


UP
PROJECTS



BODIES OF WATER SYMPOSIUM:

REGENERATIVE
ART PRACTICE

PROGRAMME

11 September 2025
The Black-E, 1 Great George Street, Liverpool L1 5EW

“The most remarkable feature of this historical moment on Earth is not that we are on the way to destroying the world – we’ve actually been on the way for quite a while. It’s that we are beginning to wake up, as from a millennia-long sleep, to a whole new relationship to our world, to ourselves, and each other.”

– Joanna Macy, 1929–2025

Introduction

By Emma Underhill, Founder & Artistic Director (UP Projects) and Justine Boussard, Symposium Guest Curator

As you are joining us for the *Bodies of Water Symposium*, the chances are that you are aware that the Earth is in crisis, with new headlines everyday reporting on heat domes, floods, droughts, exploitation, conflict, dwindling wildlife, and poisoned soils and water bodies. This is a crisis that concerns and affects all of us: humans and the more-than-human; present and future generations; locally and globally. The central question at the heart of today's proceedings will therefore not be *why* we should act but *how*? What exactly can and should we, the public art community, be doing in this time of emergency? What values and tools do we need to meet the challenges of this moment? How do we enshrine non-extractive, non-exploitative ways of working at a time when the cultural sector itself is so under-resourced?

This symposium is an invitation to explore these questions with determination, openness and generosity. Today you will hear from artists, commissioners, producers and environmentalists who have been practicing and prototyping what it means to be environmentally responsible in a world in crisis. Together, and in their own respective ways, they are raising the ambition for us all by aiming not only to do less harm, or do better, but to actively apply regenerative principles to the places where they practice.

UP Projects has a long-term commitment to environmental responsibility and social justice. We also acknowledge that we, along with everyone else, are on a learning curve. Through our practice and events such as this symposium, we're exploring how to unlearn entrenched value systems and ways of thinking and being.

There is no quick fix, or global "one-size-fits-all" solution. But as public art and social practitioners who value relationships, building trust with communities and working responsively to place, we can take heart in the diversity of approaches and relational project examples that are offered in today's programme.

The Symposium takes the themes embedded within Anne Duk Hee Jordan's [*Bodies of Water*](#) project, recently commissioned by UP Projects, as a starting point to explore a holistic approach to working regeneratively through the lens of environmental responsibility and positive social impact. From more-than-human perspectives, to hydropolitics, futures literacy and environmental justice, we will start to build a definition of what regenerative art practice might look like for the public art sector – not only technically (the tools, processes and materials at our disposal), but also culturally (how our values and mindsets can shift to respond to the challenges ahead in transformative ways).

We welcome your critical thinking and experience, and would like to invite you to share your insights and reflections throughout the event. Please contribute to a collective Padlet board which can be accessed via [this link](#).

This event sits within UP Projects' [*Constellations*](#) learning and development programme for artists, curators, practitioners and all those active or interested in public art and social practice. We will share further resources that build on today's conversations further down the line.

We would like to thank Liverpool Biennial for including this event as part of [*Liverpool Biennial 2025: Bedrock*](#), and the Black-E for hosting us today. We hope that this is the beginning of many further conversations to come.

“Regeneration is less about saving the world and more about understanding our role in it again — our relatedness to life. Regeneration is a disposition of the heart, an attitude towards the community of life that asks: What serves life — in me, around me, through me? When we begin to create from this attitude — our work, our economic activity, our decisions — then change happens. Not because we control everything. But because we participate more consciously in life as a local, regional and planetary community. Serving the community of life is the most effective way to serve ourselves and others.”

– Daniel Christan Wahl,
The Regenerative Impulse of Live,
May 2025

Considerations

The journey towards regenerative art practice is unique to each individual, organisation and place. UP Projects offers the following considerations that are currently guiding our own journey, and which will continue to be expanded upon:

Slow down and think ahead

Creative interventions in public space can enable the ecological systems they inhabit to grow and evolve in ways that are beneficial for human and more-than-human communities. This requires a shift in mindset where public art is not just understood as a permanent intervention in a public space, but rather as a process that evolves over time. When establishing a new project, imagine what it will become in the future. How will it support the ecosystems it coexists with? What will its afterlife be? So many decisions that result in an increased carbon footprint are driven by tight timescales, but if we can slow things down and allow ourselves to think ahead it is possible to shift from being delivery-driven to being legacy-oriented.

Make mindful decisions

Devise projects that have a low carbon impact, produce minimal waste, support communities and improve ecosystems. Creating and producing art in the public realm is complex, often constrained by agendas and parameters beyond our immediate control such as tight budgets and timescales. Acknowledge that compromises often have to be made, but ensure that environmental responsibility is always foregrounded. Keeping a decisions journal that documents how and why decisions that increase the project's carbon footprint are made can assist with making decisions mindfully and with due care.

