

LIMN

MA Fine Art UCA Farnham

Site Specific Art Show

Watts Gallery - Artists' Village

4 May - 30 June 2024

Launch Sat 11 May 11.00-16.30

Kasia Alexiou | Christine Banat
Ranga Bandara | Sam Chara
Xiaoyu (Irene) Chen | Sally Ferguson
Xiaoxiao Hu | Darrell Kingsley
Ranju Magar | Joy Millett
Victoria Obiakor | Salsabeel Palliparambil
Lizziy Parker | Sibtay Shaheed

Curated by Andrea Gregson

WATTS
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for the
Creative Arts FI

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4 May - 30 June 2024 | Launch Sat 11 May 11am-4.30pm

Current MA Fine Art artists from University for the Creative Arts, Farnham are thrilled to present a new and exciting exhibition of their artwork, made in response to the site, history and collections of Watts Gallery – Artists' Village.

LIMN is curated by Andrea Gregson, Senior Lecturer in Fine Art and includes a range of fine art media sensitively responding to the history, architecture and gardens at Watts Gallery – Artists' Village. It presents an opportunity to encounter contemporary art throughout the buildings and gardens, offering new interpretations to its visiting audiences. The exhibition is part of an ongoing dialogue between Watts Gallery – Artists' Village and University for the Creative Arts, led by Watts Gallery's mission of *Art for All by All*. It explores how Watts Gallery can collaborate to support student artists to access, engage with and be part of its creative community.

All the artists are brought together through their studies on the MA Fine Art course at Farnham, a vibrant community of creatives from UK, China, India, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland and Sri Lanka. The works on show use a range of media including a zine publication (artists book), installation, sculpture, film, performance, drawing, digital print, cyanotype, collage, painting, textiles, socially engaged practice and ceramics.

The title *LIMN* is drawn from *LIMNERSLEASE*, the Arts and Crafts home named by George and Mary Watts in 1891, merging the Old English words '*limner*' (artist) with '*leasen*' (to glean). According to Cambridge English Dictionary, the meaning of LIMN has several interpretations; "*to draw or paint something, to describe or show someone or something using words*" and "*to mark the edge of something*". Through the lens of fourteen emerging contemporary artists, the works draw from their ongoing subject matter and research gleaned during a site visit in December 2023. Approaching Watts Gallery - Artists' Village as a place of creation, the works are a call and response to George and Mary Watts as artistic partners, 19th century debates in art and culture, as well as the historic art collection and architectural social history of the Arts and Crafts buildings. Set among the existing collection, these new artworks find alternative perspectives, illuminating familiar artworks and ideas, enabling visitors to encounter contemporary art in this unique historic setting.

You are welcome to join us for the launch of *LIMN* coinciding with Surrey Day at Watts Gallery – Artists' Village on **Saturday 11 May, 11am-4.30pm**. There is free entry for Surrey residents on this day. There will also be an opportunity to join a special walking tour of Watts Gallery's site led by exhibiting artists who will each introduce their work. During the launch there will be two participatory art events, *Natural Sensation* by **Xiaoyu Chen** and an interactive live performance, *The Peace Lily* by **Sam Chara**.

Exhibiting Artists:

Kasia Alexiou: @kasiaalexiou

Christine Banat: @christine.banat.90

Ranga Bandara: @rangakumara14.bandara

Sam Chara: @sam.chara

Xiaoyu (Irene) Chen: <https://m11renexy.wixsite.com/irenechen>

Sally Ferguson: @sally.fergart

Xiaoxiao Hu: @boluomiyex

Darrell Kingsley: @dkingsleyfish

Ranju Magar: @ranju.pulami

Joy Millett: @millett.joy

Victoria Obiakor: @artb_yve

Salsabeel Palliparambil: @salartistry

Lizziy Parker: @ziah_fineart

Sibtay Shaheed: @sibtayart



Watts Gallery - Artists' Village, Down Lane, Guildford, GU3 1DQ

<https://www.wattsgallery.org.uk/visit/getting-here>

For information about Watts Gallery - Artist' Village:

