

DEPTFORD X COMES OF AGE

SOUTH EAST LONDON ARTS FESTIVAL CELEBRATES ITS 21ST WITH ITS LARGEST PROGRAMME TO DATE



Arnaud Desjardin, 'Deptford Gold', 2015, photo: Leo Hugo

Festival dates: 25 October – 3 November 2019

Press Day: Thursday 24 October, 4pm – 9pm (tour at 4pm followed by speeches and reception at 6pm and artists preview from 6 – 9pm)

Fringe Launch Party: Friday 25 October, 6 – 9pm with after party at Artworks Creekside with DJs from Heart n Soul, from 9pm – late

Deptford X, London's longest running contemporary visual arts festival, celebrates its twenty-first birthday this year with its largest programme to date.

New director Nathalie Boobis has curated twelve major projects, five of which have been specially commissioned. These will be bolstered by almost 100 fringe events drawn from the local community.

This year's theme is *Stop Making Sense*, which is taken from the Talking Heads' 1984 concert film of the same name, and was chosen by Boobis to reflect the '*surreal, playful and unruly art as a disruption to our current political climate of hostility and division*'.



Says Boobis: '*This year's festival builds on the success of all the earlier incarnations with an ambitious core programme, a vast Fringe showcasing the density of artistic activity happening in the area, and a community procession to close the festival.*'

The festival, which will take place over ten days between 25 October and 3 November 2019, can be experienced in a range of spaces across Deptford, South East London. Last year 120,000 people saw its various exhibitions, public artworks, interventions, talks and performances connected with its core programme and since its inception in 1998 it has attracted over 1 million visitors.

This year, Deptford X is made up of the 'Curated' and 'Fringe' strands but amongst other innovations, which include a festival procession invoking worldwide carnival traditions on the final day, Boobis has added a third: 'Supported' which, alongside Curated, form the core festival programme. Five projects were selected by an open call aimed at BAME applicants, with the winners, who are supported financially and curatorially by Deptford X, selected by a jury consisting of artists and art professionals Hew Locke, Natasha Hoare, Teresa Cisneros, Christopher Kirubi and Imran Perretta.

The seven works in the curated programme include a film by Sarah Browne, who co-represented Ireland at the 53rd Venice Biennial, and a new sculptural installation by Kobby Adi, whose work explores, amongst other things, cultural objects associated with Blackness. American artist Gray Wielebinski has created a major immersive work which uses sports as an entry point for exploring themes of national identity, desire, myth making, surveillance, hierarchies, race and gender. This work will be shown in Deptford's Wave-lengths Leisure Centre.

Meanwhile, the Fringe, which unlike the other two strands is un-juried, is made up of 94 projects by local artists, curators, galleries and arts organisations. Locations range from a painting installation in a hair-dressers, a sound installation in the toilet of a bar, and the napkins of a Vietnamese restaurant, to Deptford Community Cinema, local galleries and studios, and Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art.

Boobis adds: '*I'm really excited about this year's festival; the artists I have chosen to work with for the Curated programme are all producing fantastic and timely work that's very much responding to the context of Deptford. The ideas and concerns running through their work all address the notion 'stop making sense' in different and nuanced ways – from the need to engage more with play in order to break social boundaries in Tiz Creel's interactive work, to the limits and complexities of language in Jin Han Lee's paintings. Selecting the Supported projects was tough. We had 53 incredibly strong applications but the panel decided to privilege projects they felt would benefit most from Deptford X support. I think we have chosen a great selection of artists and I'm looking forward to working with them in the run up to the festival. Last year the Fringe was the biggest yet at 94 projects and we have the same number this year. It's amazing the amount and quality of artistic production in the area and the generosity of support offered by local businesses to host art projects for the festival.'*



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Notes to Editors:

About Deptford X:

Deptford X is London's longest running contemporary visual arts festival. It was launched in 1998 as a free, annual, artist-led festival based in and around Deptford, South East London. For 10 days every year, the festival brings artists from around the world to Deptford and showcases their work alongside some of the most creative talent living and working in the area in its uniquely un-juried fringe programme.

About Nathalie Boobis:

Nathalie Boobis (b. 1984, Leicester, UK) was appointed director of Deptford X in January 2019. She previously worked as a curator and public programmer on the artist commissions programme for SPACE, London, from 2015 – 18, curating exhibitions by artists including Jonathan Baldock (2017) and Fourthland (2018). She was curatorial fellow at Goldsmiths Centre for Contemporary Art from 2017-18, working on the gallery launch, exhibitions and publications by Mika Rottenberg, Ivor Cutler, Alexis Hunter and The Chicago Imagists. She has previously been director and curator of the project space 'Green Ray', London; curator for Blank Media Collective, Manchester and NXNW festival, Wigan; as well as an independent curator. She has an MFA in curating from Goldsmiths (2016) and a BA (Hons) in critical fine art practice from the University of Brighton (2008).

