

Press release

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The UK's largest touring exhibition *British Art Show 9* opens in Wolverhampton launching another big year for culture in the Midlands

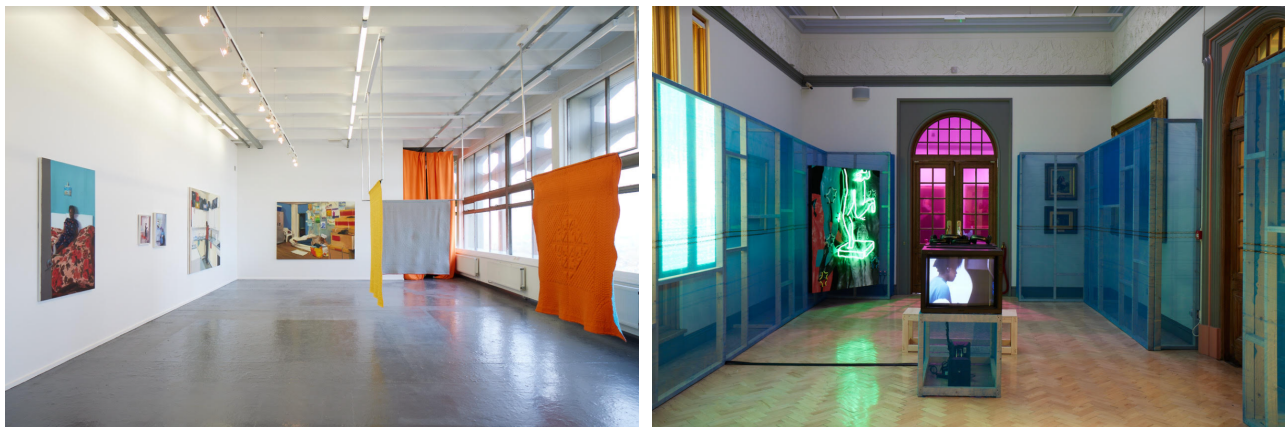


IMAGE CREDITS IN 'NOTES TO EDITORS'

- *British Art Show 9 (BAS9)*, curated by Irene Aristizábal and Hammad Nasar, continues its UK tour, opening to the public on Saturday 22 January 2022 at Wolverhampton Art Gallery and University of Wolverhampton School of Art.
- Taking place every 5 years, the British Art Show is Hayward Gallery Touring's landmark exhibition, having begun in 1979 – this is its ninth edition.
- The exhibition explores themes of healing, care and reparative history; tactics for togetherness; and imagining new futures.
- In Wolverhampton, *BAS9* focuses on how we live with and give voice to difference, responding to the city's rich cultural history.

This weekend, Hayward Gallery Touring's landmark exhibition ***British Art Show 9 (BAS9)*** will continue its national tour, opening in the city of Wolverhampton. Recognised as the most important and ambitious recurrent exhibition of contemporary art produced in the UK, British Art Show takes place every five years and brings the work of artists defining new directions in contemporary art to four UK cities.

Following its first leg at Aberdeen Art Gallery (10 July – 10 October 2021), this new iteration of the exhibition sees 34 of *BAS9*'s 47 selected artists presented across two venues in Wolverhampton from 22 January to 10 April 2022: **Wolverhampton Art Gallery** and **University of Wolverhampton School of Art**. Following this, the exhibition will continue its national tour to multiple venues across Manchester before closing in Plymouth.

British Art Show 9 is curated by Irene Aristizábal and Hammad Nasar, and showcases the multidisciplinary work of 47 contemporary artists. The exhibition reflects a precarious moment in Britain's history, which has brought politics of identity and nation, concerns of social, racial and environmental justice, and questions of agency to the centre of public consciousness. *BAS9* is structured around three main themes – **Healing, Care and Reparative History; Tactics for Togetherness; Imagining New Futures** – and has been conceived as a cumulative experience, adapting and changing for each city, and presenting different combinations of artists and artworks that respond to their distinctive local contexts.

In Wolverhampton, the exhibition will focus on **how we live with and give voice to difference**, showcasing 34 artists whose works investigate identity from an intersectional perspective. By exploring coexisting identities such as class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, these works will be presented in critical dialogue with Wolverhampton's cultural history which has been shaped by the diverse populations that came to work and live there during the post-war period. Wolverhampton Art Gallery houses one of the most significant collections of art on the Troubles outside Northern Ireland. It also collects works linked to the British Black Arts movement which has roots at the Wolverhampton School of Art where many of its members studied. As part of the *BAS9* exhibition there will be a display of works from Wolverhampton Art Gallery's Collection.