Sarah Jarvis: sarah.jarvis@wattsgallery.org.uk

Laura MacCulloch: laura.macculloch@wattsgallery.org.uk

For information about UCA MA Fine Art course, artwork, artist talks and events:

Andrea Gregson: agregson@ucreative.ac.uk IG: @mafineartucafarnham

LIMN LIST OF WORKS - LIMNERSLEASE GARDENS [*PLUS ARTIST IN RESIDENCE STUDIO]

1. JOY MILLETT

Triumph Perspex, metal (each staff 1.75m)

Web/IG: @millett.joy

This sculpture references the painting, *Triumphs of Caesar* by Andrea Mantegna and the sculpture of the same title by Anthony Caro. It acknowledges the triumph of the Watts Gallery in renovating and maintaining this important, public artists village. The sculptural works consist of three staffs with bright coloured perspex symbols, reflecting the architectural and decorative details found within Watts Gallery Artists' Village. The sculpture is sited on the lawn in front of Limnerslease and invites the viewer to cross reference the symbols with the original features found in the village and Watts Chapel.

2. SALLY FERGUSON

George and Mary in the Garden Acrylic on canvas, timber (180cm x 100cm each work)

Web/IG: @sally.fergart | <https://sallyferg9.wixsite.com/sally-ferguson-art>

Sally Ferguson sees the world in intricate detail, viewing the past with a feminist perspective, she is a naturalist and figurative painter. Her two paintings are composite images of her interpretation and representation of George and Mary Watts, their world and their creations. The paintings depict George and Mary Watts as equals, in amongst the leaves of their garden presented on the front lawn outside Limnerslease. Mary's imagery presents her as a social reformer, a suffragette and dutiful wife. In amongst the fig leaves, imagery of Mary's snake garden pot, an angel from Watts chapel and two women from the *Journal of the Power of Women Collective* from 1974 can be found. The back of Mary's canvas depicts a female image from her chapel. George's portrait references his own self-portraits, young and old, in the gardens with view of the nearby downs. The back of this portrait has two figures from *Time, Death and Judgement*, and the controversial monumental sculpture, *Physical Energy*. The horse and man are a critique of the works association with colonialist Cecil Rhodes and apartheid.

3. DARRELL KINGSLEY

Eternity Canvas, acrylic paint (2m x 2m)

Web/IG: @dkingsleyfish

There is a blessed bond between Mary and George that surrounds the Watts Gallery Artist Village. A delightful collection of working buildings consisting of Limnerslease, designed and decorated by both artists, kiln sheds, pottery studios and a spacious personal picture gallery, it is both a home and an expression of working artistic creativity. The work is made from continuous piece of material to create a form of Mobius strip. The surface is hand painted with a continuous mark that responds to the forms and shapes within Mary Watts chapel. Circular motifs found everywhere, most prominent in the chapel, represent spirituality and the notion of eternity. The work celebrates the joining of all people and the connections that follow. Using two colours, black to represent George and burnt sienna for Mary, a continuous mark-rolled movement revisits the motifs from the Chapel's terracotta craft work. Reassessing these shapes and forms into an intertwined path reveals a glimpse of an eternal ending journey, hinting at a feeling and the essence of being. Suspended among the trees in the garden close to Limnerslease, the artwork creates a circular shadow at midday below.