Artists have a specific role to play in enabling the shift towards regenerative practice due to their ability to tell vivid stories that positively change mindsets. Art can lead by example, provoke discussions, shift perspectives, question value systems and create desire for a better world. Public art in particular has a key role to play in cultivating our capacity for imagining and visualising diverse, regenerative futures that are rooted in place. This is the first step towards bringing about the positive change we want to see in the world. Art's power of storytelling can activate people and reignite their sense of agency.

Challenge worldviews

Regenerative practice requires us to address the deep narratives that underpin the way we see the world, starting with the contemporary western view that humans are separate from nature. If we reposition ourselves as part of the living world, both in the way we work and in the stories we tell, we can start to produce projects that will reconnect us with all of life. It is essential that this unlearning and relearning is done in ways that do not perpetuate legacies of harm and exploitation, but instead, actively centre and support the communities that have upheld their ancestral knowledges and practices, and that are often now on the frontline of climate impacts.

Localise the work

Develop work that is responsive to the unique character of a place, its communities as well as its ecosystems and biodiversity. Drawing on the knowledge of local people who understand and are already taking care of their local environment will root the work in the culture of a place, and enable an environmentally supportive approach that is context-specific. Sourcing local makers, fabricators and materials will reduce the need for travel and shipping, support the local economy and enhance local connectedness.

Symposium schedule

8

11 September 2025, 12:30 – 18:30 BST

The Black-E, 1 Great George Street, Liverpool L1 5EW

Through panel discussions and dynamic workshops, the symposium will explore the role public and socially engaged art can play in the climate and biodiversity crises. It aims to raise the ambition for what it means to be environmentally responsible both technically and culturally.

12:30 Registration

Main Auditorium | First Floor

Refreshments available throughout the day. Coffee generously provided by London Nootropics.

13:00 Welcome

Main Auditorium | First Floor

Introduction to the Bodies of Water Symposium by Emma Underhill, Founder & Artistic Director (UP Projects), Dr. Sam Lackey, Director (Liverpool Biennial) and Justine Boussard, Curator. **BSL will be available.**

13:20 Opener

Main Auditorium | First Floor

A grounding visualisation led by artist Seyi Adelekun. **BSL will be available.**

13:30 Regenerative Art Practice: Questions of Legacy

Main Auditorium | First Floor

This panel will explore environmental responsibility from the perspective of legacy: What systems we have inherited? What present realities we must address? What we should aim to leave behind?

Panel discussion with Alice Sharp, Artistic Director & Founder (Invisible Dust); Iman Dattoo, multidisciplinary artist and Head of Research and Community (Radical Ecology); Anne Duk Hee Jordan, artist; and Mala Yamey, Curator (UP Projects). Facilitated by Beatrice Pembroke, Executive Director of Culture (King's College London). **BSL will be available.**

15:45

Forum: Tools for Regenerative Art Practice

9

Main Auditorium | First Floor

Convened by Alice Bonnot, Independent art curator and sustainability consultant (Julie's Bicycle), each round table discussion will be facilitated by different experts in their field.

Facilitators include Seyi Adelekun, artist; Marie-Anne McQuay, Guest Curator (Liverpool Biennial 2025) with James Harper, Programme Manager (Liverpool Biennial); Jon Davies, Producer (Metal Liverpool) and Co-chair (Shift); Dr Sylvia Travers, Head of Horticulture (Haigh Hall); Dr Suzy O'Hara, Curator and Lecturer (University of Sunderland); Manon Awst, artist; Harun Morrison, artist and writer; Rhys Williams, Associate Director (Civic Engineers).

Truth, Care, Change: A Framework for Navigating the Earth Crisis

Chamber Theatre | Lower Ground Floor

A reflective workshop led by Bridget McKenzie (Climate Museum UK, Culture Declares Emergency) and Danny Chivers, carbon analyst and climate action consultant, inviting participants to map how to respond to the Earth Crisis in ways that go beyond decarbonisation. **BSL will be available.**

Neuroqueer Ecologies: Noticing Differently

Meet at (Dome) Entrance | Ground Floor

A sensory walking workshop down to Queens Wharf led by artist James Aldridge, exploring ways of seeing and being with river ecosystems.

Collaborative Place Futures Toolkit

EPC1 | First Floor

A workshop exploring Futures Literacy as a tool for regenerative placemaking led by Rosanna Vitiello, Founder & Bureau Chief, and Allison Walker, artist and associate (The Place Bureau).

17:00 Closing Remarks

Main Auditorium | First Floor

Closing remarks from Emma Underhill, Founder & Artistic Director (UP Projects) and Justine Boussard, Curator. **BSL will be available.**

17:15 Networking Drinks

Main Auditorium | First Floor

Practical bits & bobs!

