DEGREE SHOW
FINE ART
2018
UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND

OPENING EVENT
Friday June 15
17:30 - 20:00pm
Welcome by Shirley Atkinson
Vice Chancellor
17:45
Priestman Building
SR1 3PZ

SHOW DATES
Saturday June 16, 10:00 - 16:00
June 18-22 10:00 - 17:00
(Closed Sunday)

An artist’s education is never finished. Art school fosters the development of active, confident creative individuals and collaborators able to negotiate their place in culture, economy and society.

Artists have ideas in abundance, everyday they make things happen. All these qualities are enormously attractive for employers.

The Fine Art staff, themselves all artists, wish the 2018 graduating cohort every success.

Remember you can take the student out of art school, but an art school experience never leaves you.

Peter Wolland
Programme Leader
BA(Hons) Fine Art

The Degree Show is the most exciting time of the academic year for Fine Art students and staff. The show represents the culmination and celebration of three years full-time (or equivalent part-time years) of degree level study. Previous studio practice, written work and the Degree Show exhibition all contribute towards the degree awards that the students will receive.

"The studio is a concentrated space for making and thinking about making. Extracting works from the studio and installing them in the gallery space is an unnerving but hopefully revelation process," Helen Legg, Director of Spike Island.

The Degree Show is a collection of solo exhibitions. The art works are bidding to assert their maker’s ideas which have been achieved through research and hard fought practice. Now the work is exposed to academic and critical scrutiny, public curiosity and family and friends’ delight. The show is where the private studio space becomes public showcase.

The aim of the University of Sunderland’s Fine Art programme is to support and help develop students’ individual practices, so that they can find their place in society as artists in the 21st century. They will graduate with knowledge, experience and confidence, equipped with the skills required to succeed in whatever art related practice, job or career that they wish to pursue.

Studio practice at Sunderland includes painting, sculpture, printmaking, digital arts and performance. The 2018, BA (Hons) Fine Art degree cohort includes students who have been studying at the University since their first year, along with students who have completed either Foundation Degree or Higher National Diploma at their local further education college before joining the University to complete their final Stage 3 ‘Top Up’ Degree. The programme also includes local, national and international students along with students at different career stages.

So what awaits our Fine Art graduates? An article by Raqs Media Collective comments that “the artist learns to constantly prepare for the unknown, for what remains to be done. An artist undertakes to translate and to transform themselves, continuously through their practice and through their working lives.”
Danielle Anderson

I am interested in the way we dress and present ourselves in public. My paintings focus on the different ways people present themselves and the image they project to the world. I am looking at choices people make about themselves. Why they have made choices about their appearance and whether they have made them consciously or subconsciously because of self-expression, an expression of identity, beauty standards and pressures, or if they are based on social expectations or what is deemed normal or socially acceptable.

**Dissertation title:**
*A Study of the Ideas, and Techniques used in the Paintings of Lucien Freud and Francis Bacon. Comparing in particular how the use of Photographs and Life Drawing as preliminary studies influenced their finished work.*

*GettyImages/Danielle Anderson* 

**Brenda**  
oil on canvas  
76 x 61cm
My experimentation with a simple leaf motif using paintings, prints and digital images, made it clear that nature had a powerful hold. A sense of vulnerability of our little green world; a highly urgent and important concern in the 21st century.

To focus the viewer’s attention on this issue I began to push at pictorial and compositional conventions. I discovered by positioning the image near the boundaries of the canvas, that I could force the viewer to ask questions about what lays beyond the edge of the painting.

An interest in scale, proximity and space, different types of canvas surface, and a wide range of approaches to paint handling and mark making, has led to an interest in non-conventional formation and forms of display. I am interested in building new relationships between the viewer, the work and the subject matter.

**Dissertation title:**
*An Analysis of the Different ways the Myth of Narcissus has been used in Painting, particularly since 1920.*
The starting point for my current work is a long-term interest in the visual languages of Cubism and Suprematism.

