

19.5. – 31.7.2021

Experiments with Everyday Objects

Harun Morrison

11.6. – 31.7.2021

The Siren of the Deep

Leah Clements

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Eastside Projects makes art public. We are an artist-run multiverse, commissioning, producing and presenting experimental art practices and demonstrating ways in which art may be useful as part of society.



Experiments with Everyday Objects

Harun Morrison

'Experiments with Everyday Objects' takes its title from a 1970s science book that describes over sixty experiments for children to do at home using readily available materials. A copy of the book belongs to the artist's father, a former science teacher. Harun is using a selection of these experiments as scores for a series of actions to camera that evoke the weirder end of YouTube demonstration videos. The series began during the first COVID-19 lockdown using whatever was to hand.

The experiments with everyday objects extend beyond the book's instructions to include other things with personal and socio-political resonance of various sizes. These include the reconstruction of a stage prop originally designed by dancer Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson (1878–1949), the evocation of the recently demolished Birmingham pub, Eagle & Tun (compulsorily purchased for the HS2 railway development) and his narrow-boat Zoar. This Spring, Harun will navigate Zoar from Regent's Canal in London to the West Midlands via the Grand Union Canal. He will journey with friends invited to co-document different legs of the trip and its eventual return to London resulting in a travelogue of text, images and video. Zoar itself will be converted into a pinhole camera to produce a series of analogue prints en route. The boat will also be the itinerant site for a series of recorded conversations that explore the politics, histories and futures of ports and inland waterways.

Harun Morrison is an artist and writer based on the River Lea and Regent's Canal. He is the current recipient of the Wheatley Fine Art Fellowship, hosted by Birmingham School of Art, Birmingham City University and Eastside Projects. His forthcoming novel, *The Escape Artist* will be published by Book Works in 2022. Since 2006, Harun has collaborated with Helen Walker as part of the collective practice They Are Here. He is also a trustee of the Black Cultural Archive (est. 1981).

List of Works

MAIN GALLERY

Experiments with Everyday Objects
Harun Morrison

- 1 *Zoar Returns: Narrow Boat Simulator (Trailer)*, 2021
Digital Animation, 2 min 25 sec

Zoar Returns is a trailer for a currently unrealised video game. The boat itself is the protagonist and modelled on my own boat Zoar. The shots in the trailer feature St Pancras Basin in Kings Cross, Maida Hill Tunnel on Regents Canal and an aerial shot of Zoar passing the Banana Warehouse in Digbeth, Birmingham. The trailer takes after video game trailers on YouTube in the 'simulator' genre such as *18 Wheels of Steel*, a trucking game, and *Microsoft Flight Simulator*. The blue light in the tunnel alludes to a line describing 'ultramarine skies' from a translation of Rimbaud's poem 'The Drunken Boat' (1871), in which we hear the inner voice of an unmanned vessel, sharing a transcendental vision as it slowly fills with water. The trailer has been edited with multiple scores by Lea Rüeegg, Pouya Ehsaei, Samuel Rodgers, Vivian Caccuri & Thiago Secundino and Cara Tolmie. Animation by Azul De Monte.

- 2 *Studio at Night*, 2021
Video, 2 min 10sec

While working from my studio at night in May 2020 during lockdown, I recorded shadows created by car lights on Romford Road. This silent video features phone footage selected from 40 clips.

- 3 *Stair Dance*, 2020
Wood, 86 × 57 × 258 cm
Stair Dance, 2021
Hot foil block print on greyboard, 42 × 19 cm (Edition of 60, £80)

This sculpture is a reconstruction of a dance prop used by US dancer Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson (1878–1949), that features in a YouTube clip dated 1932. According to researchers Robinson designed and built the original prop himself, and took it with him from club to club. Relocated from a cabaret environment into a gallery the form evokes Minimalist sculpture works associated with the 1960s and 70s. The work is also

accompanied by a print that features three video stills from the aforementioned YouTube video. The redline references the original timebar in the video. Limited editions of the print are also available via Eastside Projects

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Eagle & Tun, 2021

Various salvaged objects: dartboard and cabinet, noticeboard and wine glasses
Audio, 3 min 18 sec

The Eagle and Tun was a locally listed Victorian Pub on the corner of Banbury Street and New Canal Street in Digbeth. It was built in 1900 by architects James & Lister Lea. The Eagle and Tun was compulsorily purchased to make way for the HS2 (a new high speed railway linking up London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland) and has recently been demolished. Prior to this I visited the pub and bought a number of items that have been reinstalled in Eastside Projects. These include a dartboard (feel free to have a go) & cabinet, noticeboard — with the last handwritten notice still intact: HAPPY DAYS — and a tray of wine glasses. The wallpaper installed in the gallery was selected by the former owners of the pub.