10

This event aims to be environmentally responsible with production principles that will reduce our carbon footprint, including avoiding unnecessary printing, minimising waste, prioritising speakers based in the UK and encouraging sustainable travel methods for all attendees.

What to bring

Please kindly bring your own reusable coffee cup and water bottle if possible. Hot drinks and water will be provided throughout the afternoon, but using your own cup and bottle will significantly reduce wastage from disposable cups. No programmes will be printed, but this programme and other resources can be accessed digitally on your own device on the day. To access the Wi-Fi at the venue, please use the code: **GUBL3ck2022**.

How to get there

Venue address: The Black-E, 1 Great George St, Liverpool L1 5EW.

The main entrance to the Black-E can be found via Nelson Street. There are a few small steps from street level to access the building.

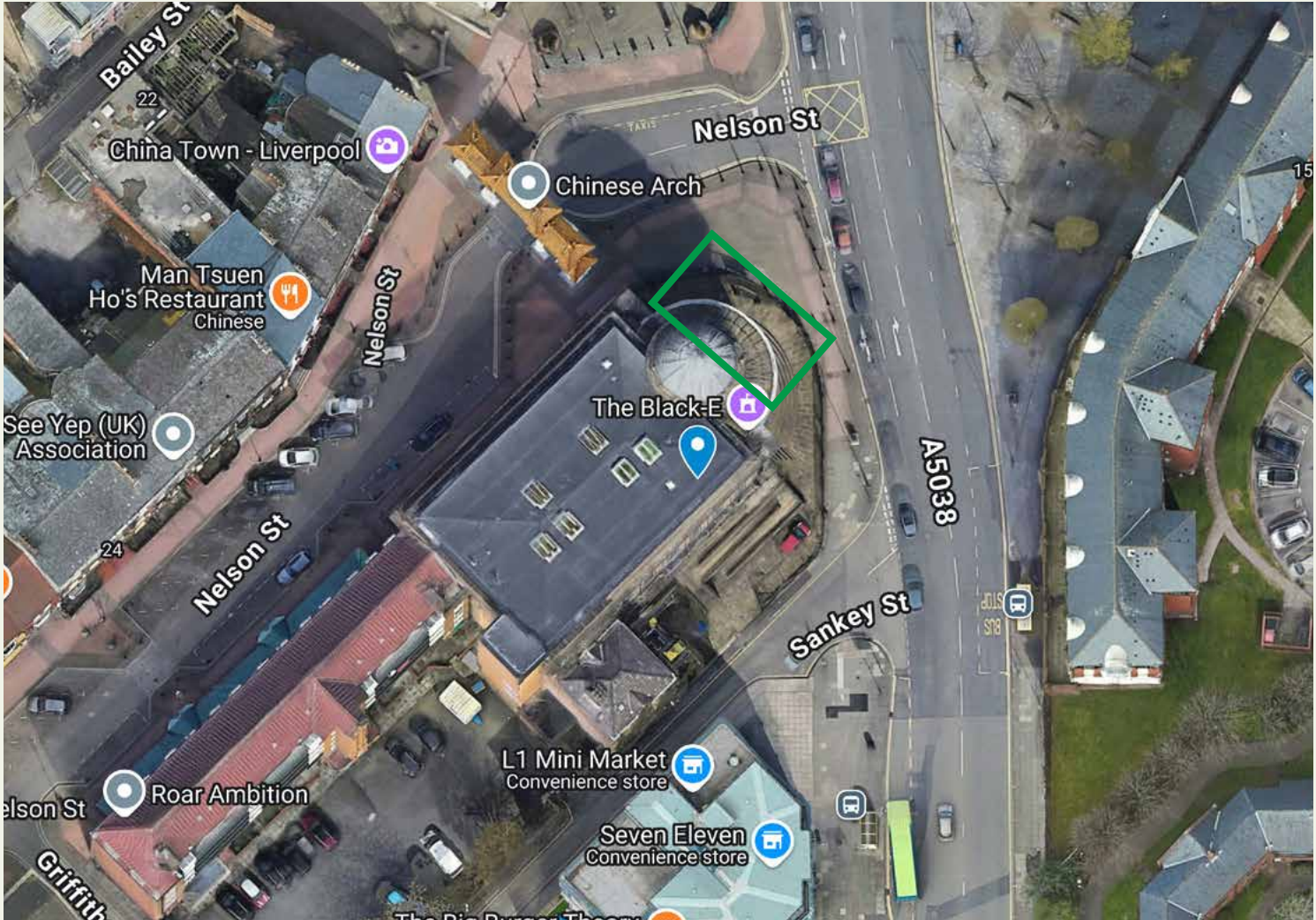
The Black-E is located approximately 5 minutes walk from the city centre and is close to Lime Street Station, Central Station, and several car parks. However, to reduce environmental impact, we recommend using local public transport, or walking or cycling to the venue.

