



PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release
Issued: 17 September 2018

The Ground Beneath Your Feet

Venue: Castlefield Gallery, Manchester

Artists: Omid Asadi, Tulani Hlalo, Keep It Complex, Jane Lawson, Roe Rosen, Oscar Santillan, Michael White, and The Museum of Homelessness

Exhibition Dates: 16 November 2018 – 3 February 2019*

Public preview: 6pm-8pm, Thursday 15 November 2018 (press preview: 5pm-6pm)

The Ground Beneath Your Feet launches this November as part of *The With One Voice International Arts and Homelessness Summit & Festival*, in Manchester (12-18 Nov 2018).

In the context of the refugee crisis, rising homelessness, environmental catastrophes, right-wing populism and the tragedies caused by deterritorialised capitalism many people see themselves, their identities and sovereignty under threat. This has led to the now familiar demand for stronger borders, rather than a call to work across them to deal with the global challenges we face. With artists from Israel, Ecuador, Iran, Scotland and England, working with film, sculpture, demonetised currency, political campaigns and fungi: this exhibition aims to keep the conversation nuanced at a time when simple lies win out against complex truths. Asking how we relate to, learn from and are affected by the ground beneath our feet.

Coproduced by Documenta 14 (2017) and showing for the first time in Britain, **Roe Rosen's** (b.1964, Israel) film *The Dust Channel* (2016) features an operatic libretto conveying the devotion of a bourgeois Israeli couple to their home-cleaning appliances - in particular the Dyson DC07 vacuum cleaner. The film makes a figurative association between the dirt which invades their home, the windswept sand of the desert and asylum seekers held at the 'Holot' detention centre: described by Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu as illegal workers attempting to infiltrate the country.

Oscar Santillan's (b.1980, Ecuador) *The Intruder* (2015) presents 'the top inch of England', a small stone taken from the 3028 ft summit of Scafell Pike in the Cumbrian Lake District. The work reflects on the ways in which humans have imposed their cultural categories over nature: the highest, the largest, the deepest etc. Its initial exhibition at Copperfield Gallery, London (2015) sparked a variety of responses including angry demands for its return, exposing the symbolic potential of a tiny piece of the ground.

In her pair of video works *Fatherland* (2016) and *Motherland* (2016), **Tulani Hlalo** (b.1994, UK) makes a solo pilgrimage to see what meaning or what connection might be found as she covers herself in the dry earth of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe and stands in the cold waters of King Edwards Bay, Tynemouth - the birth places of her parents. In the late 1990s, towards the end of Zimbabwe's involvement in the Second Congo War and after the confiscation of private farms from landowners, political and economic instability led to a period of hyperinflation. **Michael White's** (b.1987, Scotland) series of Indian ink and gouache on demonetised Zimbabwean banknotes (2016-) depict characters from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* - a modern fairy tale of a journey to a magical land which was also intended to be allegorical of the political, economic, and social events of America in the 1890s. In our current era of continued economic instability

these works exemplify the complicated mixture of both objective and subjective forces which impact the value of a nation's currency.

Dammam (2018) by **Omid Asadi** (b.1979, Iran) is inspired by musical rituals, from the oil rich region of southern Iran, present in religious ceremonies; in particular funerals. Asadi's performance involves a group of people using oil barrels as drums which leak oil onto a Persian carpet as they are played. A new piece of work being developed by **Jane Lawson** (b.1964, UK) will draw on the ideas of 'Radical Mycology', which considers how mycorrhizal networks - huge systems in which fungi and plants exchange information and nutrients within and between species - might encourage better relationships between humans and their ecosystem, seeing all beings as having inherent value and interdependence, regardless of their economic value. Previous work by Lawson has involved oyster mushrooms - which can clean up hydrocarbons such as diesel - being grown on printed copies of political and literary works which support the ideologies of neoliberal capitalism, as a form of symbolic 'detoxification'.

