

25.1.-11.4.2020

In the Castle of My Skin
Sonia Boyce

with

Anna Barham
Lindiwe Matshikiza
Harold Offeh
Lora Parrott
Lucy Peles
Alberta Whittle

and

Francis Alys
Lynn Chadwick
Lucy Harvey
Andrew Logan
Jacqueline Poncelet
Bridget Riley
Martin Smith

The Yellow Wallpaper
Lindsey Mendick

Eastside Projects

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During exhibitions our (FREE) gallery is open
Wednesday to Saturday, 12–5pm

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EOP & Public Programmer Ania Bas (Maternity Cover)
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Volunteers Chantelle Boyle, Lucy Shortman, Rodrigo Costa,
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Qianwei Shen, Sebastien Andrews, Margaux Foucret



Supported using public funding by
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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.



In the Castle of My Skin

In the Castle of My Skin is a solo show of new commissions and existing work by Sonia Boyce, with work by six other artists co-curated with Boyce. The exhibition is built through improvisation techniques and riffs on ways of playing in urban space. It takes shape across a large new sculptural display system that houses works by Boyce and artists including Anna Barham, Lindiwe Matshikiza, Harold Offeh, Flora Parrott, Luc Pheles and Alberta Whittle alongside selected works from the Middlesbrough Collection.

The sculpture is based on the crystalline form of the mineral pyrite, known as Fool's Gold, which is part of the 'DNA' of Eastside Projects through Heather & Ivan Morison's *Pleasure Island*, 2007, a large scale wooden crystalline artwork that also functioned as Eastside Projects office and kitchen from 2008 to 2013. Clad in wallpapers, made by Boyce over the last eleven years, this new improvised sculpture links to forms of art, exhibition and architectural experimentation from the early twentieth century Vorticist movement and El Lissitzky's *Abstract Cabinet* to Jean Nouvel's National Museum of Qatar and food packaging.

In the Castle of My Skin starts with the metaphor of skin as a covering, a surface, a barrier, a marker of identity and a connector between internal and external worlds. This builds on the intersection of diverse histories as a recurring theme in Boyce's work. The sculpture and a newly-commissioned video expand Boyce's thinking about the speculative nature of improvisation, social bonding, visual cultures and relationships to the built environment.

The title, *In the Castle of My Skin*, comes from an autobiographical novel by writer George Lamming, a study of colonial revolt that is seen as one of the great political novels in modern 'colonial' literature. Set in the 1930s in Barbados, where the author was born, the story follows a young boy's life against the backdrop of major societal change. This reference builds on Boyce's extensive work in re-evaluating modernism to incorporate a range of perspectives, journeys and voices.

Boyce is fascinated by moments of serendipity that occur when people are brought together without a script. The new dual video *In the Castle of My Skin* (2020), comes out of the performative laboratory of two live, public events produced at Eastside Projects in 2017 in which local skate-boarders and skate-boarding ukulele players performed. This unlikely pairing is combined with footage of female skaters shot in Middlesbrough who play and improvise, uncovering knowledge of their bodies and the town's urban architecture.

For the past twenty years Boyce has worked with other people as collaborators and participants. This exhibition extends the artists' collaborative, improvisatory techniques by making a group exhibition housed in, on and around the artwork curated by Boyce and Eastside Projects. Harold Offeh will perform new versions and workshops of his 'selfie choreography' performing the potential of the body, actions and gestures as recorded through phone cameras; Flora Parrot and Lindiwe Matshikiza create an internal space of relationships between forms and words growing from a recently discovered cave dwelling fish, the Cave Loach, that inhabits a labyrinthine cave network; Luc Pheles creates intricate hand drawn moments of science fiction, hi tech screens and the mining industry. The title *Ishango* comes from ishango bone, a 25,000 year old mathematical instrument/menstrual calendar unearthed in the DRC and is currently in Belgium; Anna Barham's sequence of video works move between the camouflaging skin of a squid to the creativity of speech recognition software; and Alberta Whittle's video work, and sculpture depict a Caribbean Limbo scene, a dance that demands that bodies bend and stretch to perform feats of physical endurance. Her film *between a whisper and a cry* links together sonic cosmologies within Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite's research and Professor Christina Sharpe's work on 'the weather' from her seminal book *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Whittle's works ask us to take a breath, seeking to challenge conditions of racialised abjection and find new methods for refusal.