By Foot: Lime Street and Central stations are a 15 minute walk away.

Public Transport: Local Arriva buses 82 and 82A link Great George Street with Liverpool city centre and Lime Street station. Other buses that stop nearby are: 74, 75, 80/80A, 86/86A/86B/86C. For public transport information, please visit www.merseytravel.gov.uk or call 08712 002233 for timetable information.

what3words: [wings.tester.scarcely](https://www.what3words.com/wings-tester-scarcely)

[Google Maps](#)



The venue is wheelchair accessible with ramps, lifts and toilets available. To enter the venue via the ramps provided, please use the entrance via Sankey Street - off Great George Street. Lifts can be found at the back of the building with access to each floor along with internal ramps. Toilets can be found on each floor, with accessible toilets available on the lower ground floor, first floor and second floor. The fit-out of the building includes plans for Sennheiser infra-red assistive listening systems in public performance and exhibition areas, and for induction loops in reception and meeting areas.

If you have any access related questions about the venue, please contact the venue directly by emailing staff@theblack-e.org or calling **01517 095109** where a member of staff can assist with any questions.

British Sign Language interpretation will be available during specific panel discussions and breakout activities. Please refer to the symposium schedule on [pages 8-9](#) to see which activities will include BSL. If you require BSL interpretation, please let us know by emailing info@upprojects.com with your full name to ensure we can reserve you a seat closer to the stage.

If you have any other access needs or requirements, please email info@upprojects.com in advance of the symposium, and we will do our best to assist where possible.

Members of UP Projects team will also be on hand during the day to answer any access related questions you may have.

If you are attending the breakout activity, *Neuroqueer Ecologies: Noticing Differently* led by James Aldridge, please note that this activity will involve a walk outside of the venue. The total length of the walk will be approx. 1.5 miles, with regular pauses for conversation and reflection. Please dress appropriately for the weather on the day.

what3words: [power.couple.chop](#)

[Google Maps](#)



Speakers

14

Further information on the speakers can be found [here](#).



@seyi_adelekun

Seyi Adelekun

she/they | Artist

Seyi Adelekun is an interdisciplinary artist of Yoruba-Nigerian heritage. Their practice combines installation, performance, and sound as storytelling devices to archive and disseminate indigenous knowledge and ecological wisdom. Seyi's work explores the role of spirituality within environmental social justice, using regenerative design principles to world-build alternative realities that support collective liberation. Rooted in somatics, their workshops integrate ritual, craft, embodied movement and ancestral nature-based practices to foster interconnectedness, healing and play within community.

Seyi has exhibited at South London Gallery, London Festival of Architecture, KLA ART Festival, Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail, and London Design Festival. They have completed residencies at G.A.S. Foundation, Iniva / Stuart Hall Library, and 32 Degrees East.

James Aldridge

he/they | Artist and Researcher



www.queerriver.com
www.jamesaldridge-artist.co.uk
@jamesaldridgeart

James Aldridge is a visual artist based in Wiltshire, UK, whose practice explores the role of visual arts processes and multi-sensory experiences within place-based learning, and individual/ecological wellbeing.

In 2020, James founded Queer River, an independent research project that brings together diverse perspectives on the future of rivers, including voices from queer and neuro-divergent communities. Through Queer River, he has collaborated with scientists, writers, and geographers, enabling the development of community engagement projects, interactive interpretation, artwork for exhibition, and written work for publication. Previous collaborators have included organisations such as Wessex Archaeology, the Environment Agency, the University of Glasgow, Bristol Medical School, British Canoeing, and the Norfolk Rivers Trust.



www.manonawst.com
@manon_awst

Manon Awst

she/her | Artist

Manon Awst is a Welsh artist who creates sculptures, performances and site-specific artworks woven with ecological narratives. She explores the way materials stick to locations and communities, transforming them deep beneath the surface. Her interdisciplinary approach is moulded by her academic studies in Architecture (University of Cambridge) and Artistic Research (Royal College of Art, London), and ten years of collaborative practice in Berlin as part of artist-duo Awst & Walther.

Her rooted interest in geology and structures of the land helps her forge new ways of working with sculptural materials, and her recent Future Wales Fellowship allowed her to focus on the ecological and cultural value of peatlands. Manon is currently developing her project 'Peat in Practice' at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds as one of their Artist Research Fellows. She was part of UP Projects' Constellations Programme in 2022.



www.alicebonnot.com
www.villavilla.co

Alice Bonnot

she/her | Independent art curator and sustainability consultant

Alice Bonnot is an independent art curator, writer, lecturer, and museum sustainability consultant, specialising in the intersection of art and ecology. She is the founding director of VILLA VILLA, a climate-conscious and regenerative arts programme and consultancy dedicated to supporting cultural practitioners and organisations committed to making a positive impact on people and the planet.

