

**Press Announcement**

**LIVERPOOL BIENNIAL LAUNCHES PROGRAMME FOR THE 11TH EDITION IN SPRING 2021**

* **The 11th edition of Liverpool Biennial,** ​***The Stomach and the Port,***​ **will take place from 20 March – 6 June 2021**
* **Curated by Manuela Moscoso, the programme showcases more than 50 leading and emerging artists including Frieze Artist Award winner Alberta Whittle, Liverpool-born artist Linder, Rashid Johnson and Jenna Sutela**
* **New venues announced include the iconic Lewis’s department store building featuring highlights from Alice Channer, works from Camille Henrot’s** ​***‘Wet Job’* series and a multi-sensory installation from Lamin Fofana**
* **New and existing works will be showcased at key venues in the city including Tate Liverpool, The Cotton Exchange, Bluecoat and FACT**
* **A series of public commissions will be displayed at outdoor locations across the city such as Exchange Flags, Canning Docks, Crown Street Car Park and within Liverpool ONE**

Liverpool Biennial today launches the programme for the 11th Edition happening in Spring 2021, running from 20 March – 6 June, with previews held on 18 and 19 March.

This inspiring programme of commissioned exhibitions, screenings, sculpture and sound will unfold over 15 weeks, showcasing and celebrating the city’s most iconic buildings and architecture. New venues announced include a Biennial take-over of the historic and renowned Lewis’s building. The Grade II listed former department store is well-loved by Liverpool’s residents and after 10 years of closure, the site will be reopened for LB2021, with two floors dedicated to a wide array of multi-disciplinary art works, including many new commissions.

Titled ​*‘The Stomach and the Port,’*​Liverpool Biennial 2021 explores notions of the body and ways of connecting with the world, drawing on non-Western ways of thinking and challenging an understanding of the individual as a defined, self-sufficient entity. Instead, the body is seen as fluid and without limits, being continuously shaped by and actively shaping its environment. The city of Liverpool’s dynamic history as an international port city and a point of global contact and circulation, provides the perfect ecosystem for this edition and the artists involved have a strong connection and admiration for the city.

In response to the onset of COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdowns, the concepts explored in this edition have intensified during this period of pivotal change. Works have had to be adapted practically with the curatorial team finding new ways to deliver planned content, and with artists finding new resonance during this process. Liverpool Biennial will offer an extraordinary shared experience that will empower and inspire, reasserting Liverpool’s reputation as a nerve centre for art and culture.

Key highlights include Neo Muyanga’s newly commissioned project ​*A Maze in Grace*​as a video installation at the Lewis’s Building. Muyanga’s composition is inspired by the song “Amazing Grace” – a hymn which is loaded with history. Composed by English slaver-turned-abolitionist John Newton, the song was reinterpreted as an emblem of the Civil Rights Movement. Muyanga’s reinterpretation of “Amazing Grace” connects the origins of the song to its murkier history, and to Liverpool’s – John Newton lived in the city and sailed on slave ships from Liverpool’s port.

Further highlights include Black Obsidian Sound System’s new commission ​–​ an audio-visual installation to be shown at FACT. An immersive environment, combining film, light, a sound score and sculpture, the work is an extension of a new short film project ​*A Collective Hum*​by B.O.S.S, commissioned by Lux. Weaving together archival images, the installation reflects the ways in which marginalised groups have developed methods of coming together against a background of repression and discrimination in the UK – positioning sound culture as spaces of collective strength and encounter where kinship is found and reciprocated.

Since 2018, the Biennial has worked with Jorge Menna Barreto and the final outcome of his durational project ​*The Earth, The Table and The Page*​will culminate in a mural and special publication displayed at Bluecoat. The publication anchors on Menna Barreto’s belief that the way we eat and live shapes our environment, and that our digestive systems have a transformative ability – that we are simultaneously consumers and producers, whose bodies interpret their surroundings through digestion. The research space at Bluecoat provides the backdrop for a mural showing drawings of common weeds found in Liverpool ​–​ produced in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University Art and Design students.