I work with abstract shapes, colour and pictorial space to ‘modernise’ the potential of these historic art forms. I focus on colour,flatness and form, and how colours work with each other. I am interested in chaotic, playful composition rather than having a figure/ground relationship within the work.

I often use outlined shapes and hard edges; developing dynamic compositions that suggest structure, chaos and the decorative. I am interested in how the use of scale effects the colour along with the use of white grounds and graphic forms. I want the viewer to engage with the work as a whole rather than having one focal point.

Dissertation title:
In What Ways did Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque extend the Ideas of Paul Cezanne? How far did this Influence the Development of Cubism?

Chaotic Precision
acrylic on Fabriano paper
213 x 152cm

catherineaspin@hotmail.co.uk
My work is about mixing portraits and fantasy worlds together. Fantasy Art has intrigued me since I was young. I am fascinated by the idea of creating anything you want with your mind and bringing it to life in a painting. I paint portraits of ‘famous’ people that I am interested in, be it singers, actors or artists. My sketchbook is my planner, I take ideas from movies I watch or books I’ve read and plan it all out roughly in my sketchbook, and when I’m happy with the planning I start painting immediately.

Some artists that I’ve looked at such as Edouard Manet, Carel Weight and Caspar David Friedrich have been important to the development of my work. I am interested in the surrealism/realmism aspects of their works.

Dissertation title:
A Comparative Study of Edouard Manet and Luc Tuymans focusing on their Portraits.
My paintings and drawings are an exploration into the harmony of seemingly arbitrary forms that the landscape takes. I use perspective, colour and mark making and a process of simplification, representation and elaboration. I am directly inspired by Fauve and Post-Impressionist painters such as Van Gogh, Vuillard and Derain. I work partly from photographs, partly on-site and partially from imagination, often embellishing a scene several times with different motifs.

Painting is a positive form of release for me, and I want everything I create to reflect an optimistic childishness. I relate this process to Taoism and Zen teachings; in my paintings I make a sort of Zen garden, simplified natural forms arranged by the human hand into a pleasing and congruous form. This process also represents my politics, in the sense that I believe that society only survives through a harmonious interaction between manifold distinct although linked elements.

Dissertation title:
Post-Impressionism, Contemporary Art and Myself

Untitled
ink on paper
50 x 60cm
tomdawes420@gmail.com
My work is based on an instinctive, intuitive and often repetitive mark making process; a natural form of self-expression. Repetition is for me a way of releasing emotions. ‘Tagging’ forms the basis of the work. My work is often spontaneous and the result will not be corrected or adjusted, it will be presented exactly how it was painted in that particular moment. Colour plays an important role in my work, I have explored the different possibilities colour can have, I have been focusing on keeping the work as minimal as possible often using just one particular colour. I have explored many mediums and my aim is to create work that gives a sense of freedom and expression.

Dissertation title:
What if any, is the Difference Between Street Art and Graffiti?

**Untitled**
spray paint on wood
200 x 100cm
garnercarl24@gmail.com
Nature has always been at the forefront of my practice. My continuing and growing interest in animals has resulted in my current work and they have become my main motif. I am inspired by the markings and patterns found in nature and adapt them to represent the animals I create. By making the animal that I represent decorative, the detail becomes very important as it forms the structure of the work. I wanted to find a way to recreate the effects nature has had on me and portray my perception of the beauty I see. The purpose of my work is to provide the viewer with an unusual representation of a recognizable form in order to create curiosity about the subject matter.

Dissertation title:
An Analysis of the Different Ways Digital Technology, particularly the Internet has changed the Relationship between Artists and their Audiences. An Evaluation of the Benefits and Disadvantages.

Howling Wolf
acrylic marker on studio wall
230 x 168cm
sophie.gibbons@live.co.uk
Instagram: SophiegibbonsART
Simulated reality is the hypothesis that reality could be simulated. There has been much debate over this topic, ranging from philosophical discourse to practical applications in computing. My work is an expression on the simulation argument, the endless thoughts we have about unanswered questions on our universe. I want my art to tell a story through collaborating my admiration for both art and science.