Alice works as a freelance environmental sustainability specialist at Julie's Bicycle where she helps visual arts organisations, cultural institutions and museums understand their environmental impacts and implement climate actions. Her recent contributions include collaborations on the Tomás Saraceno exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery, as well as work with V&A Dundee, the Barbican, and UP Projects. Alice focuses on developing environmentally respectful, low-carbon contemporary art exhibitions that address socio-political and environmental issues, as well as broader concerns relating to society.



www.justineboussard.co.uk
@AmateurAncestor

Justine Boussard

she/her | Curator and Creative Producer (The Amateur Ancestor)

Justine Boussard FRSA is a curator and creative producer with over a decade's experience working on design and craft exhibitions, artist-led public engagement and creative programming with clients including the Design Museum, Crafts Council, Jane Withers, North East Museums and UP Projects.

As the Amateur Ancestor, she creates experiences that harness the power of material culture and storytelling to expand participants' sense of time and agency, when faced with the reality of the climate and biodiversity crises. She is a graduate of the V&A/RCA MA in History of Design (2012) and a member of Climate Museum UK. The Amateur Ancestor project has been supported by the Arts Council and Creative UK. After years in London, she has happily relocated to the North East of England where she dips in the North Sea as often as she can.



Danny Chivers

he/him | Freelance carbon analyst and climate action consultant

Danny Chivers is a freelance carbon analyst and climate action consultant. For nearly 20 years, he has provided environmental guidance to a wide range of organisations, specialising in international humanitarian charities and the culture sector. He is Sustainability Advisor to the Gallery Climate Coalition, supporting over 1800 arts organisations to halve their carbon emissions by 2030. He was Environmental Advisor to the Hybrid Futures project (2022 - 2024), supporting a collective of museums and galleries in the North of England to collaborate on a series of sustainability-themed exhibitions. He writes a regular climate column for New Internationalist Magazine, and is the author of "The No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change" and "No-Nonsense Renewable Energy". He also writes and performs environmental poetry.



www.radicalecology.earth
www.imandatoo.com

Iman Datoo

she/her | Head of Research and Community (Radical Ecology)

Iman Datoo is a multidisciplinary artist and Head of Research and Community at Radical Ecology. Her practice spans art, systems, and speculative ecologies to explore forces of agency, liveness, and animacy between plants, soils, and people. Through her work, she expands the language of care, revealing how seeds, earth, and even scent can embody memory, resistance, and visions of alternative futures.

Recent collaborations with Radical Ecology include the 100 Year Care Plan (2025). Other notable works include Movement is Natural (2024), Soil-Brain, Gut-Brain (2023), and Kinnomic Botany. Solo exhibitions include Kinnomics at Agnes Etherington Arts Centre (2025) and Movement is Natural at Grays Wharf Gallery (2024). Iman was Artist-in-Residence at the Eden Project and the University of Exeter (2023), and is the 2025 Stonecroft Artist-in-Residence at Queen's University Biological Field Station, Canada.

Jon Davies

he/him | Producer (Metal Liverpool) and Co-Chair (Shift)

Jon Davies is producer for Metal Liverpool and Co-Chair for the Shift network. Shift was founded by Metal in 2021 to be the environmental sustainability network for the arts in the Liverpool City Region. Since its founding it has worked with over 60 organisations who share knowledge on promoting environmental practices and reducing the carbon footprint of the arts sector, and has brought in expertise from the culture networks across the UK (GMast, SAIL, Gallery Climate Coalition), and initiatives and green companies outside of the arts to discuss collaborative ways of working.

James Harper

he/him | Programme Manager (Liverpool Biennial)

James Harper is a Welsh artist, writer and creative producer, based in Liverpool. He is currently in his second biennial cycle with Liverpool Biennial, in the role of Programme Manager. James has been part of Liverpool's cultural scene since 2010 having held a studio and acted as Artistic Director at The Royal Standard within the city. As an independent practitioner, he has worked with organisations such as A-N, Bluecoat, Clwyd Theatr Cymru, Site Gallery and Tate Liverpool. He obtained a Masters Degree in Curating from Chelsea College of Arts and previously held the role of Curator at Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham.

Anne Duk Hee Jordan

they/them | Artist

Anne Duk Hee Jordan (Duk Hee) is a Korean-German artist born in 1978. With previous careers spanning freediving and occupational therapy, they pursued a BA at the Weissensee Kunsthochschule in Berlin in 2009, then completed their MA at Olafur Eliasson's Institute for Spatial Experiments in 2012. Their practice includes drawings, hand-built robots, edible landscapes, sculpture, public art, film and sound. Often created in collaboration with scientists, marine biologists and ecologists, their work asks questions that encourage a change of perspective, shifting the focus away from humans towards the entire ecology.

