March–May 2020

Research, culture and collaboration in the Green Heart and beyond

artsandsciencefestival.co.uk
We made it! What a fantastic year it’s been delivering our year-long Arts & Science Festival programme. Firstly, we want to say an enormous thank you to everyone who has attended, supported and participated in Arts & Science Festival 2019–20.

The festival launched in June 2019 with a summer celebration marking the official opening of the University’s new parkland, the Green Heart, and with it, the launch of the Arts & Science Sculpture Commission. In autumn, we observed political, social and environmental change across our developing campus and beyond, and in winter we lit up the dark months with an illumination themed programme examining light in all its brilliance. Harnessing our spring fever, we step forward into our final season themed ‘HOPE’...

Professor John Holmes considers poetry and its role in helping us to imagine a more sustainable future (page 25); BEAST invite you to their annual festival which explores ideas of optimism, reconciliation and restoration (page 13); Pailin Wedel’s award-winning documentary screens at Midlands Arts Centre – an emotional chronicle of the parents who turned to cryonics in hope their young daughter will one day experience rebirth inside a regenerated body (page 17); and Little Earthquake direct a performance of Animal Farm, an allegorical tale which begins with hope for a better future but ends with hopes dashed (page 12).

Join us for our final season and consider how conversation, creativity and community can inspire hope.

The University of Birmingham’s Arts & Science Festival is a celebration of research, culture and collaboration across campus and beyond. In place of its usual weeklong slot, the festival’s seventh edition is a 12-month programme designed to showcase the University’s striking new parkland, the Green Heart.

Running June 2019 – May 2020, our expanded programme invites contributors to respond to four seasonal themes: CELEBRATION (summer); CHANGE (autumn); ILLUMINATION (winter) and HOPE (spring). A host of thinkers, doers and makers will engage with these themes, collectively delivering a programme of exhibitions, events, talks, screenings, and workshops taking place both on campus and in the city.
Can you tell us more about how you came up with the idea for Mosswerk? How did you become interested in moss and how does this relate to your wider practice?

The idea came from a piece we made for Tate Britain, Trappenkamp, a large outdoor structure made with a series of decorative plywood panels. We wanted the sculpture to look like an artificial ruin, and treated the wood to weather its appearance and encourage the growth of moss.

The sculpture proposal seemed like an opportunity to think about what we had learned from that piece and expand on ways to make the moss cultivation more prominent. Mosswerk is designed to encourage moss and lichen growth, which will in turn encourage further plant growth and cause wildlife to interact with the work. It will hold a central chamber where the moss can be sheltered and watered consistently, creating a healthy environment for it.

The sculpture’s surfaces will evolve and grow over time in response to the surrounding environment. In this way, it is intentionally embedded and responsive to the Green Heart space and will quite literally have an internal green heart of moss – it is very much a sculpture specifically for the University.

Your work often invites others to participate in the formulation of ideas and the creative making process. How can the public become involved with the making of Mosswerk?

We are going to host a series of creative workshops for people to design the imagery for the sculpture. We are also keen to have conversations with different academic departments about the wider issues around the sculpture, and how these tie in to research concerns already present at the University. Through these discourses, we can address how people interpret and interact with the sculpture, and gain a deeper understanding of the piece.

One of the reasons for liking moss is that it is this underlying life, which quietly grows all around us. We hope Mosswerk can create a context where people and nature are equally important, and can be considered together. Our early work looked at the relationship between people, nature and society; how we define what is natural or unnatural. Mosswerk is part of a continuation but foregrounds these issues in a different way by being quite explicit about ecological themes. We are also going into much more depth to make each element of the sculpture as sustainable as possible – we are looking into sourcing reclaimed timber for the structure and cladding to minimise the environmental impact.

We are constantly surprised by working with other people, by ideas that emerge from conversations, and ways of working that we would never have come up with alone. Being able to meet people and create frameworks that can generate those beautiful surprises is one of our main motivations for doing what we do.

