short stories as a source of inspiration, and some of his character names feature in the artwork titles.

Benjamin Phillips and Amy Fenton

Flying over Basingstoke, 2022

Digital wallpaper

Amy walking in the Woods, 2021

Pen and coloured pencil on paper

Top:

Flying over Basingstoke, 2021

Pen and coloured pencil on paper

Bottom:

Cereal, 2021

Pen and coloured pencil on paper

Cat Vase, 2021

Pen and coloured pencil on paper

On loan from the artists

Benjamin Phillips and Amy Fenton have been working collaboratively since the summer of 2021. Amy is neurodiverse and has a complex set of needs. Benjamin and Amy's drawing sessions provide a tranquil space for creativity and communication.

Benjamin draws in pen while Amy simultaneously injects colour to the work. The subject matter is varied and a form of visual diary where autobiography, current affairs and dreams merge. Amy's mother Jill believes that Amy's morale and communication have increased and her seizures decreased since they started working together.

Benjamin says that their collaboration has been beneficial to his mental health, giving him space to process past traumas. In the work *Flying Over Basingstoke* he reflects on the experience of his mother's time in psychiatric institutes when he was a child and adolescent.

Nigel Caple

Artworks top to bottom, left to right:

Night Sanctuary (The Hill), 2022

Acrylic on paper

Night Sanctuary (The Pier), 2022

Acrylic on paper

Boats on the Beach, Hastings, 2022

Acrylic on paper

Boats on the Shore, Hastings, 2020

Acrylic on paper

Hastings Harbour Arm, 2020

Acrylic on paper

Hills and Mist, Hastings, 2021

Acrylic on paper

Fragile Sanctuary (Ruins) Variation 3, 2022

Acrylic on paper

Fragile Sanctuary (Ruins) Variation 2, 2022

Acrylic on paper

Sanctuaries were originally developed in specific natural locations believed to be sacred places. Nigel Caple's vivid paintings suggest there are many local sites in East Sussex that can be considered in this light.

Six of the paintings on display reference places in Hastings, including the East and West Hills that he describes as possessing unique atmospheres.

Caple typically creates preparatory sketches on site and returns to the studio to paint. In recent months, the Russian invasion of Ukraine prompted him to revisit past sketches of ruins – two new paintings from this body of work are exhibited here Fragile Sanctuary (Ruins) Variation 2 & 3.

On loan from the artist

[Exit the Room 3 and view the public programme information panels outside the exit doors.]

Brewers Towner International

Associated Events

Brewers Towner International Opening Event

Saturday 22 October, 7.00pm, free, drop in

Join us to celebrate the exhibition opening, see artist films in the Towner cinema and performances by Ramona Ponzini and Lucy.

Exhibition Tours with Lucy

Friday 18 November and Friday 20 January, 2.00pm, free, drop in

Artist Lucy brings her original animal character creations to life in guided tours of the exhibition.

Screening and in-conversations

Saturday 5 November, 2.00pm to 3.30pm, free, booking advised

A screening of Patrick Hough's documentary-fiction film *The Two Faces of Tomorrow*, followed by an in-conversation and Q&A with Patrick and scientist Dr Brenda Parker.

Saturday 26 November, 2.00pm to 3.30pm, free, booking advised

A screening of Felix Melia's film *Money for Nothing*, followed by an in-conversation and Q&A with Felix and Siufan Adey, co-founder of architecture collective Afterparti.

In-focus panel: East Sussex spaces of sanctuary

Thursday 1 December, 6.30pm to 7.30pm, pay-what-you-can

Eastbourne's Sanctuary Café, Refugee Radio from Brighton and curator Noelle Collins discuss creatively forming spaces of sanctuary.

Online Reading Group

Tuesday 10 January, 6.00pm to 7.30pm, free, Zoom

Explore texts on the theme of sanctuary with artist, curator and facilitator Sophie Mak-Schram.

Day courses

Drawing Strategies with artist Edward Liddle

Saturday 12 November, 11.00am to 3.00pm, booking required

A guided walk and drawing course exploring new ways to find visual inspiration and techniques for working on found materials, such as blinds and tarpaulin.

Casting Space with artist Sharon Haward

Saturday 14 January, 11.00am to 3.00pm, booking required

A plaster casting session where you'll learn a range of casting and modelling techniques exploring the idea of sanctuary through personal objects and modelled forms.

Online sound work

Saturday 15 October 2022 to Sunday 22 January 2022, free, online

Scan the QR code to listen to sound work frogs.picus.VANNA by Ramona Ponzini.



[Go to the ground floor.]

[Artwork in the window (ground floor)]

Sharon Haward

Redressing the Geometry of Power, 2021

Calico, paint, wood

The objects and images Haward creates are primarily abstract but reflect encounters with specific places, spaces and the human form. Her practice grows out of her interest in architecture and the contributions made by women designers, artists and architects to Modernism.

One strand of her work explores the potential of architecture to create a space for escape and sanctuary. Sources of inspiration include an archive of photographs and drawings gathered over many years of research trips to iconic buildings such as Villa Sommerfeld, Villa Savoye, Barcelona Pavilion and the De La Warr Pavilion.

Redressing the Geometry of Power is presented as part of Brewers Towner International, exhibition continues in top floor galleries 2 &3

On loan from the artist

[Artwork in the stairwell]

Sharon Haward

Comfort Blanket, 2019

Black felt with polyester stuffing

The objects and images Haward creates are primarily abstract but reflect encounters with specific places, spaces and the human form. Her practice grows out of her interest in architecture and the contributions made by women designers, artists and architects to Modernism.

One strand of her work explores the potential of architecture to create a space for escape and sanctuary. Haward describes Comfort Blanket as a snaking stuffed and stitched form inspired by furniture in E-1027, a modernist villa in France (designed and built from 1926-29) by Irish architect and furniture designer Eileen Gray.

Comfort Blanket is presented as part of Brewers Towner International, exhibition continues in top floor galleries 2 &3

On loan from the artist