



**PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release**  
**Updated: 30 May 2019**

## **Eileen Simpson and Ben White: Open Music Archive**

**Exhibition dates: 14 June - 18 August 2019**

**Public preview: 6pm-8pm, Thursday 13 June 2019 (Press preview: 5pm-6pm or by arrangement on Thursday 13 June)**

**Venue: Castlefield Gallery**

This summer Castlefield Gallery will present *Eileen Simpson and Ben White: Open Music Archive*, the first UK survey show of the artists' work from 14 June – 18 August 2019. The exhibition presents a selection of projects developed over the last ten years in which the artists explore the performative potential of the archive by reanimating copyright-expired archive material. Featuring sound recordings gleaned from the genesis of the music industry in 1920s Atlanta (*ATL 2067* for Flux Night Amman, 2010), a lost feature film from 1950s Jordan (*Struggle in Jerash*, 2010), and Harry Smith's celebrated six album compilation, *Anthology of American Folk Music (PLAYHEAD: A Parallel Anthology, 2010 – ongoing)* – the artists deploy rich archive material to produce an open source body of audio-visual work and invite a range of collaborators to produce and perform the public domain.

**Eileen Simpson and Ben White (Open Music Archive)** were both born in Manchester, 1977 and now living and work in London and Manchester. Simpson and White work at the intersection of art, music and information networks, seeking to challenge default mechanisms for the authorship, ownership and distribution of art. Their ongoing project Open Music Archive is an initiative to source, digitise and distribute out-of-copyright sound recordings, and is a vehicle for collaborative projects exploring the material's potential for reuse.

The survey exhibition at Castlefield Gallery coincides with the premiere of *Everything I Have Is Yours*, an ambitious film and sound work by Eileen Simpson and Ben White (Open Music Archive) that looks back to the first decade of the UK pop charts (1952-62). It has been commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella, Contemporary Art Society, University of Salford Art Collection and Castlefield Gallery and presented at Salford Museum and Art Gallery from 4 July – 3 November 2019. An edition of the film will enter the University of Salford Art Collection.

Working with a group of older musicians – many of whom are the 'original teenagers' of the Greater Manchester music scene, now in their 70s and 80s - the film focuses on this diverse group as they re-engage with public-domain samples from the formative era of the 'birth of pop', and incorporate these timeless sounds into new musical creations.

When the musicians play, they individually and collectively interact with digital technology, recalling archive sounds ripped from 1950s and early 1960s shellac and vinyl chart hits. Copyright-controlled elements of the original records are separated out and copyright-expired samples are released through an algorithmic process to enable collective use for the project and for future sharing.

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](mailto:jennifer@castlefieldgallery.co.uk) / 0161 832 8034 or 07766046672 OR Catharine Braithwaite on [cat@we-r-lethal.com](mailto:cat@we-r-lethal.com) or +44 (0)7947 644110

Notes to editors

### Listing information

**Exhibition Title:** Eileen Simpson and Ben White: Open Music Archive

**Public Preview:** 6pm-8pm, Thursday 13 June 2019

**Press Preview:** 5-6pm, Thursday 13 June 2019

**Exhibition Dates:** 14 June - 18 August 2019

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

**Tel:** 0161 832 8034

**Web:** [castlefieldgallery.co.uk](http://castlefieldgallery.co.uk)

**Opening Times:** Wed to Sun 12noon – 5.30pm

**Admission:** FREE. The gallery is fully wheelchair accessible

**Castlefield Gallery** is a contemporary art gallery and artist focused organisation established in 1984. The gallery exhibits new and commissioned work at its main venue in Manchester, off-site and in the public realm. Castlefield Gallery works locally, nationally and internationally - often through dynamic partnerships and exchange. The organisation supports artists' practice and career development, working especially with artists at early and mid-career stages. Castlefield Gallery New Art Spaces re-purposes temporarily vacant property for use by artists across Greater Manchester and the North West of England, accessed by its 200 strong plus Castlefield Gallery Associates. The celebrated Ryan Gander OBE is Castlefield Gallery's Artist Patron.  
[www.castlefieldgallery.co.uk/](http://www.castlefieldgallery.co.uk/)

