

## Speaker Biographies – *Contemporary Public Art in the Urban Landscape* 7 February 2020

### Shani Ali

Shani Ali is a socially engaged, multi-disciplinary artist whose work is collaborative and collective. Shani Ali co-founded Room 13 Hareclive in 2003 with fellow artist Paul Bradley. Room 13 is an independent artists' studio run by children and adults working together and based in a primary school on the Hartcliffe estate in south Bristol. Seventeen years later, the Room 13 Hareclive collective is still going strong: a creative hub where transformations – materials, ideas, personal and community – take place. Room 13 Hareclive is now recognised as a centre of expertise around children, creativity, collaboration and voice, working in an area of extreme disadvantage. The studio is one of the oldest, most established Room 13 spaces in the world and is a founding Associate of Tate Exchange.

Instagram: Room13hareclive

[www.room13hareclive.org.uk](http://www.room13hareclive.org.uk)

### Georgina Bolton

Georgina Bolton is an experienced Arts Producer and Consultant specialising in Public Realm Projects across the arts, charity, local authority, urban environment and heritage sectors.

People and place are at the heart of Georgina's producing approach, having brought to life large scale public realm commissions across challenging urban sites, parks, castles, beaches, fields and forests in previous roles at *Situations*, *Trust New Art* amongst others. Across her career she has worked with many respected contemporary artists, including Katie Paterson, Theaster Gates, Myriam Lefkowitz and Mark Wallinger, producing ambitious public projects for audiences across the UK.

Georgina is currently the Public Art Officer for Bristol City Council, collaborating across the City Design Group and Culture teams to strategise, secure and manage cultural investment for Bristol's public realm via the planning system, opening up opportunities and advocating for the transformative role that arts and culture plays in our everyday lives. As a strong believer in the power of arts and culture to inspire meaningful social and civic change, Georgina trusts in artists to see the world differently. She is a proud trustee of *Terrestrial UK*, an Associate Lecturer on University of West of England's *MA/MFA Curating* and is passionately committed to policy writing, guest lecturing and mentoring.

Freelance Producing / Consultancy - [gbproducing@gmail.com](mailto:gbproducing@gmail.com)

Public Art Officer, Bristol City Council - [georgina.bolton@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:georgina.bolton@bristol.gov.uk)

### Dr Cara Courage

Dr Cara Courage is a placemaking, and arts, activism and museums academic and practitioner, and Head of Tate Exchange, Tate's platform dedicated to socially engaged art. Cara specialises in socially engaged art practice, her PhD focusing on this in the context of placemaking. She has a 20-year career in the arts largely working with museums and galleries, arts in the public realm and public engagement with the built environment, working as a consultant and project manager for public and private initiatives and her own projects. Cara is author of *Arts in Place: The Arts, the Urban and Social Practice* (Routledge, 2017), and the co-editor of *Creative Placemaking and Beyond* (Routledge, 2018), and editor of the forthcoming, *Placemaking Handbook* (Routledge, 2020)

[Cara.Courage@tate.org.uk](mailto:Cara.Courage@tate.org.uk)

### Claire Doherty MBE

Claire Doherty MBE is an artistic director, producer and writer who was Founder Director of the arts producing company *Situations* from 2002-17 and Interim Director of Arnolfini, leading the organisation through its recovery in 2017-2019.

In 2009, Claire was awarded a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Breakthrough Award for outstanding creative entrepreneurs and in 2012, she led *Situations* to become an independent charity after ten years as part of the University of the West of England. *Situations* sparked transformative arts experiences in unconventional spaces, including Theaster Gates' *Sanctum*, a 552-hour long non-stop programme of performance by 700 performers in the ruin of Temple Church, Bristol; *Future Library*, a 100-year long commissioning programme of writers such as Margaret Atwood contributing secret texts to a future library

for Oslo in Norway; twenty *One Day Sculptures* across five cities of the North and South Islands of New Zealand; and the formation of a new island nation, *Nowhereisland*, for London 2012's Cultural Olympiad. A vital part of Situations' work is to improve the conditions for public art commissioning. Claire has authored public art strategies for the cities of Oslo, Melbourne and Plymouth, led a national Public Art Now programme for skills and talent development in public art producing, chaired the European Network of Public Art Producers over four years and her publications (such as *Out of Time, Out of Place: Public Art Now*, Situation for MIT Press, *Locating the Producers: Durational Approaches to Public Art* and the forthcoming *Where Strangers Meet: Arts and the Public Realm* for the British Council) have become set texts for curators, artists, and cities across the world.

