

For immediate release: Thursday 27 May 2021

Barbican launches digital group exhibition *Regenerate*

Available for free online from 27 May 2021



Young Visual Arts Group member's hands covered in soil and arranged in 14 individual allotments reflecting their individual expression while sharing a collective space. Photography by Jiawen Zhao.

The Barbican has announced the launch of [Regenerate](#), a digital group exhibition featuring newly created artworks by 14 emerging artists who are part of this year's Barbican Creative Learning's Young Visual Arts Group programme. Working together virtually since November 2020, the artists have created powerful works that try to make sense of today's world, how we got here and how we look to the future.

The artists exhibited in *Regenerate* are **Gibril Adam, Fikayo Adebajo, Sally Barton, L U C I N E, J Frank, Deji Hayes, Nefeli Kentoni, Siavash Minoukadeh, Emariamhe Obemeata, Ioana Simion, Asako Ujita, Tegan Wilson, Zhilin Xu and Jiawen Zhao**. The exhibition features photography, zines, textile, sound, and film art, with artists working individually, collectively and inviting community participation to explore themes including our relationship with our past, personal identity and nature. *Regenerate* also includes writings from the artists and a public programme of events to further explore the ideas behind the exhibition, including a workshop encouraging participants to create sculptural maquettes made from paper, found imagery and recycled materials; and a talk about the importance of playfulness in art-making.

Only ever having met and worked together remotely, the artists have interrogated what togetherness should look like online, both in their own works and in their collaborative process when producing the exhibition. With mentorship from the artist **Jordan McKenzie** and support from external guest facilitators such as artist **Antonio Roberts** and Guts Gallery's **Ellie Pennick**, they have explored the potential of digital spaces to liberate creative processes and used this to inform their artistic and curatorial decisions. Many of the works featured in this exhibition take this exploration further, setting out the internal relations at play within each of the group's members, the intersection of histories and sites and situations that form their identities.

Members of the Young Visual Arts Group said: “*The idea of forging connection and nurturing growth was central to our work as a group. We live in a time when we are struggling to properly connect, whether that’s with each other, our past or our location. The last year has shown us that we need ties with the world around us. They’re the soil in which we can grow, and we wanted to reflect this in our works. It can feel like we are increasingly losing touch with everything so our aim with Regenerate is to remake these links and use them as a fertile base to grow from into a future of renewal.*”

This exhibition has been conceived as part of Barbican Creative Learning’s Young Visual Arts Group, an annual, free learning programme which supports a group of young creatives, aged 16-25, to work collectively towards a public exhibition, and develop their skills in curating, marketing, design and project management. Members of the programme receive support from Barbican staff, as well as professional artists and facilitators in developing their creative practice and ideas.

Full details of the artworks in *Regenerate*:

Gibril Adam is a South London-based visual and sound artist. His work explores the limits of volume and dissonance and the themes of community, conflict and crime, largely influenced by his upbringing in Croydon. His film, *Third Rail*, was born strictly out of creative indifferences and embraces themes of mundanity, media consumption and anti-authority sentiment.

[Fikayo Adebajo](#) is a photojournalist and visual artist whose work presents people of colour, especially black women, through a three-dimensional lens, with her stories exploring the full spectrum of the black emotive experience. *Oríki for our Daughters of the New Age* is a photographic series in praise of kinship and solidarity with other women of colour, and the futures built in reconnection with ourselves and nature. Instagram: [fikayoadebajo](#)

Sally Barton is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores class, the North of England, intergenerational relationships and storytelling. *My Grandparents’ House and I* is an interview with her grandparents about social housing and the Barbican and serves as a love letter to their home and the complexities of class. Instagram: [bartonmade](#)

LUCINE is a transdisciplinary music artist that believes in using a cross arts approach to create unique, immersive experiences for people to enjoy and feel equal in. As a citizen of the world, they wish to retell stories of the human experience including their own, enabling them to express their innermost thoughts & feelings. Instagram: [lisforlucine](#)