4. SALSABEEL PALLIPARAMBIL

Mother Nature Digital print (60cm x 85cm)

Web/IG: @salartistry | @ar.salsabeel | [Sal Artistry \(wordpress.com\)](http://SalArtistry.wordpress.com)

Mother Nature is a digital painting which represents the intense relationship between women and nature, a theme evidenced throughout the works of George and Mary Watts. *Mother Nature* aims to celebrate the deep-rooted bond of women and nature through the lens of contemporary issues, relating to ecology and sustainability. It is an exploration of their relationship shared, giving rise to questions about how we interact with our surrounding environment. Rather than representing beauty and resilience, the viewer is taken through narrative storytelling. Palliparambil draws deep inspiration and celebrates the shared bond between nature and life and places the work by Bench, bringing the context of the gallery into the landscape. To create a sense of familiarity, the painting incorporates both the existing landscape and depicts an image of a beloved female character to create a sense of harmony.

5. XIAOYU (IRENE) CHEN*

Natural Sensation Artist book, public participation (dimensions variable)

Web/IG: <https://m11renexy.wixsite.com/irenechen> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsMCW2kJJWoh6zwPiFJMeoQ>

Feel with your heart the art of being situated in the mountains, being in nature and feeling nature. Discover the old-world and the escapist charm of Watts Gallery. Be a part of it. *Natural Sensation* is a light and shadow event that combines the natural environment around Watts Gallery Artists' Village, to provide visitors with a different experience visually and sensually. The concept of this event is to relax in a natural environment amidst our busy urban lives. Xiaoyu Chen expresses everyday emotions through watercolour imagery, using the tent's ceiling as a screen to project this imagery. During the launch on the 11th of May, Chen invites individuals to use art materials to depict their sensations in the atmosphere created by the projection in the tent. Watts Gallery is situated amidst woodlands, making it an ideal location for this participatory work, combining classical architecture with natural scenery. As a conclusion to the entire event, everyone's creations will be created as one physical zine, available in the Artist in Residence studio throughout the show, and on her website, where participants can view their works.

6. SAM CHARA*

The Peace Lily Ceramic, performance, film (dimensions variable)

Web/IG: @sam.chara | <https://samchara.com/>

The Peace Lily is a multilayered artwork consisting of a cluster of ceramic Peace Lilies placed in the garden close to Mary Watts' bench. During the launch on the 11th of May, Sam Chara will present a live performance, reimagining the song 'Casta Diva' from the opera *Norma* by Vincenzo Bellini. The story tells about the Gauls wanting their queen Norma to declare war on the Romans, who have been oppressing them. She assuages the people's anger and convinces them that this is not the right time to revolt. She asserts that the Romans will eventually fall by their own doing. It is at this point that Norma sings *Casta Diva*; a prayer to the moon goddess for peace. Looking at the history of the residencies of the Watts family, *The Peace Lily* performance focuses on the times during the war, when military troops inhabited these premises, and the peaceful, creative environment of the Watts Gallery changed. After the performance, Sam Chara will hand out origami peace lilies to remind us of keeping peace in the world, in our homes, and in our hearts. The audience are invited to write a word of peace on the paper lily, as a gift to bring home, to remember the day and the importance of peace. Just as the Peace Lily symbolizes growth, peace, and harmony, this work represents the fragile, and precious balance there within. Once in bloom, this gift should be cherished and not taken for granted. The performance will be filmed and screened in the Artist in Residence studio throughout the show.

LIMN LIST OF WORKS - HISTORIC GALLERIES

7. SIBTAY SHAHEED

Talaq (Separation) Fabric pieces on canvas (150cm x 99cm)

Web/IG: @sibtayart

Sibtay Shaheed's work explores harmony, a series of square colour fabric pieces collaged together on canvas. With *Talaq*, each coloured piece is cut and placed randomly, both connected and disconnected from each other, the squares carry the spaces of both inside and outside together. The work is about separation and connection, like the principals of Ying and Yang, squares are equal from each side, just like a person, they have boundaries, standards and an ego. Reminiscent of the religious concept of Talaq, the title is taken from the Arabic word meaning divorce, freeing or undoing a knot. Here Shaheed shows how divorce can occur in shapes and forms. Divorce (separation) is also about connection and disconnection. Each colour piece, cut and disconnected from each other, become whole when viewed from a distance. Space is about connection and disconnection and according to Buddhism, the idea of inside/outside means Shunya. The philosophy of Shunya tells that every material and spiritual entity emerges from and merges into nothingness. Shunya can be found in Sanskrit, meaning "empty" or "void", which is also considered to be the state of nothingness.