**Recent projects by Eileen Simpson and Ben White (Open Music Archive)** include: Play it Again! Use it Together for Victoria Gallery & Museum Liverpool (2018), Auditory Learning for British Art Show 8 (2015-16), Premonition 2037 (2016) for KALEIDOSCOPE Modern Art Oxford, Local Recall at Hallé St Peter's Manchester (2014), Playhead for Schizophonia at CAC La Synagogue de Delme (2013), ATL 2067 for Flux Night Atlanta (2013), Open House: Divided Estates at Casa Luis Barragán / de\_sitio Mexico City (2012), The Brilliant and the Dark at VBKÖ Vienna (2012) and The Women's Library London (2010), Song Division at Camden Arts Centre (2011), Struggle in Jerash at Gasworks London / Makan Amman (2010), Parallel Anthology at the 17th Biennale of Sydney (2010), Free-to-air at ICA London (2008) and Cornerhouse Manchester (2007).  
[www.openmusicarchive.org/projects](http://www.openmusicarchive.org/projects)

**Film and Video Umbrella** commissions, curates, produces and presents artists' moving-image works that are staged in collaboration with galleries and other cultural partners. Since the late 1980s, FVU has been at the forefront of this vibrant and expanding area of practice, promoting innovation through its support of some of the most exciting figures on the contemporary scene. During this time, the organisation has commissioned and produced nearly 200 different artists' projects, ranging from ambitious multi-screen installations to shorter film and video pieces, as well as numerous online commissions. [fvu.co.uk](http://fvu.co.uk)

**The Contemporary Art Society** champions the collecting of outstanding contemporary art and craft in the UK. Since 1910 the charity has donated thousands of works by living artists to museums, from Picasso, Bacon, Hepworth and Moore in their day, through to the influential artists of our times. Sitting at the heart of cultural life in the UK, the Contemporary Art Society brokers philanthropic support for the benefit of museums and their audiences across the entire

country. Their work ensures that the story of art continues to be told now and for future generations. [www.contemporaryartsociety.org](http://www.contemporaryartsociety.org)

**Equal Shares** is a collaboration between Contemporary Art Society and Film and Video Umbrella to commission new moving-image works by artists in partnership with four Contemporary Art Society Member Museums: University of Salford Art Collection; Touchstones, Rochdale; Gallery Oldham, and Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool. Once completed, the individual works will enter into the permanent collection of one of the four museums. The commissions will consider the North West of England as a longstanding source of radical thinking: a site of new forms of collective action and co-operation, and alternative models of redistribution and exchange. The first of the four projects is Everything I Have Is Yours by Eileen Simpson and Ben White (Open Music Archive).



**The University of Salford Art Collection** contains almost 700 works of modern and contemporary art, and exists for the benefit of students, staff and the public. It is accessible in key buildings across the University of Salford campus, and is loaned to other arts organisations and museums. The collection is distinctive in that it has an active acquisitions policy focused on three collecting strands: 'About the Digital', 'From the North', and 'Chinese Contemporary Art'. Most acquisitions are developed through strategic partnerships with external exhibition and commissioning collaborators such as Open Eye Gallery, Castlefield Gallery, Salford Museum and Art Gallery and AND Festival. [artcollection.salford.ac.uk/](http://artcollection.salford.ac.uk/)

**Salford Museum and Art Gallery & Salford Community Leisure.** Established in 2003, Salford Community Leisure, which runs Salford Museum, is a not-for-profit organisation that is run by and for the people of Salford, it is committed to enhancing the physical and cultural wellbeing of the community through the sport, library and cultural opportunities on offer across 40 venues, which attracted over 3 million customer visits last year. Working hard to ensure each and every experience is the very best it can be, Salford Community Leisure boasts state of the art fitness and sports centres, a dedicated watersports centre; football facilities; Salford Museum and Art Gallery; several music and art spaces; libraries and community hubs plus Ordsall Hall Tudor Manor House and gardens. <https://salfordmuseum.com/>

**Together We Move**, is a Greater Manchester engagement programme that responds to Everything I Have Is Yours. The programme extends opportunities for older people to engage with the music, visual culture and social history between 1952 – 1962. The older people will present a showcase of their activities at Salford Museum and Art Gallery, during the exhibition of Everything

Commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella, the Contemporary Art Society, University of Salford Art Collection and Castlefield Gallery through 'Equal Shares' 2019



Presented by Contemporary Art Society, Mbili Foundation and the University of Salford



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