If you are interested in getting involved or taking part in the public programme of events, please visit www.artsandsciencefestival.co.uk/sculpture-commission for more information. #MosswerkInProgress

We met with Juneau Projects in their Digbeth studio to find out more about Mosswerk, what inspires them as artists and how the public can get involved...
**NOCTURNES: Ethereal Science / Constructing Beauty**

**Tuesday 3 March, 18.00–20.30**
The Barber Institute of Fine Arts

![R14](image)

Free, booking essential

Encounter exciting and radical new ideas combining arts and science.

Inspired by Russian sculptor Naum Gabo, discover the wonders of the universe with Birmingham-based opera troupe, Infinite Opera; learn more about innovative research at the University of Birmingham; and take part in an artist-led workshop.

*Presented by the Barber Institute of Fine Arts*

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**MOMENTO MORI**

**Wednesday 8 April & Monday 11 May 10.00–14.00 (drop in)**

The Green Heart, see website for exact location

![Free, no booking required](image)

Using selected works from the Barber Institute collection this pop-up event will act as a catalyst for thought, discussion and reflection on the topic of death and dying. Come along, pick up a Sharpie and leave your mark. By responding to the art works you’ll be contributing to the creation of new art.

*Curated and Presented by the School of Nursing and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts*
**YHONNIE SCARCE**

Thursday 9 April – Sunday 31 May 2020  
Open Tuesday – Sunday 11.00–17.00  
Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square  
Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS

Yhonnie Scarce was born in Woomera, South Australia, and belongs to the Kokatha and Nukunu peoples. Working with glass, Scarce explores the political nature and aesthetic qualities of the material – in particular corresponding to the crystallisation of desert sand as a result of British nuclear tests on her homeland during 1956–63. For Ikon, Scarce undertakes a 5 week residency before presenting a new work in the Tower Room.*

Presented by Ikon and TarraWarra Museum of Art with consultant curator Hetti Perkins. The exhibition is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

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**SILENT ORCHID FESTIVAL**

Friday 15 May, 12.00–16.00 (drop in)  
Research and Cultural Collections  
32 Pritchatts Road G1  
Free, no booking required

Do you have a windowsill in need of some decoration? Are you interested in growing orchids successfully?

Artist Matt Westbrook and world orchid authority Philip Seaton invite you to buy an orchid seedling and nurture it to full flower. Visible on windowsills, desks and bookshelves, the plants will be accompanied by a set of hand-made vessels to form a sculptural trail across the campus. Chamberlain was a political cartoonist’s dream, and the props that appeared in many cartoons of him provide inspiration for the vessels. Created by students in ceramic workshops organised by Westbrook they will acquire new meaning and encourage discussion on Chamberlain’s political ideas from a contemporary viewpoint.

Grow kits will be available to purchase at the event for £25 each and include:
- A ceramic plant pot
- Growing material
- A copy of Philip Seaton’s best-selling Kew Growing book *Growing Windowsill Orchids*
- An orchid seedling grown by Philip Seaton at his Orchid seed lab in King Charles 1st School, Kidderminster. Plus a mature, in flower orchid for inspiration!*  

The Silent Orchid Festival runs alongside Matt and Philip’s ongoing project, ‘Mr Chamberlain’s Orchids’, which stems from an artist residency at the University of Birmingham and aims to highlight the interconnected narratives between heritage, science and cultural histories. For more information visit mattwestbrook.co.uk

*It is currently intended that varieties of seedlings and in flower orchids will include Restrepia cuprea and/or Restrepia sanguinea, (subject to availability). Both of these are native to the Andes mountains in South America and are suitable for growing on windowsills in the UK. Restrepia cuprea is currently endangered in its natural habitat and is on the worldwide ‘Red list’ of extinction.

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**RELATED EVENT:**  
Dr Ele Carpenter connects the landscapes of Birmingham, UK and Maralinga, South Australia in a special talk marking the launch of Yhonnie Scarce’s exhibition.

