

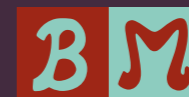




54 paintings are abstract compositions comprised of overlapping square and rectangular blocks of colour. The blocks are slightly irregular and have soft flowing edges which at times visually float on the surface of the canvas. In some of the paintings there is a distinct background field onto which the colour blocks are overlaid whilst in others the blocks are fitted together with no distinct field. Still others have more translucent colour blocks with blurred or over painted backgrounds. The colours vary from bright greens reds and oranges to more subdued tones of grays purples and browns. The paint is fairly thin and allows the texture of the canvas to show through in places. There is evidence of brushwork and a free hand in the shape and fitting of the blocks.

# Portable Retrospective

Nicola Atkinson



Published by Beautiful Materials Design Studio



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A catalogue of this book is available from the British Library.

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# About the artist

**Nicola Atkinson** lives and works in Glasgow. She is the founder of the participatory art and design studios NADFLY (2003 - 2020) and Beautiful Materials Design Studio (2018 - ongoing).

Her practice is organic and generative, specialising in place making, social cohesion and community engagement, with a commitment to the delivery of well-conceived and durable artworks that inspire and prompt actions, interactions and reactions.

These interventions have been both large and intimate in scale and have influenced behaviour, changed community identities and formed active relationships with the built environment.

Clients have included museums, hospitals, architects, third sector and local authorities from across Scotland and internationally. She has had numerous exhibitions in international venues including Long Beach Museum of Art, CA, USA, Tramway and The Lighthouse, Glasgow, Scotland, Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales, Havana, Cuba, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands, The Museum of Modern Art, NY, USA and the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, UK.

In 2020, she was one of the 25 designers, architects and artists representing Scotland in the 17th Venice Architecture Biennale, which will now be shown at the V&A Dundee 2021.

Beautiful  
Materials

Gallery

20 Sept 2020 - 12 Jan 2021



Beautiful Materials Gallery

## Beautiful Materials Gallery

Beautiful Materials Design Studio created an imaginative new space; a Beautiful Materials Gallery, that existed in 54 homes all over the world. The 54 paintings were created in March - July 2020 in Glasgow, Scotland, during the first lockdown due to COVID-19. The paintings were on display in places such as as: Bogotá, Bristol, Catterline, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Isle of Benbecula, Järpås, Newark, Paisley, Paris, Santa Monica and Sheffield.

The 54 Paintings approach was an evolution of a part of the Venice Biennale 2020, (What if...?/ Scotland, V&A Dundee, 22 May - 21 Nov 2021). That project created many painted birch plywood pieces from offcuts that had been destined for landfill which were painted and placed in the streets of Annan by its citizens as colourful guide markers.

Due to the current pandemic, we are using our homes in new and diverse ways; from office to artist's studio to schoolroom. Now some homes have also been transformed into places for the display and sale of works of art. The dealer, client and audience can co-exist in the domestic space and realise the pleasure of living day to day with an artwork.

Participating exhibitors received an artwork and could then choose to buy, sell, or return the painting to the Beautiful Materials Design Studio after the exhibition's duration. The only public record left behind were photographs of the pieces in situ.

The virtual opening took place simultaneously in 54 locations all over the world on the 20th of September 2020. In displaying the 54 paintings, each space became the Beautiful Materials Gallery; an intimate new gallery experience where the audience was the family and friends of the exhibitor.

**Image.**  
Beautiful Materials Design Studio  
Studio View.

In common with artists all over the world, it was necessary to rethink how to create and show our work. Traditional galleries have been out of bounds, and opportunities to view artworks have been severely limited. Even with galleries opening again (with strict social distancing rules), funding for the creation and display of new art is scarce. The art world is teetering on the edge of a financial meltdown.

Beautiful Materials Gallery is an ingenious new micro-business model that uses innovation and imagination to realise our visions.

After years of delivering large-scale public artworks and community engagement projects, the first lockdown period stimulated a return to painting.

It could be said that deciding to paint now is to take on the history of art and its market. So why start painting on canvas now? It was already declared that 'painting is dead' in the mid-19th Century, as an era led by scientific thought and technical development flourished.

Today, in the 21st Century, everything has dramatically changed. We have adjusted to our lives being digitally filtered and our culture is provided by the means of technology, a ghost of tactile memory. We have lost our direct relationship with each other, and the culture and physical history of objects, colour, and form. Paintings are by their very nature an intimate means of forging a relationship between the artist and the viewer. I hope that through a simple relationship to a painting in our home, maybe we can regain our connections, our access to art, and find that this monster of painting is not dead after all.

**Nicola Atkinson**



**Image.**  
TOGETHER brand,  
Annan Harbour.



# Staying Home

By Iain Irving

*I'm staring deeply into my phone; I'm looking at 54 paintings hanging on the walls of Nicola's home studio some 130 miles away. I'm trying to decide which one to select as my painting; to hang in my home as part of the Beautiful Materials Gallery project.*

*Scanning each colourful abstract painting — each one the same 300mm square — how am I to decide? What comes forward to make my decision? How do I select the one from the group?*

*"There, that one!" I exclaim.*

*"Which one?" asks Nicola.*

*"On the left, with the pink sky and blue block, that's the one," I say. It is an intuitive thing, a choice of one out of all of those paintings. That's fine surely, to like art in this way, from a gut reaction, not analysing it too much, it just jumped out and spoke to me.*

*I am then sent a photo of my painting so that I can have it on my phone to look at whenever I want, to live with it, analyse it, speak to it and take care of it.*

*I wait with anticipation for the physical painting to come to me.*

Visiting a gallery is not what it was. In this time of Covid-19, in which we need to be distant and socially isolated, a restriction on our cultural experiences has been enforced. The physical encounter, where we could stand in front of an artwork and feel its presence has changed.

For many creative people the lockdown has challenged us to be even more creative by adapting our skills and methods to bring our audiences and colleagues together. There are online virtual galleries, and trading initiatives which connect artists and their work through social media. All good and positive, which can keep things going for a while but could there be something else to enhance our art experience during this time?

The Beautiful Materials Gallery concept has enabled Nicola Atkinson's 54 paintings to physically travel and find a new home and environment to live in for a while. It links the artist with friends and colleagues to physically share the paintings while the public audience can see each painting in its new home online. The project has created a productive system for the artist to share her work, and find new outlets and audiences. The Beautiful Materials Gallery therefore becomes a multi-sited space, in homes around the world, open at all times, day and night. The paintings are a trigger to connect us. They are physically and virtually in other places and they are always there.

The home as a gallery has been an interesting and productive initiative for many decades. To turn the domestic environment into a space to show art has been a means of sheer enthusiasm by some and has shown to generate a cultural economy. But there is something significant which occurs to the artwork when it enters our homes. It can struggle to maintain its status by being placed in among our other non-art images and objects. Galleries clearly show art and the artwork embodies materials and agency relating to the artist.

The artist and curator Colin Painter (2002) points out that not all art is 'art' when it is in the domestic context. He suggests that the home is a combination of images including all things, be it paintings, sculpture, photographs, objects and even when on screens. If art enters this context it becomes a part of all images in the home.

Painter (2002 p.207) also helpfully states, "However, when — through specially devised projects — people not familiar with contemporary art, have the opportunity to live with it for some time among their own possessions, the evidence is that they are able to adjust to it in perceptive and personal ways that accord with their own priorities . . ." Therefore, whether we are familiar with it or not, given time, we can naturally create an environment which accommodates an intermix of 'art' and other images in our homes and lives with some ease.

*I see out my front window that the courier is at my neighbour's door.*

*"Hello, that box is actually for me, thanks," I call over.*

*And in it comes.*

*I let the taped up cardboard box sit for a while before unpacking it. The painting has been carefully and beautifully wrapped, with brown paper, tissue paper and bubble wrap.*

*There is also a card from Nicola.*

*And there it is, number 50 of 54, already familiar but fresh and new. The image zings with colour. So where should I hang it?*

*I feel it needs to be part of the living space so it can be seen daily, from the corner of my eye while I'm watching TV, reading or just looking out of the window.*

*I try it around the house — in the hallway and at the front door — I even take it outside into the back garden and put it on the fence which borders with the farmer's field, just to get it used to its new surroundings, but it seems a bit lost and vulnerable. So back into the living room as I thought it should. I hang it above my record player near the window so that it can be seen in natural light.*

Across the world, museums and galleries have been sharing their archives, collections and exhibitions online during lockdown. Some have used the virtual environment to present interesting discussions with artists in their studios and hold virtual openings. At this time, venues have tentatively started to open up and let the public physically view their exhibitions but with the restrictions which we are now getting used to. A ticketed and timed experience; we cannot just turn up when we need to see our art.

Taking care of, and hosting an artwork in our home can be an anxious role. There are vast collections of paintings in museums and galleries which are taken care of for us by skilled curators, so that we can visit and experience them; to check in with, when the venues are open. Becoming the host to an individual painting in our home is also special as we become the custodian, curator and collector. We can decide to rehang our own collection, position the images however we feel, add and subtract, create themes, edit and rearrange. Fitting the creativity of the artist into our lives, and it is always open for us.

But the thing is, we may get too fond of our painting. As we live with and look after it, we know that as part of the Beautiful Materials Gallery project, our painting is available. It can be seen online, either for sale or just to be looked at in the context of our homes around the world. To digitally share the 54 paintings is a generous gesture by the artist and the hosts. Ultimately, what this project might show us is that the connection of the artist with friends and colleagues through online media, sharing and talking about the work and context, and even life in general, is beneficial to our wellbeing.

By reaching out to people, Nicola Atkinson has become our creative counsellor, with the painting — the art and creativity — being the vital component for our interaction at this time.

*So, I'm wondering... at a virtual opening, do we stand around with a glass of wine, chatting, but online, sharing the moment with anyone who is out there?*

*I can see from my 'likes' that there are others out there, it feels good. I feel connected.*

*It's on, the paintings are out and open to the world.*

*I see the other galleries from the online images. Beautiful homes, which look well designed and tidy. There is also nothing more interesting than seeing into others' homes and lives - checking out their books, furniture, record players, rugs, plants, pets, musical instruments, coloured walls and other pieces of art.*

*And there is their painting, in among their things, sort of familiar, a companion of my painting.*

**Reference.**

PAINTER, C., 2002. Images, contemporary art and the home. In: C. PAINTER, ed. *Contemporary art and the home*. Oxford/New York, NY: Berg, pp. 195-237.

**Iain Irving is an independent curator, producer and writer.**



Beautiful Materials Gallery



Beautiful Materials Gallery



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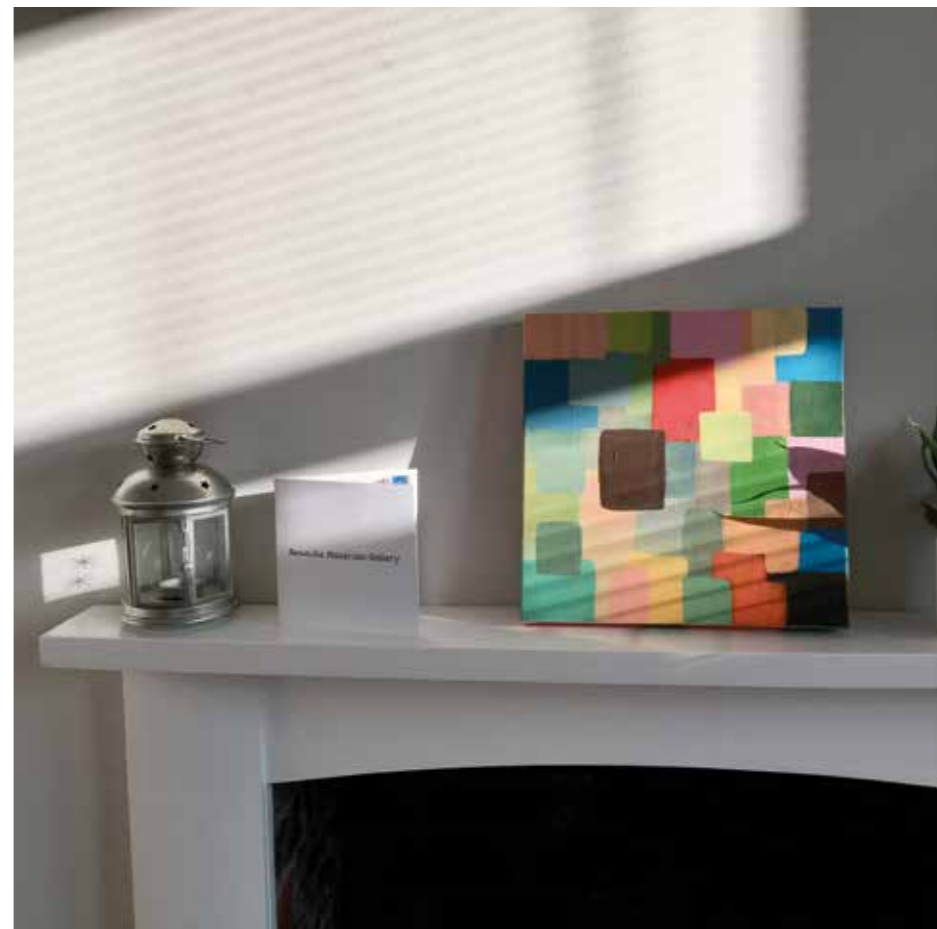


