

palimpsest

28 Aug - 3 Sept 2026
Annex Gallery, Stow Building

Private View 27 Aug 5-9pm
Performance by Susan Torrance @ 6pm

Palimpsest:

An exhibition of artistic research for PhD

28 August – 3 September

Private view, Thursday 27 August, 5-9pm with
performance by Susan Torrance 6 pm

Contributing artists:

Alistair Bamforth
Audrey Ni Ruorong
Cecilia Charlton
CW Mao & Toby Mao
MaryLynne Wrye
Michael Collazo
Rebecca Meanley
Rosie Dahlstrom
Sitian Zeng
Susan Torrance
Yimin Xiang

palimpsest

noun /'pæl.ɪm.sɛst/

a very old text or document
in which writing has been
removed and covered or
replaced by new writing

something such as a work of
art that has many levels of
meaning, types of style, etc.
that build on each other¹

Palimpsest showcases in-progress artistic research by practice-based PhD researchers based at Glasgow School of Art. Featuring a range of finished and in-progress works across disciplines including painting, performance, multi-media installation and textiles, the exhibition likewise brings into dialogue a diversity of inquiries currently being undertaken by PhD researchers from the School of Fine Art and School of Design. Palimpsest takes its name from medieval manuscripts that feature traces of older texts that had been scraped off in order for the surface to be reused. As artistic researchers, we pay homage to that mountain of material, interactions and words, which might ultimately be erased and discarded yet can still be felt beneath the surface of our tangible works. Palimpsest is the inaugural public exhibition of the SoFA PGR Practice Research Group, hosted by the Annex Gallery in the Stow Building.

¹Definition. The Cambridge Dictionary. Online.

Audrey Ni Ruorong

B-Q, 2026

Digital collage, 52 × 88 cm

H-Q, 2026

Digital collage, 52 × 88 cm

This is an ongoing series of photographic collages developed through a process of encounter and reinterpretation. I position myself as both researcher and medium, receiving fragments from my previous works and from external sources, then responding through repeated acts of remaking, tracing and rereading. These works emerge from my wider research into the incomprehensible and from a practice-led framework I call *Weird Methodology*, which uses photography, moving image and AI-generated imagery to visualise the structures through which a sense of the weird is produced. This series invites viewers to become investigators, following uncanny repetitions and visual clues to construct their own narratives. Each interpretation, in turn, becomes part of the work.

Audrey Ni Ruorong is a Chinese-born interdisciplinary artist and researcher based in Glasgow, UK, where she is currently undertaking practice-led PhD research at The Glasgow School of Art. Her art practice spans photography, digital art, moving image, installation, and AI-generated media, exploring the inherent tensions within image-making, narrative systems, and perception. From her early investigations into the body and psychological trauma to her more recent explorations of secondary-world construction and the incomprehensible, her work consistently operates between control and loss of control, order and chaos.

Through her ongoing art practice, she has developed an experimental framework which she terms *Weird Methodology*. Rather than treating incomprehensibility as a failure of understanding, this framework approaches it as a structural outcome. Within this system, images, texts, sounds, spaces, installations, audience experiences, and the various traces produced throughout the creative process are all understood as materials that can be continually generated, reorganised, and reinterpreted. Through their shifting relationships, ruptures, translations, and reconfigurations, meaning remains in a constant state of formation and dissolution, while new narratives emerge from these networks of relations.

Instagram: @AudreyNiRuorong

Alistair Bamforth

The Title of my exhibition material is “Connectedness”. My research process is focused on the intersection of anthropology and my art practice in making the visual experience part of the anthropological knowledge by enlisting the support of participants from the Knoydart community in the production of sensory output. The Art practice element of my research is motivated by an intuition that arises from theoretical, conceptual, historic and political considerations.

The artworks produced alongside one-to-one interviews, my research of the place itself and my interpretation of the history of land ownership in Scotland potentially give a unique perspective of ethnographic description.

‘The starting point, the inside from which everything returns, is the contextualised practice. Artistic practice gives the possibility for a sense-driven and material encounter with the world as opposed to an abstractedly intellectual one’ *

*Hannah, M., Soiranta, J., Vaden. T., *Artistic Research Methodology* (Peter Lang, New York, 2014)

Susan Torrance

Mrs Grant's Visiting Machine

Women in middle class society in the Highlands of Scotland found their voices in the mid 1850's through the pages of local newspapers. The aristocracy had court diaries, public scandals and endless balls and dinners, while the wives of merchants, doctors and small landowners stayed in the background of their own lives, undocumented and unheard.

This changed with the use of new print technology and audiences eager to ingest twice weekly editions of a 16-page snapshot in time comprising the assembly of paper, ink and typeface. For a few brief days, the newspaper burned brightly with the names of those mentioned and noticed. As objects, these signifiers of a world paying some attention soon decayed and dismantled into the miasma of time as yesterday's news.

