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Manchester's contemporary art space Castlefield Gallery reopens to the public on 16 September 2020

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. The gallery has been part of Manchester's contemporary visual art landscape for over 35 years and welcomes diverse audiences from local residential areas as well as artists and gallery visitors from further afield. Alongside other newly re-opened city art venues, visitors to and from the city will finally be able to get a much-needed cultural fix.

Guided by the latest official advice, Castlefield Gallery will ensure the cleanliness of the space and actively manage numbers of visitors, in order to create a safe and enjoyable visitor experience. After careful thought, the gallery will not require booked time slots other than for occasional events. Being able to have a personal and welcoming experience when visiting Castlefield Gallery has always been part of its distinctiveness, and part of the joy of engaging with its programme. On occasion, this might lead to very short waiting periods to enter. It will open with the same regular days and hours it held before lockdown.

Castlefield Gallery continued to nurture contemporary visual artists during the lockdown period, taking its exhibitions online, generating paid work for artists in a time of great uncertainty, contributing to non-digital activity to reach out to vulnerable communities in the region as well as focusing on intergenerational artists' projects. It will maintain this blended approach, offering content and work to those who are still not able to visit gallery spaces. This approach has also opened up more international opportunities for Castlefield Gallery, with plans emerging for connecting artists within the North West region and Greater Manchester with artists in Denmark and Hong Kong.

Castlefield Gallery programme 2020-2021

Soft Bodies

16 September – 1 November 2020

Closed to the public Saturday 26 September

Artists: Emma Cousin, Stine Deja, George Gibson, Aliyah Hussain and Anna Bunting-Branch (Potential Wor(l)ds), Robin Megannity, Sadé Mica, Jake Moore and Semi Precious, Sam Rushton, Megan Snowe, Xiuching Tsay.

Soft-body dynamics is a field of computer-generated graphics which creates simulations of soft materials such as muscle, fat, hair, vegetation and fabric. The increasing availability of this kind of software has given artists new tools to make work; manipulating 'digital clay' in limitless space. This exhibition places works made with these digital technologies alongside photography, painting, drawing and print in order to consider the shared limits and potential of these mediums. *Soft Bodies* explores how these works might inform our experience of being in a body, with its own insides and outsides, boundaries and internal worlds. Conceived long before the arrival of Covid-19, this exhibition cannot escape its current context. Its relevance speaks to the experience of screen-based interaction and our changing relationship with the bodies of others.

Obstructions

22 November 2020 – 17 January 2021

Preview Saturday 21 November (pre-booking)

Artists: Heather Bell, Maya Chowdhry, Tara Collette, Alena Ruth Donely, Jack Doyle, Jane Fairhurst, Sarah Feinmann, Tina Finch, Sabrina Fuller, Parham Ghalamdar, Claire Hignett, Paddy O'Donnell, Chris Rainham, Katie Tomlinson, Ian Vines.

Fifteen artists have been invited to remake an existing piece of their work for an exhibition at Castlefield Gallery - with one condition - an 'Obstruction' given to them by another artist in the exhibition. In part a response to the restrictions and disruptions caused by Covid-19, the project is also inspired by the history of artists using self-imposed restrictions to aid creative or free thinking. The artists have been selected from the University of Salford's Salford Scholars, Manchester School of Art Castlefield Gallery Mentees and the gallery's bOlder programmes with all either under 30 or

over 50 years of age, creating the opportunity to foster a conversation between two distinct generations. What may appear to be a subtle request, may in fact be a great challenge for an artist as they are pushed out of their comfort zone, either with the materials they have to use or the way they have to think, promising some revelatory results.

Castlefield Gallery Associates Members Exhibition

31 January - 21 February 2021

Preview, Saturday 30 January (pre-booking)

Mariama Attah, curator at Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool, is the guest selector with Castlefield Gallery curator Matthew Pendergast for the first 2021 Castlefield Gallery Associates Members Exhibition. The Members Exhibition is intended to be an opportunity for an artist to develop their practice and profile, by taking an idea to the next level or trying out things anew in order to deliver something exciting and ambitious. The selected associate member receives a budget of £2000 (for fees and production) as well as curatorial guidance, technical and communications support to produce an exhibition as part of the gallery programme.

Nicola Ellis and Ritherdon & Co Ltd: No gaps in the line

14 March – 9 May 2021

Preview, Saturday 13 March (pre-booking)

This will be Nicola Ellis's first major solo show and marks the end of her two year placement at Ritherdon & Co Ltd, a manufacturer of steel enclosures based in Darwen, Lancashire. Ellis's work draws on the visual language of industry operations, fabrication and processes. She develops site-responsive installation, working with sculpture, painting, drawing, video and photography. Recent projects have seen Ellis introduce herself and operate within existing industrial workplaces; making artworks which respond to the relationships between people, materials and processes. Some resulting works feature loaned or exchanged waste materials, which are temporarily transformed, often into large-scale sculpture.