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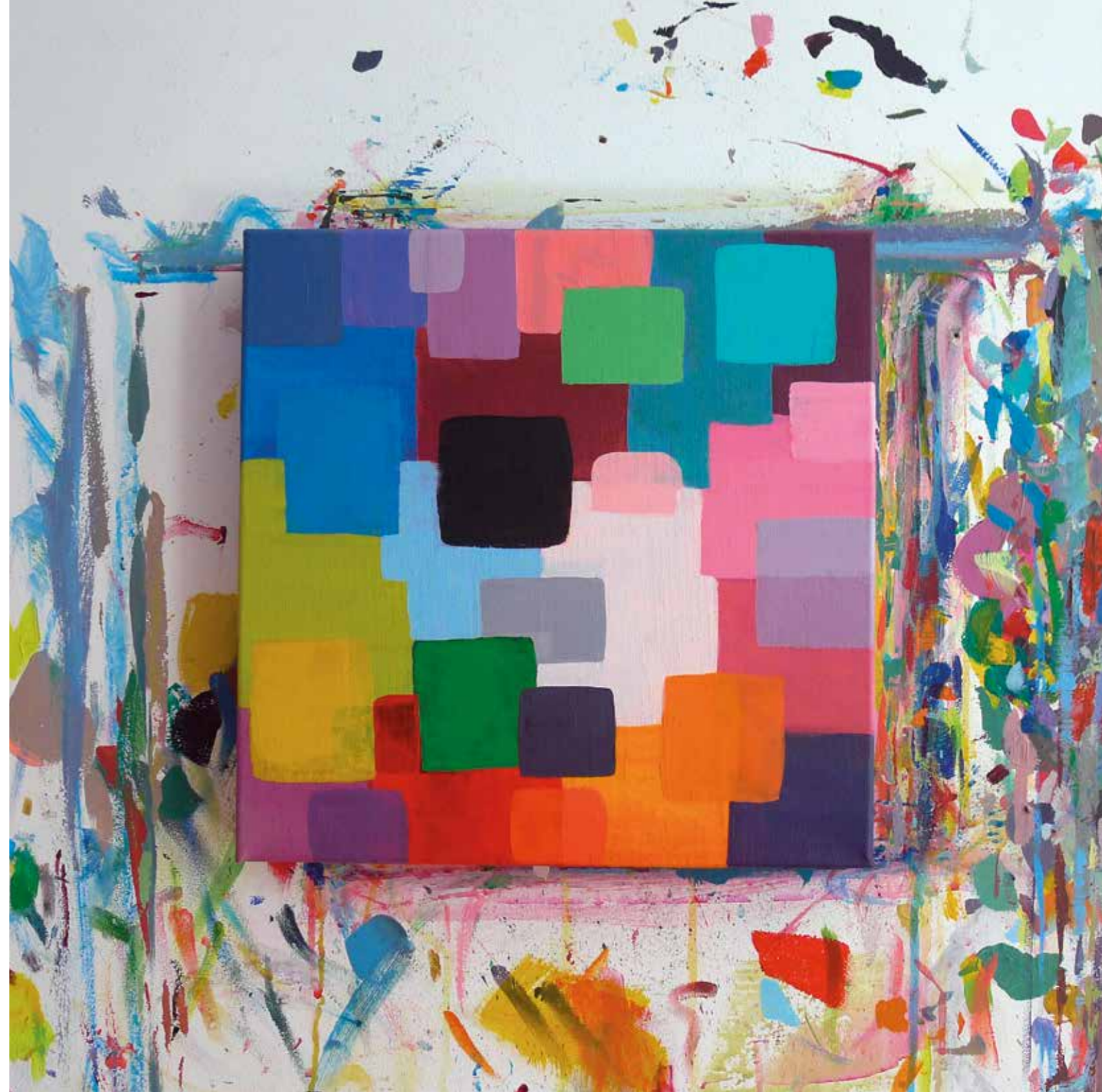




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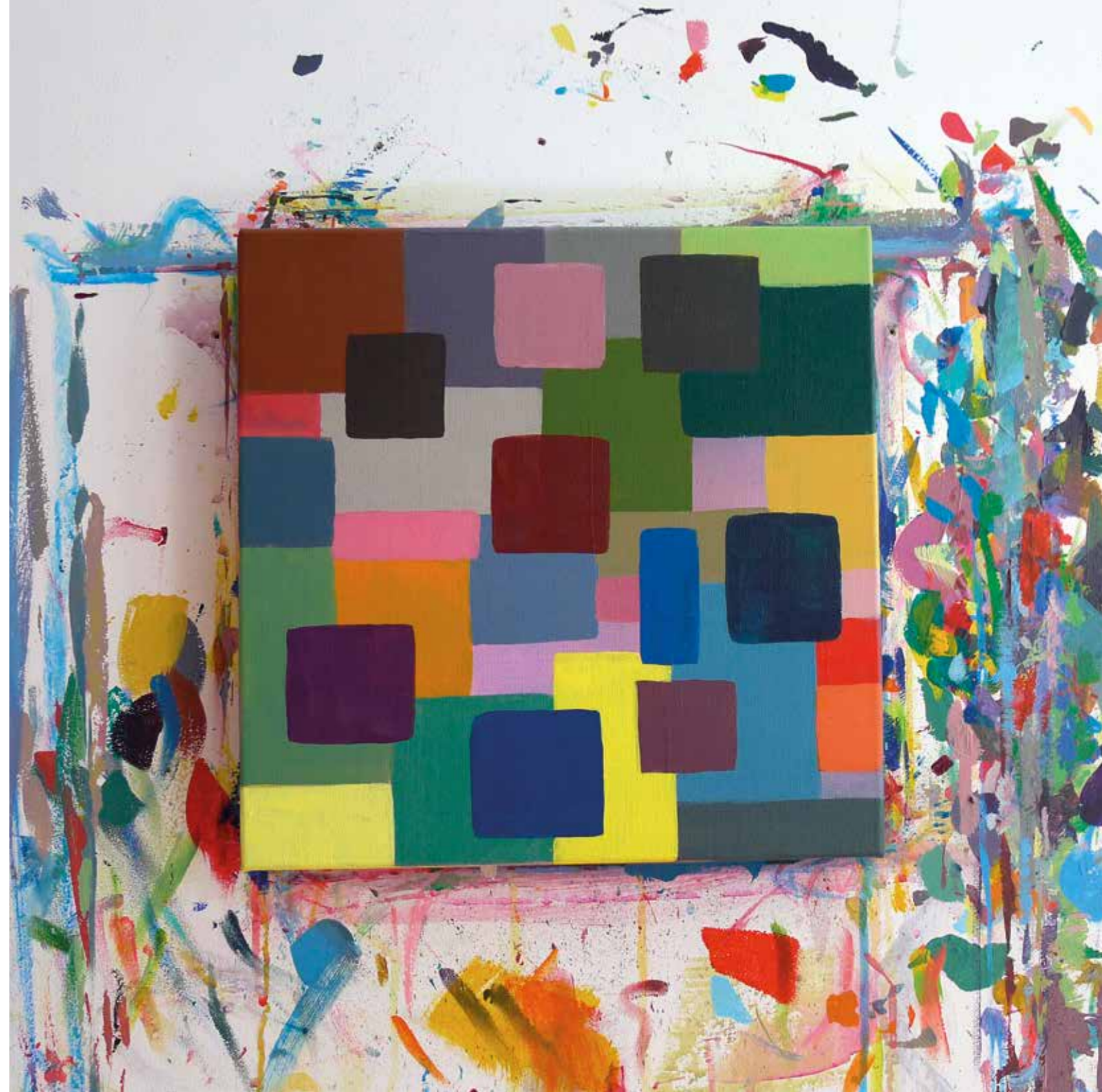
Beautiful Materials Gallery