Throughout my practice I have studied the patterns which are merely broken down from computers, the shapes and uniqueness of information held within computer coding and microchips. My ideas are continuing to spread to augmented and virtual reality using materials such as acrylics, ink and graphite. My aspiration is to paint messages, visions and narratives that communicate with this new digital world we live in.

**Dissertation title:**
*Do We Live Inside A Simulated Reality? A Detailed View Inside the Simulation Hypothesis.*

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**Circuit**
cr http://koldkreations@gmail.com
acrylic & ink on canvas
75 x 128 cm

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KERRI GOLDIE
Captivated by the hidden beauty in nature, I find myself compelled to study it in microscopic depth to explore its infinite qualities. The simplest forms – such as a grain of sand or a bubble – has the ability transport us to endless worlds within worlds. I use the micro as an expression of the macro, to discover new ways of seeing the world; illuminating the unseen and tuning into the infinitum of life beyond the five senses. To do this I branch across disciplines and forms, using both art and science (with microphotography, video projection, sculptural or time-based installation) to present an alternative view of natural wonders that would otherwise be overlooked.

“To see a world in a grain of sand
and Heaven in a wild flower
hold infinity in the palm of your hand
and eternity in an hour.”
William Blake

Dissertation title:
An Analysis of How Far and in What Ways Collaborations between Fine Art and Microbiology have created New Representations of Nature?
I make work that allows me to explore the female form through a range of different materials and processes, including embroidery and digital drawings. I use embroidery to create linear, abstract, figure-based forms, my aim is to simplify the female form to the point where the lines within the work are unrecognisable as a human figure. The slow nature of the process enables me to thoroughly explore the forms being created by the thread. Creating large-scale embroideries as part of an installation with other elements, including; projections of digital images, means that images and lines are often reimagined by the viewer and the delicate aspects of the work such as the embroidery are less noticeable.

I aim to encourage the viewer to move around and interact with the work, because the forms change as the viewer moves, with important aspects of the work such as the embroidery only becoming completely visible as the viewer moves closer.

**Dissertation title:**
My work is concerned with reconfiguring personal experience and giving new meanings to commonplace things. Engaging with colour, painting languages and pictorial space, both perceptual and conceptual, harnesses the enormous potential of a painting to communicate the mysteries, ambiguities and meaningful experiences of being in the world. The work of Makiko Kudo and Hernan Bas have been influential within that context.

The work has a strong connection with the concept of the film still, the frozen frame, re-imagined as a painting re-purposed as one frame of a much larger narrative. The boundaries of the painting double for the edges of the film camera lens. The concept of story-telling and world-building is central to my practise.

Dissertation title:
Discourse, Assertion and Myth: The Representation of Marcel Duchamp in Art-World Literature.
An interest in the work of other painters such as Monet and Dubuffet has long been the basis of my work as it allows me to experiment with different forms and means of abstraction. Recently I have been most interested in exploring colour and shape and the ways that different methods of mark making can affect the outcome of a painting, this experimentation has increased my knowledge of what shape and colour can actually mean in a painting and has opened me up to the endless possibilities that the mind can provide.

Recently I have also been exploring the idea of incorporating figures into my work, Dubuffet, (1901-1985) has become one of the main influences on my work and in particular how he brought figures into his paintings through the use of shapes, lines and colours. I am drawn to the idea of abstract shapes and colours being brought together to create a figure hidden inside the painting, conjured up by the viewers imagination.

Dissertation title:
What has been the Impact of 20th Century Art on Today’s Figurative Art?
During the third year I have become interested in nature and in particular flowers and their shapes. Making flowers into mandalas I work with contrasting colours and shapes. This project has made me explore more precise, delineated forms in my work. Creating these mandala pieces can be quite time consuming, so I have learned to work at a fast pace.