Ebony G. Patterson presents three hand embellished textile works at Tate Liverpool, including ​*...fraught...for those who bear/bare witness*​ (2018), ​*and ...in loving memory...for those who bear/bare witness*​(2018), as well as a new floor work. Patterson is concerned with historical representations of marginalized bodies, and capturing, mourning and glorifying the passing of their lives. The opulent and tactile qualities of her works invoke the outward glamour of Jamaican dance-hall culture and draw the viewer’s gaze, so that they can bear witness to the fragmented and unsettling images embedded within them.

In addition to these projects, we will also reveal six new public realm artworks from Larry Achiampong, Teresa Solar, Erick Beltran, Linder, Daniel Steegmann Mangrané and Rashid Johnson.

Sam Lackey, Interim Director of Liverpool Biennial, says:

“We are experiencing intense and transformative events across the globe, with many of us adapting to, and coping with, life-changing shifts. At Liverpool Biennial we feel that ways of sharing and interpreting our lives and experience are of huge importance right now.

So it is with hope and energy that we now share with you the programme for ​*The Stomach and the Port*,​the 11th Edition of Liverpool Biennial for 2021.This edition has been curated with passion and nurtured over several years with a group of carefully selected artists who are connected to Liverpool as a place.

The city is known for its role for being an epicentre of social and cultural exchange, through connecting communities and artists and continually reshaping its global identity by steadfastly investing in arts and culture.

We are committed to working together with our partners in the city to redesign and remodel events to enable us to put on a show in the city and to broadcast across the world. By continuing to support artists and draw more world class talent and artworks to Liverpool, we hope to inspire the creators of the future.”

Manuela Moscoso, Curator of the 11th edition of Liverpool Biennial, says:

“The 11th Edition of the Liverpool Biennial rethinks the body beyond its concrete physical boundaries. Our bodies are not autonomous, rational or universal. They are multidimensional forms that depend on and interact with people, animals, plants, artefacts, images, technologies and the fabric of our contemporary world.

We tend to think of the skin as the ultimate frontier of our bodies. It functions as a shell that separates our inner life – the self and the mind – from the outside world – society and nature. The skin is flexible and porous and so are we.

Today, the way we relate to one another has been dramatically reshaped by the effects of COVID-19 and by the Black Lives Matter movement ​–​ a call for social justice and a demand for anti-racist action. The concomitance of these occurrences is not a coincidence. Both have their roots in a long-standing economy of extraction: nature, gendered bodies, racialised bodies – all have been turned into objects and seen as commodifiable and disposable.

The artists and thinkers collaborating on this edition committedly question the rigid categories defined and perpetuated by colonial capitalism through their expression. Their practices embrace kinship, co-dependence and embody knowledge. This programme remains rooted in a commitment to decolonise our thought processes and our experience of the world, demanding a re-calibration of the senses, an acceptance of vulnerability and the recognition of our own privileges and prejudices. It is much more than a reflection; it must be integral to all aspects of our life as we move into this new future.

Liverpool’s position as a port and hub of cross-cultural encounters, circulation, distribution and global transnational mobility – along with its difficult history of humans forcibly moved from Africa to the Americans and beyond – is central to the narrative of this edition. It is a bringing together of the near and far with notions of movement and digestion; the stomach’s role within the body and the movement from inside to outside, on a global scale.

During such unprecedented times, art can be the most powerful place to go, through a wide variety of practices ​–​ from sound, to film, to sculpture, to dance – all art opens up our understanding. It positions us as active participants in this process of change and asks us to reconsider what we know and how we know it.”

The public programme of performances and events for the 11th edition will be announced in January 2021, to ensure that the Biennial can provide clear details of the safest attendance procedures for our artists, partners, supporters and audiences.

Many of our partner venues will also showcase exciting exhibitions that run alongside the Liverpool Biennial programme. Highlights include ‘AI: More Than Human’ exhibition (Barbican 2019) arriving at the World Museum on January 22. The UK's biggest painting competition, The John Moores Painting Prize, opens at the Walker Art Gallery on February 12. Aliza Nisenbaum’s paintings of Merseyside’s NHS Frontline workers will be unveiled at Tate Liverpool on Dec 15. All exhibitions run until the final week of June. Running alongside the Biennial, FACT will also present a solo presentation of the Liverpool-based artist Kiara Mohamed, including a new moving image work, and curated by Fauziya Johnson. Liverpool Biennial will once again be releasing a collection of limited edition prints by selected artists when the festival opens in March 2021.