The best way of getting your name in the paper was through good deeds, principally by visiting the institutions of the refugees and the poor – orphanages and poor houses. Your name appeared at the commencement of a paragraph with your fellow do-gooders, you might dish out some cake and pat a few heads, but those you visited remained anonymous, their stories untold and undocumented.

The more you visited, the more you were mentioned and found a means to be recognised and remembered in a society which valued status and class above everything.

PERFORMANCE – Based around the above narrative, Mrs Grant will introduce her Visiting Machine to the audience for their reaction and comments.

Time – 5 to 10 minutes at the most.

Susan Torrance is later life artist and researcher, who brings a wealth of experience and knowledge gained through living to her practice.

Yimin Xiang

The Archaeology of Printed Images, 2024-2026

35 letterpress halftone prints on paper, pinned on a hessian-covered wood panel with an index, 150 × 100 cm.

The Archaeology of Printed Images reprints obsolete industrial halftone copper plates recovered from second-hand markets, once used to print newspaper and magazine pictures. The reprints are arranged on a panel modelled on Aby Warburg's Bilderatlas Mnemosyne, so that plates from different decades and industries sit side by side, and subjects that never shared a page are brought into unexpected juxtaposition.

Yimin Xiang is an artist and researcher based in Glasgow, working across printmaking, archival theory, and contemporary visual culture.

Cecilia Charlton

Bath Mat, 2021

Hand-woven textile with cotton and found fabric,
40 x 50 cm

House Wares, 2026

B/W photographic prints, A4 size

How can our relationships to objects, time, and material be changed when we consider the domestic space to be one of care and attention? When personal creativity and acts of domestic sustainability are foregrounded, and allowed to be brought into a public arena? What is the purpose of creating 'artwork' when we are essentially making meaningful, creative and political choices as we cook, clean, and live?

Cecilia Charlton is a Glasgow-based American artist and researcher working primarily with the processes of weaving, embroidery, spinning, and natural dyeing. Themes of feminism, human history, time and transcendence are inherently part of the hand-made work, and Charlton's investigation into the history of textiles from creative, cultural, and socio-economic perspectives underpins her studio practice. Spanning the mediums of textiles, installation, and art in the social sphere, the work results in conversation tending towards both the personal and the universal. Recent works meditate on the intersection of traditional craft practices, ecological systems, and sociopolitical events towards a deeper understanding of intercultural and environmental relationships.

Toby Mao

A Thing Called "Modernism Art", 2026

Typewriter print, photo frame

The physical materials of the work were all produced in the 1960–70s and collected through various platforms. The work is a linguistic experiment that reflects on the notions of the modern, the postmodern and the contemporary by establishing an intentional yet inconclusive material and logical paradox.

Toby Mao is a visual art worker and third-year PhD student at the School of Fine Art at GSA. His practice employs various media and formats, with critical, analytical, conceptual, and experimental features that develop new understandings of the act of thinking, logic, objecthood, and material interpretation through/with artistic practice. His research interests also include the analytical continental divide, the dualism argument, and philosophical investigation(s) in the visual art context.

Instagram: @tb_mao

Sitian Zeng

Towards

75cm x 55cm; 100cm x 80cm

This series of ink and watercolour paintings treats multiple canvases as metaphorical screens, exploring how our subjectivity is shaped and continually transformed through our encounters with digital apparatuses. Rather than representing digital images, these works trace the affective and embodied experiences of the post-digital condition. Through layers of fluid marks, the diffusional traces of ink, transparency, and the gestures implied by human figures and abstract marks, the works invite audiences to slow down and experience painting as an operational field rather than a static image. As the audience's gaze moves across multiple surfaces, the works seek to evoke a sense of reaching, touch and becoming.

CW Mao

Five Years of the British Art School, 2026

Steel, aluminium and collected cards

The work is consisted of a steel frame and art graduates' business cards collected from various British art school degree shows after the pandemic. The work aims to problematise rather than confirm a *symbolical* situation of the art education system in Britain.

CW Mao is a visual artist whose practice examines the intersections of identity, current affairs, and contemporary socio-political structures. Beginning his artistic career in 2026, CW employs a minimalist aesthetic infused with subtle humour, using restrained forms to invite critical reflection on complex cultural narratives. His work translates acute observations of everyday systems into poignant visual commentary, balancing conceptual rigour with accessible irony. CW holds degrees from the Glasgow School of Art, the Royal College of Art, London, and the University of Central Lancashire, Preston.

Instagram: @cw_mao

Rosie Dahlstrom

The Potent Dead

Framed etching, edition of 6, 47cm x 35cm

'The Potent Dead' is a series of images which ruminates on an artwork from the Amarna period of Ancient Egypt. The print considers the symbol of the cartouche, the oval shape that denotes a name in Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic writing, which here becomes a container for a mysterious face: a stone sculpture possibly representing a pharaoh who has been lost to history, the mysterious Smenkhkare. The obscure relationships between a face, a name and a corpse, where time has rendered all certainty impossible and we can just grasp for stories, making our own meaning in our own age with these disparate parts, form the underlying motivation of this series. The potent dead, in Ancient Egyptian belief, continued to act on the world of the living in either benevolent or spiteful ways, for generations after passing into the afterlife; these artifacts and traces of Smenkhkare continue to act in the making of this research project.