Given the decorative nature of my work, in addition to making paintings on canvas and the studio walls, I have printed t-shirts and plates with my designs on. I am interested in seeing my work on gallery walls and in it being worn and used in the home.

**Dissertation title:**
*What Contribution did Women Make to Abstract Expressionism?*
Through boxing I have been able to take control and understand the power of my own body. The central focus of my work is the female form and after moving away from drawing directly from the figure I started making black and white abstract (action) paintings that communicate how my body physically reacts to the intensity of the boxing environment.

The longer I have participated in boxing the more aware I have become of my capabilities and limitations, both as an artist and a boxer.

The physical act of painting is both a form of expression and a visual representation of my movements.

My body is used as a material in the performance, the resulting artwork becomes an extension of my body providing the viewer with an embodied experience. The viewer is encouraged to follow the marks around the canvas so that they can imagine myself or them as the boxer.

Dissertation title:
*How far did the Impact of the First World War Influence Artists and their Attitudes to Society at the Time?*
My work comes from the human form, from life drawings I have made over the years. I am interested in the structure of the body, how flesh, bone, and muscle combine to create an individual human being and also, how the body itself is changed by time and experience.

I use my life drawings as a starting point to create paintings in acrylic and acrylic ink on boards. I do not make exact copies of these drawings. Instead, I focus very tightly on parts of them, looking at the shapes contained in them and then select two, three at most, to create the paintings. The choice of colours is often intuitive with a preference for complimentary colours. I also use metallic colours and other paint effects.

Through the simplicity of these images I hope to present the viewer with some ambiguity or choice as to whether they are looking at a human form, a landscape or even an abstract painting.

**Dissertation title:**
**How far have Attitudes to Sexuality and Censorship in Art Changed since Aubrey Beardsley scandalised late Victorian society?**

**Matthew**
acrylic ink on canvas
40 x 30cm
awfully_quiet1975@hotmail.co.uk
Bethany Jackson

My interest is in process-based work, experimenting with different ways of using materials. I pay attention to details such as line, pattern, colour, texture, shape and form.

Prior to my current abstract work I included subject matter taken from natural forms such as plants and birds; subjects that had a bright and light-toned colour palette. My current colour palette has some links to ideas about escapism; used to combat the complications of modern life and the effect it has on my emotions.

I use a wide range of media because of the different ways I can layer them up. I use printmaking and painting because they allow me to add detail through multiple layers, creating visually engaging textures and patterns.

Dissertation title:
What are the Differences and Similarities between Gestural Painting and Colour Field Painting? Are these terms still legitimate today in helping to understand Abstract Expressionism?

Eric
acrylic on canvas
76 x 55cm
bethanyjackson95@me.com
My work is based on photographs and is influenced by Pop Art. I focus on the use of strong and interesting colour, using it to express and change characteristics of the subject matter. I use simplified designs, bold graphic drawing and areas of flat colour. This choice of visual language, I believe creates a level of intrigue that engages the audience and is aesthetically pleasing and presents familiar subject matter in a new form.

**Dissertation title:**
An Exploration of the Development of Abstract Painting in the 20th century. Is Abstract Painting still important and relevant in the 21st Century?

**Untitled II**
acrylic & watercolour on canvas
152 x 121cm
jackjmcknighton@gmail.com
VICKY LAMBTON

My paintings are a melange of paint, ink and pen. They are created from a collage of my family crests and wild animals on canvas.

I was inspired by William Morris and the way he works with colour, repeat pattern, design, textile and wallpaper. In particular I looked at his use of colour, which is vibrant but also natural.

I was also inspired by John Piper, his work on design, lino print, painting and colour. Specifically, I focused on a lino print to use on top of a colour background. I also created a painting and consider the contrast colour which John Piper uses.

Dissertation title:
Design and Colour by John Piper and William Morris and How they Influenced Contemporary Art and Designers.

