

News Release 15 October 2020

Poetics of Place

Fiona Curran, Yva Jung, Dave Nelson, Kirke Raava, Amanda Ralph and Imogen Welch

A timely group exhibition considering the ways in which our perceptions of place shape our thoughts, memories and dreams.

UH Arts is thrilled to announce a new exhibition - *Poetics of Place* – launching online on Thursday 22 October. Part of the Hertfordshire Year of Culture, the exhibition focuses on works by six artists living and working in Hertfordshire. With varying visual languages, artists Fiona Curran, Yva Jung, Dave Nelson, Kirke Raava, Amanda Ralph and Imogen Welch all share an inherent interest in the process of moulding and re-shaping experiences of memory or place.

The exhibition considers autobiographical thoughts, nostalgic narratives and re-interpretation of ideas, and takes inspiration from French philosopher Gaston Bachelard's seminal book *The Poetics of Space*. Consisting of assemblages, textile works, painting, photography and installation, the exhibition showcases layered, meticulously constructed works that consider the undercurrents of value systems, social histories and image-making.

Commenting on the exhibition, curators Inna Allen and Elizabeth Murton, said “*Poetics of Place* explores our perceptions of place, and how memories can be filtered through a variety of artefacts and personal experience. Our homes have always been the foundation in our lives, but we have perhaps never been more in tune with our senses of place than now, in this current environment.”

Talking about how the pandemic has impacted on his work, exhibiting artist Dave Nelson said “Since March my physical world experience, as for most of us, has become much smaller. Although potentially constraining and one might think limiting, I have been interested to observe how I, and many others, have been paying more attention to what we do have. The idea that people were looking more closely at what was in front of them – because they had the time to pay attention – seemed to me to be close to the artist’s ideal of looking and really seeing”.

Poetics of Place launches online with a curators’ introduction on Thursday 22 October and is supported by a programme of events including: an online artists’ event discussing working in a Covid context, interviews, online workshops and creative activities for everyone to enjoy at home.

Full details at www.uharts.co.uk

Ends

For further press information or images please contact Hayley Lewis on h.lewis4@herts.ac.uk

Notes for Editors

Exhibition details

22 October 2020 – 9 January 2021

Digital exhibition & curators' introduction available at www.uharts.co.uk

The exhibition is open to University of Hertfordshire staff and students in the Art & Design Gallery, College Lane Campus; open Mon – Fri 10am – 4pm. Due to Covid-19 restrictions access may be limited and the Gallery remains closed to the general public.

About Fiona Curran

Colour, collage and pattern are central to Fiona Curran's practice. Working across painting, textiles and installation her works explore real, imagined and sensed geographies where the relationships between external landscape and decorative interior, natural and technological, and figure and ground are blurred. Curran gained her PhD from Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2016 and currently teaches at the Royal College of Art. www.fionacurran.co.uk

About Yva Jung

Yva Jung is interested in planetary rhythms - the cycles of life and death. Her practice is temporal, site-specific, performative and interdisciplinary, working across moving image, digital prints, drawing, installation and improvised performance. Jung has studied Fine Art in Seoul and New York, and received her practice-led PhD from Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2016. www.yvajung.com

About Dave Nelson

Dave Nelson's paintings are concerned with the landscape, material, technique and texture. He overlays marks, scrapings, symbols and colour to create abstracted, collaged imagery that alludes to landscapes. After a career in mathematics, Nelson has been practising as an artist since 2013 and became an elected Arts Fellow at the Digswell Arts Trust in 2016. www.davenelsonart.com

About Kirke Raava

Kirke Raava's creative practice is based upon aspects of her Estonian childhood, where memory and personal heritage both inspire and influence her work. Following a career in design in the fashion industry, Raava graduated with BA(Hons) in Jewellery and Accessory Design in 2015 from Middlesex University. In 2017 she became an elected Arts Fellow at the Digswell Arts Trust. digswellarts.org/kirke-raava

About Amanda Ralph

Amanda Ralph's practice is concerned with finding 'readymade art' within the everyday landscape around us. After graduating from Coventry Polytechnic with BA(Hons) in Fine Art in 1991, Ralph was an active member of the Arena Studios. 20 years later, after diversifying her skills as a stylist and interior designer, Ralph has returned to art and is currently studying MA Fine Art at the University of Hertfordshire. amandaralph.wordpress.com

About Imogen Welch

Imogen Welch's practice is concerned with recycling, re-presentation and transformation, often with autobiographical elements. Having first studied Geology, Welch pursued a career in IT. She later returned to education, graduating with BA(Hons) in Fine Art from Buckinghamshire Chiltern University College in 2005. She studied at a postgraduate level in the artist run The Other MA (TOMA) in Southend in 2018. www.imogenwelch.co.uk

Poetics of Place Events Programme

Digital Exhibition & Curators' Introduction available from midday Thursday 22 October at <http://www.uharts.co.uk/whats-on/2020/spring-summer/poetics-of-place>

Artists' Online Event: *Working in a COVID Context*

November: date & time to be confirmed.

An opportunity for artists to come together and discuss how we can create places to work and practice as artists during these unusual and difficult times. Register your interest here: uharts@herts.ac.uk

'Create It Share It' Artist-led Activities

A chance for everyone to curate and create artwork with objects found in the home. Find out more here: <http://www.uharts.co.uk/get-involved/create-it-share-it>

New Geographies Installation & Online Workshops

Explore ideas of place, landscape and art with Krijn de Koning's installation (viewable online) and activities from artist Sarah Evans, including worksheets and digital workshops:

<http://www.uharts.co.uk/about-us/projects-partnerships/new-geographies/>

Expanding on the exhibition's themes of nostalgia, collective memories and perceptions of place, November will also see the release of videos by teaching and research staff in the University's School of Film & Television. The short films present a preview to the School's Genre & Nostalgia online conference being hosted by the University in January 2021.

About UH Arts, University of Hertfordshire

UH Arts offers a vibrant arts and cultural programme for the University of Hertfordshire's campus and local communities, working cross-arts with artists and performers. With a programme of exhibitions, performances, residencies and engagement projects, UH Arts delivers excellent, innovative arts and culture with associated research; offering space for artists and performers to experiment, and audiences to engage and co-produce. Working in collaboration with St Albans Museum + Gallery, and other key partners, UH Arts presents off-campus exhibitions and events, displaying works from around the world in new contexts. For more information, visit www.uharts.co.uk

About the University of Hertfordshire

The University of Hertfordshire brings the transformational impact of higher education to all. Its students, staff and businesses consistently reach their full potential. Through TEF Gold rated expert teaching, 300 flexible degree programmes, cutting-edge research projects and powerful business partnerships, they think bigger, stand out and positively impact local, national and international communities. For information, visit: <https://www.herts.ac.uk/>

About Hertfordshire Year of Culture

HYOC2020 is all about celebrating Hertfordshire as a county of creative and cultural opportunity. It is supported by all 11 Hertfordshire local authorities. The Programme Board has additional representation from the University of Hertfordshire, Visit Herts and Trestle Theatre Company. For further information, please contact the HYOC2020 Project Co-ordinator, Liz Gore at hyoc2020@hertsmere.gov.uk