

EXCHANGE



Antwerp><UK

In January 2018, 30 artists across Europe were paired and exchanged three statements to inspire each other to make original work specifically for the EXCHANGE show, to be shown firstly Friday 18th - 25th May 2018 at Stour Space, London and then in Antwerp.

"We have far more in common than that which divides us."

A paraphrased statement by MP Jo Cox from her maiden speech in 2015. She was murdered by a far right extremist during her referendum campaign in 2016.

The EXCHANGE show aims to explore the 'differences' that separate us socially, culturally and geographically and to attempt to bridge those gaps creatively and with humour.

In the not so distant past, as children at school, some of us may have been paired with 'pen pals' across the seas in the hope that in writing to each other we would improve our language and communication skills and perhaps find a friend or connection despite the distance between us.

Towns were 'twinning' across Europe, encouraging the idea that we were not so different from our cousins abroad, that our similarities and differences could be celebrated and that we might feel part of a global rather than parochial community.

Both actions encouraged broad thinking and a welcoming outlook to others, to 'the other'.

Recent political events have had the opposite effect - open arms have been crossed defensively, outstretched hands have become fists, dialogue has been shut down or deliberately misinterpreted.

We need not share a common tongue, a piece of land or a cultural history to share a thought, a joke, a feeling. To exchange a point of view, a vision, is both throwaway and precious. It means everything and nothing. It is all we have to give.

By pairing artists randomly across continents, by playing with boundaries, limits and borders in the exhibition space, by laughing in the face of adversity we can challenge this new, reductive rhetoric.

After all, what have we got to lose?

The artists were paired randomly by means of a blind ballot, having been divided into 'home' and 'away' teams:

Louisa Dunn - Brian Lunn
Carmen Van Geffen - Frances Grant
Denise Leworthy - Chris Giorgi
Senne Marquenie - Wendy Kirwood
Naser Kianersi - Vikki Hill
Anita Wernstrom-Pitcher - Lee Hazeldine
Hannah Baker - Anja Lubach
Orphee Pannekoucke - Mark Shaw
Howard Mason - Andrew Smith
Alexander Voutchkov - Jenny Walden
Gilles Hellemans - Dani Penhaligan
Maria Demas - Aron Spall
Martyn Cockram - Elle Lever
Paulien Verheyen - Lee Shearman
Rich Martin - Mark Freemantle

Opens Friday 18th May, 7-10pm, free entry

Daily 19th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th & 25th, 9am-5pm
free entry

AT Stour Space, 7 Roach Road,
Hackney Wick, London, E3 2PA

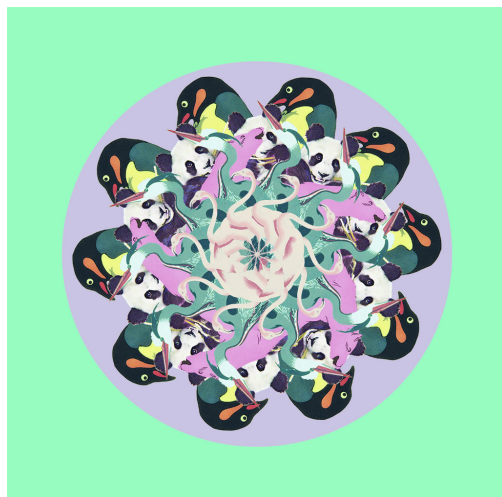
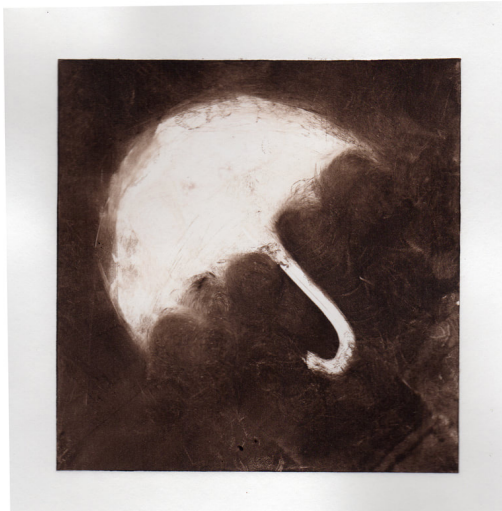
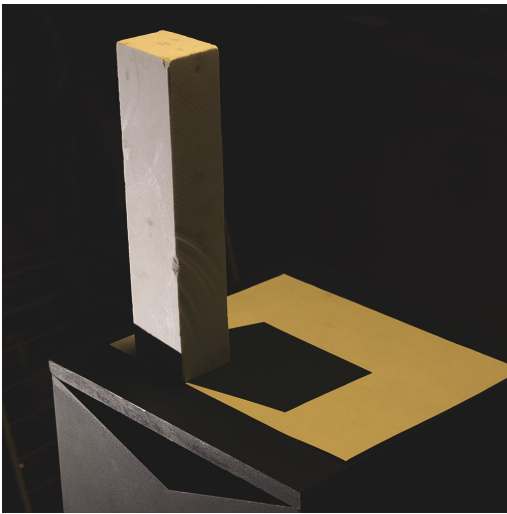
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Works in progress - Clockwise from top left: Alexander Voutchkov, Hannah Baker, Gilles Hellemans, Aron Spall, Wendy Kirwood, Andrew Smith