Family Crests
ink on canvas
30 x 23cm
vlambton@yahoo.co.uk
I (primarily) make soft sculptures that use the human body as subject matter. I am relatively new to the medium of sculpture, beginning in my first year at university, it is only recently that I am beginning to understand the impact my work potentially has. I have always had an intense interest in distortion within the body and the uncanny.

My interest in the figure stems from life drawing and re-configuring the body using interesting materials. I am particularly interested in exploring distortion in my work, sometimes this is has been unintentional. The use of the human body within my work, coupled with my interest in the uncanny can create an uneasy and disturbing atmosphere when several works are arranged together.

The process of translating my ideas into sculpture is a fascinating experience and I feel the process of making the work has become just as important as the finished piece.

**Dissertation title:**
How did Psychoanalysis and the Subconscious in Louise Bourgeois' personal life change and shape her Artworks?

**Untitled**
mixed media sculpture
60 x 60 x 60cm
bexxmarris95@gmail.com
Anastasia Manentzou

I am inspired by the complex beauty of nature and animal life. Challenging myself to find ways to make this subject matter into painting and sculpture. I am interested in wildlife and the environments in which animals live. Colour as it is found in nature is a particular interest and it inspires my work. Realism has always been the main focus of my paintings as a method of presenting the beauty of life. However, as a sculptor I use objects from the environment that are directly connected to both my sculptural ideas and to nature. In my most recent work the intention is to have a visual conversation about the beauty and life of the natural world so that the viewer remembers that we are intensely related to nature and to assist them in appreciating the value of it.

Dissertation title:
To What Extent did Eye Diseases, and other Vision Difficulties, affect Artist’s work during the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Untitled
oil paints on canvas
140 x 100cm
anastasiamanentzou2@gmail.com
Society shapes us in many ways, possibly more than we realise – from our interactions, to our personal development through to others' perception of our bodies as a reflection of self-worth.

We are social beings. Genetically we rely on one another for the survival of humanity. That fundamental connection makes our interactions physiologically and psychologically important. So it's not surprising that how society perceives us affects us on many levels. And it's partly how society perceives our bodies that is of concern; we're talking body image. So what does that involve?

**Dissertation title:**
An Analysis of the Different Reasons and Controversies Surrounding Contemporary Artworks when they have been Censored.

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*Beauty is the appreciation of yourself*

digital drawing, sticker
7 x 7cm
mikaella-21x@hotmail.com
Capturing my imaginary world in my work is essential. Trying to capture my wild and fantastical thoughts as they race through my mind is not easy, this is why I tend not to make preliminary sketches. I work in a very free and unplanned way. I paint fast and am not restrained by reality. Images cling to my brain with an unrelenting grip, begging to be explored. I don’t draw from life because it simply does not interest me. Sometimes I don’t know what I want my work to become, I just trust in my ability as an artist to find it along the way, as I have a very clear idea of what I don’t want my work to become, kitchy, boring or unoriginal.

Dissertation title:
Is Putting your Body through it Art?

La beauté du chameau
acrylic paint on wood
32 x 24cm
eleanormurley@gmail.com
The interdependent relationships we have connect us to each other and the world in which we live. It is in observing the strength or fragility of these relational dynamics that drives me to explore the themes of gender, sexuality and power within my work.

I am currently responding to the implications of aspects of fairy tales that are often present in female archetypes. Exploring their existence and relevance in contemporary culture and questioning the possibilities for exploitation and restriction that they present.

Working in both 2 and 3 dimensional forms, and combining elements of natural and man-made materials, I explore the balance of power. And employ current and historic symbolism as a visual language to reflect personal experience.

**Dissertation title:**
*Woman in Surrealism: Sexual Objects or Empowered Beings?*

*Tampered Innocence*
acrylic on canvas
183 x 136cm
pajgephillips97@outlook.com
The main influences on my current practice are artists and filmmakers from the past such as soviet film director Dziga Vertov, Walter Ruttman and Joris Ivens. I have always used photography and mixed media, whether that be film or digital. I needed a challenge so I decided to explore experimental film making alongside producing artwork.