Recent projects include (A)I Will Tell You, You Tell Me, ZKM Karlsruhe, Germany (2024); The End is Where We Start From, KunstHausWien, Vienna, Austria (2024); Snailing (Slippy Slimy Slug Slut), Canal Projects, New York, USA (2024); I will always weather with you, The Bass, Miami, USA (2023-2024) Der Fluss bin ich (I am the river), Tatort Paderborn, Paderborn, Germany (2025); Manifesto of Spring, National Asian Culture Center in partnership with ZKM and M+Gwangju, South Korea (2025). Duk Hee is currently commissioned by UP Projects for Bodies of Water, A la Ronde Exmouth and Haigh Hall, Wigan (2025 -2030).



www.dukhee.de



Dr. Samantha Lackey

she/her | Director (Liverpool Biennial)

Dr. Samantha Lackey has held the position of Director at Liverpool Biennial since late 2020. She joined the Biennial from her role as Head of Collection and Exhibitions at the Whitworth at the University of Manchester. Before this she was curator at The Hepworth Wakefield (2010-16), where she was part of the team that opened the gallery in 2011 to critical acclaim. Her background is in academia, receiving a PhD in 2005 in the subject of surrealism, which was the context of her work as a lecturer, research fellow and her first co-curated 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. Sam also sits on the as Co-Vice Chair on the Executive Board of the International Biennial Association and is a Co-Director of Contemporary Visual Arts Network North West.



Bridget McKenzie

she/her | Creative Curator and Consultant in Regenerative Culture

Bridget McKenzie is a researcher and creative curator in culture, learning and environment. After 14 years in roles such as Education Officer for Tate and Head of Learning at the British Library, she founded Flow Associates in 2006, who supported the evolution of Flow India. In 2019, Bridget founded Climate Museum UK, an experimental museum which stirs and collects the emerging response to the Earth crisis. She is an advisor for Culture Unstained and co-founder of Culture Declares Emergency. She presents and publishes internationally on possibilities of Regenerative Culture.



Marie-Anne McQuay

she/her | Guest Curator (Liverpool Biennial 2025: BEDROCK)

Marie-Anne McQuay is Guest Curator of Liverpool Biennial 2025: BEDROCK. She is on secondment from Arts&Heritage as Director of Projects (2022-) and has worked with A&H CEO Stephanie Allen and A&H team on environmentally conscious public art commissions in a wide range of heritage contexts.. Previously Marie-Anne was Head of Programme at the Bluecoat, Liverpool (2015 – June 2022) where she curated numerous exhibitions and commissions. She also worked across the Residency and Print Studios.

Marie-Anne was Guest International Curator for Wales in Venice 2019 with artist Sean Edwards and lead organisation Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham and was Curator at Spike Island, Bristol (2007-2013), and co-ran artist development network Spike Island Associates. Marie-Anne was a member of the Arts Council Collection Acquisitions Committee 2022-25 and Jury member for The Arts Foundation Futures Awards 2024: Visual Art. She is currently on the Advisory of Board of At The Library.



Harun Morrison

he/him | Artist

Harun Morrison is an artist and writer based in London and an associate artist with Greenpeace UK on the project Bad Taste. He is currently showing research on darkness in urban space, developed with Kim Coleman at Orleans House. He recently presented work in the group show, SOIL: The World at Our Feet. In 2024, he was in the two person show, DONO, at Somerset House Studios project space G31 alongside Appau Jnr Boakye-Yiadom and the solo show Conjunction at VOLT, Devonshire Collective in Eastbourne. His forthcoming novel, The Escape Artist will be published by Book Works. Recent group exhibitions include Sonic Acts 2024: The Spell of The Sensuous, Amsterdam, Chronic Hunger / Chronic Desire in Timișoara, Romania, BALATORIUM Disturbed Waters, in Veszprém, Hungary as part of the European Capital of Culture 2023 programme and Bamako Biennial, 2020 in Mali. Harun is Visiting Fellow at Goldsmiths University, London and part of the Art and Ecology Research Centre. He is also part of the faculty of the Dutch Art Institute, MA Art Praxis and Conditions in Croydon, London.



Dr. Suzy O'Hara

she/her | Lecturer in Digital Arts and Enterprise in the School of Art, Design and Performance (University of Sunderland)

Dr Suzy O'Hara is a Lecturer in Digital Arts and Enterprise in the School of Art, Design and Performance at University of Sunderland, where she leads CoLab Sunderland. As a curator, educator, and practice led scholar, her research is concerned with exploring the central role that art-making and curatorial praxis play in addressing pressing environmental and social challenges impacting society. Recent projects include curating public programmes that explore the role that cross - sector curatorship and interdisciplinary artmaking can play in engaging local communities with pioneering Big Data scientific discovery, marine environment and heritage protection, and the urgent practical challenges caused by coastal erosion. With Victoria Bradbury, she is the co-editor of Art Hack Practice: Critical Intersections of Art, Innovation and the Maker Movement (Routledge, 2020).