At Castlefield Gallery the UK's first **Museum of Homelessness**, will present a selection of stories and objects donated to the collection during their State of the Nation project. Objects were donated from a wide mix of sources including homelessness workers and volunteers, activists, and people experiencing different forms of homelessness. They showed what is going on for people in detention centres, in squats, in alternative communities, in hostels, day centres and on the streets - highlighting the systemic injustices that continue to cause homelessness at a time when we already have record numbers of homeless people in the UK: a 169% increase since 2010.

Keep it Complex is a collective of cultural workers who formed during the EU referendum in 2016, working collaboratively to run events, workshops, facilitate discussion and create campaign materials, often using traditional artistic formats such as exhibitions as support structures for other cultural work. For *The Ground Beneath Your Feet* they will produce new merchandise and campaign materials with funds raised from sales going towards their third annual activation, *Nothing Ever Changes*, in January 2019. A screen-printing workshop at Castlefield Gallery will also aim to foster informal conversations about the links between food, agriculture, migration, feminism and work.

Events:

Radical Mycology Gathering, Saturday 24th November 2018

Further events to be announced

For further information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact: Jennifer Dean, Communications and Audience Development Coordinator at Castlefield Gallery, on jennifer@castlefieldgallery.co.uk / 0161 832 8034 or 07766046672.

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Listing information

Exhibition Title: The Ground Beneath Your Feet

Public Preview: 6-8pm, Thursday 15 November 2018

Press Preview: 5-6pm, Thursday 15 November 2018

Exhibition Dates: 16 November 2018 – 3 February 2019*

Venue: Castlefield Gallery, 2 Hewitt Street, Manchester, M15 4GB

Tel: 0161 832 8034

Web: castlefieldgallery.co.uk

Opening Times: Wed to Sun 12noon – 5.30pm

***Christmas and New Year closure: Saturday 22 December 2018 - Tuesday 8 December 2019 inclusive**

Admission: FREE. The gallery is fully wheelchair accessible

Castlefield Gallery is a contemporary art gallery and agency, established in 1984, focused on showing new and commissioned work from its city centre venue in Manchester, as well as off-site and in the public realm. The organisation supports artists' career development, in particular through partnership working and services. New Art Spaces is a Castlefield Gallery run scheme that repurposes empty spaces for use by artists across Greater Manchester, accessed by its 200 strong plus Castlefield Gallery Associates. Castlefield Gallery artist patron is the celebrated Ryan Gander.

The gallery is a Manchester City Council Cultural Partner, Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and currently a recipient of Arts Council England Catalyst Evolve Funding. Catalyst Evolve is an initiative from Arts Council England supporting arts and cultural organisations to grow private giving and build resilience. This means that, between 2016 and August 2019, Arts Council England will match every pound we secure from new Trust and Foundation sources, corporate sponsorship and donations, as well as individual donations made to Castlefield Gallery, on a 1:1 basis.

The With One Voice International Arts and Homelessness Summit & Festival, in Manchester (12-18 Nov 2018) As cities around the world struggle to solve homelessness, delegates from 15 countries will come together in Manchester to explore and celebrate the role the arts can play in tackling homelessness. Greater Manchester has been chosen because of the exceptional arts/homelessness projects in the area, the way the region is integrating the arts into homelessness support and the way the cultural sector is stepping forward to pledge support people who are or have been homeless through the Manchester Homelessness Charter. The Summit & Festival will focus on Performance, Practice, Policy, People and Partnerships: showcasing performances, films and exhibitions by some of the best local, national and international groups; sharing practice and methodology and putting people who are or have been homeless at the centre of everything, from design to delivery including working in paid positions in the Summit & Festival.

The Museum of Homelessness is being developed by people from all walks of life, including those who have been homeless. Our community explores the art, history and culture of homelessness to make a difference for homeless people today. The first museum of its kind in the UK, we make the invisible visible through collecting, research, events and exhibitions. We do not yet have a building, so we are working with partners to produce our public programme.

Castlefield Gallery Funders



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