

March – November 2019

Exhibitions



DCA²⁰

Dundee Contemporary Arts



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CREATIVE COURSES

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EXPERTS

welcome

Within the exhibitions team at DCA we work closely with artists to develop projects for the galleries that resonate not only with the immediate society around us in Scotland, but also with the wider world that we are all connected to in myriad ways, now more than ever.

As we move from spring to summer and autumn this year you'll see three new exhibitions unfold across the galleries. In March, we'll be launching a major new show by British artist **David Austen**, who has carved out a prolific career since the 1980s, making beautiful work across many mediums from drawing, painting and print to photography, sculpture, video and film. Given the generous scale of our spaces here at DCA, this exhibition will present the breadth of Austen's practice for the first time in many years.

Following this will be the first solo exhibition in Scotland by **Patrick Staff**, a Los Angeles-based British artist known for creating powerful projects using video, installation and performance that tackle politically charged subject matter by blending personal experiences with wider social issues. This new commission will explore exhaustion, sickness and sleep as political states by reinterpreting *The Prince of Homburg*, a 19th century German play by Heinrich Von Kleist. We're particularly excited to be commissioning this ambitious new work in partnership with the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, where Staff will further develop the project later this year following its premiere in Dundee.

In autumn we are delighted to be working with Barbadian-Scottish artist **Alberta Whittle** on what will be her largest solo exhibition to date, inviting the artist to fill both galleries at DCA with voices that speak back and forth across the Atlantic, between Scottish and Caribbean shores. With new installations blending film, sculpture and performance, this show will reflect on ideas of memory, weather, colonial histories and tensions between the land and sea.

These forthcoming exhibitions from Austen, Staff and Whittle all focus in different ways on the idea of journeying, of moving through spaces and places in particular ways. They each offer up alternative ways of navigating the world around us: inviting us to look anew at celestial objects and human forms; exploring dream-like states as a means of resistance to discriminatory forces in society; or journeying back through time to seek out ancestral voices and knowledge that have been overlooked or wilfully erased by those in positions of power.

Eoin Dara **Head of Exhibitions**

Keep up to date with the very latest from DCA by visiting www.dca.org.uk or by following us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. We love seeing your photos and comments about each exhibition at DCA: share them with us using **#helloDCA**, or the exhibition hashtags you'll find in this brochure.

UNDER WORLD

Underworld

David Austen

Sat 23 March – Sun 9 June

Open daily 10:00 – 18:00 Open late Thu 20:00

Admission Free

#DavidAusten

This exhibition will offer up a new constellation of work by British artist David Austen, bringing the breadth of his artistic practice to audiences in Scotland for the first time.

Since the 1980s Austen has worked as a painter, sculptor, printmaker and filmmaker. The stylistically diverse elements of his work come together to reveal an often dark yet endearing vision of the world. The artworks in this exhibition, from oil paintings on heavy flax canvas and delicate watercolour works on paper to suspended sculptural objects and cinematic film projects, create an otherworldly space inhabited by Austen's strange and lovelorn characters.

With sources as varied as 19th century literature, poetry, ancient myth and film noir, the impetus of Austen's work often derives from his immediate surroundings. There is a liveliness and generosity in his approach to art-making, a delicacy of touch, a delight in the unexpected, and a disarmingly nuanced understanding of complex human emotions. Each object and artwork in this project stands alone and speaks for itself yet simultaneously connects with others in the spaces, forming multiple narratives across the galleries.

Underworld seeks to create a mythical space for viewers to journey through, punctuated by the artist's poetic musings on the known world, the imagined world, the bright celestial heights above us and the shadowy, unknowable depths below.

About the artist:

David Austen (b.1960, Harlow, England) is an artist based in London. A graduate of the Royal College of Art (1985), he has exhibited widely over the past 30 years.

Solo exhibitions include: *The Drowned*, Matt's Gallery, London (2018); *The stars above the ocean... the ocean beneath the stars*, David Totah Gallery, New York (2018); *Black Heart*, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Cogliandrino, Basilicata; *End of Love*, Modern Art Oxford (2010); and *My love, I have been digging up my own bones in the garden again*, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh (2009).

His work has been featured in major international group projects and is held in collections such as Tate, British Council, Arts Council England and the Government Art Collection. He is represented by Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh.



The Prince of Homburg

Patrick Staff

Sat 22 June – Sun 1 September

Open daily 10:00 – 18:00 Open late Thu 20:00

Admission Free

#PatrickStaff

This exhibition by British artist Patrick Staff will debut a major video installation and series of sculptural works reinterpreting 19th century German writer Heinrich Von Kleist's play *The Prince of Homburg*.