In the summer of 2020, the exhibition will be reimagined and reconfigured at MIMA in Middlesbrough. MIMA holds one of Boyce's key early works, *She Ain't Holding Them Up, She's Holding On (Some English Rose)* (1986, acquired in 1987), and throughout 2019 the artist has collaborated with the institution and colleagues from the Black Artists & Modernism research project to audit the collection for contributions by black artists.

This exhibition is organised in partnership with MIMA, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art. The new works are commissioned by Eastside Projects and MIMA, with support from The Henry Moore Foundation and The Elephant Trust.



Biographies

Alberta Whittle

Alberta Whittle is an artist, researcher and curator. Her creative practice is motivated by the desire to work collectively towards radical self-love. Informed by diasporic conversations, Whittle considers radical self-love and collective care key methods in battling anti-blackness. Her practice involves choreographing interactive installations, using film, sculpture and performance as site-specific artworks in public and private spaces.

Andrew Logan*

Since the 1970s Andrew Logan has made jewellery that combines precious materials, shattered glass, mirrors and found objects. He works spontaneously, without preparatory sketches. Logan explores gender non-conformity and queer culture through making camp and kitsch objects influenced by fashion and performance that are made to be worn with theatricality. In 1972 he founded the Alternative Miss World competition in London. Unlike traditional pageants, it welcomes contestants of any gender and favours high camp, eccentricity and transgression as well as drag. For Logan the event means "you can transform yourself into anything", with contestants judged on poise, personality and originality. Logan produces Alternative Crown Jewels for the winner.

Anna Barham

With a practice that incorporates writing, video, drawing, sculpture and performance, Anna Barham's work interrogates language's endless and unruly potential through the bodily and technological operations that act upon it. Earlier projects have particularly concentrated on the structural dimensions of anagrams, with drawings and animations performing texts written from the multitudinous possible permutations of a collection of letters. Some of Barham's recent work has drawn on elements from Plato's *Cratylus*; a Socratic dialogue that investigates the 'correctness of names' asking if writing is really the imitation of reality in letters and syllables.

Bridget Riley*

Bridget Riley uses abstract geometric forms to generate optical effects. In these 'Fragments' from the 1960s various shapes and lines curve and mutate, stimulating the eye to perceive movement and, often, three-dimensional volumes.

Flora Parrott

Flora Parrott is an artist and researcher currently undertaking a TECHNE funded PhD between the Geography Department at Royal Holloway University London and the Printmaking Department at The Royal College of Art. Parrott has a background in printmaking and a fascination with

material investigation is at the centre of the development process of the work.

Francis Aljys*

Francis Aljys explores notions of manual dexterity in this animation. The work depicts a pair of hands alternately touching thumb to index finger in an eternally looping sequence, creating an impression of circularity and repetition. This moving motif comments on the role of manual skill in creativity, whether in the coordination required to play a musical instrument, as suggested by the title, or the act of drawing itself.

Harold Offeh

Harold Offeh is an artist working in a range of media including performance, video, photography, learning and social arts practice. Offeh, often employs humour as a means to confront the viewer with historical narratives and contemporary culture and is interested in the space created by the inhabiting or embodying of history. He has exhibited widely in the UK and internationally including Tate Britain and Modern, Studio Museum Harlem, South London Gallery, MAC VAL, Kulturhuset Stockholm and Kunsthall Charlottenborg.

Jacqueline Poncellet*

Jacqueline Poncellet produces ceramics, painting, sculpture and public art commissions. From the late 1970's Poncellet began experiments with hard-edged, angular stoneware with painted decoration. This boat-like form has decorative circle motifs and explores surface quality and colour. It is informed by Poncellet's travels in USA in late

1970s where she was inspired by the American landscape and architecture.