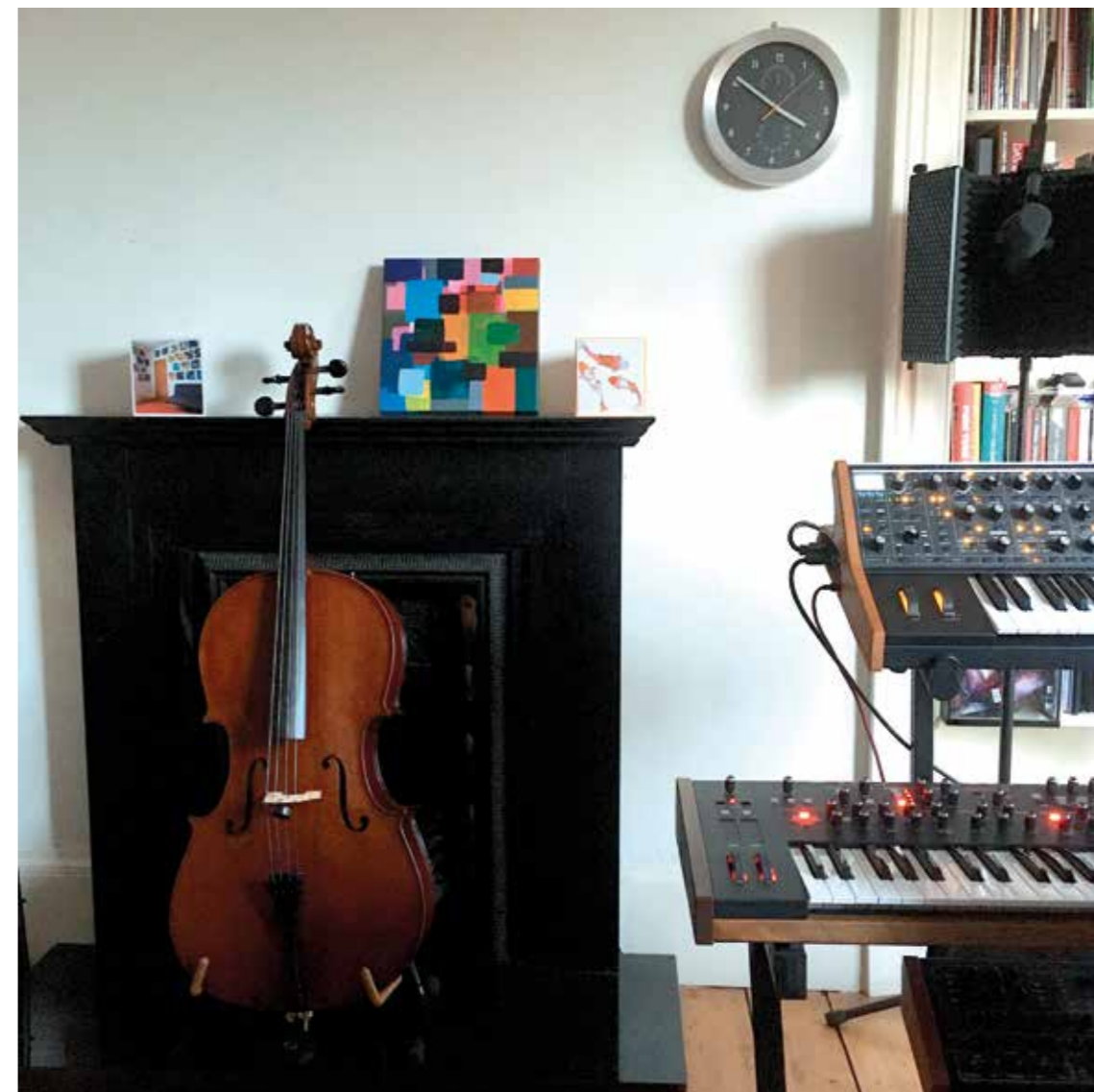


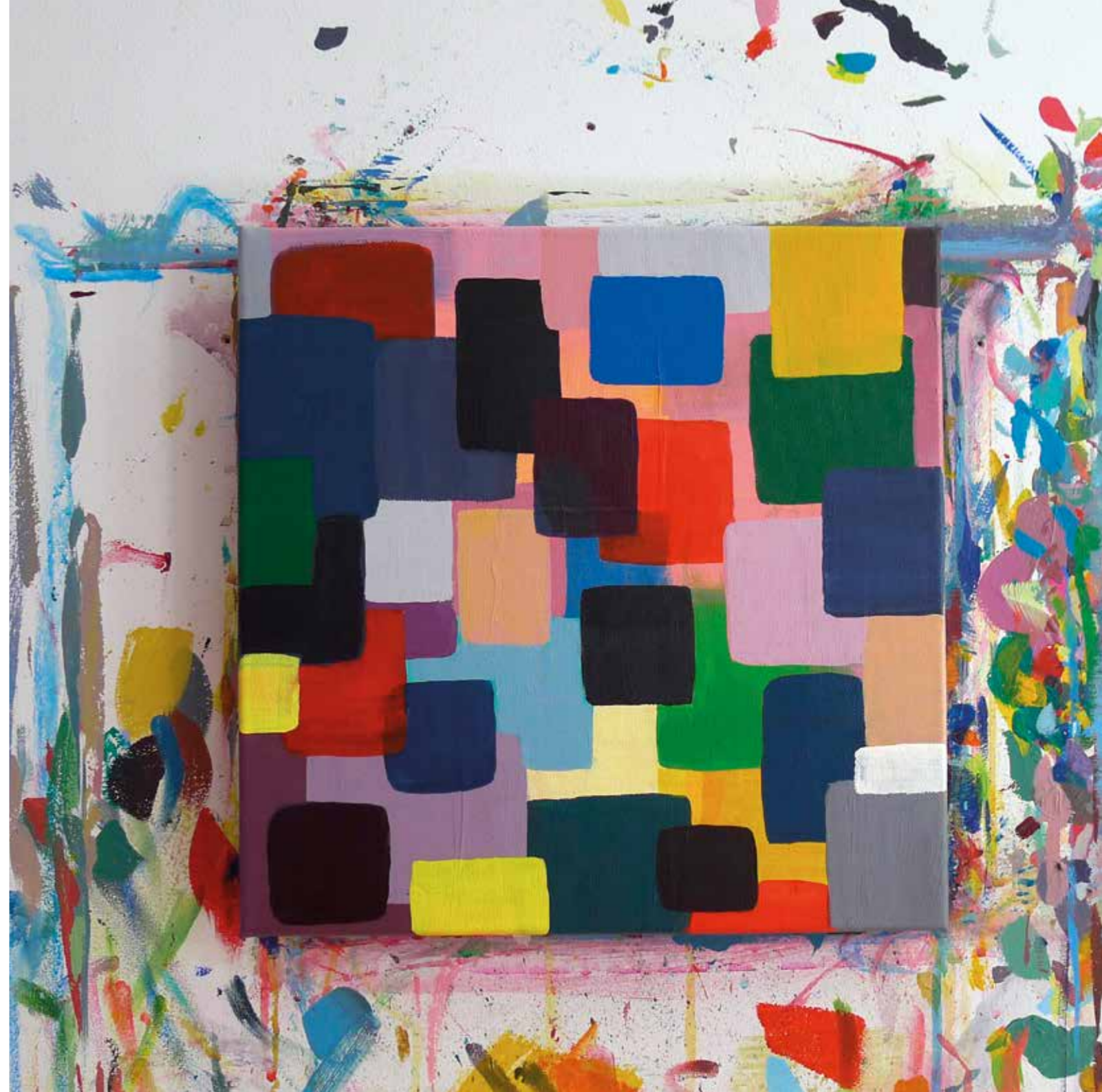


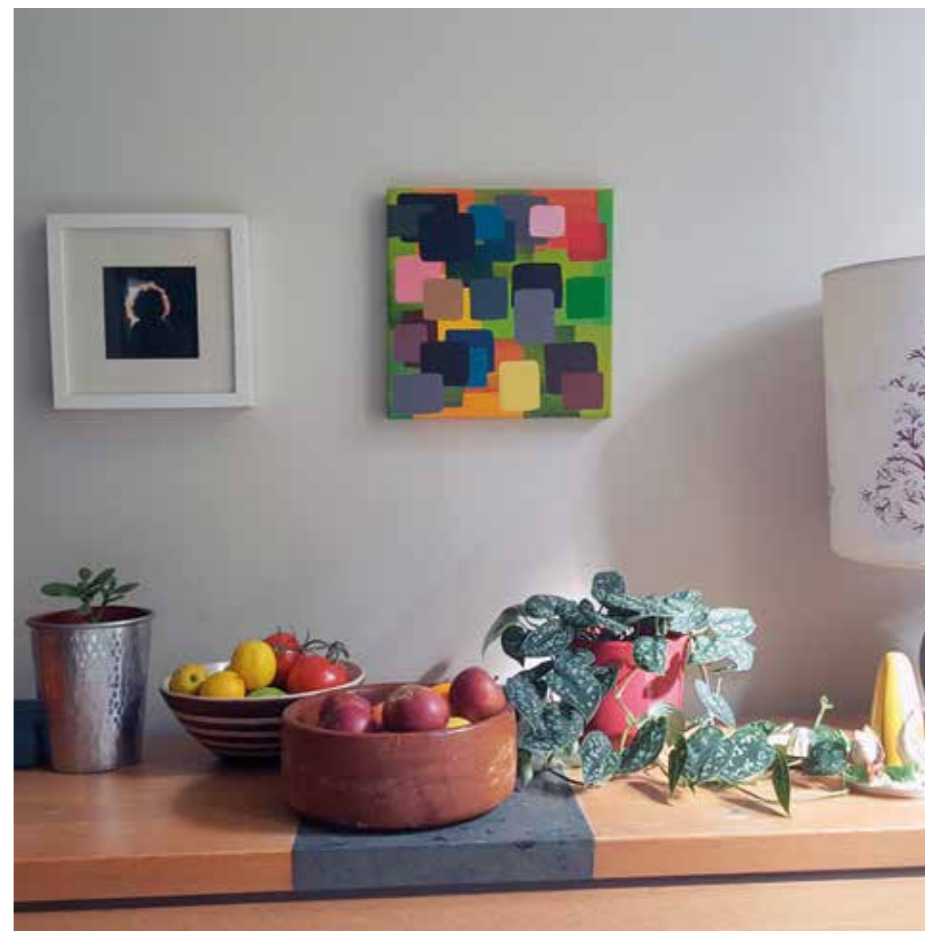




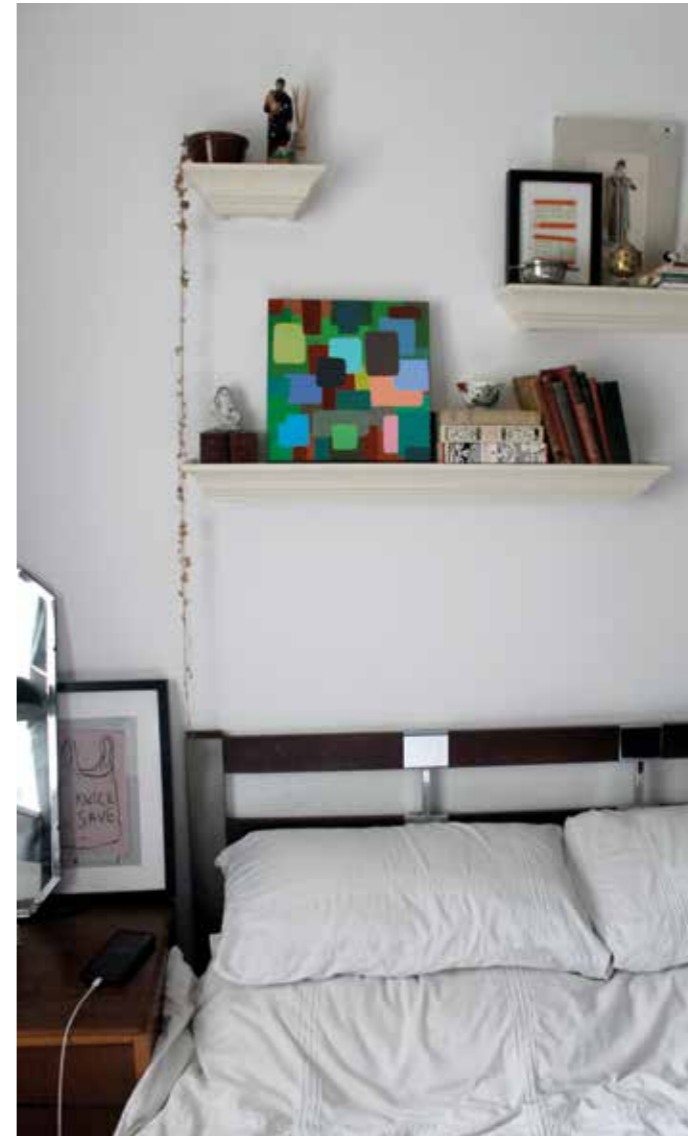












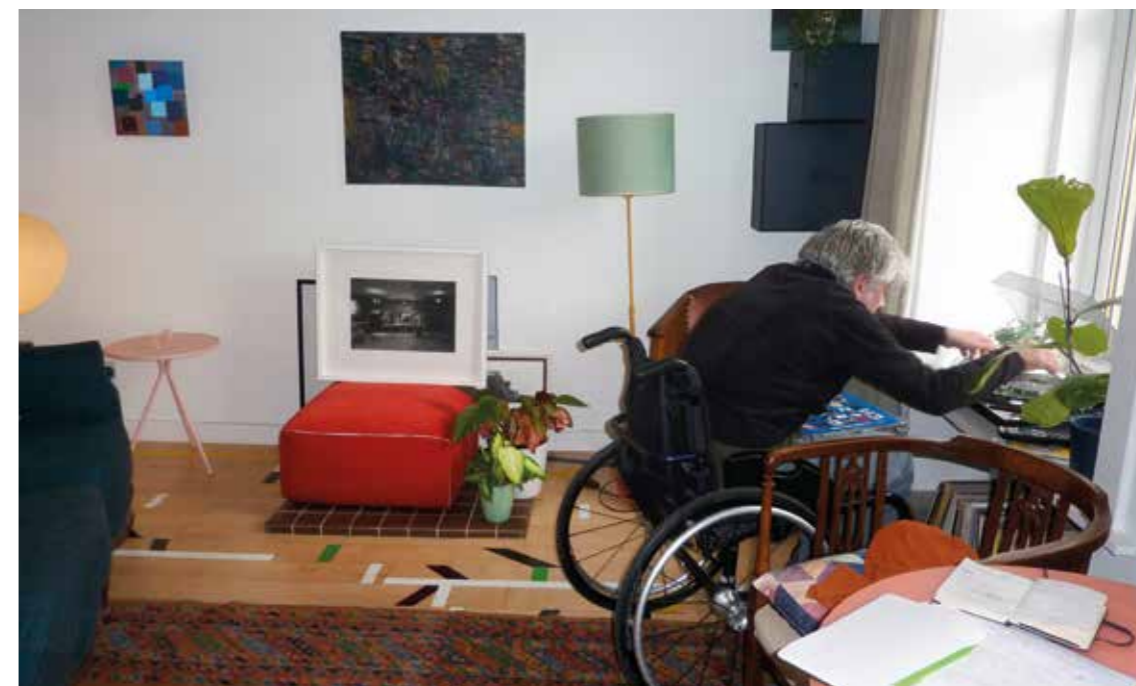


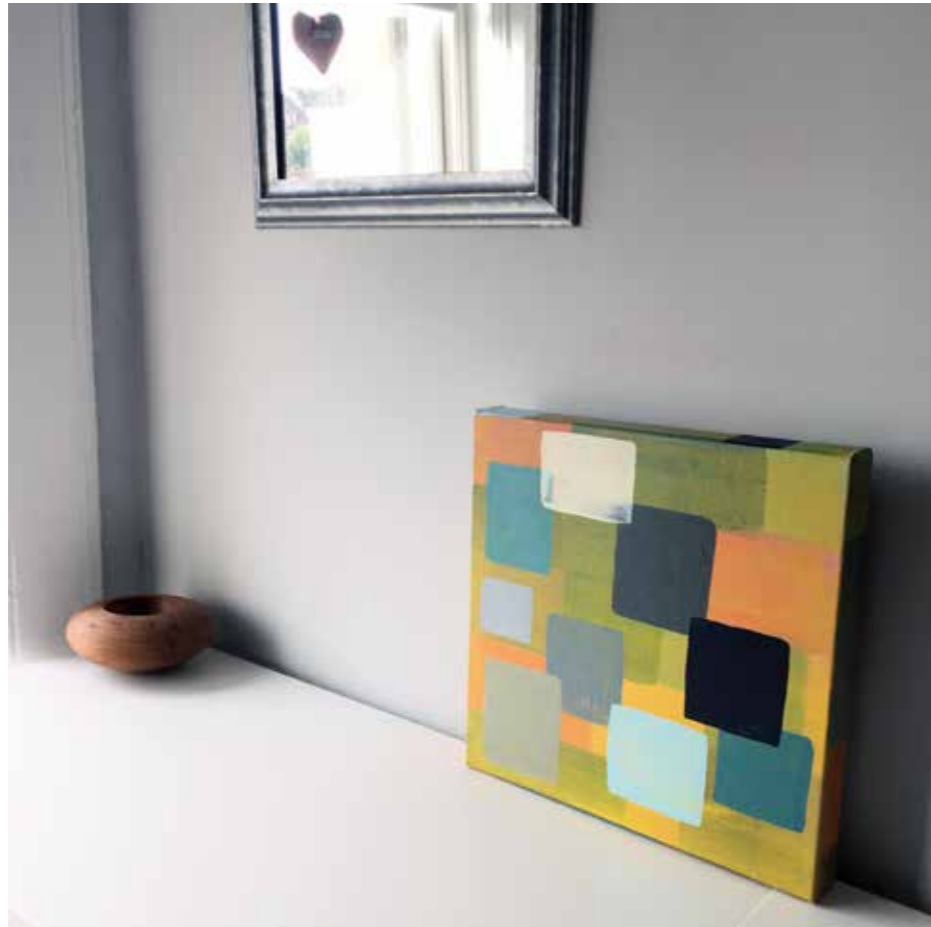






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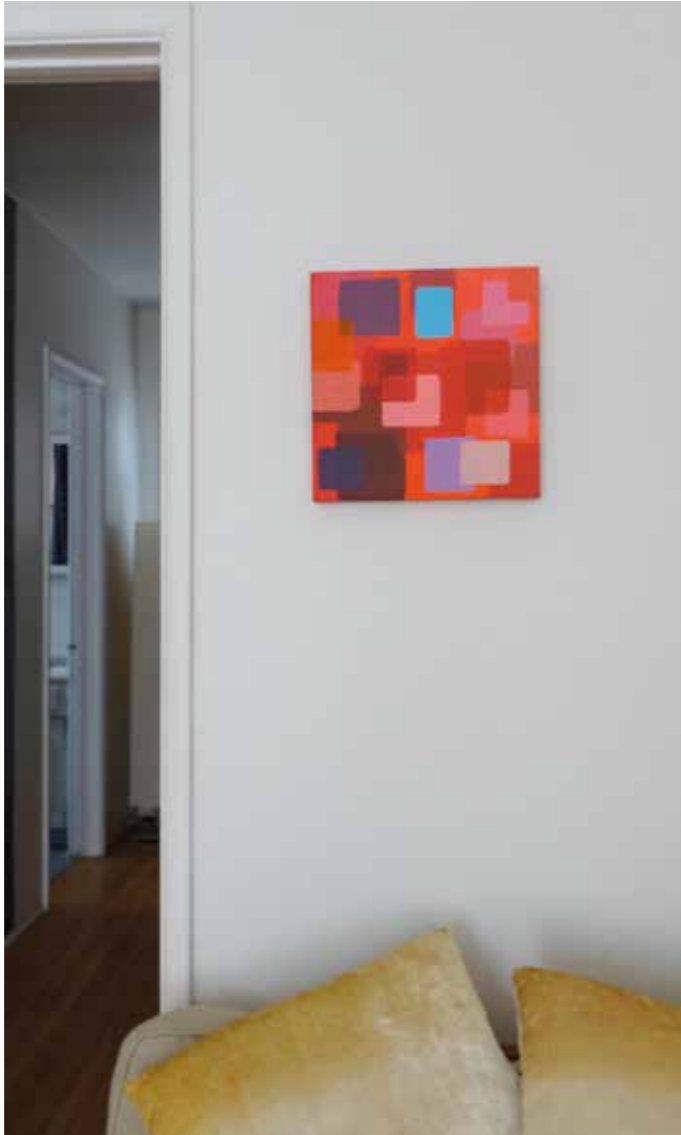