Opening with a disoriented Prince sleepwalking in royal gardens, the original play, written in 1810, develops by swift degrees into a personal nightmare that draws together questions about the limits of state control versus individual freedom. While some have interpreted this piece as an assertion of the might of authority, many others consider Kleist's work as a passionate defence of free will. The play was completed shortly before the author's death by suicide in 1811, and this biographical detail has further informed scholarly opinion on this historical work.

In their new work Staff will strip the play back to focus on the symbol of the exhausted, sleepwalking figure as a political dissident. Presented as a film installation with accompanying sculptural and collage works across the galleries, the work will document cycles of exhaustion, desire and repression that are embedded in many contemporary cultural and political crises. In a collision of documentary and fictive filmmaking, Staff will consider ideas of alienation, labour and sickness in society whilst exploring fraught spaces where queer desire can elicit dream-like transgressions of law and order.

Staff's work has always tackled politically charged subject matter, blending both personal experiences with wider social issues. Their projects develop over a number of years, with influences and research developing from a broad range of disciplines to produce experimental film, video, installation and performance work.

The Prince of Homburg will initiate a dialogue about how history, technology, capitalism and the law have fundamentally transformed the social constitution of our bodies today. Through this work Staff will seek to contest current repressive structures in our society and speculate on alternative ways of moving through the present into a better future.

Image courtesy of the artist

About the artist:

Patrick Staff (b.1987, Bognor Regis, England) lives and works in Los Angeles. Their work combines video installation, performance and publishing. They have exhibited extensively, gaining significant recognition and awards for their work which is held in private and public collections internationally.

Staff received their BA in Fine Art and Contemporary Critical Studies from Goldsmiths University of London in 2009. They completed the LUX Associate Artists Programme and studied Contemporary Dance at The Place in London, in 2011.

Their work has been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2017); New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2017); Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (2016); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2016); Serpentine Galleries, London (2015); Chisenhale Gallery, London (2015); Tate Liverpool, England (2014); Monte Vista Projects, Los Angeles (2012); Tate Modern, London (2012); and Whitstable Biennale, Whitstable, England (2012), among others. Staff's 2017 film work *Weed Killer* was recently acquired by the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The Prince of Homburg is co-commissioned by Dundee Contemporary Arts, Scotland, and IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art), Ireland. Supported by the Elephant Trust, UK, and Commonwealth & Council Gallery, USA. Video work produced by Spike Film and Video. Special thanks to producer Ali Roche and Humber Street Gallery, Hull.



How Flexible Can We Make the Mouth

Alberta Whittle

Sat 14 September – Sun 24 November

Open daily 10:00 – 18:00 Open late Thu 20:00

Admission Free

#AlbertaWhittle

This exhibition will mark Barbadian-Scottish artist Alberta Whittle's first major solo exhibition in a UK institution, drawing together new and recent artworks in film, sculpture, print, installation and performance to reflect on memory, trauma, weather and tensions between the land and sea.

Whittle's interdisciplinary practice aims to develop a visual, oral and textual language that questions accepted Western constructs of history and society. This work is undertaken with an acute understanding of how formal historical records produced by privileged white men have always sought to replace more ancient and informal ways of comprehending the past. The artist's wider research questions the authority of postcolonial power, its implications and its legacy.

Whittle's work often considers conditions in the afterlife of slavery where the racialised black body can become suspended in a state of stress that directly impacts upon physical, mental and emotional health. Within her work, the artist connects these ideas of black oppression with meditations on survival; championing the idea of healing as self-liberation.

How Flexible Can We Make the Mouth refers to Whittle's current preoccupation with healing, writing, breath and orality. Writing has always been an integral part of her practice, and the texts she produces are meant to be read aloud, to be heard as well as seen. She also works rhythmically in relation to writing and reading, particularly looking at punctuation marks as visual signifiers of shifts in breath and breathing. Looking at the relationship between historical written testimonies and ancestral knowledge shared through oral traditions, the artist will be using video and performance to create direct encounters with audiences, encouraging mutual empathy, learning, and understanding.

About the artist:

Alberta Whittle (b.1980, Bridgetown, Barbados) lives and works in Glasgow. Her practice-led research involves performance, writing, digital collage and video installation.

Whittle received her MFA from Glasgow School of Art in 2011 and she is a PhD candidate at Edinburgh College of Art. Whittle was also the 2018 recipient of The Margaret Tait Award.

