

Raft Symposium
27th February 2024
2-5:30pm

The symposium as part of the RAFT exhibition aims to ask questions such as why, as well as how, people from different places and backgrounds might live together to make space for new dialogue about migration in modern Britain. Taking inspiration from ideas of adaptation throughout the exhibition, this discursive afternoon will draw from it methods through which we might reconfigure our ways of thinking. The symposium will consider what it means to migrate or to celebrate national identity. Rather than turning inward on a particular idea of Britain or “Britishness”, this exhibition and symposium instead aims to be outward looking. It looks out from the British Isles, concentrating on this country’s connections with the wider world. The discussions aim to foreground diverse practices, backgrounds and perspectives to think about questions such as how humans adapt and thrive in new places, the role of activist approaches, and the importance of decolonial art making and curatorial practices.

Schedule

1:00- time to see the show

1:30pm start-

Introduction and first panel (Context + Methods in Migration)

Sam Scott

Sam Scott is a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Gloucestershire.

Scott specialises in population geography and international migration. His teaching draws on research he has carried out looking at low-wage migrant workers in the UK and skilled British expatriates overseas.

Tom Green

Tom Green is a Senior Producer working primarily to support artists and organisations including Counterpoints Arts through their Platforma network. He produces the biennial Platforma festival and also helps oversee our international work. Previously he has worked for organisations including the Refugee Council, where he first began work on Platforma and the Writers' Guild. Tom's background is in creative writing and his work has been performed in theatres and on BBC Radio 4. Counterpoints Arts is a leading national organisation in the field of arts, migration and cultural change. Counterpoints Arts support the arts by and about refugees and migrants and produce a range of programmes in the UK and internationally, including Refugee Week, PopChange and Platforma Festival.

Anna Gormley

Anna Gormley is a visual researcher and producer based in the UK and a lecturer of photography at University of Gloucestershire. Her work explores the intersection of relationships in the production of photography, most recently in humanitarian contexts. As a producer she has worked with leading practitioners and institutions worldwide. More recently she has focused on projects which seek to activate audiences by including them in the process of image production, pushing the boundaries of the medium and addressing questions around authorship and collaboration. Projects include Danube Revisited, A Portrait of Marrakech with MMPVA and Magnum Photos, Night Contact and Magnum Live Lab funded by the Arts Council and in collaboration with The British Museum. She is currently working on a research project exploring Photography and Migration at the border in Calais and Dunkirk funded by the ESRC and Cardiff University.

1:30- 2:15pm Questions

2:15-2:45 break and refreshments

2:45- 3:30 -

Second panel (Artists- subject matter and process)

Sarah Rhys- Coracle Project

Sarah Rhys is an interdisciplinary artist living in west Wales. She is interested in the reinterpretation of landscape, geological material, the other-than-human and the rural. Sarah contributed to 'HON' a bilingual publication on Women Artists in Wales, edited by Christine Kinsey and published by The H'mm Foundation. She is a member of; [PLaCE International](#) , [Space Place Practice](#)' and Spike Island Associates (Bristol)

Ghafar Tajmohammad

Ghafar Tajmohammad's art reflects upon home, belonging and relocation across the Afghan diaspora community, working primarily in the field of painting. Based in London, he holds a Bachelor's degree in Painting from Camberwell College of Arts and was a Meads Final

Project Award winner of 2019. Ghafar has exhibited with Hypha Studios, New Art Exchange and Counterpoints Arts.

3:30- 3:45 questions

3:45-4:15pm - break and networking

4:15-4:45 Discussion between B.A Zanditon and Sarah Bowden mapping activity.

B.A. Zanditon

B.A. Zanditon is an artist based in London. She has a Bachelor's degree from Chelsea School of Arts, University of the Arts London. She has exhibited as part of Art Language Location in Cambridge.

<https://www.zanditon.com/>

Sarah Bowden

Sarah Bowden is a Research Fellow and Director of Hardwick Gallery at the University of Gloucestershire (UoG), which she established in 2014. Hardwick Gallery presents a public programme of curated exhibitions, residencies, and live and online events by local, national and international practitioners, as well as staff research and presentations by community groups and students in the School of Creative Arts. Sarah's research examines the role of the gallery and creative practice in public life and discourse. In 2016 she founded We Create arts action group with residents in the locality of Hardwick campus, to develop projects with contemporary artists that connect people and explore the area's heritage. Prior to joining UoG, Sarah founded and directed MEANTIME, an artist residency programme and event venue in Cheltenham town centre. Between 2007 and 2014 MEANTIME hosted more than 120 artists' residencies, providing time and space for free experimentation within a discursive framework. Sarah is a practitioner, curator and consultant of art in the public realm and has worked closely with universities, local authorities, housing associations, property developers, and arts organisations.

4:45-5:30 Final discussion