8. VICTORIA OBIAKOR

Essence Fabric and acrylic on canvas (88cm x 77.5cm)

Web/IG: @artb_yve

In this vibrant painted collage, Victoria Obiakor celebrates the visionary minds behind Watts Gallery Artists' Village, George and Mary Watts. Through a kaleidoscope of colours and textures, she pays homage to their artistic legacy, capturing the essence of their passion and creativity. Together, the Watts' shaped a gallery that continues to inspire and ignite artistic minds. The central theme of the work revolves around the concept of unity amid diversity. Like many artists, George Watts would often paint himself, using self-portraiture to experiment with style, colour, different poses and facial expressions. Mirroring each other, the Watts' profiles add depth and symmetry, creating a composition of the two creators and their support system. In a world often marked by fragmentation, Obiakor's collage serves as a visual metaphor for emerging harmony where different components are seamlessly integrated. *Essence* represents the beauty of partnership and encourages contemplation about the interconnection of people and ideas.

9. KASIA ALEXIOU

Hope Tulle fabric, digital print, mirror, film projector (3.5m x 70cm)

Web/IG: @kasiaalexiou

The art installation, *Hope* is inspired by the emotional experience of symbolism with George Watts' painting *Hope* and *The Sower of Systems*. These paintings relate to Alexiou's practice *Diary of Water*, which features documented videos of floating water. Her tulle column, with water reflecting on the mirror, captures the dual nature of hope – its fragility and strength. The materiality of time is delicately woven into the fabric of Hope through use of tulle, highlighting its ephemeral and fleeting nature. The spectacular reflection on the floor surface creates an illusion of infinite space, invoking a sense of timelessness, inviting the viewers to reflect on the enduring quality of hope amid existence. One of Alexiou's films projects moving image onto the soft undulating tulle fabric, bringing a beguiling sensory presence of water into the gallery.

10. RANJU MAGAR

Thoughts Acrylic paint on canvas (160cm x 102cm)

Web/IG: @ranju.pulami

The concept for *Thoughts* emerged during the site visit to Watts Gallery. As Magar was immersed in the beauty of the rich colours and textures in the paintings, it was a poignant reminder of the transformative potential within us. The patterns and textures in her painting attempt to define how thoughts are consistent, vast yet limited, but often difficult to understand. Positive thoughts are the seeds of growth and resilience, they illuminate the darkest corners of the mind, fostering hope and perseverance. In a world often clouded by negativity, choosing to embrace positive thoughts can lead to powerful acts of self-care and a catalyst for personal transformation. Just as an artist manipulates hue and strokes to evoke emotions and captivate the senses, so too can we cultivate awareness and mindfulness to shape our inner landscape. By acknowledging the interplay between our thoughts, emotions, and daily experiences, we open ourselves to the possibility of positive change and growth.

11. LIZZIY PARKER

A Light Beyond Cyanotype, mixed media (84cm x 119cm)

Web/IG: @ziah_fineart

The cyanotype print incorporates images of flowers from the gardens surrounding the Watts Gallery Artists' Village, overlaid onto architectural details from the Historic Gallery external doors. The work is suspended from the roof beams of the Historic Galleries with original gallery chains used to hang the surrounding paintings. The work references the history of the cyanotype print process, developed by the Victorians to record botanical specimens. It also includes decorative beading alluding to the presence of pearls in 19th century jewellery and the inclusion of crystals from chandeliers. These adornments speak of both the location of the work hung from the ceiling, and the ornate aesthetics within the gallery.