Selected highlights of *BAS9* Wolverhampton include:

- Works from **Hurvin Anderson's** barbershop series – including a new painting *Dixie Peach* (2020) – will be presented at Wolverhampton Art Gallery. Born in Birmingham to Jamaican parents, Anderson's vibrant paintings explore his relationship to both cultures.
- **Helen Cammock's** new multimedia installation *Changing Room II* (2021) and elegiac film *Changing Room* (2014) reflect on her late father – who was an art teacher, magistrate and amateur ceramicist – and his experiences of living in Wolverhampton in the 1960s and 70s. This work is made possible through Art Fund support and will be acquired into the collection of Wolverhampton Art Gallery.
- **Oona Doherty's** dance work *Hope Hunt & The Ascension into Lazarus* (2015-ongoing) – created after learning that Northern Ireland had the highest rate of young male suicides in Europe – has been performed in youth detention centres and prisons as well as theatres, and will be configured as a street performance in Wolverhampton on Saturday 9 April 2022 at the Light House.
- **Mandy El-Sayegh** presents a new immersive installation *blank verse blanket man* (2022) at Wolverhampton School of Art, incorporating a new sound composition, paintings from her *Net-Grid* series and walls covered in local Wolverhampton newspapers to create an environment of sensory overload through imagery and a mesmerising soundtrack.
- **Mark Essen** has created a pilot programme for an 'experimental art school' within the setting of Wolverhampton School of Art, working with students from Thomas Telford to create and furnish a workshop space and begin a collective exploration of what an art school could be. *School of the Underkraft* (2021-22) is made possible with support from Arts Council England Project Grant for

National Activities.

- A new audio-visual installation, *ZEMEL* (2022), from experimental rapper, producer, writer, visual and performance artist **GAIKA** draws on his Caribbean heritage, sound system culture and is a shrine to his late uncle and other Windrush-generation deportees.

The exhibition includes a programme of artist films and a dedicated website which enables artists, especially those not presented in Wolverhampton, to share works online. A schedule of events and activities for visitors of all ages, both in person and online, will furthermore extend the reach of *British Art Show 9* throughout the city and across the Midlands region and its surrounding counties.

Hammad Nasar and Irene Aristizábal, Curators of *British Art Show 9*, said: *"We are thrilled to present the second iteration of BAS9 in Wolverhampton, where we focus on an intersectional approach to living with difference. Our approach foregrounds the contemporary resonance of the Black Lives Matter protests with the historic context of Enoch Powell's infamous and divisive 'rivers of blood' speech (1968), made during his tenure as Wolverhampton South West's Conservative MP. We see BAS9's presentation in critical dialogue with Wolverhampton's cultural history. This is reflected in concrete form through a 'capsule' exhibition of a selection of works from Wolverhampton Art Gallery's permanent collection, presented as part of BAS9".*

Brian Cass, Senior Curator, Hayward Gallery Touring, said: *"We are delighted to be working with Wolverhampton Art Gallery and University of Wolverhampton School of Art on British Art Show 9. The collections and histories of these two iconic institutions provides an important context for BAS9. We hope the extraordinary range and variety of outstanding work in BAS9 will give everyone who lives and visits Wolverhampton an opportunity to engage with the most exciting contemporary art being produced in the UK today."*

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication published by Hayward Gallery Publishing which includes two wide-ranging curatorial essays, over 200 colour illustrations and original texts on all 47 artists.

www.britishartshow9.co.uk

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For further press information, images and interview requests please contact:

Hannah Carr, Press Manager (Visual Arts), Southbank Centre: hannah.carr@southbankcentre.co.uk

Rachel Willcocks, Press Officer, Southbank Centre: rachel.willcocks@southbankcentre.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Tour details:

10 July – 10 October 2021, Aberdeen: Aberdeen Art Gallery

22 January – 10 April 2022, Wolverhampton: Wolverhampton Art Gallery and Wolverhampton School of Art

13 May – 4 September 2022, Manchester: Castlefield Gallery; HOME; Manchester Art Gallery; and the Whitworth, The University of Manchester

8 October – 23 December 2022, Plymouth: KARST; The Levinsky Gallery, University of Plymouth; The Box; and MIRROR, Plymouth College of Art

Image Credits

L-R: Installation view, *British Art Show 9*, 2021-22, University of Wolverhampton School of Art. A Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition organised in collaboration with galleries across the cities of Aberdeen, Wolverhampton, Manchester and Plymouth. Photo © Stuart Whipps; Simeon Barclay, *As a Precursor to Folly*, 2021. © Simeon Barclay. Installation view, *British Art Show 9*, 2021-22, Wolverhampton Art Gallery. A Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition organised in collaboration with galleries across the cities of Aberdeen, Wolverhampton, Manchester and Plymouth. Photo © Stuart Whipps.

About Hayward Gallery Touring

Hayward Gallery Touring organises contemporary art exhibitions that tour to galleries, museums and other publicly funded venues throughout Britain. In collaboration with artists, independent curators, writers and partner institutions, Hayward Gallery Touring develops imaginative exhibitions that are seen by up to half a million people in over 45 cities and towns each year.

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day.

The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).

