

**PRESS RELEASE**

**LIVERPOOL BIENNIAL 2021 LAUNCHES EXHIBITIONS ACROSS THE CITY FROM 19 MAY IN SECOND CHAPTER OF *THE STOMACH AND THE PORT***

* ***The Stomach and the Port* will open 9 free exhibitions across Liverpool from 19 May, complementing the outdoor sculptures and installations which launched in March**
* **Artists will take over new venues, including Lewis’s Building, Dr Martin Luther King Jr Building, Lush Building, Liverpool Central Library and Cotton Exchange**
* **New commissions and existing works will be shown at partner venues Tate Liverpool, FACT, Bluecoat and Open Eye Gallery**
* **Trails across the city will connect the full indoor and outdoor Biennial, underpinned by the Biennial 2021 Online Portal, along with the Public and Learning Programme**
* **Dr. Samantha Lackey is appointed Director of Liverpool Biennial**

Liverpool Biennial 2021 opens the second ‘inside’ chapter of exhibitions across the city on 19 May, bringing together the complete presentation of the 11th edition, *The Stomach and the Port.* In line with Government guidance, this final chapter will open the doors to the city, welcoming visitors from across the country to safely enjoy the UK’s largest free festival of contemporary art. In the lead up to the festival, Liverpool Biennial has appointed Dr Samantha Lackey as the new Director of the Biennial.

**Dr. Samantha Lackey, Director, Liverpool Biennial: “**It is an honour to accept this appointment and to be part of such a strong and dynamic team here in Liverpool. During these past four months as Interim Director, I have witnessed the power of this Biennial’s creative vision, developed by Manuela Moscoso and our artists. Together they have created a vital and thought-provoking edition with *The Stomach and the Port,* addressing some of the big questions of our times and overcoming significant challenges which the pandemic has presented along the way. We are profoundly grateful to our supporters and partner venues, in particular Arts Council England and the recent grant from the Government’s Culture Recovery Fund, this valuable contribution will enable us to open Liverpool Biennial 2021 safely and to play an active role in reigniting the cultural hub that is the city of Liverpool”.

*The Stomach and the Port,* curated by Manuela Moscoso, presents a total of 50 artists from 30 countries around the world with 150 works of art, including 47 new commissions. It explores concepts of the body, drawing on non-Western thinking where the body is seen as fluid, being continuously shaped by, and actively shaping its environment. To navigate the breadth of the Biennial and to make connections between the artworks, a series of trails across the city will gather the exhibitions, outdoor sculptures and installations around the 3 curatorial entry points of *The Stomach and the Port* – Stomach, Porosity and Kinship.

The **Stomach / Waterfront Trail** highlights the role of the stomach, the bodily organ through which we engage with and digest the world. The stomach, similar to the port, is a place where the inside and outside meet and a process of transformation occurs. At the heart of this Biennial, is Liverpool’s history as a port city, an active agent in the process of modernisation, change, and colonialism. The **Porosity / Business District Trail** centres around the state of being porous; how our permeable skin reacts to the world around us, absorbing the history of our individual journeys. Finally, the **Kinship / City Centre Trail** revisits the bonds and social relationships which connect us to the world, from our loved ones to our wider community, to other species and beyond, including every aspect of our environment - be it natural, technological or synthetic - that produces and sustains life.

**Manuela Moscoso, Curator of Liverpool Biennial 2021, said:** “*The Stomach and the Port* reflects on systems of exchange, how borders are not only geographic but also political and subjective constructs, the outcome of a historical process of division which began in the modern, colonial world. The Biennial resists this order, reminding us that our lives are intertwined with one another. Developed over several years, *The Stomach and the Port* gathers practices that are deeply engaged with different forms of existence that challenge rigid categories. They include kinship, porosity, and bodily experience, embracing ways of digesting and continuously producing the world, rather than only consuming it. They also address bodies embedded in concrete historical, linguistic and cultural contexts, and knowledge that does not only come from the mind. Rooted in decolonising our experience of the world, the artists collaboratively present a re-calibration of the senses and a catalyst for change.”