12. XIAOXIAO HU

Feeling Carpet (210cm x 140cm)

Web/IG: @boluomiyex

In past times, there was an array of cats living around the lawns outside the Watts Gallery Artists' Village. Xiaoxiao Hu has created a floor artwork printed onto carpet, referencing this history with her work. Hu intends this work to be a space of healing and resting and invites the viewer to sit on the carpet whilst touching the vibrantly coloured imagery of cats and flowers from the gardens. The style of this work combines classical painting with cartoon aesthetics. It is a space to sit on, look up and reflect upon the other artworks from a new perspective, such as the ceiling and architectural spaces which can often be overlooked.

13. CHRISTINE BANAT

Joy and Sorrow Jesmonite, clay, wax (*Joy* 155cm x 35cm x 35cm | *Sorrow* 140cm x 35cm x 35cm)

Web/IG: @christine.banat.90 | www.christinebanatart.co.uk

The two sculptures *Joy and Sorrow* symbolise the highs and lows of human experience. *Joy's* pose is one of elation and freedom expressing confidence in unrestrained happiness, its smooth white marble like finish represents uncomplicated strength and certainty. *Sorrow's* pose is dejected, fearful, vulnerable, the colour of clay and the wax combined are fragile and the clothing represents a feeling of worthlessness. The work responds to George Watts representation of the human body which addressed the great themes of life, love and death. Seeking out the fundamental truths of humanity Watts said: "*I paint ideas, not things, I paint primarily because I have something to say....as to suggest great thoughts which speak to the imagination and to the hearts and arouse all that is best and noblest in humanity.*" The sculptures *Joy and Sorrow* acknowledge George and Mary Watts' dedication to sharing their home and work with the community around them.