See page 24 for full details.

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*Please note the Tower Room is only accessible via a number of steps*
The University’s Jazz Orchestra collaborates with one of the UK’s finest MCs as part of an exciting and unique project culminating in brand new arrangements of Juice’s critically acclaimed music.

Come and hear this large ensemble explore a dynamic and creative set of music featuring rap, spoken word, improvisation and groove.

Presented by University Music Society and CrossCurrents+ in partnership with Juice Aleem.
ANIMAL FARM by George Orwell

Adapted by Nelson Bond
Directed by Little Earthquake

Thursday 19 – Saturday 21 March, 19.30 daily and 14.00 matinee on Saturday 21 March
George Cadbury Hall
988 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, B29 6LG
£8 / £5 concession

A pig has a vision about a new way of life – a fairer, freer world in which all animals are equal. The rebellion that follows against their vicious human masters seems to make everyone’s dreams come true. Until the milk and the apples start mysteriously disappearing.

Soon, a new ruling class emerges from within the ranks of the revolutionaries – a ruthless elite who will trample over anyone and anything standing in their way. As the standard of living goes down and the list of casualties goes up, the real cost of taking back control becomes chillingly apparent.

The production will be presented in a promenade staging, with audience members moving around the stage with the actors for the full duration of the show (approx 75 minutes without interval.)

The production will address themes of animal welfare and the meat industry, and it will include scenes of violence and simulated animal slaughter. We therefore recommend the production as being most suitable for audiences aged 15 and above.

Presented by the Department of Drama and Theatre Arts

BEAST FEaST: COME TOGETHER

Thursday 30 April – Saturday 2 May
Bramall Music Building
Elgar Concert Hall
£12
See website for ticket details, booking recommended.

In 2020, four years after the election of Trump and the Brexit vote, it has become a cliché to say that we live in an increasingly divided culture. BEAST FEaST 2020 aspires to joyously defy the idea of a disunited world, to explore ideas of optimism, reconciliation and restoration, and celebrate the ways that electronic music can bring us together.

Join BEAST for three days of music, meetings, and ideas, with featured guest artists Beatriz Ferreyra, Hans Tutschku, Heather Roche, Eva Zöllner, Simon Emmerson and Christopher Fox.

Presented by BEAST
THE PLAN that came from the bottom up
[dir: Steve Sprung, 2019, 270 mins]

Sunday 1 March, 14.00–19.30*
Midlands Arts Centre (Cinema)
Cannon Hill Park, B12 9QH

From £8.50, booking recommended

THE PLAN that came from the bottom up is a thought-provoking and extensive film essay which chronicles the extraordinary story of the Lucas Aerospace engineers, who forty years ago responded to the threat of redundancy with their own plan of action. The film documents how this group of workers developed alternatives to the military products their company made, including wind turbines and hybrid cars.

With climate injustice fanning the flames of inequality all around the world, the most urgent question we face is how we transform our destructive economic model towards one that is good for people and the planet. This film needs to be watched and shared – for it will inspire, educate and transform what we think is possible.

Asad Rehman, 'War on Want'

This special screening will be followed by a panel Q&A including a Lucas Aerospace worker and special guests from the climate and Just Transition movements.

Presented by Midlands Arts Centre
ONE MINUTE MOVIES

Wednesday 25 March, 18.00–19.30
Muirhead Tower, G15
(Ground Floor) R21
Free, booking recommended

Watch entries to the Department of Film & Creative Writing’s annual One Minute Movie competition. Entrants have created films inspired by Arts & Science Festival’s winter theme: illumination and the competition winner will be revealed on the night. There’ll also be a short showcase of film work by students from the department.