Claire is currently Artistic Advisor to Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 and an Associate of People Make It Work.

[cclairedoherty@gmail.com](mailto:cclairedoherty@gmail.com)

### **Vassilios Doupas**

Vassilios Doupas is Curator of Programmes at the Contemporary Arts Society in London, a charitable organization that acquires contemporary art for 70 museums around the UK. The role involves conceiving and delivering a dynamic programme of talks, seminars, conferences and symposia for museum curators on the most current and diverse topics around art and culture ranging from engagement and participation to interpretation, collections and displays. Previously, Vassilios was the Head of Fundraising for the Athens Biennial. He has worked closely with both emerging and established artists and has organised and advised on a number of exhibitions at galleries and public institutions, most recently the Whitechapel Gallery. His writing has appeared in *Flash Art*, *Art Monthly* and *The Art Newspaper* (Greek edition).

[vassilios@contemporaryartsociety.org](mailto:vassilios@contemporaryartsociety.org)

### **Kirsten Dunne**

Kirsten Dunne joined the Mayor of London's Culture & Creative Industries Unit in 2012. She heads up Cultural Infrastructure and Public Realm for, the Mayor of London, including flagship programmes Creative Enterprise Zones, Creative Land Trust and the Fourth Plinth Commission. Prior to joining the Culture Team, Kirsten was a Senior Officer Visual Arts at Arts Council England, where she led the development of an Art Market and Artists' Sales strategy for London and oversaw a portfolio of 62 regularly funded visual arts organisations. Before then, she worked in the commercial gallery field for 10 years in Berlin, Dublin and London, representing artists such as Willie Doherty, Fiona Banner, Tacita Dean, Cornelia Parker and Sophie Calle. Kirsten was a trustee of PEER for six years, currently chairs the board of CGP London and has advised on numerous public art commissions and prizes including the commissions for London's Elizabeth Line (Crossrail). She is a visiting lecturer at the Sotheby's Institute of Art.

[Kirsten.Dunne@london.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsten.Dunne@london.gov.uk)

### **Jack Gibbon**

Jack Gibbon is a producer based in Bristol. Currently founding director of Bricks - a charity that works with local communities, creative communities and social enterprises to programme activity and create permanent cultural infrastructure in Bristol that supports grassroots activity. Previous to this Jack was founding director of Antlers Gallery (2010 - 2018) a nomadic art gallery and producers. Jack also freelances as a producer with clients including The Architecture Centre, Studio Upstairs and the National Trust.

[jack@bricksbristol.org](mailto:jack@bricksbristol.org)

### **Sophia Hao**

Sophia Yadong Hao is Director & Principal Curator of Cooper Gallery at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee. Sophia has curated contemporary art projects internationally, notably *NOTES on a return* (2009), a re-contextualisation of performance art from 1980s' Britain; *Studio Jamming: Artists' Collaborations in Scotland* (2014); *Of Other Spaces: Where Does Gesture Become Event?* (2016/2017), which evoked the political ethos of feminism to reveal the urgency for an alternative politics in culture and society; and *CURRENT: Contemporary Art from Scotland* (2015 - 2020), an exhibition programme in China interrogated the concept of contemporaneity in a post-colonial context. She is founding editor of art journal &labels. Her publications include *Of Other Spaces: Where Does Gesture*

*Become Event?* (Sternberg Press, 2019), *Hubs and Fictions: On Current Art and Imported Remoteness* (co-edited with Edgar Schmitz, Sternberg Press, 2016), *A CUT A SCRATCH A SCORE* (2015) and *NOTES on a return* (2010).

[s.y.hao@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:s.y.hao@dundee.ac.uk)

### **Dr Sophie Hope**

Dr Sophie Hope works as a lecturer at Birkbeck, University of London in the Film, Media and Cultural Studies Department on the MA in Arts Management where she teaches arts policy and cultural theory. Her practice-based research explores histories and experiences of cultural democracy, socially engaged art and community arts (e.g. [Meanwhile in an Abandoned Warehouse](#) podcast series with Owen Kelly and [1984 Dinners](#)), the language and labour of commissioned art (e.g. *Performative Interviews*, [Social Art Maps](#) and *Cards on the Table* card game) and physical and emotional relationships to work ([Manual Labours](#) with Jenny Richards). Sophie also writes about and facilitates workshops to support the development of practice-related PhDs (see [Corkscrew](#)) and the ethics of employability in the cultural sector (e.g. [Critical Work Placements](#)).