About the Curated Projects:

Kobby Adi (b. London 1993) makes sculptural installations that attempt to give new agency and subjecthood to things that have been objectified through human perception, including cultural objects associated with Blackness; the objectified Black body; nature; and non-human objects. For Deptford X 2019, Adi is producing a sculptural installation and a new film that look to ritual and repetition as affective forces, as well as a public artwork installed on a billboard on Brookmill Road near Deptford X HQ.



Sarah Browne (b. 1981, Dublin) is an artist based in Ireland concerned with non-verbal, bodily experiences of knowledge and justice. This practice involves sculpture, film, performance and public projects, as well as forms of writing and publishing in diverse contexts. For Deptford X 2019 Browne is showing a new video work entitled *The Shambles of Science* that she developed during a residency in Sweden with Iaspis from Nov 2018 - Jan 19. The work is first being shown at Bergen Assembly in September 2019 and will go on to premier in the UK during Deptford X festival. The work brings together two historical narratives - of the Brown Dog Affair involving illegal vivisection in the early 1900s and of the contemporaneous force-feeding of suffragettes on hunger strike in HMS Prison Holloway.

Roland Carline (b. 1981, Aberystwyth) makes interdisciplinary work, individually and collectively, that covers most media, including painting, sculpture, film and performance. Carline believes in the act of making and showing as a transformative process that can be a powerful vehicle for learning, relationship building, social and political resistance. He is interested in ways in which humour can lighten this complex process. For Deptford X 2019 Carline is working with a group of 30 participants of Meet Me at The Albany, an all-day arts club for the over 60s run in partnership with Entelechy Arts and The Albany, and children from Rachel McMillan nursery school, to co-create a performance around the plight of honey bees for presentation at the festival. The film of the performance will be exhibited throughout the duration of the festival. The project will later go on to Goldsmiths CCA for an exhibition of Carline's work in November 2019.

Jin Han Lee (b.1982, Seoul) uses painting to capture the wordless emotions that underpin the minutiae of everyday life, from having a pint at the end of the day to accidentally brushing hands with a stranger. Lee will be creating a new set of paintings in response to the festival theme 'Stop Making Sense' that will be exhibited as part of the festival alongside a series of large-scale reproductions of her paintings that will be installed in key locations within the public realm.

Sophie Mallett (b. Australia) pursues a practice at the intersection of affect, politics and value. Through close attention she opens up spaces of discomfort, both within and outside of the gallery, that acknowledge clandestine societal norms, complicity and dysfunctional ethics. Her practice concentrates on how financial, architectural and social worlds are constructed and controlled, and in turn affect our ability to co-exist. For Deptford X 2019 Mallett is exhibiting a new 2 channel video work developed and commissioned during E.M.M.A Residency, Matadero, Madrid. The work, entitled 'Lol, sploot, blep, blop, bork', takes the idea of human procrastination from meaningful action via the enjoyment and sharing of cute animal videos as its starting point. In Mallett's work, the burden of institutional and societal change has been transferred to dogs. Its presentation at Deptford X will be the first public exhibition of the work.



Beatriz Creel (b. 1991, Mexico City) is a Mexican artist whose practice is heavily influenced by the concept of play, participative games and ludic experiences. She often performs as a facilitator/game master in exhibitions and encourages people to interact and explore. For Deptford X 2019 Creel is exhibiting a bespoke, interactive bouncy castle and creating a quest to be played by visitors to the festival through engaging with clues and instructions placed on the pavements outside shops, cafes and other venues throughout Deptford. Creel's Deptford X commission encourages new interactions through enjoyment and play.

Gray Wielebinski (b. 1991, Texas, US) works in collage, video, performance, sound, sculpture, and installation. Their work explores gender and sexuality and how these intersect with other structures of power and identity. For Deptford X 2019 they are producing a new film, in collaboration with HRH, set in the swimming pool and locker rooms of Deptford's Wavelengths Leisure Centre which will be installed in situ and accompanied by live performances. Wielebinski's immersive installation uses sports as a metaphor and entry point for exploring themes of national identity, desire, myth making, surveillance, hierarchies, race and gender.

Supported Projects:

Ikra Arshad
George Boros
Tyreis Holder
Nkechinyere Nwobani-Akanwo
Davinia-Ann Robinson

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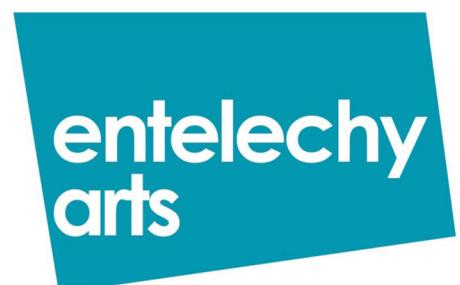
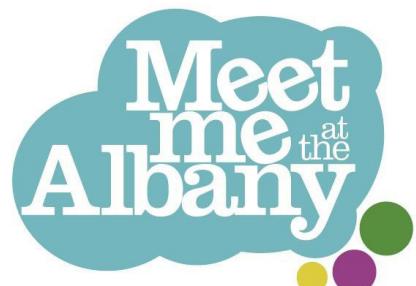
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