

Nikki Carroll works in sculpture, ceramics and installation. Her work focuses on the human body, nervous systems and internal/external spaces and questions the multitude of ways in which physical and mental realms can be experienced as a bodily landscape.

'GRIDS' is a visual response to the UK lockdown period. Fascinated with the collapse of everyday routines experienced on a National scale, this on-going project aims to explore various movements through time and space that challenge perceptions of regime and pre-lockdown social structures.

The seven-minute video 'diary' offers a narration of external space observations and physical rhythms happening within a shared sequence of video time. This amalgamation of found footage, internet scrolling and short film clips recorded in Grantham, Lincolnshire, capture various realms overlapping and operating at a seemingly isolated pace. This diary currently exists as a tool for the artist to organise a collection of ideas and visuals that will influence future work and can be accessed via Usher Collection Gallery Webpage and various social media platforms.

Nikki is currently a member of Rochester Square Clay Studio and has been developing a series of sculptural ceramic pieces that fixate on systems within the human body. The 'Time for Practice Bursary' has enabled Nikki to develop a new body of ceramics that embody a method of weaving multiple clay lengths together to replicate a grid or calendar like form. Alongside the video diary, these sculptures aim to illustrate further ideas about daily routine and schedule.

Darren Neave explores both 'display' and 'displaying', taking every day and decorative objects and exploring taste, styles and techniques. Darren's 'queered up' objects and interventions encourage the viewer to look again, ensnaring and enticing to result in a potentially deeper engagement.

"The bursary has helped me to shape up a specific online research project, that in turn helped develop a presentation of my current work and ideas.

I incorporated technology and web-support to set up an online 'out of hours' gallery: The Turntable Gallery (@turntablegallery on Instagram) via my Website www.darrenneave.com which was set up in my own home.

This allowed for some audience online interaction with a few of my pieces (via a live-feed). The sculptural works could be made to 'perform' for you; they were not 'stuck' in cabinets or cemented to plinths awaiting your gaze.

My works sought the limelight and put on a show. Pieces were also produced with abilities to 'reveal themselves' and to command a longer glance, overt and effective embellishments.



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I wanted this to be perhaps, a critique of how galleries had been functioning before the lockdown situation - wanting more and more 'audience participation' more revelry in self-portraiture with the artworks, more engagement, 'sharing' and immersion.

We need balance. We sometimes need to shut out the chaos and drama, slow down and clear our minds.

I am greedy - I want both, and more!

The presentations became more and more preposterous and funny. The online functions changed too, allowing a different type of interaction.

I feel as though the opportunity has allowed me to play, to have fun and to also obtain some great feedback and experiment further as well." – Darren Neave

Twitter - @neaveshackleton

Instagram - @thehazmatguy and @turntablegallery

Website - www.darrenneave.com

James Ellis works with collage to create minimalist and colourful compositions from hand cut printed media, inspired by the balance of nature and the organic forms of the human body.

"As well as giving me time to develop my new series of printed media collages, the bursary has helped me to understand and implement best practices for making professional work. This resulted in the launch of my online shop and the release of my first limited edition prints.

The bursary has also enabled me to grow my practice in new and exciting ways - I've recently been making mural collages from coloured and painted paper. This development has given me the chance to work on a larger scale thus making my work more immersive and impactful." - James Ellis

Karen Barnes' practice involves Paper Art, Craft & Design. Karen is inspired by origami, geometry, Zen philosophy and mindful creative activity and the benefits this can have on mental health.

'Suminagashi; The Art of Floating Ink' - This experimental, fine art film explores the ancient Japanese art marbling technique in the context of mindfulness. Suminagashi was originally invented by Shinto & early Zen Buddhist monks as an aid to meditation and to understand the natural world. Karen used this bursary to explore connections between art, therapy and



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mindfulness, taking Suminagashi as a starting point to experiment by creating her first film piece.

This work brings together collected images and audio, with extract of guitar played by the artist herself. This has then been manipulated and distorted using digital software to explore how visual and digital experienced can echo or simulate the experience of meditation.



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