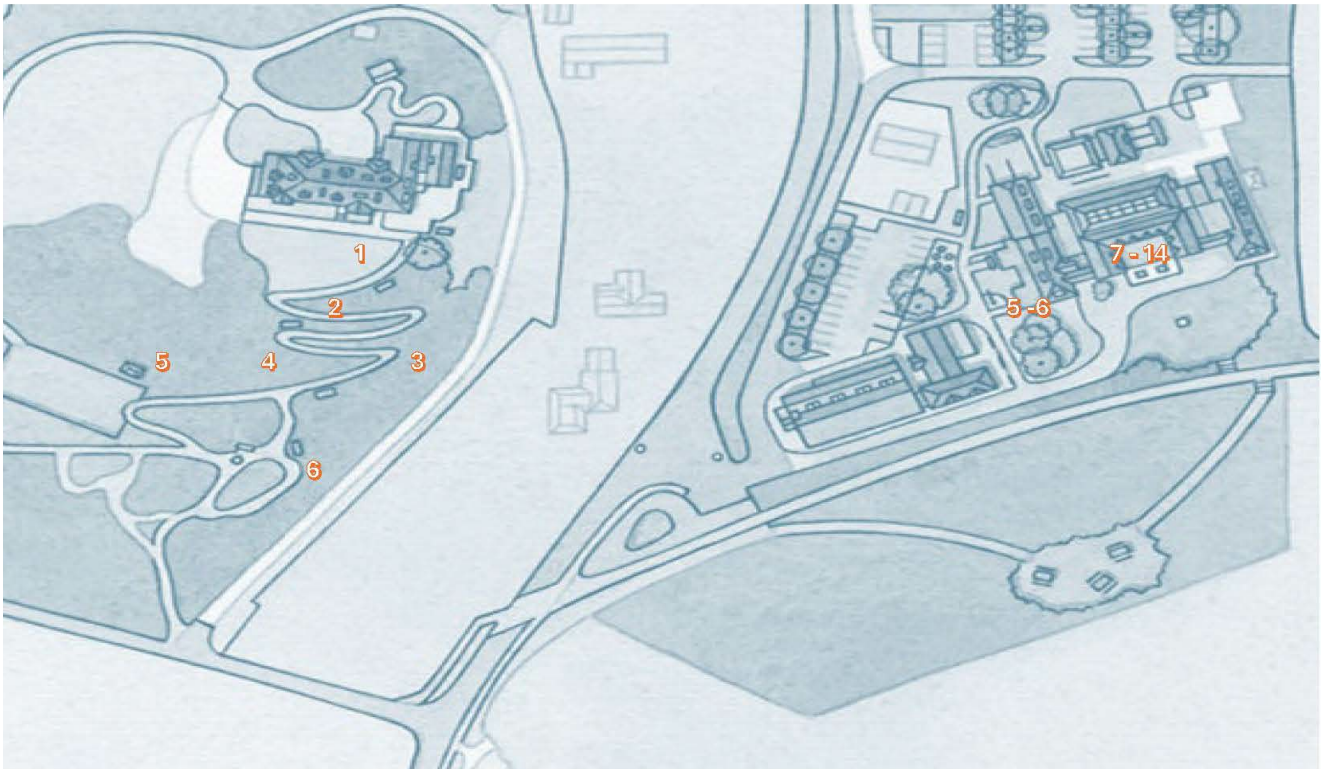
14. RANGA BANDARA

Vine of Heaven Recycled copper (92cm x 61cm)

Web/IG: @rangakumara14.bandara

Watts Gallery Artists' Village reminds Ranga Bandara of Florence, with the vast array of figurative sculpture and painting, the artworks and buildings demonstrate the quality and power of Victorian art and culture from this period. The copper sculpture, *Vine of Heaven*, is inspired by the embossed vine and flower designs on the *Lithium Door* at the entrance outside and is fabricated from repurposed copper sheeting and pipes. The work symbolizes the decorative aesthetics of Watts Gallery Artists' Village and is suspended from the ceiling beams in the Historic Galleries, referencing growth and form within nature.

LIMN | MAP LOCATIONS OF WORK | 4 MAY – 30 JUNE 2024

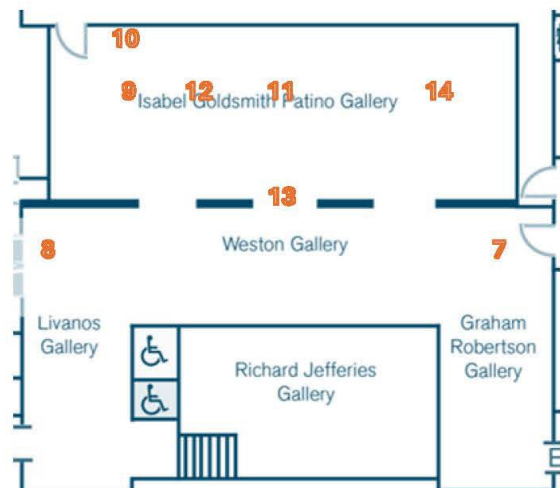


LIMNERSLEASE GARDEN [*PLUS ARTIST IN RESIDENCE STUDIO]

1. JOY MILLETT - *Triumph*
2. SALLY FERGUSON - *George and Mary in the Garden*
3. DARRELL KINGSLEY - *Eternity*
4. SALSABEEL PALLIPARAMBIL - *Mother Nature*
5. *XIAOYU (IRENE) CHEN - *Natural Sensation*
6. *SAM CHARA - *The Peace Lily*

HISTORIC GALLERIES

7. SIBTAY SHAHEED - *Talaq (Separation)*
8. VICTORIA OBIAKOR - *Essence*
9. KASIA ALEXIOU - *Hope*
10. RANJU MAGAR - *Thoughts*
11. LIZZIY PARKER - *A Light Beyond*
12. XIAOXIAO HU - *Feeling*
13. CHRISTINE BANAT - *Joy and Sorrow*
14. RANGA BANDARA - *Vine of Heaven*



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