Beautiful Materials Gallery





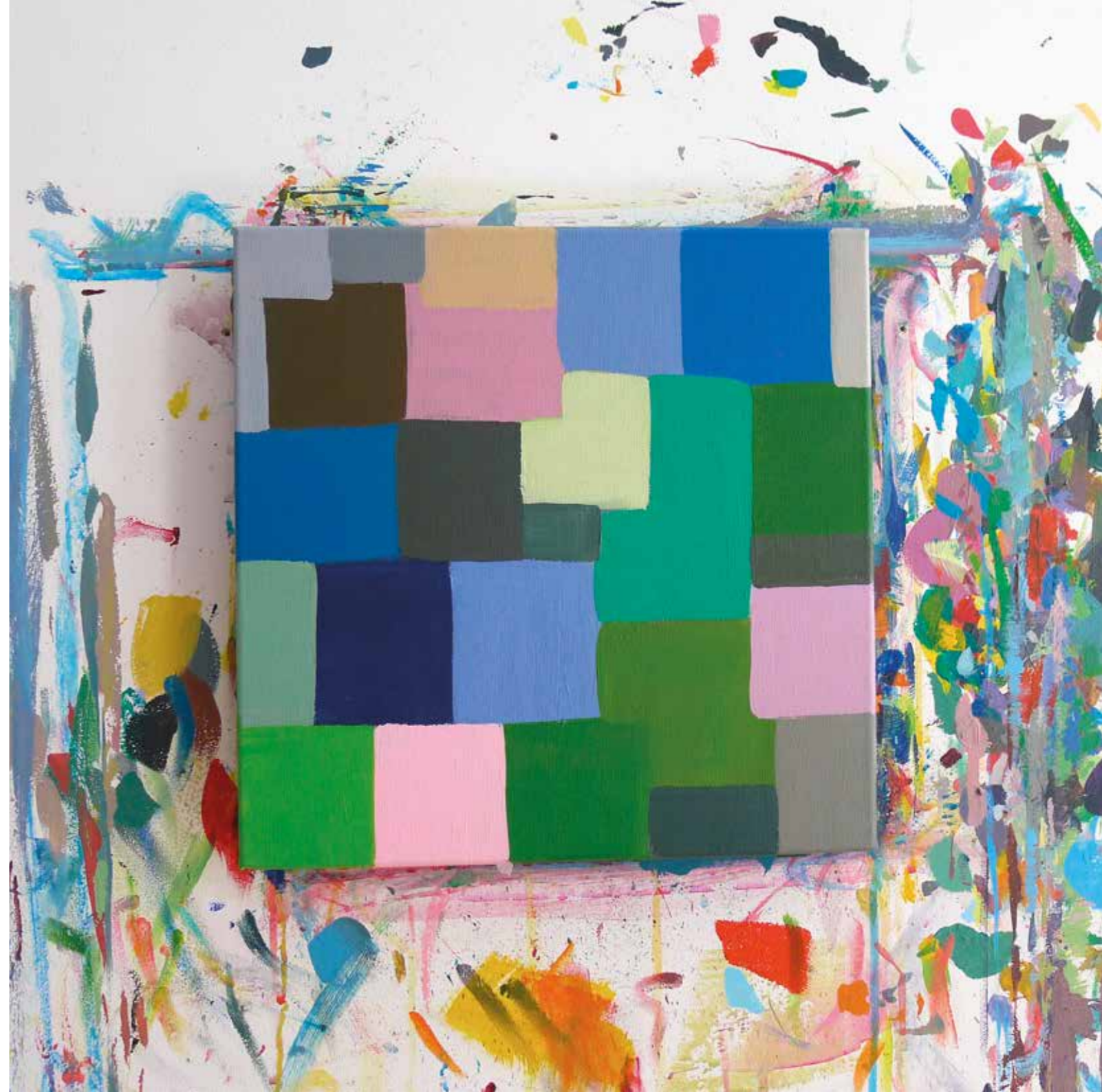






Beautiful Materials Gallery



















Beautiful Materials Gallery

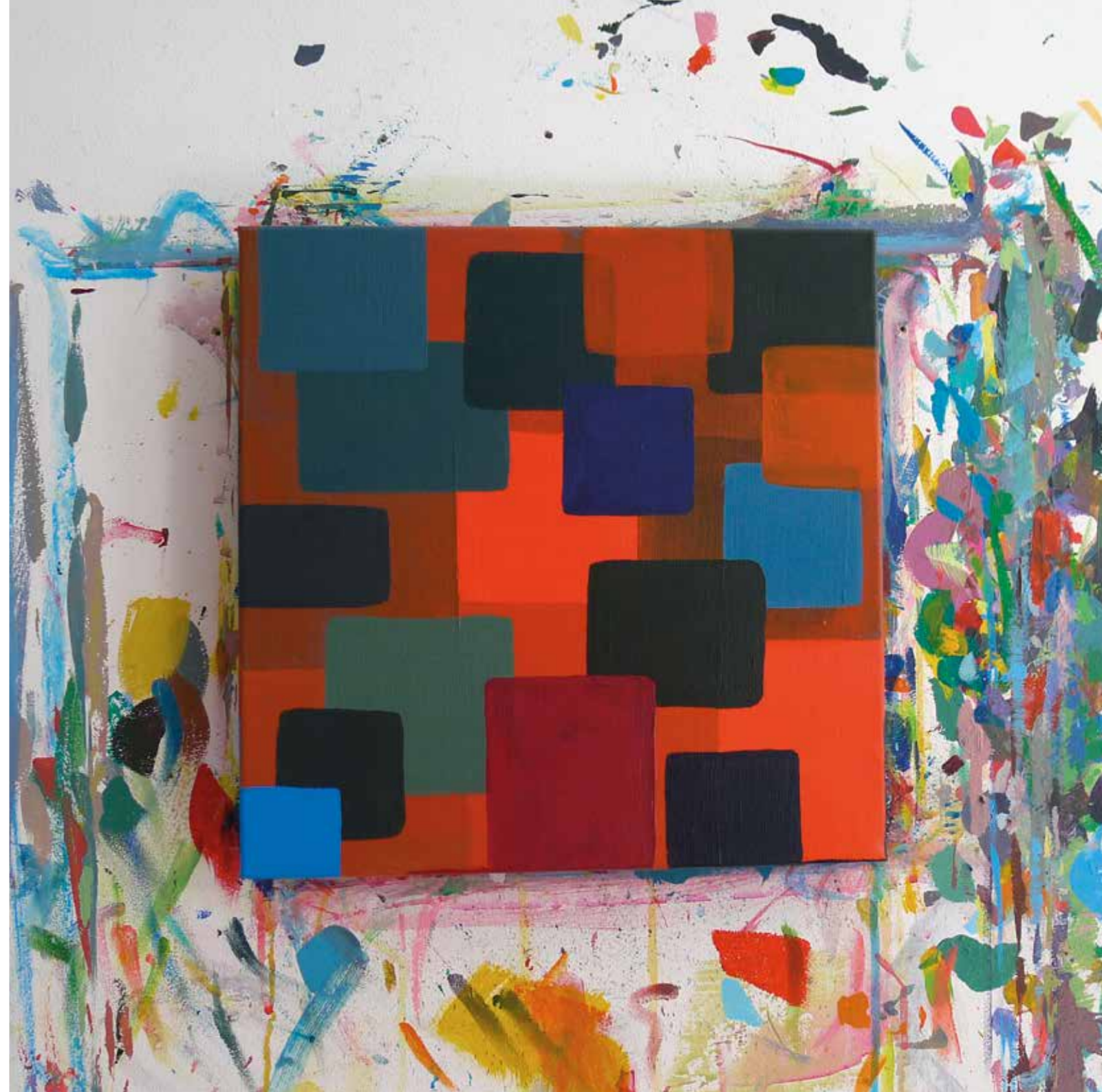






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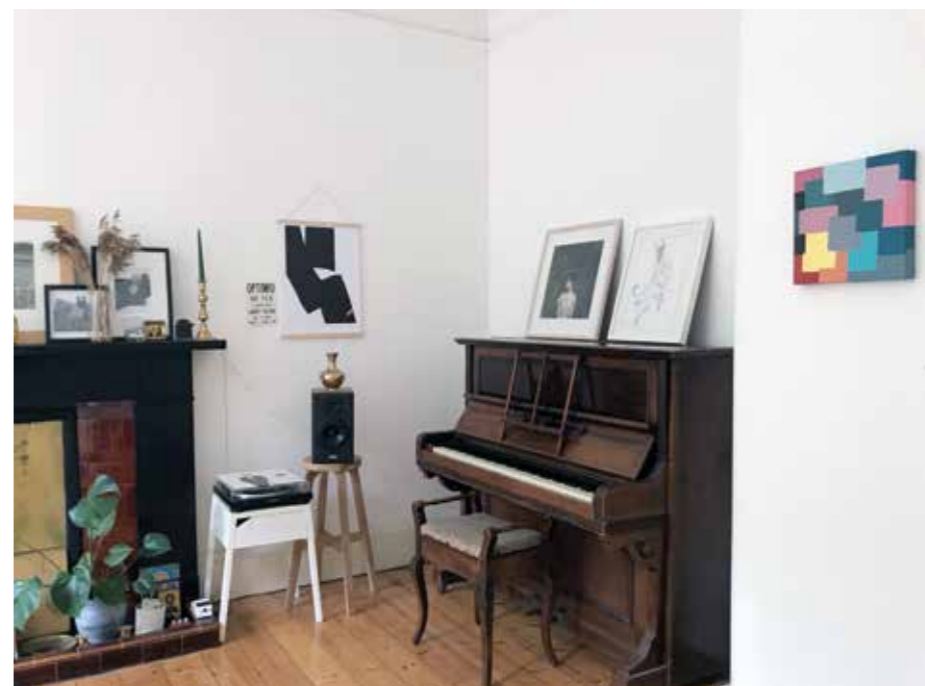
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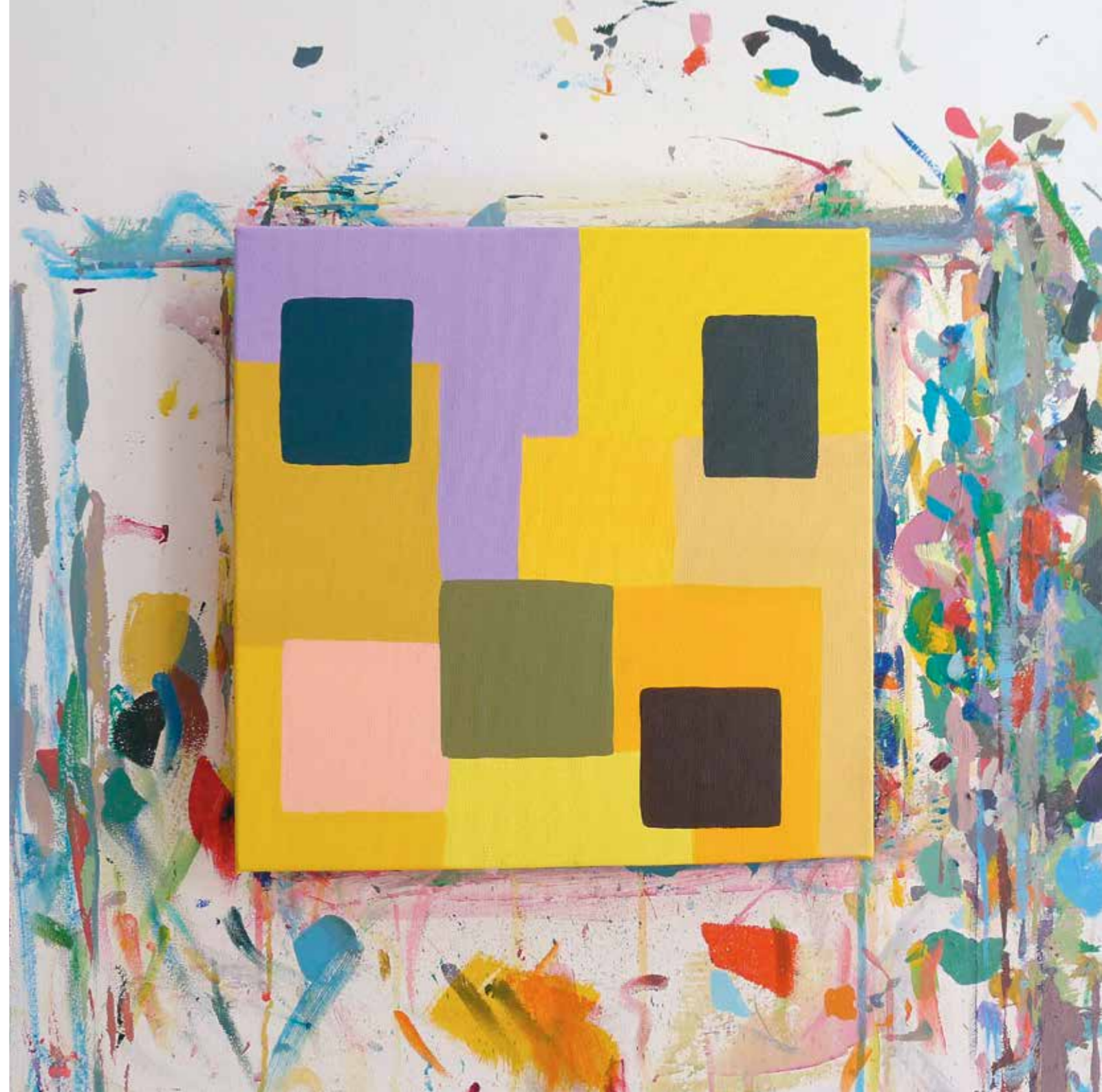






Beautiful Materials Gallery











Beautiful Materials Gallery



43 of 54 / Kate - Glasgow





Beautiful Materials Gallery







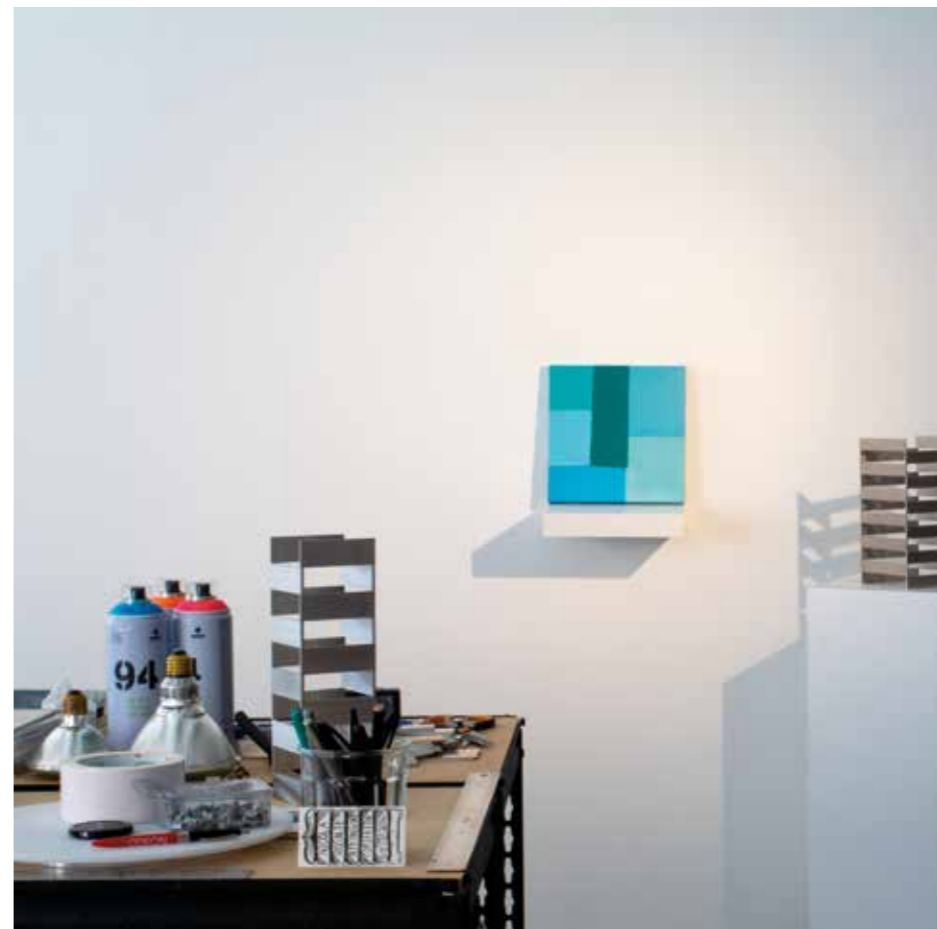




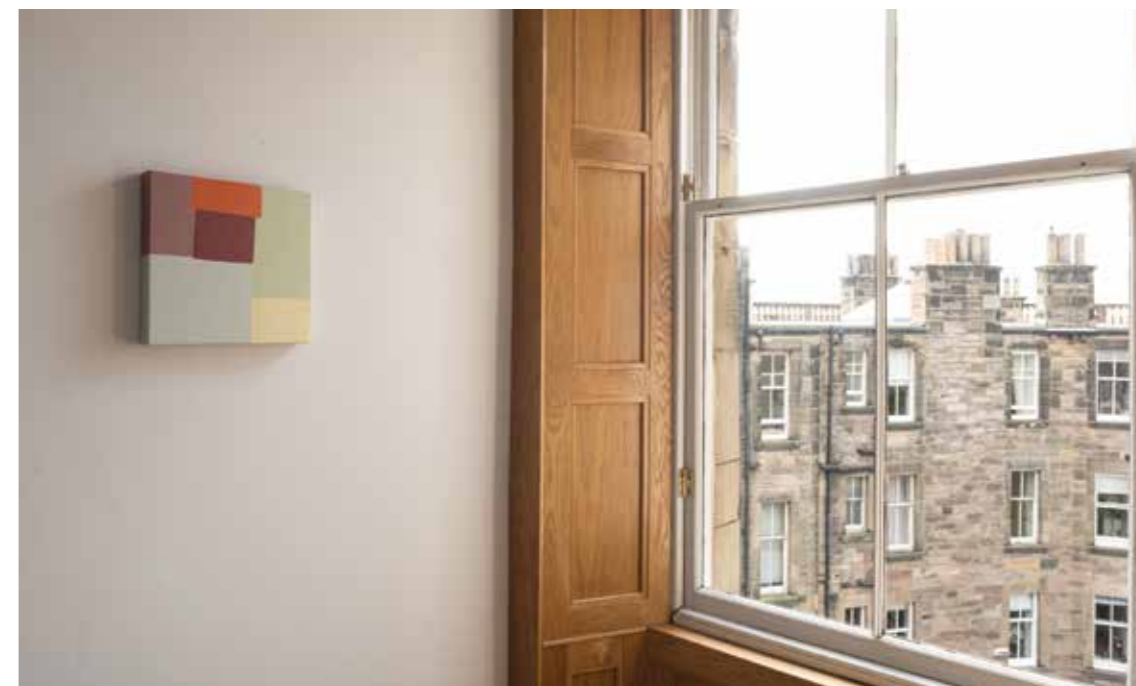
Beautiful Materials Gallery













Beautiful

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**Nicola Atkinson** is a hugely energetic artist who has a unique ability to engage and unite disparate communities using art, with successful civic projects around the world.

Atkinson's practice is particularly concerned with presenting her work, and that of other artists, in unusual public spaces; continually interrogating and pushing the boundaries of making art in public. To the eye, her work is carefully crafted and exquisitely presented, aesthetically underpinned by her training in Fine Art. Yet this is to simplify work of great complexity, evolved from scintillating ideas and the painstaking processes involved.

People from all walks of life find themselves joyfully participating in Atkinson's projects, and the apparent simplicity of her ideas belies the deep complexity and original thought involved. In a world where people are becoming increasingly insular, Atkinson's work is a beacon of hope; a way for communities to take ownership of their environment and find new ways to connect with each other.

In essence, Atkinson works to question people's perception of their environment through producing frameworks of ideas that enable the public to contemplate alternative views of the world. The work intriguingly warps the everyday to disturb the status quo and to alert audiences to remarkable aspects of life around them. Atkinson presents thoughts, questions and concepts to gently