<https://sophiehope.org.uk/>

[s.hope@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:s.hope@bbk.ac.uk)

### **Donald Hyslop**

Donald Hyslop is the Head of Urban Culture and Community at Tate Modern. His work is at the forefront of developing culture, architecture, business districts, food markets & museums in the regeneration, place making, economic and social development of cities and communities.

His practice takes the form of a social model working with artists and communities in shaping organisational and community strategic approaches based on partnership and active participation. It has helped transform the South Bank/Bankside/Borough to one of the most vibrant and visited cultural districts in the world.

A broadcaster and author Donald was also the Chair of Borough Market and Curator of the Tate Modern Turbine Hall Commission (Superflex) 2017.

[Donald.Hyslop@tate.org.uk](mailto:Donald.Hyslop@tate.org.uk)

### **Daniel Jewesbury**

Daniel Jewesbury is an artist, writer and lecturer. After studying Fine Art in Dublin he moved to Belfast in 1996, where he stayed until 2017. He is now Senior Lecturer in Fine Art, and Vice-Prefect for Research Education at HDK-Valand Academy of Art & Design, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Daniel has been writing, making art, and producing events about the neoliberal restructuring of European cities for over 20 years, most prominently in Belfast, where he examined the rapid privatisation and deregulation that came with peace, but also across Europe.

[daniel.jewesbury@gu.se](mailto:daniel.jewesbury@gu.se)

### **Jordan Kaplan**

With 15 years' curatorial experience, Jordan manages and delivers public art and arts programming projects for CAS Consultancy. Initially trained as an actor at Drama Centre London, Jordan moved into visual art in the late nineties, curating exhibitions, commissioning artists and developing publications for projects with the Garden Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Royal Geographical Society. She is a founder-trustee of Parabola, a curatorial group that commissions contemporary art for non-gallery spaces. She developed the first three editions of the Tatton Park Biennial from 2008-2012, commissioning over sixty artists including Helen Marten, Ryan Gander and Jimmie Durham. Jordan holds an MA in Art Criticism from City University, is a member of AICA (the International Association of Art Critics) and a Fellow of the RSA.

[Jordan@contemporaryartsociety.org](mailto:Jordan@contemporaryartsociety.org)

### **Alissa Kleist**

Alissa Kleist is a curator based in Belfast. In 2012, she co-founded Household and as a Co-Director collectively runs the organisation, curating site-specific public programmes, exhibitions, student modules,

residencies and events in Belfast in community, non-institutional, public and neighbourhood spaces. She is the Project Curator (2018-2020) of the PS<sup>2</sup> Freelands Artist Programme, part of a UK-wide initiative to support and grow regional arts ecosystems by fostering long-term-relationships and collaborations between emerging artists and arts organisations. As the Curator (Exhibitions) at the Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) in Derry~Londonderry (2015-2018), she commissioned and delivered exhibitions and projects with emerging and established local and international artists. She was one of the Co-Directors at Catalyst Arts (2011-2013), a collaborative, artist-led organisation with a polyvocal approach to the promotion of contemporary art practices. She regularly gives presentations at the invitation of cultural and educational institutions and critically writes about art for publications and online platforms.  
[info@householdbelfast.co.uk](mailto:info@householdbelfast.co.uk)

### **Amberlea Neely**

Amberlea Neely is Director of consultancy practice Starling Start. Starling Start offers expertise in arts development, engagement and place, by collaborating across sectors and disciplines. With almost 15 years experience working within Northern Ireland's arts sector, Amberlea has been involved in the development of organisations like Platform Arts, Belfast Photo Festival and PLACE, which until its closure in 2019 operated at the cutting edge of creative, intelligent and inclusive public engagement in the built environment in Northern Ireland. Amberlea holds a BA(Hons) in Fine Art, MSc in Cultural Management and PGCert in Executive Leadership.  
[starlingstart.com](http://starlingstart.com)  
[hello@starlingstart.com](mailto:hello@starlingstart.com)

### **Megan O'Shea**

Megan O'Shea has been working in the contemporary art world for over 15 years. Currently she works as an art producer and consultant for Contemporary Art Society Consultancy where she is involved in the research, analysis and writing of cultural and public art strategies, as well as managing curatorial projects, involving commissioning and producing major public art commissions. Megan has an academic background in both contemporary art theory and architecture and this influences her thinking about the role of culture in public space, developing opportunities to activate public realm and contribute to the social experience of places.  
[Megan@contemporaryartsociety.org](mailto:Megan@contemporaryartsociety.org)