Lindiwe Matshikiza

Lindiwe Matshikiza is an artist who uses theatremaking tools to extend into film, music and various other disciplines. She is interested in work that is collaborative, process-driven and experimental. A performer, director and writer, she has initiated projects such as *The Donkey Child* — a devised theatre piece involving 40 players of all ages — in collaboration with Hillbrow Theatre Project, and UHB MASSIVE: Uozi Accra, a temporary collective of 15 artists that combined forces to get to Chale Wote Street Art Festival in Uames Town, Accra.

Luc Pheles

Luc Pheles is an artist based in Birmingham. He has been an Extra Ordinary People member since 2018.

Lucy Harvey*

Lucy Harvey's small-scale jewellery and sculpture raise the relationships between people, places and objects. Her works combine found materials using traditional craft techniques and processes. Harvey is interested in our human motivation — protection, escapism and discovery — to collect and own objects as well as the emotional significance that they hold for an individual.

Lynn Chadwick*

In the 1950s, Lynn Chadwick was part of a group of young sculptors who

produced hard-edged, contorted works that were widely understood as expressions of post-Second World War anxiety. He later became known for his works representing semi-abstract figures, presented in public space. Initially trained as a draftsman, Chadwick began making sculptures after learning to weld in 1950.

Martin Smith*

Martin Smith plays with the relationships between interior and exterior spaces. This form references architecture and particularly the geometry found in buildings from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Characteristic of Smith's work, there is a distinction between the industrially polished external surface of the vessel and the roughly scraped interior.

Sonia Boyce

Sonia Boyce came to public attention in the early 1980s as a key figure in the Black-British art scene, with artworks that spoke about race and gender. Boyce is Professor of Black Art and Design at the University of the Arts London and was the Principal Investigator of a 3-year AHRC-funded project Black Artists and Modernism (2015–2018). In 2016, she was elected as a member of the Royal Academy. Recent exhibitions include *All the World's Futures*, 56th Venice Biennale (2015); *Paper Tiger Whisky Soap Theatre: Sonia Boyce (Dada Nice)*, Villa Arson, Nice (2016); *We move in her way*, ICA London (2017); and *Sonia Boyce*, Manchester Art Gallery (2018).



*Works from the Middlesbrough Collection at MIMA

The Yellow Wallpaper

Lindsey Mendick is the first of our Extra Ordinary People solo shows this year with an installation of video, ceramics and, of course, wallpaper, exploring three intertwining stories of female 'histrionics', depression and Russian spies.

The artist's point of departure is the 1892 short story *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. In the novella, a young mother with postnatal depression is haunted by the garish yellow wallpaper that appears to mutate from the walls of the room she is convalescing in. At night, the wallpaper feeds into her psyche, it's fiendish pattern torturing and deceiving her, whilst her seclusion slowly drives her into hysterical madness. The gothic short story is a feminist exploration in attitudes towards female mental health and the inherent horror of the domestic.

At 18 years old Mendick had a nervous breakdown, which resulted in her quitting art school and professionally taking to her bed in her parent's house on a North London estate. Agoraphobic and totally insomniac, one night the artist looked out of her window and saw six men in black, pacing the cul-de-sac on walkie talkies. She was utterly terrified. The next day she told her mother, but because of her daughters mental state, she found it impossible to believe. Days later the news broke that their neighbour had been the Russian spy Alexander Litvinenko, and he had been poisoned.

Mendick's solo show delves into these parallel stories to create a multifaceted installation, an immersive environment, where the wallpaper that adorns the walls comes to life with ghostly ceramics, crawling and sprawling into the gallery space.

Lindsey Mendick's practice explores the paradox that women her age can feel, growing up in a society where gender is rapidly evolving whilst having been instilled with traditional gender stereotypes by those who raised us. She has recently been part of Survey, Clerwood Projects, travelling to G39, Bluecoat, and Baltic, and her solo shows include *The Ex Files*, Castor Projects, London, 2019 and *Regrets, I've Had A Few*, 2019, Space, Ilford.