Beatrice Pembroke

she/her | Executive Director (King's Culture)

Beatrice Pembroke has worked in the creative and cultural industries for over 25 years, building partnerships across the arts, tech industries, academia, government and civil society. She is particularly interested in the role of the creative and cultural industries in tackling contemporary challenges and has led various international programmes that bring innovative approaches to the climate crisis, urban development and social inequalities.

In her current role as Executive Director, King's Culture, she and her team develop cultural partnerships and creative approaches to enhance research, knowledge exchange and public engagement across and beyond the university. She was previously Director of the Global Cultural Districts Network (GCDN), Director of Creative Economy at the British Council and is co-founder of the Long Time Project.

Alice Sharp

she/her | Artistic Director & Founder (Invisible Dust)

Alice Sharp is Artistic Director and founder of art and environmental organisation 'Invisible Dust'. Invisible Dust has been working for 15 years 'making the invisible visible' creating new climate futures with artists and scientists internationally. She is a prominent speaker on art and climate recently in Athens, Timișoara and New York, and previously for Insider magazine attracting 85,000 viewers worldwide, Davos and UNDP and was part of the British Council Malaysia 2024 'Human Nature' delegation. Alice is currently curating 'Climate Clock' a large-scale public art trail for Oulu Finland EU Capital of Culture 2026 including Superflex, Takahiro Iwasaki and Rana Begum. Also Turkish exhibitions and residencies with Shezad Dawood, Teos Art Collective and KARANTINA Collective. Invisible Dust curated 'Breathe' by Dryden Goodwin with Rosamund Adoo Kissi Debra in 22/23. In 2025 Jeremy Deller has opened his permanent 'Wild Eye' artwork 'Roman Mosaic c2025', 'The tides of our tears' by Raqs Media Collective will open in June with L.B Richmond and 'Forecast India' exhibition at 'Seed130', Fenchurch St, opening in October. Invisible Dust has a multi partnership project in development as part of the UK/Brazil Season of Culture led by the British Council and Instituto Guimarães Rosa (IGR) with Pivô Brazil.



Dr. Sylvia Travers

she/her | Head of Horticulture (Haigh Hall)

Sylvia has worked in horticulture for over 20 years, having studied at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin and at Reading University. Specialising in kitchen gardening throughout her career, she moved to Denmark to complete a PhD in plant science in 2010. She ran the productive gardens at The Lost Gardens of Heligan and has set up and managed kitchen gardens for Michelin starred restaurants. She also worked for the RHS overseeing the construction and planting on the Paradise and Kitchen gardens at Bridgewater in Salford. These days she is Head of Horticulture at Haigh Hall in Wigan, Lancashire, a part time tutor at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation as well as consulting on all aspects of walled kitchen garden restoration and management.



Emma Underhill

she/her | Founder and Artistic Director (UP Projects)

Emma Underhill is Founder and Artistic Director of UP Projects with over 20 years' experience in curating and leading large scale, ambitious projects in the public realm, often delivered through complex partnership working. Under Emma's leadership, UP Projects has gained an expansive reputation for progressive public art commissioning, robust and genuine community engagement methodologies and a commitment to artist development, often providing artists with career changing opportunities.

Emma leads the artistic direction of UP Projects' core programme which includes the Constellations learning & development programme for public art practitioners, and public art commissions that have social relevance and explore the pressing issues of our time. Emma has led the Bodies of Water project with Anne Duk Hee Jordan (2025), and other notable projects include The National Windrush Monument by Basil Watson at London Waterloo Station (unveiled 2022), with the Newham Trackside Wall by Dame Sonia Boyce DBE (2021) and Gut Feelings Meri Jaan by Jasleen Kaur (2022).



www.theplacebureau.com

Rosanna Vitiello

she/her | Founder (The Place Bureau)

Rosanna Vitiello is a leading voice in cultural placemaking, with an unparalleled international background in articulating the story of city spaces and rural landscapes of cultural significance. She is the founder of The Place Bureau, a research strategy and design studio that defines new futures for cultural destinations around the world — infusing placemaking with collective identity, emotion, narrative, and experience. For over 20 years, Rosanna has explored how places speak to us, and how we speak back. Her focus on Place Futures is driven by a mission to help people see their places with fresh eyes, exploring the future with deeper insight, bolder imagination for greater impact. With a focus on natural and civic spaces, her work has explored coastlines and greenways, heritage docks and old hospitals, as spaces rich in story and ready to be re-imagined for the future.