Whittle's work has been exhibited in various solo and group shows within institutions including the 13th Havana Biennial, Cuba (2019); GoMA, Glasgow (2019); The City Arts Centre, Edinburgh (2019); The Showroom, London (2018); National Art Gallery of the Bahamas (2018); RAW Material, Dakar (2018); FADA Gallery, Johannesburg (2018); The Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg (2017); FRAMER FRAMED, Amsterdam (2015); Goethe On Main, Johannesburg (2015); at The Johannesburg Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale, Venice (2015); and BOZAR, Brussels (2014). Several of Whittle's digital prints were recently purchased by the Contemporary Art Research Collection at Edinburgh College of Art.

Image courtesy of the artist



Gallery Events

For every exhibition in DCA Galleries we programme a series of talks and events, from artist Q&As to live performances and talks from writers and academics whose work relates to the works in our galleries. Please keep an eye on our website or ask one of our friendly Visitor Assistants for the most up to date information.

Exhibition Preview & Meet the Artist

Be among the first to see new shows as they open at these popular events. Advance booking is essential for Meet the Artist where you'll hear directly from our artists and/or curatorial team, before getting the chance to explore the show. Exhibition Previews follow these events from 19:00 – 21:00 and do not require booking.

Gallery Tours

For each exhibition we hold daily tours at 11:00 and 15:00, seven days a week (unless there is another event in the gallery). These are free, drop-in tours in which our friendly and knowledgeable Visitor Assistants will show you around the exhibition.

Artists' Choice Screenings

Whenever possible, we invite the artists in our programme to select films to screen in our cinemas to accompany their exhibition. To hear about upcoming screenings, please visit our website, sign up to receive exhibition emails or check with our Box Office.

Curator's Tours

Join Eoin Dara, Head of Exhibitions at DCA, for a guided tour through our gallery spaces on a selected date during each exhibition. Free, but advance booking is required. See our website for further details.



More events will be announced for each exhibition: visit www.dca.org.uk for further information, and sign up to receive regular email updates. Or if you prefer, give Box Office a call on 01382 432444.



Young Visitors, Families and Groups

We provide a range of free and ticketed activities for children and families to accompany every exhibition that aim to help you to engage with the works on show in the galleries and offer simple and enjoyable learning experiences.

Children under 12 years-old must be accompanied at all times unless otherwise stated.

Family Art Labs

These workshops offer a chance for all of the family to get stuck in with more in-depth creative activities led by our team of artists. Activities are inspired by the exhibitions or exhibiting artists. You can stay as long as you like or leave when you need to, these workshops are designed to be flexible.

There's no ticket, just come along at the start time. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Art Labs happen on selected Saturdays and run 13:00 – 15:00 – please see our website for further details.

School & Community Group Visits

Are you a group leader or class teacher interested in visiting the galleries or Print Studio? Get in touch at learning@dca.org.uk and we'll be happy arrange a tour or workshop to suit.

We are grateful to The Northwood Trust for their support of our family learning programme.

Go to www.dca.org.uk for dates, details and to book.

Create Space

Free and open daily 10:00 – 18:00 during exhibitions, unless being used for a workshop.

DCA Create Space is a comfy imaginative space for younger visitors and families to have a go at DIY art activities inspired by our exhibitions, browse the art library or just relax on the sofas and enjoy the view.

Do phone in advance if you are making a special trip or bringing a group to visit to check that the room will be free. **Please note: children must be accompanied at all times in Create Space.**

Creative Courses for 11+ years

We offer short and longer courses in art and print techniques, photography, digital skills, craft making and portfolio development, all led by professional artists. Check our website or pick up a Get Creative leaflet for more information.



As well as feeding back on our current exhibitions in our galleries, we'd love for you to share your memories from the last 20 years of DCA on our #helloDCA20 board.

DCA Galleries are open:

Mon – Sun: 10:00 – 18:00

Open late Thu: 10:00 – 20:00

Daily Exhibition Tours: Join our friendly Visitor Assistants at the gallery entrance for a free guided tour at 11:00 or 15:00

For bookings: 01382 432444

DCA Box Office is open daily from 10:00 until 20:00

Access

DCA welcomes everyone and we are committed to making our programme and facilities accessible. Large print copies of all DCA print materials are available from Box Office. Guide Dogs are welcome in our galleries.

If you have any questions regarding accessibility, please call us on: 01382 432444.



Whilst every effort is taken to ensure the information within this guide is accurate mistakes do happen. DCA reserves the right to make changes to the programme as necessary.

DCA reserves the right to refuse admission.

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Photography by Erika Stevenson