List of Works

MAIN GALLERY

In the Castle of My Skin

Sonia Boyce

With Anna Barham, Lindiwe Matshikiza, Harold Offeh, Flora Parrott, Luc Pheles & Alberta Whittle. And Francis Aljés, Lynn Chadwick, Lucy Harvey, Andrew Logan, Jacqueline Poncelet, Bridget Riley & Martin Smith.

Sculpture

Sonia Boyce

In the Castle of My Skin (2020)

Plywood, timber, fixings, pasted wallpaper (digital printed on blue-back paper), paint

Designed by Sonia Boyce, Gavin Wade, Matt Foster and fabricated by Plane Structure

Wallpapers

Sonia Boyce

Clapping Wallpaper (2009)

Dada Migrant (2016–2019)

We move in her way: Eve and Be (2017)

We move in her way: Shimmer and Shadow (2017)

Performance Wallpaper (2017)

Floral Pattern (2018)

Courtyard (2019)

Works

- 1 Jacqueline Poncelet
Container (c. 1982)*
Glazed Stoneware

- 2 Andrew Logan
Wing Earrings (1991)*
Resin, glass, beads, mirror shards, glitter

Waves (1990)*

Glass, resin, metal, glitter, plastic
A Modern Perspective (1998)

Metal foil hologram, coloured glass, glass/plastic beads, resin, gold paint

Wing Brooch (1991)*

Beads, glass, hologram, glitter, resin, metal, mirror, and plastic and paint

- 3 Sonia Boyce
In the Castle of My Skin (2020)
Dual channel video, colour, sound, 7 min. 30 secs. Mini SD cards, Brightsign Media synchronisation

- 4 Lucy Harvey
Melancholy Amulet (2009)*
Ceramic, Prozac capsules, oxidized copper, resin, steel

- 5 Martin Smith
Sicilian Fusion (1981)*
Redware, grey terra sigillata slip, aluminium, Portland stone

- 6 Lynn Chadwick
Walking Cloaked Figures (1977)*
Bronze
Purchased with assistance from the Arts Council Collection/Victoria & Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund

- 7 Anna Barham
Liquid Consonant (2012)
HD video Loop
- 8 Alberta Whittle
between a whisper and a cry (2019)
Single channel video, colour, sound, 41 min
Margaret Tait 2018/19 commission
- 9 Francis Alÿs
De Fluitier (1999)*
Single channel video, colour,
sound, 0 min. 3 secs. DVD
Purchased through the Contemporary
Art Society Special Collection
Scheme with Lottery funding from
Arts Council England
- 10 Flora Parrott & Lindiwe Matshikiza
I'm in the bath on all fours (2019)
Cast aluminium, birch face ply,
digitally printed cotton satin, bin liners,
box wood, copper, pen shells, rubber
washers, vellum, poster prints, audio
- 11 Bridget Riley
Fragments (1965)*
7 Screen-prints on acrylic glass
- 12 Anna Barham
The Squid That Hid (2015)
HD video, colour, sound, 5 min. 6 secs.
- 13 Anna Barham
-52nth jt5k8 (2015)
HD video loop
- 14 Alberta Whittle
matrix moves (2019)
Mixed media
- 15 Luc Pheles
Ishanga (2020)
Ink and acrylic paint on painted
plywood, bone, motherboards

- 16 Harold Offeh
Selfie Choreography (2019)
Video, iPhone, selfie stick

And in partnership with Dance
Xchange:

Digbeth First Friday 7 Feb, 6–8pm
Selfie Choreography Part 1:
Workshop: 2–5pm
Performance: 6.30–7.30pm