Rosie Dahlstrom is an artist and writer from Glasgow, currently living and working between Glasgow and London. She completed MA Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts (UAL) in 2020. Her practice comes from a painting background, but as the work is narrative-driven the stories can also take the forms of collage, film, sculpture, text and installation. This experimental approach has led to engagement with a range of unusual spaces, from a cell in an abandoned jail in Kintyre to a belfry in a church in Bethnal Green. Rosie is now a PhD research student in the School of Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art, interested in the relationship between beauty and the ancient world, and its implications for contemporary art.

Michael Collazo

I Have Spent Years Polishing a Mirror That Was Never Interested in Reflecting Me

Ballpoint Pen, 42 cm x 30 cm

Drawing with Epistemic Grief: Durational and Relational Practices of Mark-Making

The two drawings presented in the Annex Gallery form part of an ongoing body of research that explores drawing as a process of thinking rather than simply image-making. Each work develops through sustained, non-predetermined mark-making, where the final image is not planned in advance but gradually emerges through repetition, attention, and the physical relationship between hand, pen, and paper. Rather than offering fixed meanings, the drawings invite viewers to spend time with uncertainty and to experience how knowledge can develop through the act of making itself. By exhibiting two works from different stages of this evolving practice, I hope audiences encounter drawing not only as a finished object, but as evidence of an ongoing process in which time, labour, memory, and reflection remain visible.

Michael Collazo is an international UK-based artist of Puerto Rican, African, and European heritage, working between Glasgow, London, and Chicago. Working across drawing and painting, he creates figurative-based images that emerge gradually rather than being resolved from the outset. His experience of moving between cultures and communities, together with his perspective as a gay man, has informed a practice that is interested in how images can hold the complexity of lived experience.

Drawing has always been at the centre of Collazo's practice. What began as fascination with observation has developed into a way of thinking through images, where each mark creates the conditions for the next. Rather than beginning with a finished idea, he allows his work to evolve through continual looking, responding, and redrawing.

Instagram: @ballpointpenwizard

MaryLynne Wrye

Separated, 2026

Collage, 50 x 50 cm

This work responds to Anne Carson's translation of the extant fragments of Sappho's verse, informed by my experience living and working on Lesbos, Greece. I incorporate the ancient Greek, Anne Carson's words, my response, and an image of debris from a refugee-boat landing site on Lesbos. I am engaging with the predicament of representation in the context of suffering and fragmentation as experience and expression in the borderland.

MaryLynne Wrye works across photography, text, moving image, and performance. Her experience in the borderland of Lesbos, Greece, as an artist and as part of the humanitarian community is the impetus for her current PhD practice research.

Wrye holds a Master of Research from the Royal College of Art and a Master of Fine Art from the Slade School of Fine Art at University College London. When away from Glasgow, she lives in New York City with her wife and son.

Rebecca Meanley

Seeing through: towards an enmeshed expanded territory

The works exhibited in the Annex Gallery attempt to articulate the intersection or interconnection between visual and textual forms, emanating from the ongoing activity of the mesh (in which this research project is a process already in operation). The works are experimental at this stage in the practice-research, where I am exploring the possibilities for aesthetic encounters with a seeing through semi-transparent 'imagery' with the interruption or integration of textual forms. Handwritten and mono-printed texts emerge from stream of consciousness writing processes as they move progressively closer to abstract 'painted' compositions. The intention is to cause perceptual disruption yet also synthesis through the installation process, interweaving the practices of autobiographical writing and an expanded abstract painting to question how they may or may not cohere.

Rebecca Meanley is an artist, writer, researcher and senior lecturer. She is currently pursuing a practice-based PhD in The School of Fine Art at The Glasgow School of Art. Her research is concerned with how autobiographical and experimental writing and an expanded abstract painting meet in the navigation of the visual-aesthetic-literary device of the mesh. Rebecca's writing features in the forthcoming 2026 edition and the 2025 edition of *The Yellow Paper*, published by Art Writing at The Glasgow School of Art. Recent solo projects include a Residency in the Barnes Garage Space at GSA in July 2026 and a Residency in The Drawing Room, GSA in July 2025 both culminating in solo-exhibitions. Upcoming group shows include *Palimpsest* at The Annex Gallery, GSA, Glasgow in 2026, and *The Winter's Tale* at The Bindery, London in 2026, with Vivienne Roberts Projects. Recent group exhibitions include *Small is Beautiful* with Flowers, London, in 2024 and 2025; *Encounters* at The London Art Fair in 2023, and *The Aesthetics of Enchantment*, London, 2022, both with Aleph Contemporary.

Thank you:
Dr Laura Guy,
Dr James Hutchinson,
Doug Kennedy,
and Sean Black

Poster and visual identity design:
Cecilia Charlton and Bryan Reedy

Booklet design: Toby Mao