**Stomach / Waterfront Trail**

**Tate Liverpool (until 20 June)** exhibits new commissions and existing works by Ines Doujak and John Barker, Linder, Jutta Koether and Ebony G. Patterson, alongside works from Tate’s collection including Judy Chicago, Nicholas Hlobo, Martine Syms, Anu Põder and Ithell Colquhoun. Patterson’s opulent, tactile hand-embellished textiles and new floor work reflect the glamour of Jamaican dance hall culture, drawing the viewer’s gaze to the fragmented and unsettling representations of historically marginalised bodies that are embedded within. They form just part of the broad range of collages, drawings, paintings, sculptures and video on display, spanning 80 years and 4 continents. Connected by the history of Feminism, each work is a call to action to reject acts of subordination to racialised, feminised and gendered bodies and to recall the power of the body in all its different forms.

At **Open Eye Gallery (until 6 June)** Zineb Sedira’s large-scale photographs and sculptures from her series *Sugar Routes* (2013) are juxtaposed alongside Alberta Whittle’s film, *between a whisper and a cry* (2019), a reflection on memory, labour and the afterlives of colonialism in our contemporary world. Both artists engage with histories of the transatlantic movement of enslaved people, showcasing how different forms of the past exist in the present. David Zink Yi’s video installation *Horror Vacui* (2009) at the National Museums Liverpool’s **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Building (until 27 June)**, combines footage of rehearsals of the Cuban Latin band ”De Adentro y Afuera” with images of Afro-Cuban rituals. Based on African diasporic intellectualities, the film highlights the music’s use of polyrhythm and how it represents the plural construction of identity that counters binary positions.

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**Porosity / Business District Trail**

Sonia Gomes, Xaviera Simmons and Invernomuto & Jim C. Nedd will present sculpture, photography and music at **Cotton Exchange (until 27 June)**, each drawing on a multitude of narratives within the layered and entangled histories of the American experience**.** The former Cotton Exchange is symbolic of the city’s economy and societal history; the building is explicitly and integrally tied to a time in the 19th and 20th century, when wealth and economic prosperity depended upon the enforced movement of people, enslavement, trade and labour. At Liverpool’s **Central Library (until 27 June),** Yael Davids’ new work *Wingspan of the Captive* (2021) references the Library’s 19th century book *Birds of America* by John James Audubon, and explores the concepts of migration, the sentiments of belonging, and what it means to look, to study and to be studied.

**In a series of weekly individual** **phone calls (from 23 April until 27 June)**, Luisa Ungar threads the notion of porosity throughout her participatory commission *A Regurgitation is a Song is a Spell (*Consultations *to recreate the colonial disease)* (2021) offering members of the public a personal engagement with experts in clairvoyance. The phone calls will take place three days a week, from Friday to Sunday. Following the caller's inquiries, each conversation will present constellations that connect to Liverpool’s history as a contact point for global trade, through the interpretation of various types of material. Inspired by reports of contagion, hygienisation and witch-hunting in the city*,* her workis based on research of official records, rumour and historical gossip.

**Kinship / City Centre Trail**

The Grade II listed former department store, the **Lewis’s Building (until 27 June)** will open-up 3 of its floors for Liverpool Biennial 2021 to present a wide array of multi-disciplinary art works and new commissions. Highlights include Taiwanese artist Luo Jr-shin’s immersive *Like a filter, matters passed through you and became a part of you* (2021) which will transport visitors to a nightclub toilet, complete with sticky floors and coloured lights; Camille Henrot investigates co-dependency between parent and child in her series *Wet Job* (2020–2021), while her accompanying new sculptures *Iron Deficiency* and *End of Me* and *A Free Quote (2021)*, refer to bodily transformation from liquid to vapour, from solid to liquid and from contained to leaking; and Jes Fan uses borosilicate glass to create his entangled series of tubes *Network for Staying Low to the Ground* (2021). Other works by Alice Channer, Lamin Fofana, SERAFINE1369, Reto Pulfer, Ane Graff, Diego Bianchi, Pedro Neves Marques, Sohrab Hura and Erick Beltrán, contribute to the overarching question of what we consider a body to be and what it means to be human.