challenge the safe and familiar cocoon in which we tend to embed ourselves. This approach is based upon the idea of art as a form of communication through which the artist can influence (and be influenced by) as wide a range of people as possible. Through working in the public domain, Atkinson is not confined to touching people who visit galleries and this has led to the development of her particular artistic practice.

In much public art, the concept of collaboration often involves little input from the community where the work is sited. The traditional approach to making public art often tries to gentrify an area by imposing an aesthetic, usually in a singular form, which has little to do with the identity or concerns of the local population. On the other hand, community art has its tradition firmly rooted in working to empower local people in transforming their environment. With an emphasis on providing the chance for people to be creative at any level, the processes of community art are intrinsically democratic in their approach to artistic practice. Although community art may be challenging for the participants, the results rarely have much impact and are largely uncritical in terms of contemporary art practice. Atkinson does not practise either approach.

Throughout her career, Atkinson has initiated projects which use participation as a process to release her work, but this approach is not community art. Nor does the work impose itself on the community in which Atkinson is working, but evolves from the participatory process. The common thread running through all her projects is the creation of temporary communities, existing or fabricated, to pursue links that bind established, or disparate, worlds together. Atkinson develops a framework to explore a particular idea within a community and then works intimately with its people to elicit contributions to the project; perhaps an object, a likeness or a memory. It is important this involvement is not coerced and that the participation is entirely voluntary. This process of gathering is itself an artwork and is fundamental to Atkinson's practice.