I am interested in the issue of transportation; how we use transport in our daily lives to get around whether it be work or leisure. Bicycles and how they are used to get around the city, have allowed me to produce GoPro video, photographs, drawings, paintings, cyanotype and prints based around movement, rhythm and journey.

Dissertation title:
What are the Ethical Considerations for Photographers when they take photographs in a Public Context? When does Street Photography become Voyeuristic

Urban Metropolis
digital film/sound
10 mins
andypringle1@hotmail.co.uk
instagram - @pringle.andrew
My focus and interest lies within the modernist aesthetic of hard-edged painting, geometric abstraction and the Minimalist movement. My creative intention is to develop the use of line, form, colour, space, perspective, dimension and scale to explore, interpret and communicate the architectural surroundings and cityscapes that I experience.

This design focus has resulted in both minimal and complex outcomes that have included drawings, acrylic paintings, physical and digital sculptures, and paintings made with vinyl tape. By exploring different mediums and working with a range of approaches to making, my aim is to produce a body of work that occupies both two and three-dimensional space in a coherent abstract language. In the recent past I have worked exclusively in black and white but am now exploring the full colour palette.

Dissertation title:
A Comparative study analyzing the work of Carmen Herrera and Ellsworth Kelly, in Post-War France (1948-54). An Evaluation of how important this period was in establishing their careers and future success, including whether Herrera should now be recognized as one of the most important Abstract Painters of the Twentieth-century?

Architectural Profile, 2017
acrylic on plywood
30 x 30cm

Shadow, 2017
acrylic and white silk emulsion on plywood
122 x 80cm
william_ramsay@live.co.uk
williamramsay.wixsite.com/fine-art-blog
I am interested in translucent materials and in particular how light and colour travels through clear objects. I like to experiment and explore the unconventional ways in which materials behave when you paint on them. I find it challenging to work with translucent materials such as glass, double glazing units, transparent rainwear etc. The outcomes are sometimes unexpected but always interesting. I am also fascinated by the symbolic potential that the materials that I use have. The main influences on my current practice are Sigmar Polke, Pipilotti Rist and Remy Jungerman.

My most recent work considers nakedness and how it is protected in both physical and psychological ways. The beauty of light on the human forms is a metaphor, for me, of an individual life’s and value.

Dissertation title:
A Comparative study of the Stained-glass work of Marc Chagall & Sigma Polke in a Spiritual Context.
My work is underpinned by a passion for creating narratives, characters and scenes. Drawing inspiration from the arts, I work mainly through painting and illustration. I also experiment with sculpture and installation. I like to use whatever materials and mediums I can access to create and explore my ideas as they develop. I am always striving to develop my skills and knowledge. I usually start with pencil drawings in sketchbooks, these are a personal record of ideas and imagery that can later be analysed and re-used.

My work moves between what is real and what is imagined and is often deeply personal. I use art to explore the innermost desires, dreams and fears of my subconscious and often attempt to project myself into the work, pretending I am as much a part of the work as any of the brush strokes. With a mind often racing with ideas, I try to incorporate a ‘flow’ in my work to capitalise on this. A melodic blend of colour, vibrancy and the macabre, my work typically contains hidden creatures in dreamlike vistas, often harnessed from my subconscious. I turn the internal imagery of my mind into colourful worlds of automative escapism.

**Dissertation title:**
*An Analysis of Artists’ Representations of Witches in Western Art from the Fourteenth to the Early Twenty-First Century from a Feminist Perspective.*

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**Fools**

acrylic paint & wax on canvas board
10 x 15cm
indieflocks@icloud.com
I am interested in journeys and transformation both physically and intellectually. I combine painting and mixed media with traditional printmaking, using inspiration from my travels and events in my own life such as childbirth and motherhood. Colour is a major concern in my work. I use contrasting hues, alternating between expressive and well-defined brush marks.