The Eagle and Tun is also noted as the setting of UB40s music video for their cover of 'Red Red Wine' (1983). I asked musician Sarah Farmer to play the song on the pub glasses with red wine. They have been arranged in the gallery in pitch order.

5

Fictions Opens at Sunset, 2020

Poster 297 × 198cm

Fictions Opens at Sunset is an exercise in design through speculative fiction. This short story, set in 2081, describes the founding and day-to-day goings-on of an oxygen bar called *Fictions*, in the Eastside district of Birmingham, England. *Fictions* is the hangout spot for a loose assembly of activists campaigning under the environmental justice, anti-capitalist movement 'Right to Breathe'. In describing the bar and its signage, in considering its history, use of electricity and distribution systems, a set of pointers emerge through narrative as to how this space might function if realised as an installation in the future. This iteration of the story takes the form of a poster designed by the same Rose Nordin who features in the story.

6

Knot Practice, 2021–ongoing

Jute rope, various lengths

Stretches of jute rope have been tied together with various naval knots and hung from the two modular walls. Knot tying is a key element of boat-living and a subject I continue to learn more about as a boater. The title is of course a pun — questioning the degree to which ropes are an artwork and the variable meanings (and overuse) of the word 'practice' in different contexts.

- 7 *Snowman, Skogskyrkogården, Jan 2021*
Transparency in lightbox 33 x 43cm

Documentation of a snowman built with Ofelia in Skogskyrkogården, a woodland cemetery in Stockholm, layered with black chalk.

- 8 *Experiments with Everyday Objects, 2020–ongoing*
Video, variable duration (online at www.eastsideprojects.org)

Experiments with Everyday Objects takes its title from a 1970s science book that describes over sixty experiments for children to do at home using readily available materials. I have used a selection of these experiments for a series of actions to camera. During the running of the show new videos will be posted on the Eastside Projects website.

- 9 *Boat as Camera, 2020–ongoing*
Foam-board screen, photographs 40 x 48 & 20 x 24in

I converted my boat into a pinhole camera, assisted by photographer David Brunetti. We used a hatch at the front of the boat as the light source. A foam-board, one of which has been installed in the gallery, acts as a screen inside the cabin (also indicating the height and width of the narrowboat). Sheets of photographic paper pinned to the foam-board capture the image, which have been reassembled in the gallery. The images are developed onboard *Zoar*, which has become a floating darkroom. The photographs currently displayed on the two mobile walls capture Great Western Studios and The Westway, an elevated dual carriageway in West London, built between 1962 and 1970. The Westway has become a symbol (and relic) of post-war modernity alongside the nearby Trellick Tower. The third photograph registers the rocking of *Zoar* as another boat passes during the exposure process. As I navigate *Zoar* along the Grand Union, more images will be produced and developed on the boat.

- 10 *Nothing Special, 2020–ongoing*
Performance, 35 mins
£7 / Pay-what-you-can
Thursday 24 June, 4pm & Friday 25 June, 5:45 pm

Nothing Special is an evolving text by Harun Morrison, comprising 365 statements outlining everyday scenarios. Each iteration is read by a guest performer, this version will be read by Cindy Sissokho.

(Additional Support: Mossutställningar, Appetite Stoke, IASPIs, Birmingham School of Art and Design / Wheatley Fine Art Fellowship.)