While the actual donation is likely to be invested with great significance by the donor, the contribution itself may not be of particular interest on its own. Rather it is the act of participation itself that is crucial to underpin each project, adding meaning to the work and creating a shared, unified experience. In exchange for this involvement, Atkinson clearly outlines her role and what contributors can expect to gain from the project. A key part of the process is that anyone involved does not feel they have been either misrepresented or used in any way. This contract is vital for the artist to build up trust with the participants and has permitted Atkinson easy access to a wide range of communities. While Atkinson's practice has remained constant over her whole career, each project demonstrates the development of this approach.

The turning point in Atkinson's career was *Gentle Breezes Blowing* (1990) which began the artist's exploration of ideas on how to collaborate with people. Atkinson took a city block in Los Angeles and engaged with all the occupants of the neighbourhood wondering how this disparate community could be linked together. The final work superimposed a fantasy landscape over the block to bring an imaginary place and a little bit of beauty into their everyday lives. The occupants of this shared realm, both real and imaginary, were all connected by being given a map of the fantasy island and an abstract detail of the landscape, painted by the artist, relating to their particular location. The work aligned the community for a moment, creating a link through the common ownership of the artist's work. This gift was also crucial to the project as an exchange for letting an outsider in.

Atkinson continued to develop her practice and the process of linking fragmented communities together with public art projects all over the world.

Excerpts from essay **Making a Beautiful Thing**  
**The work of Nicola Atkinson** by Ben Spencer.

# Retro- spective

2021 : TOGETHER - WHAT IF?.../ SCOTLAND, V&A Dundee, Scotland.  
 2021 : WITNESS/ NINE CATS/ NINE LIVES - BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS GALLERY - Scotland Wide.  
 2021 : THE RED SHOES & ST MARGARET & OUR ANGELS - Bruce Street, Dunfermline, Scotland.  
 2021 : FESTIVAL DAMASK - Bruce Street - Dunfermline, Scotland.  
 2020 - 2021 : WALKING IN THE TOWN AS IF YOU WERE WANDERING IN LANDSCAPE - Dunfermline, Scotland.  
 2020 - 2021 : BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS GALLERY 54 Paintings - Worldwide.  
 2020 : FLOWER MOON & COUPLET - Wester Hailes, Edinburgh, Scotland.  
 2020 : FOUNDRY FORTUNE - Larbert & Stenhousemuir, Scotland.  
 2019 : CRUMPLES 2020 - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2019 : WORK PLEASURE, BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS DESIGN STUDIO - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2019 : SCREENMEDIA OFFICE DESIGN STUDY, BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS DESIGN STUDIO - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2019 : BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS TYPEFACE- Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2019 : MONUMENT FOR A LANDSCAPE - Maddiston, Falkirk, Scotland.  
 2019 : DANDELION WISHES - Cowdenbeath, Fife, Scotland.  
 2018 : BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS LTD SC604425  
 2018 : BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS DESIGN STUDIO Company Launch & Exhibition - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2018 : 789 ROUTES - Elgin, Moray, Scotland.  
 2018 : PARK PUZZLE - Aberdeen, Scotland.  
 2014 - 2017 : DUMFRIES GATEWAYS - Dumfries, Scotland.  
 2017 : RUNNERS - Edinburgh, Scotland.  
 2017 : 123 ROUTES - Elgin, Moray, Scotland.  
 2017 : MOSAIC GARDENS - Aberdeen, Scotland.  
 2016 - 2017 : ABC ROUTES Exhibition - The Lighthouse, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2016 : MUSICAL CHAIRS - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2016 - 2018 : OAT LIBRARY SINGS - Gartnavel Hospital, Glasgow International & Architecture Fringe 2018, Scotland.  
 2016 : ABC ROUTES - Markinch, Fife, Scotland.  
 2016 : Nesjavellir, Iceland - AND/OR by MCCARREN/FINE - University Art Museum at California State University, Long Beach.  
 2016 : PLACING THINGS ON SHELVES - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2016 - 2020 Caspar J Wilson worked at NADFLY.  
 2015 - 2016 : #24HOURWINDOW - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2015 - 2016 : NO MANNERS - Berlin, Los Angeles & Reykjavik.  
 2015 - 2016 : URBAN OATS - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2015 : PEPPERSOLO - Welcome Home, CCA, and South Block, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2015 : LIGHT AS A FEATHER - Forth & Clyde Valley Hospital, Fife, Scotland.  
 2014 : NADFLY PONDS - David Ross Design - The Lighthouse and South Block Exhibition, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2014 : GRAFFITI TILING - NCP Carpark on the corner of King St / Osborne St, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2014 : KITCHEN IMPLEMENTS - Saving the Season Book, Kevin West, Knopf Publishers, New York, USA.  
 2014 : BLUE - Kio Griffith 'Whitehouse / Restroom' at Roppongi 605 Tokyo, Japan.

# Retrospective

2014 : HEAD ON - Glasgow city wide, Scotland.  
 2014 : NADFLY LTD SC472773  
 2013 : SOFT TOYS SOFT MUSIC - University of the West of Scotland.  
 2013 - 2015 : FLOWERS & PARKS & WISHES Street Design Project -Pathhead, Kirkcaldy, Scotland.  
 2013 : ALL YOU NEED - 18 homes and the Briggait, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2012 - 2013 : ODD NUMBERS - Remaking Society Milton, Scotland & University of the West of Scotland.  
 2012 : LAURENCE AND PEDRO Band - The Glad Cafe & the Poetry Club, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2012 : MACABRE BEASTIES: A BURNS NIGHTMARE - Alloway, Ayrshire, Scotland.  
 2012 : CREATURES, SHOES, JUNCTION & MAP DESIGNS - Sinclairtown, Kirkcaldy, Scotland.  
 2012 : PET TONGUES RECORD - MONO, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2012 : THE FISH PEOPLE CAFÉ DESIGN - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2011 - 2014 : FRIENDS & FIREMATES Nina Hole, Grimmerhus Keramikmuseum Denmark.  
 2011 - 2012 : WEE SHOW - Boyle Heights, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 2011 - 2012 : THE BUG WALK - Kirkcaldy, Scotland.  
 2011 - 2012 : INVENT A GAME - Elgin, Moray, Scotland.  
 2011 : HUNTLY WOODLANDS PUBLIC ART PLAN - Huntly, Scotland.  
 2011 : BOY IN A CUP - On The Stage Of The Present: An Exhibition The Arches, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2011 : REPLACE - MONO, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2010 : GLASGOW WALKS - Belfast, Glasgow & Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 2010 : NEVER FARAWAY - Underpass, Elgin, Moray, Scotland.  
 2010 : CROSSING ILLUSION - Blaue Nacht, Rathaus, Nuernberg, Germany.  
 2010 : THIS IS PERMANENT - Events and exhibition 7th street Santa Monica, CA, USA.  
 2010 : PILLOW THOUGHTS - Urban: Sanctuary Gallery Boyle Heights, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 2010 : RETURN2YOU - European Dance Theatre Collaboration, Nuremberg & Glasgow.  
 2010 : LOS ANGELES ELECTRIC - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2009 - 2010 : CUP THOUGHTS - Los Angeles, CA, USA & Lidköping, Sweden.  
 2009 - 2012 : PROMENAD - Print & Design, Lidköping, Sweden.  
 2009 : SWEET CAKES Album - Recorded at Banchory & A Glo-Spot Sound.  
 2009 : NAD / BAX SHOP & TREE - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2008 - 2009 : VICTORIAN MARKET - Inverness, Scotland.  
 2008 : PAUSE FOR THE JET BY DANIEL PADDEN - Album Design. World Wide.  
 2008 : LORRIES SONG, Stevie Jackson, Hey You Get Off My Pavement!, Mono, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2008 : IN THE BLINK OF THE EYE - Words 2008, The Mitchell Library Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2008 : WILD SHADES - Stenportsgatan, Lidköping, Sweden.  
 2008 : WINNERS & LOSERS - Drumchapel, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2007 - 2008 : SEE EYE - Abbeyview, Dunfermline, Scotland.  
 2006 - 2007 : HANGING BY A THREAD - Glasgow, Paisley, Nürnberg & Fürth.  
 2006 : GREEN DOT - Schloss (Castle) Almoshof Nürnberg, Germany.  
 2006 : BRING THE GLAM TO EAST KILBRIDE - East Kilbride, Scotland.  
 2006 : I AM A DISH - Keswick Museum and Art Gallery, and Keswick, UK.  
 2006 : THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING !!! - Hamburg, Germany.  
 2006 : CaaC 1 - 10 - Belle & Sebastian, Triptych, Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2006 : FLIGHT/ VUELO - Glasgow International, Hunterian Art Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 2005 : BLACK SUITCASE FROM KARACHI ( ON TOUR ) - Glasgow Art Fair & Welcome Inn Eagle Rock, CA, USA.

2005 : BUTTONS UP UK, LA & NY - Glasgow, Scotland & Havana, Cuba.  
 2004 - 2005 : TERRIBLE BEAUTY/STRASNA LJEPOTA - West Bromwich, UK & Bosnia and Herzegovina.  
 2004 : FLUROESENCE/FLUORESCENCIA - Havana, Cuba.  
 2004 : PINTURA DE MAR /SEA PAINTING - Havana, Cuba.  
 2003 : CLEAR PILOTSPACE - NYC, New York, USA.  
 2003 : SECRETS OF THE WORLD - The Art of Thought, Angel's Gate San Pedro, CA, USA.  
 2003 : NADFLY - Nicola Atkinson Does Fly - created art brand - World Wide.  
 2002 - 2005 : TOTAL INVESTIGATION - Fellowship; National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.  
 2001 : A PIECE OF SKY - Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 2001 : THE MUSICAL HARE - Hairmyres Hospital, Hairmyres, Scotland.  
 2000 : CONNECTED - British Airways / Year of the Artist, Glasgow, Scotland & Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 2000 : CHOICE TAKES - Glasgow, Scotland & World Wide.  
 1999 - 2000 : VANISHING POINT - Chesterfield, UK.  
 1999 - 2001 : BULKHEAD - BULKHEAD PRIZE, 24HR WINDOW & ADD HAWK GALLERY, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1998 : KEYS TO THE CITY - Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland.  
 1997 - 1999 : BULKHEAD ON THE BUSES - First Glasgow Buses / Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1997 : TRUCK ART PROJECT - Museum of Transport / Traveling Glasgow City / Karachi, Pakistan.  
 1997 : ON THE 34 - The Fringe Gallery /Pearce Institute/240 Strathclyde Buses - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1996 - 2003 : SECRETS OF THE WORLD - Los Angeles, Hamburg, Karachi.  
 1996 : WHERE ARE YOU GOING? - Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1995 - 1996 : P.I.E.S. PEARCE INSTITUTE EXHIBITION SPACE - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1995 : MY HOME IS DUBLIN - Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Eire.  
 1995 : CAPTURED - McLellan Galleries, Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1994 : MY VIEW - Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA, USA.  
 1993 : HANGING SPACE - Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1993 : LOST & FOUND - Glasgow, Scotland.  
 1992 : A PAIR OF SHOES/UN PAR DE ZAPATOS - Santa Monica Place, Santa Monica, CA, USA.  
 1992 : BLOOD & WATER - Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA, USA.  
 1992 : CHARTED COLLECTED & CAREFULLY COUNTED - Security Pacific Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA, USA.  
 1991 : A FORMAL SETTING - Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1991 : I FEEL SO GOOD - RICHARD THOMPSON - Music Animation Video Design Klasky Csupo CA, USA.  
 1990 : MONUMENTAL ACTIVITY PART 11/111- Otis Parsons Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1990 : GENTLE BREEZES BLOWING - City Block, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1989 : PERFECT ACTIVITY - Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1989 : SHADOWS OF IDEAS - Santa Monica Art Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, USA.  
 1988 : OBVIOUS AREA - Wallenboyd, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1987 : HELP ME OUT OF THIS HEAD BY PETER BERGMAN - Set Design - M.O.C.A - Los Angeles, CA, USA..  
 1987 : ROOMISM - Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1987 : THE COZY WALL - Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1987 : THE DRAWING ROOM - Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1985 : THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL HAS NO TEETH - Lhasa Club, Hollywood, CA, USA.  
 1985 : IMPRESSIONS OF LOS ANGELES - Bernard Jacobson Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA.  
 1982 - 85 : GOLDEN MOMENTS /MEMORY OF YOUR NOSE - Museums & Galleries worldwide.  
 1981 - 86 : PAINTINGS VARIOUS COLLECTIONS - Los Angeles, CA, USA.