Presented by Department of Film & Creative Writing

HOPE FROZEN

[dir: Pailin Wedel, 2019, 75 mins]

Wednesday 13 May, 20.00–22.00
Midlands Arts Centre (Cinema)
Cannon Hill Park, B12 9QH
From £8.50, booking recommended

In 2015, two-year-old “Einz” became the youngest person in the world to be cryopreserved. Her head and brain now rest in a cryonic tank in Arizona. Before her death, Einz was diagnosed with a terminal illness and her parents explored every avenue to save her. Refusing to accept her death as the end, they turned to cryonics in the hope that she will one day experience rebirth inside a regenerated body.

With remarkable access and intimacy, Wedel follows the parents and their surviving son on this extraordinary journey, objectively presenting their challenges and dilemmas. Ethical, philosophical and emotional questions abound. Can the dead come back to life? And should they? Pailin Wedel’s award-winning documentary is an emotional chronicle of parents doing what they believe is best for their child, no matter the cost.

Presented by Arts & Science Festival in partnership with Midlands Arts Centre and A Matter of Life and Death Festival
Join artist duo Juneau Projects for this family friendly workshop exploring red-green-blue animation. Produce drawings inspired by the natural world and then watch them come to life in coloured light! 

**WORKSHOP**

**RED-GREEN-BLUE ANIMATION**

Friday 24 April, 11.30–13.30
Lapworth Museum of Geology ❘ R4
❑ Free, no booking required

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Warning Signs, screenprint, 2012, Juneau Projects
Arts & Science Festival has partnered with the University’s Public Engagement with Research team to deliver a mentoring programme for PhD students and Early Career Researchers designed to enhance their public engagement with research skills.

Through a series of workshops, participants collaborated with creative practitioners to develop events designed to engage audiences with their research as part of Arts & Science Festival’s spring season. This year, we were joined by Jo Gane, photographic artist and educator, and Philip Holyman and Gareth Nichols, Co-Directors of theatre company Little Earthquake, who generously supported our postgraduates and helped turn their research ideas into a creative reality.

PEANUTS, PINTS AND PONCHOS: HOW ARE THEY LINKED ON OUR PLASTIC PLANET?

Thursday 26 March, 13.00–16.00
Biosciences Building, The Undercroft

Free, booking essential

Join Katie Reilly and the microplastics research group to explore the plastic problem and changes we can make in our day to day lives to make things better. Learn more about common misconceptions and the current research at the University of Birmingham exploring plastics in the environment and their impact.

WHOSE LIE IS IT ANYWAY?

Saturday 16 May, 19.00–20.30
Artefact, 1464 Pershore Road
Stirchley, Birmingham, B30 2NT

Free, booking essential

Join doctoral researcher Moumita Deb for a twisted version of the much-loved murder mystery game Cluedo. Embark on a truth-finding mission through a minefield of fake news and consider how to make informed choices in today’s increasingly complex landscape littered with competing sources of news. The evening promises to be a fun, eye-opening experience filled with valuable insights from applied Game Theory and Behavioural/Experimental Economics.

COPY, PASTE, EAT

Date and venue to be confirmed – please see website for details.

Jon is a food lover, but he works until late in the evening. Before leaving work, he uses a phone app to tell his 3D food printer what he’d like for dinner. When he arrives home, his dinner is prepared.

In this hand-on workshop, Dr Azar Gholamipour-Shirazi, Research Fellow in the School of Chemical Engineering, invites you to explore Jon’s secret and help him decide what to have for his dessert.

SEEING THE BIGGER PICTURE

Date and venue to be confirmed – please see website for details.

The eye is considered ‘a window to the brain’ and research has shown that certain diseases which cause changes to the brain can also cause tiny changes in the eye. Currently in the early stages of research, it is hoped that monitoring blood flow in the eye could prove a valuable tool in managing diseases like sepsis.

Ella Courtie of the neuroscience and ophthalmology research group invites you to see the bigger picture. Bring your colouring-in skills and help to create an eye blood flow collage whilst learning more about sepsis and how to recognise it.

BASED ON YOUR PREVIOUS READING

Date and venue to be confirmed – please see website for details.