SECOND GALLERY

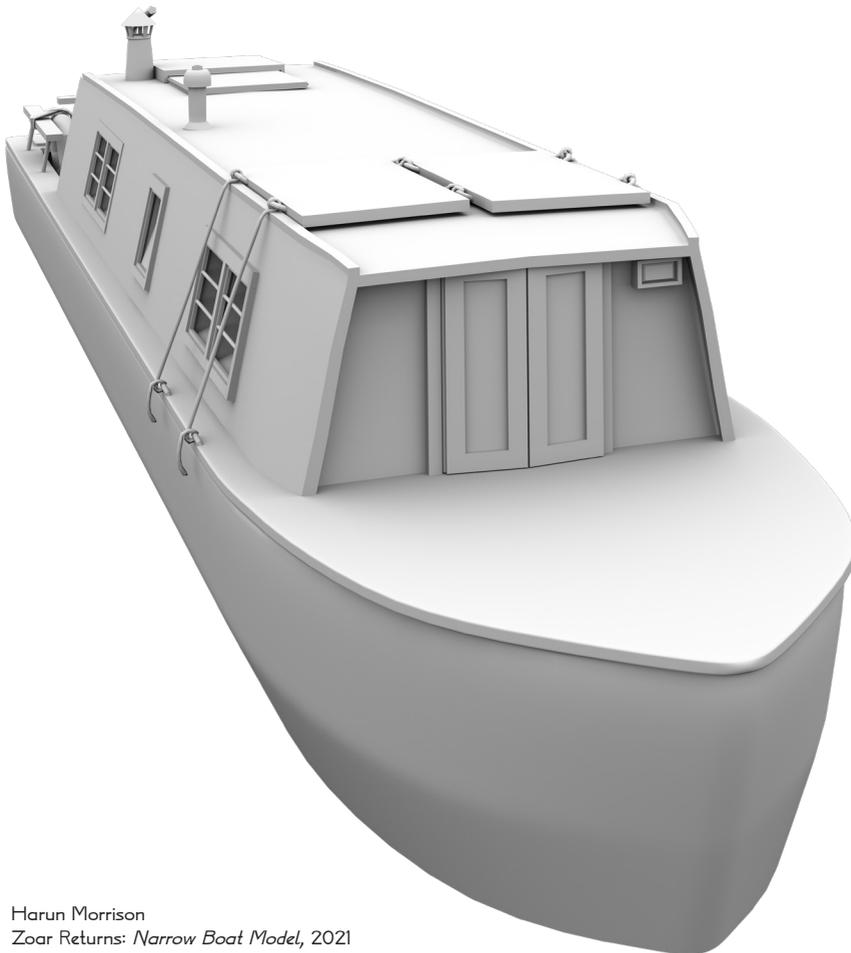
The Siren of the Deep
Leah Clements

A

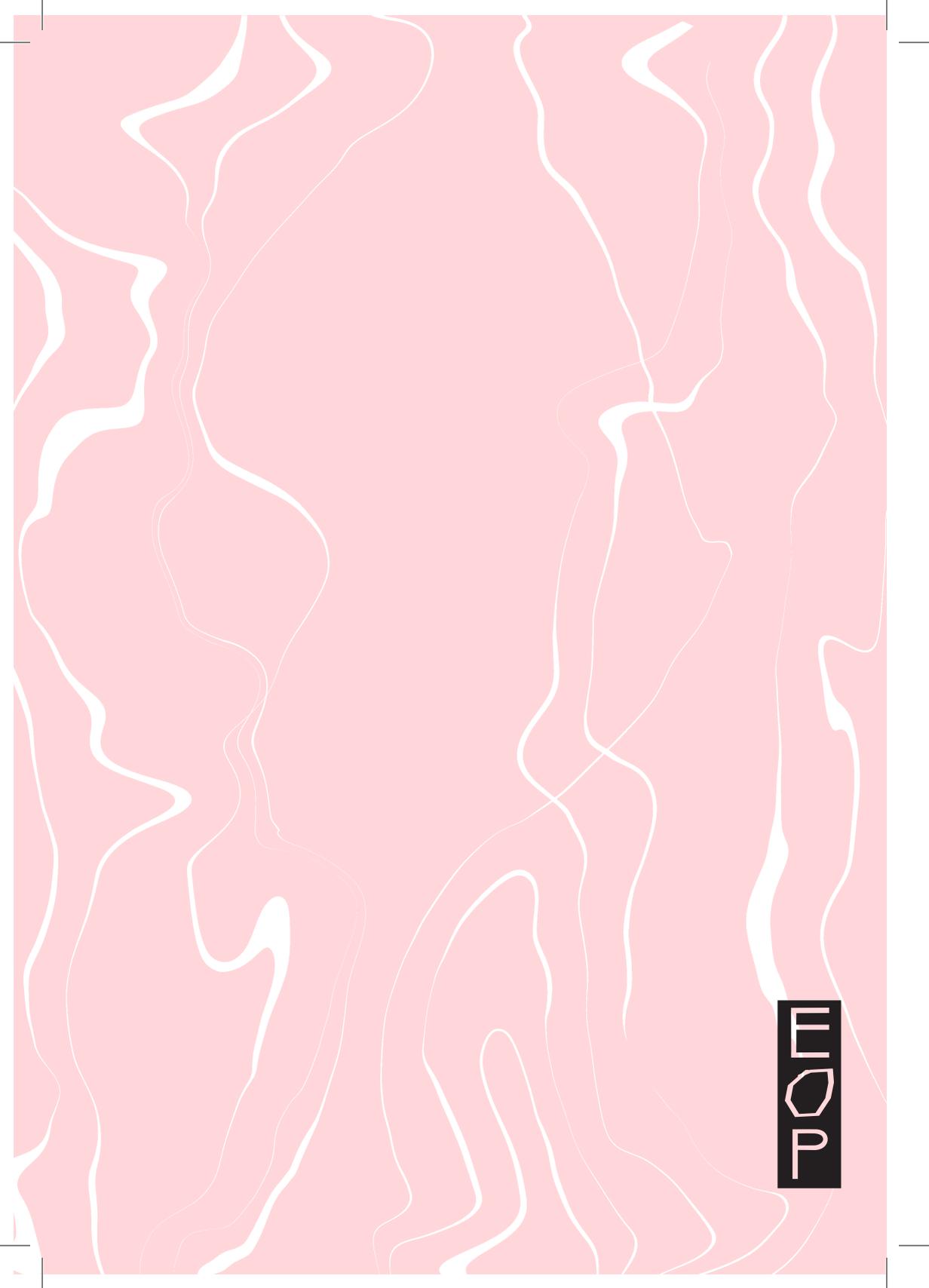
The Siren of the Deep, 2021

Audio, video projection, water, wave makers, light, pool, fabric, mirrors, tiles, drinking glasses.

With thanks to Tames from Stan's Cafe and To from Couture Fabrics.



Harun Morrison
Zoar Returns: *Narrow Boat Model*, 2021



TOP

The Siren of the Deep

Leah Clements

'The Siren of the Deep' takes its name from a term used by diving communities to describe an overwhelming pull to stay on the bottom of the ocean in a state of awe and never come back up. For this exhibition Clements draws on accounts of astronauts, cosmonauts, divers, religious euphoria, come-ups & come-downs to follow experiences of bliss and the subsequent return to Earth through light, sound, and sculptural elements that are activated and deactivated states.

Leah Clements is an artist based in London whose practice spans film, performance, writing, installation, and other media. Her work is concerned with the relationship between the psychological, emotional, and physical, often through personal accounts of unusual or hard-to-articulate experiences. Her practice also focuses on sickness/cripness/disability in art, in critical and practical ways.

Leah is currently artist in residence at Serpentine Galleries, London. Recent commissions and projects include 'Hyperbaric' as part of 'Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy', Somerset House Studios (2020), 'Other Rooms', Rupert, Vilnius (artist and co-curator), 'Diagnosis', written text, Chisenhale Gallery; 'A sort of "no" feeling', La Casa Encendida, Madrid. (2019): 'ON EDGE: Living in an Age of Anxiety', Science Gallery London; 'Adam Reynolds Memorial Bursary Exhibition', Baltic39, Newcastle; 'On Allyship', ICA, London; 'Beyond the Perfect Image', Wellcome Collection, London. In March 2019, Leah launched Access Docs for Artists: an online resource made in collaboration with Lizzy Rose and Alice Hattrick to help disabled artists create and use access documents.

This exhibition is the latest in a series of projects by EOP members. EOP supports artists, to develop work, ideas, connections and careers through a programme of events, opportunities and projects.

The absolute
The absolute
The absolute
Weight

Open your eyes and not move
Open your eyes and close them
again, do not want to move
Open your eyes and want to move
but can't



Shouldn't have come back

Fall on your knees

Fall on your knees

Fall on your knees

(and hear the angel voices)