About Irene Aristizábal

Irene Aristizábal is the Head of Curatorial and Public Practice at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, where she has curated Judy Chicago's first major survey in the UK and Abel Rodríguez first solo exhibition. Before BALTIC, Irene worked as Head of Exhibitions at Nottingham Contemporary (2013–19), where she curated exhibitions and commissioned projects by Lis Rhodes, Pia Camil, Steffani Jemison, Otobong Nkanga, Simon Starling, Michael Beutler, Pauline Boudry/Renate Lorenz, Sun Ra, Rana Hamadeh, Danai Anesiadou, Danh Võ, Carol Rama and Asco. Recent group exhibitions include *Still I Rise: Feminisms, Gender Resistance* (2018–9) and *States of America: Photography from the Civil Rights Movement to the Reagan Era* (2017). She was curator at the FRAC Nord Pas de Calais, Dunkirk in 2010–1, and was the recipient of the H+F Curatorial Grant (2010). Prior to that she co-directed the not-for-profit space Bétonsalon in Paris (2005–6). She has also curated exhibitions at the Fundació Miró, Barcelona; Maison Rouge, Paris; Form Content, London and the Museum of Health Sciences, Bogota.

About Hammad Nasar

Hammad Nasar is Lead Curator at Herbert Art Gallery and Museum during Coventry's City of Culture year (2021-22) where he recently curated the Turner Prize 2021 exhibition. He is also Senior Research Fellow at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and Principal Research Fellow at the University of the Arts, London. He was the inaugural Executive Director of the Stuart Hall Foundation, London (2018-19); Head of Research & Programmes at Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong (2012-16); and, co-founded (with Anita Dawood) the non-profit London art space, Green Cardamom (2004-12). Known for collaborative, research-driven and exhibition-led inquiry, his recent exhibition projects include: *Speech Acts: Reflection-Imagination-Repetition* (2018-19 – with Kate Jesson); *Structures of Meaning | Architectures of Perception* (2018-19 – with Sophie Persson); *Rock, Paper,*

Scissors: Positions in Play – the UAE's national pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale (2017); *Excessive Enthusiasm: Ha Bik Chuen and the Archive as Practice* (2015 – with Michelle Wong, Ingrid Chu and Vivian Poon); and *Lines of Control: Partition as a Productive Space* (2005-2013 – with Iftikhar Dadi, Ellen Avril, Nada Raza, Sophie Persson and Justine Blau). Nasar is a member of the board of Mophradat (Belgium), of the editorial board of Tate's magazine, *Tate Etc*, and is an advisor to numerous organisations including the Lahore Biennale Foundation (Pakistan); Alserkal Avenue (UAE); and Delfina Foundation, Manchester Art Gallery and Whitechapel Gallery (UK).

About Art Fund

Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. It provides millions of pounds every year to help museums to acquire and share works of art across the UK, further the professional development of their curators, and inspire more people to visit and enjoy their public programmes. In response to Covid-19 Art Fund has made £2 million in adapted funding available to support museums through reopening and beyond, including Respond and Reimagine grants to help meet immediate need and reimagine future ways of working. Art Fund is independently funded, supported by the 159,000 members who buy the National Art Pass, who enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places, 50% off major exhibitions, and receive Art Quarterly magazine. Art Fund also supports museums through its annual prize, Art Fund Museum of the Year. In a unique edition of the prize for 2020, Art Fund responded to the unprecedented challenges that all museums are facing by selecting five winners and increasing the prize money to £200,000. The winners are Aberdeen Art Gallery; Gairloch Museum; Science Museum; South London Gallery; and Towner Eastbourne www.artfund.org

Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from the Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of the bodies administering the Government's unprecedented £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Funds. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19

About Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Wolverhampton Art Gallery was purpose built in 1883 to house the city's collections of fine and decorative arts. It has one of the UK's best regional holdings of modern and contemporary art, including the renowned Pop Art collection and art focusing on the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Another important area for collecting is that of the British Black Art movement that began in the city in the 1980s. The Art Gallery is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation and attracts around 150,000 visitors annually. For further information please visit <http://www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk/>

About University of Wolverhampton School of Art

University of Wolverhampton School of Art has been at the centre of the City's creative and industrial strategy since the 1850's when our first purpose-built art school was commissioned. Our current home was formally opened to students in October 1970 - 50 years ago. Charles Wheeler's brave and iconic architecture has dominated the Wolverhampton skyline ever since.

Students on our Art, Design and Screen based courses join a creative, practice led community in which they find the time, space and resources to gain high level skills as makers and learn to understand the historical and contemporary scope of their subject. Socially engaged and community arts practice is core to our history and vision and the University of Wolverhampton School of Art has a long tradition of working with industry, civic and community partners. We embrace a diverse student body and aim to provide targeted and public access opportunities through an outreach programme that includes school/college experience days, the annual Artsfest

and degree shows, exhibitions, conferences and public lectures. For further information please visit <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/our-schools-and-institutes/faculty-of-arts/wolverhampton-school-of-art/>



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