Today, in celebration of Dr Lakra’s creation of the visual identity, an exclusive set of three prints will be released ahead of the full artist collection. The works mirror his LB2021 commissioned graphics that centre around features of the body and Liverpool’s port identity – ​illustrations that will become increasingly recognisable as the festival draws nearer.

**The list of participating artists can be found below:**

Larry Achiampong (Public Space), Black Obsidian Sound System (FACT), Erick Beltrán (Lewis's Building and Public Space), Diego Bianchi (Lewis's Building), Alice Channer (Tate Liverpool), Judy Chicago (Tate Liverpool), Ithell Colquhuon (Tate Liverpool), Christopher Cozier (Lewis' Building), Yael Davids (Central Library), Ines Doujak (Austria) & John Barker (Tate Liverpool), Dr. Lakra (Public Space), Jadé Fadojutimi (Bluecoat), Jes Fan (Lewis's Building), Lamin Fofana (Lewis's Building), Ebony G. Patterson (Tate Liverpool), Sonia Gomes (Cotton Exchange), Ane Graff (Lewis's Building), Ayesha Hameed (Lewis's Building), Camille Henrot (Tate Liverpool), Nicholas Hlobo (Tate Liverpool), Laura Huertas Millán (Bluecoat), Sohrab Hura (Lewis's Building), Invernomuto & Jim C. Nedd (Cotton Exchange), Rashid Johnson (Canning Graving Docks Quayside), KeKeÇa (Public Space), Jutta Koether (Tate Liverpool), SERAFINE 1369 (Lewis's Building and Public Space), Ligia Lewis (Public Space), Linder (Tate Liverpool and Liverpool ONE), Luo Jr - shin (Lewis's Building), Jorge Menna Barreto (Bluecoat), Haroon Mirza (Public Space), Neo Muyanga (Lewis's Building and Public Space), Pedro Neves Marques (Lewis's Building), Roland Persson (Bluecoat), Anu Põder (Tate Liverpool), Reto Pulfer (Lewis's Building and Public Space), André Romão (Bluecoat), Kathleen Ryan (Lewis's Building), Zineb Sedira (Open Eye Gallery), Xaviera Simmons (Tate Liverpool), Teresa Solar (Exchange Flags), Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (Crown Street Park), Jenna Sutela (Lewis's Building), Martine Syms (Tate Liverpool), UBERMORGEN (Online), Leonardo Impett (Online) and Joasia Krysa (Online), Luisa Ungar (Public Space), Alberta Whittle (Open Eye Gallery), Zheng Bo (FACT), David Zink Yi (Martin Luther King Building).

**ENDS**

Liverpool Biennial 2021: ​*The Stomach and the Port* t​akes place 20 March – 6 June 2021 www.biennial.com

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**About Liverpool Biennial**

Liverpool Biennial is the oldest and largest 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 in the public realm. 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 340 new artworks and presented work by over 480 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.

**Manuela Moscoso**

Manuela Moscoso (b.1978, Ecuador) joined the Biennial from Tamayo Museo in Mexico City, where she was the Senior Curator. She is part of Zarigüeya, a programme that activates relations between contemporary art and the pre-Columbian collection of the Museo de Arte Precolombino Casa del Alabado, Ecuador. Moscoso was the adjunct curator of the 12th Cuenca Biennial and the co-curator of the Queens International 2011 biennial. In 2012 she was appointed co-director of Capacete, a residency programme based in Brazil where she also co-ran the curatorial programme Typewriter. Moscoso has collaborated with CA2M, Di Tella, MAM Medellin, Museo de Rio, RedCat and Fundació Miró among other institutions.

**Interim Director Sam Lackey**

Dr Samantha Lackey has joined Liverpool Biennial as Interim Director, she is currently Head of Collection and Exhibitions at the Whitworth at the University of Manchester, where she is the Senior Lead on the Leadership Team. Previous to this she was curator at The Hepworth Wakefield (2010-16), where she delivered 40 exhibitions over 4 years, and was part of the team that opened the gallery in 2011 to critical acclaim. Her background is in academia, receiving a PhD on the subject of surrealism in 2005, which was the context for 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.

