



**PRESS RELEASE: issued 20 August 2020**

## **New Trustees and Collaborative Doctorate Award announced by Castlefield Gallery, Manchester**

Castlefield Gallery has been part of Manchester's contemporary visual art landscape for over 35 years, with an established track record in artist development, supporting the production of new work for exhibition, public art commissioning and public realm animation and activation. Its international work is focused on exchange between artists in the North West of England and the rest of the world.

Castlefield Gallery puts partnership at the heart of all it does, in particular operating strategic partnerships with key HEIs in the Greater Manchester City Region. Continuing to develop these relationships, Castlefield Gallery announces a new AHRC NWCDTP Collaborative Doctoral Award with Manchester School of Art at Manchester Metropolitan University. This September, Thomas Dukes will commence his PHD with the university and gallery: *Castlefield Gallery and the Curatorial Project: uncovering process and the impact of contemporary art practices in the city*. He will be exploring Castlefield Gallery's archive, researching a 35 year history of its exhibition history, taking a sharp focus on its support of the development of new work, growing artists' practice and careers through exhibition making and affecting artist communities in the city, region and further afield. He has previously worked as Cultural Coordinator across the libraries of St Helens Metropolitan Borough, and as the curator of Open Eye Gallery.

**Thomas Dukes** said: *"Here at the beginning of my Collaborative Doctoral Award I'm excited and honoured to follow the stories of the artists and projects who have worked with Castlefield Gallery in its 35 year history, opening the process and findings to our audience."*

Castlefield Gallery is a female led organisation and continues to build on its growth and achievements with the announcement this month that Ceri Hand, Alisha Kadri and Chara Lewis have joined the gallery as Trustees.

[Ceri Hand](#) is the Director of [Artist Mentor](#) and has extensive experience of working in the arts and culture sector, with previous key positions including: Director of Programmes at Somerset House, London; Associate Director: Institutions and Public Relations, Simon Lee Gallery, London; Associate Consultant, Contemporary Art Society, London; Director, Ceri Hand Gallery, London/Liverpool; Director, Metal, Liverpool; Director of Exhibitions, FACT, Liverpool; Deputy Director, Grizedale Arts, Cumbria and Director of Make, London. She is also an Independent Member of the Cymru yn Fenis Wales in Venice Advisory Committee 2020-2024.

**Ceri Hand** said *"I am delighted to be joining the Board of Trustees at Castlefield Gallery, particularly at this pivotal time in the sector. I look forward to supporting the brilliant team and their mission critical role of enabling artists to enrich our lives, in the North West, across the UK and internationally."*

**Alisha Kadri** is a trained dancer, writer and development professional with over 20 years' experience in the creative sector. She is currently Development Officer at The University of Salford. She has performed at the Royal Festival Hall, the Southbank Centre and taught undergraduate dance programmes for Creative Academy (UWL). Alisha is passionate about increasing access to the arts and education and enjoys building strong and meaningful partnerships to enable this. Alisha has established ambitious fundraising programmes for Watford Palace Theatre, Manchester International Festival and the University of Salford.

**Alisha Kadri said:** *"I am excited to join the Castlefield Gallery team as a Board Member. Castlefield Gallery is an important part of the creative DNA of the North West and propels so many artists careers onto a global arena. I look forward to building strong meaningful partnerships so that Castlefield Gallery can continue to grow its vital offer for artists and audiences."*

**Chara Lewis** has lived in Manchester since graduating from the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art in 1990. She had her first gallery group show at Castlefield Gallery after graduation and joined their Slidex scheme which led to a commission to work with award-winning architect Roger Stephenson on a large glass piece for NM Rothschild's Manchester office. She founded [Brass Art collective](#) in 1998 and has worked on collaborative projects with Anneke Pettican and Kristin Mojsiewicz since 1999. Their practice is hybrid, interdisciplinary and often site-specific in nature, with a number of commissions including Gestured, the recent Arts & Heritage commission for

Chetham's Library. She is a member of Rogue Studios and senior lecturer in Fine Art at Manchester School of Art where she is part of the programme leadership team.

**Chara Lewis** said: *"I am passionate about this city, collaboration and multifarious practices, public engagement and making opportunities for young artists."*

**Helen Wewiora, Director of Castlefield Gallery** said: *"We are very fortunate to be welcoming Alisha, Ceri and Chara as Trustees at Castlefield Gallery. They bring with them vital knowledge and experience honed through strong careers in the arts both as practitioners, producers and senior managers. We are very excited to have them on board, working with us to drive the next phase of the gallery's vision."*

**Susie Stubbs, Chair of the Board of Trustees at Castlefield Gallery**, said: *"During the pandemic Castlefield Gallery has continued to work as it always does - with and for practicing artists, making a career in contemporary visual art possible, even in these most difficult times. We are delighted to welcome three such visionary women to our Board, who are committed, like us, to making the case for contemporary visual art and nurturing the creative talent that's so integral to our city and to the North of England as a whole."*

**Castlefield Gallery will reopen on Wednesday 16 September 2020** with the exhibition [Soft Bodies](#), which was due to launch when Covid-19 lockdown restrictions were put in place. Alongside other newly reopened city art venues, visitors to and from the city will finally be able to get a much-needed cultural fix. It will open with the same regular days and hours it held before lockdown.

[A full exhibition programme is available here.](#)

**Ends//**

**For further press information please contact Catharine Braithwaite on [cat@we-r-lethal.com](mailto:cat@we-r-lethal.com) or 07947 644110 [Portraits in this folder.](#)**

## Notes to editors

At **Castlefield Gallery (Est. 1984)**, we make new art possible. We are dedicated to the advancement of contemporary visual art. We are artist facing. We work with artists and creatives in Greater Manchester and beyond, at all career stages. We support them to develop their practice and careers, and to find ways not just to make art, but to make a living. We do this through: our gallery, and its free exhibitions and events that are open to all; through tailored career and practice development support; through our 200-strong artist Associates scheme; through the provision of low-cost studio and project space; through commissions and co-commissions; and through collaboration with universities, including annual graduate programmes that provide mentoring, coaching and more. For 35 years, we have supported young and older artists, new graduates right through to established artists, connecting them to each other, and to our international network of curators, arts organisations, artists and collectors. Castlefield Gallery's international work is focused on exchange between artists in the North West of England, and the rest of the world. We have an established track record in public art commissioning and public realm animation and activation. We are a female led organisation and a registered charity. Castlefield Gallery is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and Manchester City Council Cultural Partner. Our Artist Patron is the celebrated Ryan Gander, OBE.

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

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

[info@castlefieldgallery.co.uk](mailto:info@castlefieldgallery.co.uk)

**Opening Times:** Wed to Sun 12noon – 5.30pm (reopening 16 September 2020)

**Admission is FREE**

The gallery is fully wheelchair accessible, including provision of an accessible bathroom.

## Castlefield Gallery Funders



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