Following a short Art in Manufacturing (festivalofmaking.co.uk) residency in 2018, Ellis returned to the factory in February 2019. Throughout *Return to Ritherdon*, she has been observing, participating in and at times disrupting the ecosystem of the factory and its operations. New works and methodologies have been informed by studying the application of Lean Manufacturing – a

philosophy aimed at the reduction of waste in the form of time, energy and materials. Site-responsive works are being developed for this exhibition which will continue this process, connecting the factory and the gallery space in real time and sharing the project with wider audiences.

Castlefield Gallery has worked with Ellis for nearly a decade, in recent years supporting the artist to realise a site specific installation at DOX Centre for Contemporary Arts in Prague and securing a place for her work in Manchester Art Gallery's collection at The Manchester Contemporary 2019. This summer, Ellis was given an Artist Award from the Henry Moore Foundation.

The exhibition is supported by the Ronnie Duncan Art Foundation and Castlefield Gallery Commissioning Patron Professor Chris Klingenberg

MA and MFA Fine Art graduates from Manchester School of Art.

23 May - 13 June 2021

Preview, Saturday 22 May (pre-booking)

In 2018, Castlefield Gallery and Manchester School of Art launched a new collaboration: a series of biennial exhibitions showcasing some of the most promising work being produced by MA and MFA Fine Art graduates from Manchester School of Art. The second of these will now take place in spring/summer 2021. Artists will be selected by Castlefield Gallery Curator, Matthew Pendergast and Programme Leader of MA/MFA Fine Art at Manchester School of Art, Ian Rawlinson.

The Naming of Things: a group exhibition curated by Castlefield Gallery Associate Bryony Dawson

27 June – 15 August 2021

Preview, Saturday 26 June (pre-booking)

Language has always been in a state of flux, but the acceleration of change led by new media platforms and formats is dramatically changing the way that language is written, read and understood. The artists selected for **The Naming of Things** embrace this unreliability by using and mis-using language as a way to imagine architectural spaces and alternative viewpoints. Featuring the work of Sriwhana Spong, Lydia Davies, Jeanne Constantin, Sarah Tripp, James McAleer and Bryony Dawson, Charlie Godet Thomas and Jessica Higgins involving text, audio, sculpture and film, each explores the semiotic relationships between images, sounds and words.

The Naming of Things was selected from proposals submitted to Artist and Castlefield Gallery Associates guest selector Ryan Gander and Castlefield Gallery curator Matthew Pendergast as part of the gallery's members exhibition series.

The Annotated Reader: A publication-as-exhibition and exhibition-as-publication conceived by Ryan Gander and Jonathan P. Watts

27 June – 15 August 2021

Preview, Saturday 26 June (pre-booking)

Imagine you've missed the last train. Is there one piece of writing that you would want with you for company in the small hours? Perhaps this text transformed your thinking. It might be a mantra continually returned to. Perhaps it is a text you felt should be read by younger generations or that you wish you'd encountered as a student.

Artist Ryan Gander and critic and writer Jonathan P. Watts put this question to a range of creatives, artists, academics, writers, musicians, and designers, inviting them to suggest such a piece of writing and then annotate it. The annotations add a further layer to the texts, demonstrating and suggesting ways of reading, displaying thought, complicating the relationship between image and text, reading and looking. With almost 300 contributors including Marina Abramović, Art & Language, Paul Clinton, Tom Godfrey, Ragnar Kjartansson, Sarah Lucas, Alistair Hudson and Hans Ulrich Obrist, it forms an educational resource that can be used as a teaching aid for future generations. The Annotated Reader is a curriculum, an index and an ethics.

John Powell Jones: Cyber Junk

12 September – 7 November 2021

Preview, Saturday 11 September 2021

Jones' work deals with empathy or the lack of, in contemporary society. His use of speculative fiction is intended to form a dialogue with our present predicament and an imagined dystopian future which we may learn from in the present. A body of multimedia work will depict a narrative running for hundreds of years, starting with characters introduced in Jones' previous work *Technotrash: The Fellowship of Technoid*. The presentation at Castlefield Gallery will take the form of performance, video (a combination of live action, 2D and 3D animation), tufted wall hangings and ceramic sculpture, all housed in an immersive installation in bright blues, fleshy pinks, slime greens, and

populated with life size characters. Audiences will be transported to this Cyber Junk universe as spectral observers of a looped time-line spanning thousands of years. We continue to partner with IMT Gallery, London to deliver this exhibition which will be presented in two parts across both venues.

Ends//

For further information, images and interviews please contact Catharine Braithwaite on +44 (0)7947 644110 or cat@we-r-lethal.com

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

info@castlefieldgallery.co.uk

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

Admission: FREE

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

Castlefield Gallery Funders



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