J Frank’s piece explores the intersection between queerness and the cultural landscape in which it exists. He works in a range of performative mediums documenting his trans* experience. His work for *Regenerate* explores access to and the absence of trans* bodies within the archive and London histories. Instagram: [fickle_dreams](#)

Deji Hayes is based in Manchester and focuses on fine art media including painting and ink portraiture. He also works in other media like creative writing, and for *Regenerate* he has written an imagined biography, titled *Villagers and The Child*, inviting other group members to contribute to the outcome of the fictional character’s life. The story evolves organically, as all lives do.

[Nefeli Kentoni](#) is an interdisciplinary artist and writer, completing her MA at Central St Martins in Performance Design & Practice. She is fascinated by the gaps between language and image, the implicit exertions that sustain the performer-viewer relationship, and the performativity of space. Her piece *Unsent Letters* is a ten-metre

piece of fabric with embroidered letters challenging creativity and the lack of inspiration faced over the last year.

Instagram: [nefairy](#)

[Siavash Minoukadeh](#) is a curator and writer exploring how communities are formed in spaces through individual action. He is presenting *whitenoisespace*, a film shot on location at Severn Beach, celebrating our liminal and often overlooked spaces as a source of joy and home.

Twitter: [@SMinoukadeh](#)

[Emma Obemeata](#) is a video artist currently completing her final year at UCL studying Spanish with Film Studies. Her work for the exhibition, *touch-type*, explores the re-contextualisation of intimacy post-pandemic. By creating a sensorial relationship with the viewer, she explores the tension between the haptic relationship we have with our devices, and the bodily yearning we experience for others.

Ioana Simion is a visual creative and arts facilitator based in London. Her digital zine, *Lifelong Kindergarden*, explores ideas and links between play-based learning and zine-making. Created using child-like imagery and bold colours, the zine is an invitation for pursuing playfulness and participating meaningfully in our communities.

[Asako Ujita](#) is interested in the intersection between film and theatre. Her film, *The Rokumeikan*, uses stories from nineteenth-century Japan and archival footage to explore Japan's colonial history and personal emotional struggles within the shift of society and the power of authority.

Instagram: [asako_ut](#)

Tegan Wilson is interested in media and its influence in relation to coming of age stories. She is presenting *i have never had an original thought*, a rolling credits scene acknowledging the various inspirations that have influenced her life and practice.

Instagram: [tegaaanwilson](#)

[Zhilin Xu](#) is a multidisciplinary artist based in London, studying Fine Art at Central St Martins. Her research interests constellate around the philosophy of film and narrative construction. Her moving-image piece, *Outside*, makes a perverse use of the video essay configuration, pushing its generic conventions.

Instagram: [artgracezx](#)

[Jiawen Zhao](#) is interested in how the existence of the self is shaped and grown by the intervention of artificial intelligence by creating the past and future of the "I". She has explored these interests through a film, presented as part of the exhibition.

Instagram: [jw__zz](#)

The Barbican believes in creating space for people and ideas to connect through its international arts programme, community events and learning activity. To keep its programme accessible to everyone, and to keep investing in the artists it works with, the Barbican needs to raise more than 60% of its income through ticket sales, commercial activities and fundraising every year. Donations can be made here:

barbican.org.uk/donate

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Notes to Editors

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Press images of the individual artworks can be downloaded [here](#).

About Barbican Creative Learning

Barbican Creative Learning pioneers new models for cultural learning across the art forms. Our mission, Creative Skills for Life, underpins all aspects of our work and approach in the design and delivery of meaningful and impactful learning experiences across three strategic pillars: Education, Employability and Enrichment.

In 2020/21, we delivered 20 digital and physical programmes with over 200 partners, engaging 2,400 participants, and reaching an audience of more than 50,000.

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over a million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, public spaces, a library, the Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark Company](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court, and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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