In Liverpool, she has worked with Asif Khan, Theaster Gates, and cultural partners Twenty Stories High, Writing on the Wall, and Squash Liverpool on co-design and narrative for National Museums Liverpool's Canning Dock, centring communities perspectives in a major civic project. In Parma, Italy, she is leading the co-creation of the vision for ParCO, and in St. Louis, USA, she has collaborated with Bruce Mau Design, Great Rivers Greenway and the Artist of Colour Council to shape the narrative for Brickline Greenway.



Allison Walker

she/her | Artist and associate (The Place Bureau)

Allison brings over twenty years' experience shaping stories for museums, heritage institutions, and places across the UK and the U.S. Her practice moves between writing, interpretive strategy, and community engagement—driven by a belief that imagination is a form of critical infrastructure, essential to navigating the complexities of now. Before relocating to the UK in 2003, Allison worked at institutions such as the Franklin Institute, MoMA, and the American Museum of Natural History. Allison also maintains a socially engaged arts practice centring on the art of invitation—through conversation, materials, and shared attention. While not formally trained as an artist, Allison's work is relational and participatory: tending to the space between people, disciplines, pasts and possible futures.

Allison is co-founder of Narrative Threads and the Cultural Futures Lab, and an associate at The Place Bureau.



@civic_thrivingtogether

Rhys Williams

he/him | Associate Director (Civic Engineers)

Rhys Williams is a chartered civil engineer based in Civic's London studio. As an associate director, Rhys oversees the design and coordination of drainage, utilities and active travel infrastructure and more across a wide range of public realm, neighbourhoods and buildings across the UK.

Rhys is known for engineering with a conscience and providing solutions that have a positive impact on the environment, incorporating nature-based solutions, improving biodiversity and water quality, and prioritising the health and wellbeing of communities. His recent projects include the refurbishment of Sutton Estate; Gascoigne Estate East and Sandilands Nature Reserve.



Mala Yamey

she/her | Curator (UP Projects)

Mala Yamey is Curator at UP Projects and has worked in the contemporary art world for several years working on curating public commissions, public programmes, and devising international partnerships. Mala leads on curating and producing UP Projects' public art commissions; she is currently working on Bodies of Water and further upcoming projects.

Alongside her role at UP Projects, Mala works as Programmes Curator at Art South Asia Project (ASAP) and as a freelance writer. Mala is also a member of The Lazy Susans Collective, with whom she curates exhibitions, collage workshops and community events. Her independent research focusses on South Asian contemporary art and its UK diaspora, and she is pursuing a research project into cultural exchange between South Asia and the USSR during the Non-Aligned Movement. Mala has worked for over seven years in the contemporary art world spanning the non-profit and commercial sectors including Art South Asia Project (ASAP), Invisible Dust, Kochi Biennale Foundation, Levy Gorvy, and Sotheby's.

Thanks and credits

The *Bodies of Water Symposium* is curated by UP Projects and guest curator Justine Boussard, on the occasion of the Liverpool Biennial. The symposium is part of *Bodies of Water*, a national, site-specific public art commission by artist Anne Duk Hee Jordan that explores the politics of water. Two sculptural installations harvest, filter and circulate rainwater, responding to the urgent need for sustainable water management within the UK and internationally, presented at A la Ronde in Exmouth, East Devon and Haigh Hall in Wigan, Greater Manchester.

Bodies of Water is commissioned and curated by UP Projects working in partnership with National Trust and Wigan Council. It is generously funded by Arts Council England, Art Fund and Vallum Associates, and supported by Goethe-Institut with engineering support from Civic Engineers, and environmental sustainability advice and guidance from Julie's Bicycle.

Please visit the online platform to learn more about the project:

bodiesofwater.site

Thanks and gratitude to UP Projects' current and former team members who have all contributed to realising *Bodies of Water*: Leila Baetiong, Producer; Elisabeth Del Prete, Senior Curator (Learning & Live Research); Moira Lascelles, Executive Director & Head of Partnerships; Jack Newbury, Producer (Learning & Participation); Leanne Petersen, Curator; Zoë Scholes, Communications & Development Coordinator; Emma Underhill, Founder and Artistic Director; Mala Yamey, Curator.

To UP Projects' Trustees for their ongoing advise and support: Thahmina Begum, Iain Bennet, Kaia Charles, Jenny Garrett OBE, Massy Larizadeh, Viya Nsumu, Peter Ratcliffe, George Sawtell.

And to UP Projects' Critical Friends Pauline Desouza, Diversity Arts Forum and Bridget McKenzie, Regenerative Culture for advising on the project.



Image: courtesy of the Haigh Community Ambassadors

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Supported using public funding by
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