New commissions at the **Lush Building (until 27 June)** call for the end of violence and advocate for politics of care among humans and beyond. From Christopher Crozier’s exploration of the global oil economy’s impact on the Caribbean through drawing to Ayesha Hameed’s video installation, charting the first undersea telegraphic cable between India and Britain during the British Empire. A key work is Neo Muyanga’s *A Maze in Grace (2021)* whichtracesback the history of the hymn “Amazing Grace” to its origins within the city of Liverpool, home to its composer, English slaver-turned-abolitionist John Newton, from where the song then travelled to the US, becoming an emblem of the Civil Rights Movement. Meanwhile, Jenna Sutela focuses on gestation, presenting a conversation between imaginary organisms with both organic and synthetic attributes, one of whom lives inside the other.

Elsewhere, **FACT (until 29 August)** presents *The Only Good System is a Soundsystem* (2021), a new audio-visual commission by B.O.S.S. (Black Obsidian Sound System), positioning sound system culture as a space of communal strength, where kinship is formed and reciprocated, against a background of repression and discrimination in the UK. Along with film works by Zheng Bo from his *Pteridophilia* series, including a new film created for the Biennial, the installations suggest ways of coming together that move beyond our experience as individual humans, incorporating the world of humanity, nature and technology.

The artists exhibiting at **Bluecoat (until 5 September)** also acknowledge the kinship attachments between humans and nature. Paintings by Jadé Fadojutimi explore how bodies and nature are in constant flux, with our identities continuously being shaped by our environments. Films including *Jíibie* (2019) by Laura Huertas Millán and *Fog Dog* (2020) by Daniel Steegmann Mangrané, together with sculptural works by Roland Persson, Kathleen Ryan and André Romão, propose ways in which we belong to the world beyond our physical boundaries, considering ourselves as nature, not just part of it.

**Public Outdoor Trail**

To celebrate Liverpool’s iconic architecture and public spaces, the Biennial’s series of outdoor sculptures and installations will be completed on 23 April with the addition of Erick Beltrán’s sound and graphic works *Superposition* (2021), animating a fleet of ComCabs taxis driving throughout the city, and Daniel Steegmann Mangrané’s *La Pensée Férale (2*021) at Crown Street Park. Outdoor works already on display include Rashid Johnson’s *Stacked Heads (2020)* at Canning Dock Quayside; Teresa Solar’s *Osteoclast (I do not know how I came to be on board this ship, this navel of my ark)* (2021)at Exchange Flags; Linder’s *Bower of Bliss* (2021) at Liverpool ONE; Jorgge Menna Barreto’s mural *Mauvais Alphabet* (Liverpool) (2021) on the side of Bluecoat; and Larry Achiampong’s *Pan African* *For the Relic Travellers’ Alliance* (2017 - ongoing) which can be found at ten locations across the city centre.

**The Biennial Online Portal**

The Biennial Online Portal [liverpoolbiennial2021.com](https://liverpoolbiennial2021.com/) underpins the physical festival, introducing each artist taking part alongside the public online programme *Processes of Fermentation,* bringing the Biennial into the home, the classroom and the community. It combines an inspiring line-up of live performances, artist interviews, curatorial videos, artist-led discussions and workshops, a film programme, and podcasts, hosted alongside rich and engaging multimedia content, enabling audiences to enjoy the Biennial from home. In addition, a vibrant selection of online and physical resources is available for children and young people.

Forthcoming events include the LB x a-n Artist Talk on 27 April, as part of The Artist Information Company’s 40th anniversary celebrations, featuring the artists Alice Channer and SHELL LIKE.  On 21 May, as part of Liverpool’s Light Night, Haroon Mirza will premiere his new digital performance *The Three /\/\/\/’s*. Combining soundwaves with patterns of movement, the performance fosters a sense of ritual and gathering informed by the Fibonacci sequence and golden ratio. This digital commission will accompany the existing series, featuring *Transmission: A series of five Podcasts on Disease and Pandemics in a Distorted World* (2021) by Ines Doujak, in collaboration with John Barker; *B3(TNSCAM) (2021)* by artists UBERMORGEN, digital humanist Leonardo Impett and curator Joasia Krysa; and free participative tutorials by KeKeÇa Body Percussion Ensemble.

