

Liverpool Biennial

NEWS RELEASE

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KHANYISILE MBONGWA ANNOUNCED AS CURATOR FOR LIVERPOOL BIENNIAL 2023



Khanyisile Mbongwa © Tatyana Levana

Liverpool Biennial is delighted to announce the appointment of Khanyisile Mbongwa as Curator for the 12th edition, which will take place June – September 2023. 2023 marks the 25th anniversary of Liverpool Biennial, the UK's largest contemporary visual arts festival.

Mbongwa, previously Chief Curator of the Stellenbosch Triennale 2020, will curate the 12th edition with the Liverpool Biennial team.

The 11th edition of Liverpool Biennial, the largest festival of contemporary visual art in the UK, took place in 2021 as the first UK contemporary arts festival to emerge post lockdown. The Biennial, titled *The Stomach and the Port*, was curated by Manuela Moscoso and the Biennial team.

Khanyisile Mbongwa, Curator, Liverpool Biennial 2023, said:

“I am excited to work with the Liverpool Biennial team on the 12th edition and am curious to find out what the city will show me about my curatorial processes during my time there. I am looking forward to co-creating with individuals, collectives and

organisations both within Liverpool and beyond and am interested to see how the city has established itself historically, how it sustains itself in this moment and how it imagines its future.”

Sam Lackey, Director, Liverpool Biennial, said:

“We are thrilled to have Khanyisile Mbongwa join us for the 12th edition of Liverpool Biennial. Her longstanding curatorial concerns around care and repair will be vital in thinking about new futures together with the city. She is an extraordinary asset to the team and Liverpool as we move towards recovery and build on the innovation and success of *The Stomach and the Port*. I look forward to welcoming her to Liverpool and working with her and our partners across the city as we look towards our 25th anniversary year”

Ends.

Notes to Editors:

Liverpool Biennial 2023
June – September 2023
Venues and sites across Liverpool, free entry
www.biennial.com

Social Media

Join the discussion online at:
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Press enquiries:

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About Khanyisile Mbongwa, Curator of Liverpool Biennial 2023

Khanyisile Mbongwa is a Cape Town-based independent curator, award-winning artist and sociologist who engages with her curatorial practice as Curing & Care, using the creative to instigate spaces for emancipatory practices, joy and play.

Mbongwa is the curator of *Puncture Points*, founding member and curator of *Twenty Journey* and former Executive Director of Handspring Trust Puppets. She is one of the founding members of arts collective Gugulective, Vasiki Creative Citizens and WOC poetry collective Rioters In Session. Mbongwa was a Mellon Foundation Fellow at the Institute of Creative Arts at the University of Cape Town, where she completed her masters in Interdisciplinary Arts, Public Art and the Public Sphere, and has worked locally and internationally. She is also currently a PhD candidate at UCT where her work focuses on spatiality, radical black self love and imagination, and black futurity.

Formerly Chief Curator of the 2020 Stellenbosch Triennale, her other recent projects include: *Process as Resistance, Resilience & Regeneration* – a group exhibition co-curated with Julia Haarmann honoring a decade of CAT Cologne (2020), Athi-Patra Ruga’s solo at Norval Foundation titled *iiNyanka Zonyaka (The Lunar Songbook)* (2020) and a group exhibition

titled *History's Footnote: On Love & Freedom* at Marres, House for Contemporary Culture in Maastricht, Netherlands (2021).

About Dr. Sam Lackey, Director of Liverpool Biennial

Dr. Samantha Lackey initially joined Liverpool Biennial as Interim Director in late 2020 and was appointed Director in April 2021. She joins the Biennial from her role as Head of Collection and Exhibitions at the Whitworth at the University of Manchester and Senior Lead on the Leadership Team. Before this she was curator at The Hepworth Wakefield (2010-16), where she delivered 40 exhibitions over 6 years, and was part of the team that opened the gallery in 2011 to critical acclaim. Her background is in academia, receiving a PhD in 2005 on the subject of surrealism, which was the context of her work as a lecturer, research fellow and her first exhibition at the Whitworth, *Subversive Spaces: Surrealism and Contemporary Art*. She has published on surrealism and contemporary art and worked on multiple group and solo exhibitions with artists including Cecily Brown, Susan Hefuna, Linder and Eva Rothschild.

About Liverpool Biennial

Liverpool Biennial is the largest and longest-running festival of contemporary visual art in the UK. Since its inception in 1998, the Biennial has become renowned in the international contemporary art world, bringing together a wide array of international voices and artistic practices. Taking place every two years, Liverpool Biennial activates public institutions, historical sites and extraordinary locations across Liverpool, ensuring major commissions and legacy projects in the public realm including *Liverpool Mountain* by Ugo Rondinone (2018), *Evertro* by Koo Jeong A x Wheelscape (2015) and *Everybody Razzle Dazzle* by Sir Peter Blake (2015). Pioneering an innovative approach underpinned by a year-round programme of research, education, residencies, projects and commissions, each biennial edition introduces renewed thinking and scale of production. Having commissioned over 380 new artworks and presented work by over 530 celebrated artists from around the world, the Biennial is built on a longstanding commitment to connecting international artists with local practitioners, communities and the general public. Liverpool Biennial is supported by Arts Council England, Liverpool City Council and founding supporter James Moores.

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in *Let's Create* that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million **Emergency Response Package**, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of the bodies administering the Government's unprecedented £1.96 billion **Culture Recovery Funds**. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19

About Liverpool City Council

Liverpool City Council is one of the largest local authorities in the UK serving a population of 491,500. Culture Liverpool is the city council department which aims to maintain the city's reputation as a cultural and sporting destination, positioning Liverpool as the most exciting place in the UK in which to live, visit, work, study and invest. Through the production and delivery of events, and championing creativity via funded projects across Liverpool City Region, Culture Liverpool pushes boundaries and inspires audiences, ensuring everyone has access to arts and culture. For more information, visit www.cultureliverpool.co.uk.



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