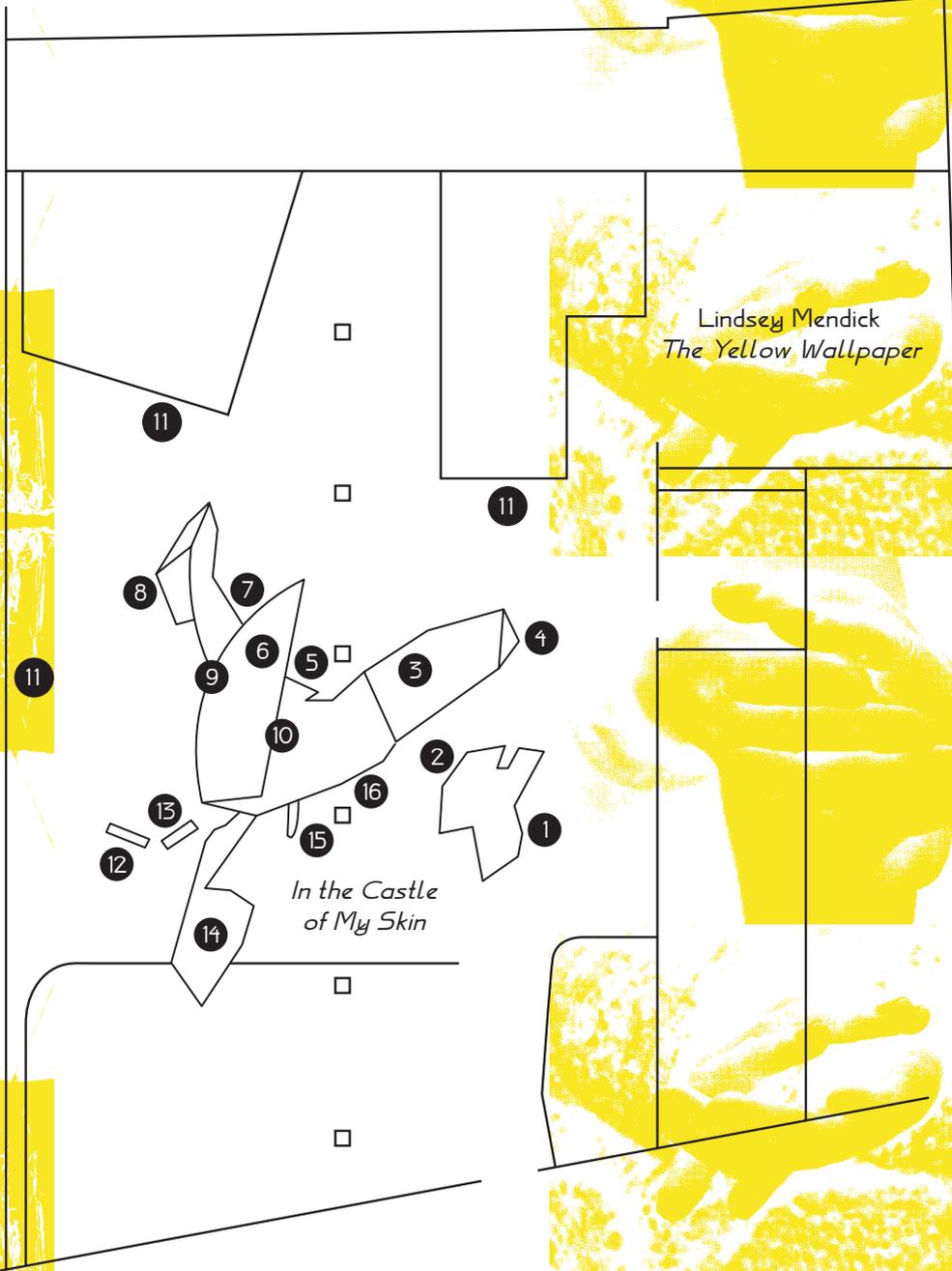
Digbeth First Friday 6 March, 6–8pm
Selfie Choreography Part 2:
Workshop: 2–5pm
Performance: 6.30–7.30pm

SECOND GALLERY

The Yellow Wallpaper
Lindsey Mendick

Lindsey Mendick
The Yellow Wallpaper (2020)
Installation, glazed ceramic, papier
mache, paint, furniture, towels, fabric,
mannequins, film, cardboard.
Made in collaboration with
Jenny Mendick, Anthony Mendick
and Guy Oliver

* Middlesbrough Collection at
Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art



Lindsey Mendick
The Yellow Wallpaper

*In the Castle
of My Skin*