Running alongside Liverpool Biennial’s 2021 programme, exhibitions at partner venues will include: the UK's biggest painting competition, *The John Moores Painting Prize*, on virtual display www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk; the retrospective of acclaimed photographer Don McCullin, together with Aliza Nisenbaum’s paintings of Merseyside’s NHS Frontline workers at Tate Liverpool; *Soft Boys*, the solo presentation of the Liverpool-based artist Kiara Mohamed at FACT, and *AI: More Than Human* at the World Museum. In addition, 18 local, regional and national artists will be represented by the Independents Biennial, delivered by At in Liverpool.

**Artists Participating in Liverpool Biennial 2021**

Larry Achiampong, Black Obsidian Sound System, Erick Beltrán, Diego Bianchi, Alice Channer, Judy Chicago, Ithell Colquhuoun, Christopher Cozier, Yael Davids, Ines Doujak & John Barker, Dr. Lakra, Jadé Fadojutimi, Jes Fan, Lamin Fofana, Ebony G. Patterson, Sonia Gomes, Ane Graff, Ayesha Hameed, Camille Henrot, Nicholas Hlobo, Laura Huertas Millán, Sohrab Hura, Invernomuto & Jim C. Need, Rashid Johnson, KeKeÇa, Jutta Koether, SERAFINE 1369, Ligia Lewis, Linder, Luo Jr – shin, Jorgge Menna Barreto, Haroon Mirza, Neo Muyanga, Pedro Neves Marques, Roland Persson, Anu Põder, Reto Pulfer, André Romão, Kathleen Ryan, Zineb Sedira, Xaviera Simmons, Teresa Solar, Daniel Steegmann Mangrané, Jenna Sutela, Martine Syms, UBERMORGEN, Leonardo Impett and Joasia Krysa, Luisa Ungar, Alberta Whittle, Zheng Bo, David Zink Yi.

Further information, images and biographies are available [here](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qeypsqrwpzm4gts/AAAUW2I9bjIDbKL7jLdBYGsda?dl=0) .

**Ends**

Liverpool Biennial 2021: *The Stomach and the Port* takes place 20 March – 27 June 2021

Opening hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 10 – 5pm.

To receive weekly updates about the Public and Learning Programme and for first access to booking an event, sign up to the [[newsletter](https://www.biennial.com/education/family)](https://biennial.com/get-involved/sign-up). Alternatively, for more information and to make an online booking visit [liverpoolbiennial2021.com](https://liverpoolbiennial2021.com/).

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**Press Enquiries**

For further press information or images contact:

Susie Gault, Press and PR Advisor, Liverpool Biennial, susie@biennial.com

Lucinda Riding, Scott & Co: lucinda@scott-andco.com

Catharine Braithwaite: cat@we-r-lethal.com

**Notes to Editors:**

**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 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 artist with local practitioners, communities and the general public. Liverpool Biennial is supported by Arts Council England, Liverpool City Council and founding supporter John Moores. A full list of supporters and partners for the 11 edition is located at the end of this press release. For more information visit: [www.biennial.com](http://www.biennial.com/).

**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. For more information visit: [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://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 £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund. Find out more at [www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19](http://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](http://www.cultureliverpool.co.uk).

**About Dr. Sam Lackey, Director of Liverpool Biennial**

Dr. Samantha Lackey initially joined Liverpool Biennial as Interim Director in late 2020 and following a wide recruitment exercise 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 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 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 in multiple group and solo exhibitions with artists including Cecily Brown, Susan Hefuna, Linder and Eva Rothschild.

**About Manuela Moscoso, Curator of Liverpool Biennial 2021**

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.