## 2021

**TOGETHER - WHAT IF?.../ SCOTLAND**

V&A Dundee, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Bash Creative.

At the start of 2020 and before the first nationwide lockdown, 7N Architects paired 25 people from 5 places: Wester Hailes in Edinburgh, Paisley in Renfrewshire, Annan in Dumfries and Galloway, Elgin in Morayshire, and Lerwick in Shetland – with 25 designers, architects, and artists – to share their hopes, dreams or wishes for the future of the places where they live.

Beautiful Materials Design Studio, Building Workshop, Buro Happold Engineers, Ian Gilzean, Collective Architecture, Gaada, Graeme Nicholls Architects, Harrison Stevens, Hoskins Architects, JM Architects, Lisa Mackenzie, Moxon Architects, Nick Wright Planning, Rankinfraser, Richard Gibson Architects, Studio NIRO, Daisy Narayanan, Threesixty Architecture & Voices of Experience.

These designers, architects and artists then used these wishes to begin exploring ideas in response to the community challenges being faced. This process all took place in a pre-COVID-19 world before the pandemic changed so much of what we take for granted; in the meantime, the Biennale theme of ‘how will we live together’ of the postponed 17th Venice Architecture Biennale in Venice, Italy, has gone on to develop a poignancy far beyond Hashim Sarkis’ original intent.

Nicola Atkinson was invited to Annan, a town and former royal burgh in Dumfries and Galloway. She spent the day with local citizen Calum McDougall: ‘It was nice to be able to talk to you about my town and the struggles it faces and I truly hope that what is being done by the project will help it in any way possible.’

Calum and Nicola both worked towards a bold and clear vision to make things happen for the people in Annan. Creating a brand that focused the people of Annan on developing a sustainable, profitable and engaged community as a source of change. We thought it would be lovely to imagine how the TOGETHER brand could become part of the future Annan’s DNA.

TOGETHER is a brand to inspire the local community to make things happen and transform Annan for the future. TOGETHER hopes to unify the generations and focus them on a common goal – a better place to live for all. It is adaptable and can be projected on buildings, on clothing and used digitally. The TOGETHER brand will unify the many hopes and wishes into a bold and clear vision, to help harness energy and to make things happen for people and places.

Small changes can lead to bigger things, but a big idea is needed to hold the smaller ideas TOGETHER.

**Supported by: 7N Architects, Architecture & Design Scotland and Scotland + Venice partnership.**

## 2021

**ST MARGARET & OUR ANGELS & THE RED SHOES**

Dunfermline, Scotland.

Medium: Bruce Street shop fronts & vinyl.  
Dimensions: Various.

Dunfermline Heritage Partnership as part of their Heritage Lottery Funded Great Place project work with shop owners and Beautiful Materials Design Studio to tell the stories of Bruce Street and Dunfermline. The initiative greatly revitalised Bruce Street, bringing people back to one of oldest streets in Dunfermline.

The shops’ public art installations brought to life the 19th century local artist Andrew Blair, Damask textile designs, St. Margaret and the Dunfermline born ballet dancer and actress Moira Shearer. Nicola said “ It is important the artwork created in my studio have the elements of discovery, engagement and participation. I believe an expressive and colourful approach can add to the wellbeing of the individual and the place.”

**ST MARGARET & OUR ANGELS**

Inspired by the life of St. Margaret and the many detailed and brilliant stained glass windows that are found high above in churches. The public artwork brings St. Margaret and our Angels to ground level, creating a scale that is large and bold, yet intimate and personal.

## 2021

**FESTIVAL DAMASK**

13 Bruce Street, Dunfermline, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

Working on Dunfermline Bruce Street with Sustrans and Dunfermline Heritage Trust to address the changing face of the high street. Innovative approaches were introduced to increase footfall and develop collaborative working methods with businesses .

On 13 Bruce Street FESTIVAL DAMASK the public art by Nicola Atkinson Artist, Beautiful Materials Design Studio was inspired by Joseph Neil Paton, a mid-19 century Scottish textile designer who specialised in damasks - a technique where the reversible pattern is woven into the design, rather than printed or dyed on to it.

The designs started as a pencil drawing which was then inked ready for scanning. Using the same technique as Joseph Neil Paton would have to create his 742 designs.

In 1877, there were 11 linen factories in the Dunfermline area. In 1854, Bruce Street had a factory, a warehouse, a calendar and lapping works meaning that linen was being made, rolled, washed, packed and stored here before being shipped all over the world.

**Supported by: Sustrans Scotland, Fife Council, Dunfermline Heritage Partnership, Delivering Dunfermline, Heritage Lottery Fund and Transport Scotland.**

St. Margaret was Queen of Scotland during the 11th century and on her death in 1093, was buried in Dunfermline Abbey alongside her husband, King Malcolm Canmore. St Margaret had an exciting and inspiring life. She was a homeless English princess born in exile in Hungary, a pious and strong woman who had an enormous impact on her adopted nation.

**THE RED SHOES**

Moira Shearer King was an internationally renowned ballet dancer and actress born in Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland in 1926. She is best remembered for her performances in Powell and Pressburger’s The Red Shoes (1948), which marked her feature film debut.

The film is based on the fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen and tells the story of a young ballerina who joins an established ballet company and becomes the lead dancer in a new ballet called THE RED SHOES.

The fairytale tells a moral tale surrounding ideas of temptation and eventual redemption. The story is centred on the protagonist’s desire for a pair of shoes and the consequences of her temptation.

The presentation of ballet in the film received praise at the time, deeming it the most ambitious and probably the most dazzlingly successful use of traditional-type ballet in any motion picture to date.

Revealed between the theatre curtains on Bruce Street is the hand-painted set of the shoe shop. Referencing the start of THE RED SHOES, where Victoria Page (Moira Shearer King) starts to dance. Nicola was inspired by the art director Hein Heckroth and Ivor William Gilmour Beddoes’s 1948 film set, and used the filmic technique of matte painting on glass to create the illusion of a hallucinatory landscape; a world of the unconscious, with flamboyant and dreamy cartoon-like images.

Nicola is very familiar with the world of film and theatre, having previously lived in Los Angeles, where she designed hand-painted stage sets for performances at The Museum of Contemporary Art and painted sets on feature films and animation in Hollywood.

**Supported by: Dunfermline Heritage Partnership, Heritage Lottery Fund & Fife Council.**

## 2020 - 2021

### WALKING IN THE TOWN AS IF YOU WERE WANDERING IN LANDSCAPE / BERRYLAW PERSPECTIVE

9 Bruce Street, Dunfermline, Scotland & Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: Getting Perspective  
Video: Project documented by Bash Creative

Nicola's installation, WALKING IN THE TOWN AS IF YOU WERE WANDERING IN LANDSCAPE, takes Blair's painting as a starting point, creating a new perspective from Bruce Street.

The old studio of celebrated 19th century Dunfermline artist Andrew Blair (situated at 9 Bruce Street) provides the perfect setting for displaying one of his landscape paintings, 'Dunfermline from the North-West'. Painted in 1860, the work is in the collection of the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum. The painting shows the town from the perspective of Berrylaw Hill. When standing at that vantage point you can see almost the exact same view that he captured in the work.

Blair painted, during the height of the weaving industry in Dunfermline. You can see amongst the sea of houses to the left, a group of chimneys blowing smoke into the sky. These probably belonged to the Dunfermline Foundry and Pilmuir Works, a linen factory founded in 1849. At the time, there were 200 power looms at Pilmuir Works. The other chimney (rising to the right of Dunfermline Abbey) may have belonged to Abbey Gardens Works, a linen factory which opened on St Margaret Street.

BERRYLAW PERSPECTIVE exhibition in the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum was an open call for people to create landscape artwork from the perspective of Berrylaw Hill Dunfermline. Inviting people to walk to Berrylaw hill and create art in nature. The 50 artists were curated by Nicola Atkinson and Alan Grieve.

**Working with Alan Grieve.**

**Supported by: Fife Council & Dunfermline Heritage Partnership & Heritage Lottery Fund.**

## 2020

### FLOWER MOON & COUPLET

Westside Plaza, Wester Hailes, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Medium: Sandblasted Granite.  
Dimensions: 4200mm x 3300mm.

FLOWER MOON & COUPLET public artwork is a part of four granite panels set on the Westside Plaza, Wester Hailes.

Throughout our history the Moon has been a symbol of aiming for unreachable goals, but on July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong took 'one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind' and for the first time humanity saw itself amongst the stars.

In this same year, the building of Wester Hailes began, and residents felt a sense of pride in sharing this date with such a special event in human history. We hoped that this Moon could inspire wonder and contemplation in Wester Hailes.

The Moon is a night time companion to all who wander in body and thought. It has been handed down as a symbol from each generation of artists and thinkers to the next and we have given it many roles. It has changed from a god to a planet and from rock to cheese.

The Wester Hailes FLOWER MOON was hand drawn in ink and designed in black granite by Nicola. Taking the photograph by Emily Stevenson for correct position and inspiration. The couplet surrounding the FLOWER MOON was by Eoghan Howard.

**Working with Eoghan Howard.**

**Supported by: WHALE Arts, Edinburgh Council & Harrison Stevens Landscape Architects and Urban Designers.**

## 2020 - 2021

### 54 PAINTINGS - BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS GALLERY

Worldwide.

Dimensions: Each painting - 300mm x 300mm.  
Materials: Acrylic on Box Canvas.

The 54 paintings were created by Nicola during the first Covid-19 pandemic lockdown: March - July 2020 in Glasgow, Scotland.

Beautiful Materials Gallery introduced an intimate new gallery experience that existed in 54 homes all over the world, where the audience are the family and friends of the exhibitor. Due to the pandemic, we were using our homes in diverse ways; from office to art studio to schoolroom. Now it also becomes a place for the display and sale of works of art. Where the domestic, dealer, client and audience co-existed, and the pleasure of living everyday with an artwork was realised.

Paintings were shown in places such as Bogotá, Bristol, Catterline, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Isle of Benbecula, Järpås, Newark, Paisley, Paris, Santa Monica and Sheffield.

The recipients of the 54 Paintings were invited to return, keep or sell their specific edition. This is a new business model for artists and galleries in the post-pandemic society.

**Supported by: 54 people, and their households & Beautiful Materials Design Studio.**

## 2020

### FOUNDRY FORTUNE

Larbert & Stenhousemuir, Falkirk, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: FOUNDRY FORTUNE  
Video: Project documented by Falkirk Council

FOUNDRY FORTUNE featured six unique waymarkers for the public to discover across Larbert & Stenhousemuir. The intention was to encourage people to get out and about on foot and by bike to explore the wonderful parks and pathways, and discover hidden heritage.

The six sculptures were greatly inspired by Scottish industrial heritage, and the many iron foundries that used to dominate the landscape across the local area. Each design had the idea of a coin as the central motif - the 'fortune' of "Foundry Fortune". Materials were especially important when creating something that was to last into future decades, whilst also being exposed to all the elements of the great outdoors. Stainless steel was a clear choice as a high-grade metal that would maintain an excellent finish, and was paired and contrasted with the rough and organic feel of natural boulder.

The 6 Sculptures are named / themed:  
PARTNERSHIP/ bring the right people together  
INSPIRATION/ the spark that lights the fire  
INSIGHT/ experience and opportunity  
MAKING/ the process of creation  
FINESSE/ prepare for the world stage  
MANIFEST/ from the mind made real

The journey of the research and making process started at a two-hundred-year old iron foundry in Bo'ness, and proceeded to a stonemason's in West Calder, via a machinist in Arbroath, and a cosy metal polishing workshop tucked behind a residential street in Edinburgh. This special exploration enabled us to create the highest quality artwork possible, which will stand in the landscape for generations.

**Supported by: Falkirk Council & Paths For All.**

## 2019

**CRUMPLES 2020**

Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Porcelain.  
Dimensions: 30mm - 50mm.

Crumples, 366 artworks for everyday of 2020 were made from thin and translucent porcelain and could fit in your hand. Participants were invited to choose one of the porcelain pieces that they felt matches the folds of their closed hand. Each CRUMPLES 2020 piece had a matching date that provided a future promise of progress, development, celebration or calm.

**Supported by: Beautiful Materials Design Studio.**

## 2019

**WORK PLEASURE**

New Glasgow Society, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

Beautiful Materials Design Studio comes from a place that reflects the personal experiences and unique history of objects used in daily life.

There is a growing desire for a new type of space enabling greater concentration and the freedom to engage in collaborative relationships.

Home/Work spaces and open-plan workspaces may not be functioning as intended, even though they have been gaining popularity over the past decade. These previously defined spaces have now become interchangeable as technology allows us to move about freely, and carry the work with us. The places we sit do not need to be as formal as a desk, only a comfortable spot to take a seat is necessary. Wearing headphones could create the perfect environment to block out distractions; allowing enjoyment of a soundscape curated for productivity.