A family trip to Bolivia informs my current work which employs a range of media to explore the universal mother figure. More recently I started incorporating old family photographs going back five generations of women.

The figure of the mother has become more and more important in my work over time as I started analysing how the relationship I had with my mother as a child influenced the bond I have with my own children.

**Dissertation title:**
*Analysis and Comparison of the way Saint Sebastian is used as a Representation of Suffering and Homoeroticism, Historically and in Contemporary Art*

*Untitled*
acrylic on canvas
117 x 100 cm
ecstraka@yahoo.com
Instagram: eileenstrakarnac
I am interested in exploring my experiences with mental health, to enable me to be more self-aware. There are aspects of this that are difficult to talk about due to the associated stigma that mental health issues have.

My work is mostly figurative drawing and painting but recently I have started making sculptures, three-dimensional objects and installations. My work usually includes a figure form surrounded by shapes and bold outlines, with high contrast between colours and a lot of black. Over the years I have moved from a very academic and planned way of working to using more spontaneous and playful strategies. I used to illustrate specific subjects quite literally, now I use more abstract themes and concepts. It has always been difficult to expose myself in my work but after researching confessional art for my dissertation I have been more accepting, more daring and more willing to open up to more taboo areas.

**Dissertation title:**
*How does Confessional Art Demonstrate Societies’ Acceptance of Taboos over the last Century?*
Tori Walton

My artwork is based around three main genres of art; abstract, minimalism and geometry. I adore the simplicity of minimalistic art; the simplistic lines, bold colours and withdrawal from true representations of objects. If I was to describe my work; it is not neat, it is sometimes clumsy and erratic – but I feel that is what makes me, me. No line is truly straight, no block of colour is truly full of pure pigment. There is no perfection in art; there is no perfection in the way I work. My work has developed initially from a hobby into an interest in arts, crafts, sculpture and painting, it is forever changing.

Dissertation title:
An Investigation into How Far Yves Klein, Donald Judd and Dan Flavin influenced Modern Art.

Open Window
acrylic on canvas
164 x 128cm
toriwalton@hotmail.co.uk
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A Community of Learning

At Sunderland, students embark on a journey that allows them to develop their own individual curriculum. Leading by example, tutors work with students, encouraging them to explore what it means to be a practicing artist. The programme's philosophy centres around helping students to develop a personalised understanding of the opportunities and skills that Fine Art can offer them today; to think through making. Importantly, our programme not only helps our students to develop their creative skills but also focuses on how they might use those skills to benefit contemporary society.

For example, some will develop ‘portfolio careers’ that might involve a mix of working as ‘Fine Artists’ for gallery exhibitions, designers making work to commission for specific contexts, makers who can fabricate work for themselves or others, curators, educators, arts administrators or participatory artists working in the community (participatory art is an approach to making art in which the audience is engaged directly in the creative process, allowing them to become co-authors, editors, and observers of the work). Others may chose to take their creative skills into jobs outside of the creative arts.

The programme is mainly about developing a student’s creativity, confidence, problem solving skills, communications skills and professionalism so that they are well prepared to enter the professional world. Developing a personal approach to art or ‘practice’ is central to our programme at the University of Sunderland. Through this approach, students develop their own individual creativity, enabling them to deal with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk - a key asset for their future careers. As a Fine Art graduate they ‘invent’ their own personal approach - as opposed to being told what they should do or think.

The programme is underpinned by what have been described as the ‘signature pedagogies’ distinctive to art and design teaching (Shreeve, Sims & Trowler, 2010). These approaches help students develop their own sustainable art practice as well as professional skills and attributes which will be transferable to many jobs and careers in the future:

**Learning has a material and physical dimension** - There is recognition of the whole person’s involvement in learning; it is not simply a matter of cerebral activity, but a bodily learning that involves the emotions and senses

**Learning involves living with uncertainty and unknown outcomes** - As tutors we can’t always tell students the answer and they are encouraged to develop personal responsibility and independence – important attributes for employment

