

Push and Pull

Printmaking from Salford and Manchester

Monday 25 June – Friday 19 October 2018

Push and Pull draws together prints made in and around Salford and Manchester from the late 1970s to the present day, including works made at the Manchester Print Workshop, Hot Bed Press and Islington Mill alongside new work by University of Salford graduates.

The artists in this exhibition experiment with process, pattern and repetition, as well as considering physicality and the body. They interrogate both the methods and labours of printmaking practice as well as the labours of existing and surviving as an artist/worker today. The exhibition coincides with *PRINT UnLtd.* at **Salford Museum and Art Gallery** (open until 14th October) which includes new commissions by Lubna Ali, Claudia Alonso, Joey Collins and Gwilym Hughes.

Manchester Print Workshop

Works by Cecile Elstein, Michael Green, Kip Gresham, Richard Riley, Paul Ritchie and Alan Whitehead

The Manchester Print Workshop was founded in 1975 by Kip Gresham and Steve Currie; originally it was based in Manchester before moving to the University of Salford, where it ran until the mid-1980s. As well as supporting regional artists to explore screenprinting, lino, etching and lithography, as exemplified by the four 'Print Set' posters, the studio also produced limited edition prints for established practitioners.

Prints from this collection demonstrate the vibrant and experimental aesthetic of printmaking in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as social concerns of the time. **Gresham** explores playful methods of mark-making, the nature of materials, and the interplay of colour, shape, pattern and layering. His consistent interrogation of the possibilities of print has led him to work with a number of established artists including Adrian Henri and Elisabeth Frink – both also represented in the University of Salford Art Collection. Since 2002 he has been the Director of The Print Studio in Toft, Cambridge.

Elstein's *A Letter from Mrs Gould* was produced in response to challenging socio-economic conditions in the 1980s. Elstein received an unsolicited note signed by an S.Gould, reading: "*Woman needs work urgently – cleaning & domestic work – housekeeping – gardening – handywoman – will do work of any description – hours to suit you – at a rate you can afford....*" Using found papers and materials, Elstein attempted to piece together the circumstances of Gould's precarious situation: The twenty screenprinted layers include newspaper clippings from the time, netting from a bag of oranges (with a price tag of 50p – showing rising food prices) as well as the envelope in which the letter was received. Elstein intended the final image as a reminder of the dignity, grace and tenacity of "*all women involved in real communication*".

Maurice Carlin

Carlin is an artist and director of Islington Mill, a vibrant creative hub established in Salford in 2000. He co-founded the peer-led education group Islington Mill Art Academy in 2007. *Temporary Custodians* is an experiment in art distribution and ownership: an installation of 100 prints held by a network of custodians rather than a single institution. The CMYK ink relief prints were made directly from the surface of the derelict 5th floor of Islington Mill, in a method influenced by ancient stone-rubbing techniques. The physical endurance of hand-printing the works was live-streamed online for over a week, as a way to reveal the 'hidden performance' of printmaking.

The University of Salford Art Collection holds four *Temporary Custodians* prints, two of which were kindly donated by local private collector Bob Miller. Raising conversations around sustainability and advocacy for artist-led spaces, all funds raised from the purchases of prints will contribute to essential building works at Islington Mill; and all custodians will be invited to participate in discussion and action about the future of the space.

Works presented here by **Lubna Ali** and **Claudia Alonso** are preparatory pieces for final works exhibited at *PRINT UnLtd.* at **Salford Museum and Art Gallery**. Both Ali and Alonso graduated from BA Visual Arts at the University of Salford in 2017, and were individually awarded 2017-2018 Graduate Scholarships at Hot Bed Press.

Lubna Ali's practice combines Islamic geometry with contemporary minimalism. She explores pattern, process and repetition in print – which have symbolic meanings of spirituality and unity in Islamic culture. All of her images are first carefully hand drawn and cut before being screenprinted.

Claudia Alonso uses photography, collage, sculpture and printmaking, often exploring sense of form, space and composition. For this work Alonso photographed architectural details at Salford Museum and Art Gallery, and experimented with colour palettes, layering images, and printing onto fabrics, before making the final 7 metre long print.

Sadé Mica

Mica graduated from BA Visual Arts in 2018, and was awarded a 2018-2019 Graduate Scholarship at Hot Bed Press printmaking studios.

“My current practice explores my experiences navigating the world as a fat, queer, black person and the nuances that brings in fleshing out an identity that is often met with contempt and confusion... I use photography, textiles, print and film alongside other mediums to document my body, emotions, ever in flux gender presentation and the facets of my identity I feel most pressing in regards to my gaze and worldview.”