What surprising connections can you find between your favourite books? Postgraduate researcher Helen Tatlow invites you to add to her crowd-sourced installation by linking threads to form a network of connected texts. Based on your previous reading, you might just discover a new favourite, or inspire someone else to read yours!
People often say that they would like to take action to tackle global problems such as climate change, poverty and exploitation in supply chains, but that they don’t know where to start.

Project IndiActs – indiacts.org – is a website full of very practical, bite-sized (but well-researched) tips and suggestions to make it easier for people to take action and contribute to a better world.

The project team would like to involve a range of voices in setting the agenda for their research and for Arts & Science Festival they will run two sessions to consider the focus and presentation of the project, and to invite practical suggestions from participants.

Presented by the Department of Philosophy.

**WORKSHOP**

**PROJECT INDIACTS – HOW TO IMPROVE THE WORLD, ONE INDIVIDUAL ACTION AT A TIME**

Monday 23 March, 12.00–13.00 and 17.00–18.00
Gisbert Kapp Building, N329 G8 (12.00–13.00) and European Research Institute, Room 149 G3 (17.00–18.00)
Free, booking required

**TALKS**

**WALKS**

**TOURS**
TALK

POETRY IN AN AGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

Wednesday 20 May, 13.00–14.00
Teaching & Learning Building
Lecture Theatre 2 \( \text{R32} \)

Free, booking recommended

We are facing a perfect storm of environmental crises, from climate change to pollution and the destruction of habitats and species. While scientific knowledge and technological innovations are going to be essential in solving these problems, they are not sufficient on their own. We also need to be able to imagine different ways of living with nature and to process for ourselves the knowledge we need to face and the changes we have to undergo.

In this talk, Prof John Holmes will show how poetry can help us to face up to the impact that human beings are having on the environment and on other living things, and to find the imagination and the hope required to get us, individually and collectively, through to a better, more sustainable future.

Presented by the Department of English, Drama and Creative Studies

WALK

DEEPER ROUTES

Thursday 14 May, 17.30–19.00
Starting point to be confirmed – please see website for details
\( £5 \) (incl a drink), booking essential

Christiane Worth has long been fascinated with trees and on this walk will explore the University grounds, highlighting the variety of wild trees, municipal street trees, in parkland and the University’s own selection.

More than tree identification alone, this walk explores the uses of trees and the practical and ornamental choices made in their selection.

Join us after the walk for further conversation, rest and refreshments, included in the ticket price. Please dress for the weather and wear shoes suitable for urban walking.

Presented by Christiane Worth in partnership with Still Walking

TALK

BIRMINGHAM & THE A-BOMB

Wednesday 8 April, 17.30 – 19.00
(Launch 17.30–18.00, Talk 18.00–19.00)
Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square
Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS
\( £3 \), booking essential.

To mark the launch of Yhonnie Scarce’s new installation at Ikon, this event connects the landscapes of Birmingham, where scientific calculations that led to the development of the atom bomb were made during World War II, and Maralinga, South Australia, where nuclear testing took place during 1956–63. Speakers include Dr Ele Carpenter, curator, writer and artist whose research considers the contemporary aesthetics of living in a nuclear present.

Presented by Ikon

TALK

TEN BIRMINGHAM WOMEN

Wednesday 11 March, 19.00–20.30
Winterbourne House and Garden
\( £7/ £5 \) members/ Free to UoB Staff and Students with ID, booking recommended.

Celebrate ten years of Winterbourne House being refurbished with a talk on Ten Birmingham Women and discover what life was like for Edwardian women when Winterbourne House and Garden was first built.

Join collections officer, Henrietta Lockhart, as she looks at the life of Margaret Nettlefold – the first mistress of Winterbourne – and other female lives connected to hers.