**Learning has a visible dimension** – Both students and staff can see learning as work in progress. This is often not the case in other subjects

**Aspects of learning take into account the audience** – Who a student’s work is for and in what context it is shown is important. Again this is not always the case in other subjects

**The intention is to develop independent creative practitioners** - The tutor’s role is not to develop students who are all able to recite a fixed canon of knowledge, but to encourage individuals to understand where they and their work fits, and belongs, within a practice

**Learning is fundamentally social** – Artworks are visible and discussed. Students have access to their peers and tutors (and visiting artists) and discussion is a key part of, often informal, learning situations. This social element helps to build confidence in working with others

**Process is important and developmental** - The developmental and collaborative nature of student and tutor interaction is often centred on unfinished and on-going work in progress. These opportunities for formative feedback are facilitated by the visibility of the ‘work’ around them and the readily accessible work of others. It is faster to ‘read’ a painting or sculpture than a dissertation, and meaning may be jointly debated with the whole group in the presence of both student and tutor

We aim to help students reflect upon this studio-based approach to teaching and learning and to find out what their particular creative and professional
Importantly, we also help students to articulate their own particular skills and attributes so that when they graduate they can either use them to continue to develop their practice or to get a graduate job. We want our students to be leaders and tomorrow-makers for the future. As a team of lecturers, we work alongside our students, as fellow creative practitioners. This approach might also be linked to the idea of inducting students into a ‘Community of Practice’ (Drew, 2004). All the staff on the course are working artists themselves, and share many of the same doubts, exhilarations, successes and failures as our students. We never stop learning; it’s what drives us all forward - that and a desire to share an enthusiasm for our subject. We work together, staff and students, collaborating as a team. We share ideas, as a community, questioning what it means to be an artist today and developing the skill of thinking through making.

Peter Wolland (Programme Leader)
Professor Mike Collier
Professor Kevin Petrie: Head of School

References


Fine Art at Sunderland

Fine Art has been studied in Sunderland since the 1860s. This long tradition gives the programme a rich inheritance and association with the proud history of art education in the UK. The Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art has a fifty year history in Sunderland and has recently opened in a brand new space in the University. a-n The Artists’ information company started in Sunderland as The Artist’s Newsletter, more commonly known as “an” magazine. The University of Sunderland was one of the pioneers of Practice-led PhDs in the UK with a strong cohort of art and design PhD students today who are creating new knowledge and ways of thinking for contemporary practice.

Previous Lecturers and Alumni include Robin Crozier - the internationally recognised Concrete Visual Poet and Mail Art Network artist; the nominated Turner Prize Fine Art graduate, photographer Richard Billingham, renowned sculptor and Emeritus Professor of Fine Art, Eric Bainbridge (named recently as one of Britain’s top one hundred sculptors) and Emeritus Professor of Fine Art Brian Thompson. The Fine Art staff have a wealth of national and international exhibiting professional practice and subject expertise which includes the painter Lothar Goetz, Reader in Fine Art and Professor Mike Collier artist and curator.

FINE ART PROGRAMME

BA Programme Leader:
Peter Wolland
peter.wolland@sunderland.ac.uk
(0191) 5153776

MA Programme Leader:
James Hutchinson
j.a.hutchinson@sunderland.ac.uk
(0191) 5153774

Admissions Tutor:
Marcia Ley
marcia.ley@sunderland.ac.uk
(0191) 5152138

Enquiries:
student.helpline@sunderland.ac.uk

Fine Art Department
University of Sunderland
Priestman Building
City Campus
Green Terrace
SR1 3PZ
(0191) 5153000

www.sunderland.ac.uk
www.sunderland.ac.uk/degreeshows
OPENING EVENT

Friday June 15
17:30 - 20:00pm

Welcome by Shirley Atkinson
Vice Chancellor
17:45

Priestman Building
SR1 3PZ

SHOW DATES

Saturday June 16, 10:00 - 16:00
June 18-22 10:00 - 17:00
(Closed Sunday)