Presented by Winterbourne House and Garden

Presented by Ikon

Presented by Christiane Worth in partnership with Still Walking

Presented by the Department of English, Drama and Creative Studies

Yhonnie Scarce, Glass Bomb (Blue Danube) (2015). Courtesy the artist and This Is No Fantasy. Photograph by Janelle Low
Date | Event | Category | Venue | Time | Price
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Sat 1 March | THE PLAN that came from the bottom up | Screening | Midlands Arts Centre, B12 9QH | 14:00–19:30 | £8.50
Tue 3 March | NOCTURNES: Ethereal Science/Constructing Beauty | Event | The Barber Institute of Fine Arts | 18:00–20:30 | Free
Sun 8 March | Jazz Orchestra ft. Juice Aleem | Concert | Hare & Hounds, B1 7JZ | 19:30–21:30 | £6/3
Wed 11 March | Ten Birmingham Women | Talk | Winterbourne House and Garden | 19:00–20:30 | £7/5
Mon 23 March | Project IndiActs | Workshop | Gibbet Keep Building, N329 European Research Institute, Room 149 | 12:00–13:00 | Free
Thu 26 March | One Minute Movies | Screening | Murihead Tower, G15 | 18:00–19:30 | Free
Thu 8 April | Momento Mori | Event | The Green Heart, see web for exact location | 10:00–14:00 (drop in) | Free
Birmingham & the A-bomb | Talk | Ikon Gallery, B1 2HS | 17:30–19:00 | £3
Fri 24 April | Red-Green-Blue Animation | Workshop | Lapworth Museum of Geology | 11:30–13:30 | Free
Mon 11 May | Momento Mori | Event | The Green Heart, see web for exact location | 10:00–14:00 (drop in) | Free
Wed 13 May | Hope Frozen | Screening | Midlands Arts Centre, B12 9QH | 20:00–22:00 | £8.50
Thu 14 May | Deeper Routes | Walk | The Green Heart, see web for exact location | 17:30–19:00 | Free
Fri 15 May | Silent Orchid Festival: Launch | Event | Research & Cultural Collections, 32 Pritchatts Road | 12:00–16:00 (drop in) | Free
Sat 16 May | Whose Lie Is It Anyway? | Workshop | Artefact Café, B30 2NT | 19:00–20:30 | Free
Wed 20 May | Poetry In An Age of Environmental Crisis | Talk | Teaching & Learning Building, Lecture Theatre 2 | 13:00–14:00 | Free
Thu 19 – Sat 21 March | Animal Farm | Performance | George Cadbury Hall, B29 6LG | Thurs-Sat 19:30 & Sat matinees 14:00 | £8/ £5
Thu 9 April – Sun 31 May | Yhonnie Scarce | Exhibition | Ikon Gallery, B1 2HS | Tue-Sun, 11.00 – 17.00 | Free
Thu 30 April – Sat 02 May | BEAST FEaST: Come Together | Concert | Bramall Music Building, Elgar Concert Hall | See website for details | 13

HOW TO FIND US

The University of Birmingham is located in south-west Birmingham, approximately 3 miles from the city centre. For maps and information about getting to the University please visit birmingham.ac.uk/maps

HOW TO BOOK

Unless otherwise stated, please visit artsandsciencefestival.co.uk/festival and go to the individual event listing. Please note all chargeable events are subject to a booking fee. There is no booking fee for free events.

CONTACT

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artsandsciencefestival.co.uk
facebook.com/ArtsandScienceFestival
ArtsScienceFest

CREDITS

Arts & Science Festival is developed and delivered by the Cultural Engagement team at the University of Birmingham.

We would like to thank all involved in the planning, promotion and delivery of the sculpture commission and festival events. Special thanks to Laura Milner, Rachael Yardley, Clare Mullett, Jenny Lance, Nadia Awal, Susan Franklin, Anna Young, Robin Kirkham, Harry Blackett, Emma Singleton, Greg Milner, Helen Stallard, David Baldwin, Ben Waddington.

We would also like to thank our festival partners: The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, BrumYODO, Ikon, Lapworth Museum of Geology, Midlands Arts Centre, Public Engagement with Research, Research and Cultural Collections, and Still Walking.