The objects were staged in a gazebo within the gallery as a temporary partition from reality. It created an alternative environment; such as those used in design and art fairs, and festival events.

The designed items exhibited were: The Breakaway seat, The Belly rucksack, Standup backpack & Carryout bag.

All made in Glasgow by the Beautiful Materials Design Studio

Talks: Christopher McEvoy / Weaver Designer, Arne Wern / Furniture Maker. Nich Smith / Lighting Designer, Josh Armstrong / Artistic Director Objet-a Creative Studio & Lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice, RCS.

**Music: Ben Fletcher.**  
**Lighting: Ana Miran and Kay Flounders.**

**Supported by: New Glasgow Society & Beautiful Materials Design Studio.**

## 2019

**BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS TYPEFACE Launch & Website.**

Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Harrison Reid

Typography is one of design's most important elements and can magically add value to objects. The Beautiful Materials typeface was created and developed over several months without using a computer. Instead, it was created freehand with a pencil and later with a brush and ink to define the shape. The joy of the letters is not only that they stand on their own, but can also enter into conversation with each other.

The Living Alphabet event celebrated the launch of BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS TYPEFACE. Gathering at Glasgow Central Station 26 people volunteered to adorn sweatshirts and become a Living Alphabet letter, and proceeded to walk to the Lion Chambers Building on Hope Street accompanied by BMtypeface music. The Living Alphabet arrived to see the

BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS TYPEFACE projection displayed on the building's surface.

As proved with many projects, fortuitous timing plus the energy and willingness of many people was necessary for a project to work. For example, finding people who had an office right across from the building who were thrilled to help with the projection was vital.

**BMtypeface Music: Ben Fletcher.**  
**Lighting: Ana Miran and Kay Flounders.**

**Supported by: Beautiful Materials Design Studio.**

## 2018

**BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS DESIGN STUDIO****Company Launch & Exhibition.**

South Block Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

BEAUTIFUL MATERIALS DESIGN STUDIO is a Glasgow-based design studio established by Nicola Atkinson, artist and entrepreneur. The design studio is enthusiastically committed to the delivery of well-conceived and sustainable objects for a lifetime of use.

Beautiful Materials is where production, design and entrepreneurship meet. Its philosophy is to consider that customers are participants and not just consumers, and this enables stunning designs to be created. With this in mind, the studio never has to compromise its vision or values. Each object created in the exhibition was rooted in local & personal history, enabling it to be beautiful, sustainable and long-lasting.

BM STOOL - From childhood to later in life, it always has a use. The BM STOOL was inspired by a stool that Nicola found in her flat in Glasgow. It was honest, utilitarian, and always useful. It was a tough stool that you could stand on, sit on, and rest things on. The BM STOOL was made for a lifetime of use, from a childhood seat, to resting with a cup of tea, to working in the garden, to reach for out-of-the-way objects later in life.

Beautiful Materials has approached every part of the creation of the BM STOOL in a sensible and sustainable way.

BM TABARD - Artists and makers spend much of their time wearing functional clothes to protect them from the materials they are working with. Why not wear something you like and to hell with the mess! The designs were made with minimal wastage.

PRACTICALLY UNFRAMED - Here is where function meets design and price meets function. Hang on a hook or hang on a wall. The choice is yours. Use our Beautiful Materials tea towel to dry your dishes, or buy it as a canvas and make your wall a talking point. Printed on 100% cotton.

**Supported by: Beautiful Materials Design Studio, SOUTH BLOCK & WASPS LTD.**

## 2018 - 2019

**MONUMENT FOR A LANDSCAPE**

Maddiston, Falkirk, Scotland.

Medium: Granite & Stainless steel & Paper  
Dimensions: Various  
Video: Project documented by Falkirk Council & Harrison Reid.

Maddiston Falkirk distinct areas of historic postwar council and contemporary residential; the aim of the public art project was to foster a greater connection between these areas. The installation features nine waymarker sculptures, formed in warm granite and features a piece of the fantastical landscape carved into its sides. At the head there is a circular plaque in steel, engraved with a landscape symbol. The public are invited to explore Maddiston to collect all nine symbols and complete the landscape. People used pencils to make a rubbing into the appropriate space of the beautifully designed maps. The public walk event was attended by 387 people who used hand made Paper Lanterns with bike lights to illuminate their journeys.

This outcome is a consequence of the investment in imaginative community engagement.

**Supported by: Falkirk Council & Paths For All.**

## 2018 - 2019

### DANDELION WISHES

Cowdenbeath, Fife, Scotland.

Medium: Crystal Black Granite & Stainless Steel.  
Dimensions: Various.

DANDELION WISHES was a public art project for Cowdenbeath. The work used the imagery of the blown dandelion to express making a wish for the future. Dandelion flowers and florets floated through the park into the centre of the town, connecting two schools and the leisure centre with Cowdenbeath High Street.

Each design of a dandelion head or floret is unique; drawn with a brush and selected from hundreds of examples for its individual expression. These were then created in stainless steel, and etched and set into Crystal Black granite. Across the park, half-moon pavings were situated at twelve points along the Line. At Pitt Road & Hall Street, twenty rectangular pavings were situated in the fabric of the newly pedestrianised streetscape.

Dandelion Wishes became a neighbourhood landmark for Cowdenbeath, transfusing architecture, artistry, wayfinding and participation into a permanent legacy for this historic Fife town. The project inspired an iconic gable end mural in the town centre by Kerry Wilson.

**Supported by: Sustrans Scotland & Fife Council**

## 2018

### PARK PUZZLE

Westfield Park, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

PARK PUZZLE was a participatory artwork for Bridge of Don, Aberdeen. A vivid landscape of colour inspired by the park, was created as a painting and made into unique artist signs

that were just waiting to be collected as you piece the puzzle together in your mind. Puzzle signs were placed in the beautiful Westfield Park and a map was given to each of the participants for their journey to collect each of the twelve pieces.

The puzzle piece signs were installed on lamp posts throughout the entire park area, encouraging people of all ages to walk, cycle and explore their park. The pieces were marked off as they were found and the imaginary puzzle completed.

**Supported by: Paths For All & Aberdeen Council.**

## 2017

### RUNNERS

Edinburgh, Scotland.

Medium: Flowers, Printed Textiles & Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

RUNNERS was a participatory artwork in the form of table runners; long textile tablecloths that reflect the role that food plays in our lives. The designs were made by Nicola Atkinson of NADFLY in response to the process of making and sharing with participants.

RUNNERS is an expression of the social and celebratory role that eating together holds in our lives. A workshop series with older people from the Chinese and South Asian communities in Edinburgh led to the design of fabric table runners. Coming together for a meal with family and friends, the fabric designs were presented and shared, demonstrating the balance between traditional motifs and contemporary thought. A restaurant was chosen and booked out for a dinner event to share the finished product, with each participant taking one runner for their own home.

**Supported by: LUMINATE & MECOPP.**

## 2017

### 123 ROUTES & 789 ROUTES

Elgin, Moray, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: 123 ROUTES & 789 ROUTES  
Video: Project documented by Daniel Warren.

123 ROUTES & 789 ROUTES by NADFLY was a participatory artwork that aimed to inspire residents and visitors to rediscover New Elgin & North Elgin.

Unique glyph signs created new pathways of discovery for the public to walk, cycle and use to rediscover the neighbourhood. The routes and glyph designs were kept secret until the signs appeared in the streets for everyone to find, and maps of the area were subsequently released to help guide explorers. By engaging with thousands of residents through a comprehensive strategy across public events, the project resulted in exceptionally high increases in walking, cycling and scootering.

The programme of events included a Night Walk, for invited locals and visitors to see Elgin at dusk by using flashlights to reveal the reflective, beam-catching signs.

Pat Douglass, Sustainable Travel Officer for Moray Council, said: “This was a new and innovative approach to discovering local walking and cycling routes. Through art, NADFLY created a voyage of discovery that everyone could enjoy, where it’s not about the destination, but the journey along the route. An opportunity for people to discover some of the many back-door routes that wind through the local communities, away from the more familiar road network. The programme of events on the route and the work with the primary schools provided a welcome opportunity for additional community engagement.”

**Supported by: Johnstons of Elgin, Moray Council & Paths For All.**

## 2016 - 2017

### ABC ROUTES EXHIBITION

The Lighthouse, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Daniel Warren.

An exhibition of the legacy of ABC ROUTES, including a colouring book featuring all 26 glyph designs, was included as part of the Year of Architecture & Design.

ABC ROUTES broke new ground for public art by integrating an artist-conceived strategy into the architecture of the built environment. Unique traffic signs attached to lamp posts created an evolving set of new routes for the community to discover.

**Supported by: NADFLY & The Lighthouse Glasgow & Architecture & Design Scotland.**

## 2015 - 2016

### #24HOURWINDOW

An exhibition space featuring new, site-specific work, King Street, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Hanna Ford.

NADFLY invited proposals from artists for the #24HOURWINDOW exhibition space on King Street. Presenting an opportunity for artists to present work to a public audience for a one-month period during 2015 - 2016. The space was a boxed window approximately 2m x 2.5m x 0.5m, with power plugs and fittings. The proposals were for new work that responded to the window space.

The window spaces exhibited were:

Another Version of The Real, Nicola Atkinson.  
Identity Crisis, Caspar J Wilson.  
Praying Point, Sara Alonso.  
The Smooth and the Striated, Victoria Evans.  
Let Me Stay, Penny Anderson.  
Liminal, Blair Cunningham.  
Nostalgia, Overwhelming, Nicola Atkinson & Caspar J Wilson.

The baton was successfully passed and the #24HOURWINDOW project continues to function under a new curator.

**Curated by Nicola Atkinson and Caspar J Wilson.**

**Supported by: NADFLY & 13th Note Bar Glasgow.**

## 2016

### MOSAIC GARDENS

Union Terrace Gardens, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Medium: Flags & Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Daniel Warren.

MOSAIC GARDENS was a participatory artwork and part of the development plan for Aberdeen Union Terrace Gardens. This participatory installation created the opportunity to visualise a reimagining of a much-loved city centre space.

On a cold November day, the lawns fluttered with over 200 brightly coloured flags featuring drawings of details found within the Gardens. The public was invited to discover this emotive installation and take one flag home with them as their piece of the MOSAIC GARDENS.

As part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan proposals, LDA Designs submitted a detailed re-imagining of the Union Terrace Garden and chose NADFLY as part of their artistic intervention. Nicola and the team found ways to put local people at the heart of the design process and demonstrate that the Gardens truly were theirs to shape.

Over 400 members of the public attended the day and each person took home their own flag. As they subsequently filtered out across the city, the attendees created a moving symbol of reclamation and hope for what was to come.

The MOSAIC GARDENS event introduced ideas of change, re-imagining and renewal.

**Supported by: Aberdeen Council & LDA design.**

## 2016

### MUSICAL CHAIRS

Royston, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Porcelain & Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Hanna Ford.

MUSICAL CHAIRS was a public art intervention in Royston, Glasgow by NADFLY. MUSICAL CHAIRS used curiosity, surprise and symbolism to inspire the community to think about their neighbourhood in new ways.

120 tiny porcelain sets of chairs were placed across every street in Royston over ten days. Arranged in sets of three, suggesting a conversation, they were discovered at the street corners throughout the area.

Children and adults interacted with the chairs in a natural and spontaneous way; searching for them and taking them home to start a new life, and stimulate conversations with others about art, place and imagination.

Awareness of the project was spread through MUSICAL CHAIRS Postcards that were then used to send a message from Royston to a friend or loved one. With at least 27 languages spoken in the area, the multicultural identity of the community where the MUSICAL CHAIRS project took place was shared across Glasgow and the world.

Musical Chairs prompted a rethinking of how we relate to each other within the place we live.

**Supported by: Glasgow City Council & Blochairn Housing Association.**

## 2016 - 2018

### OAT LIBRARY SINGS

The Summerhouse, Gartnavel Hospital, Glasgow International 2016 & Architecture Fringe 2018, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Daniel Warren.

OAT LIBRARY SINGS was part of the SMHAFF 2016 theme 'Time', this new work inverted the traditional harvest cycle by reflecting on the process of germination and inception. The performance took place at The Summerhouse, Gartnavel Hospital, Glasgow.

The male (tenor) and female (mezzo-soprano) voices were paired in a live singing performance complimented by live projections of wild oat seeds in genetic motion. The choral pairing explored notions of 'duration' and the stages of growth within a larger cycle, as well as the historical context of work-songs as a ritualistic and functional expression of human connections with the natural world.

The work contained an immersive projection installation of wild oat seeds that have been triggered with water to begin a kind of slow dance of self-propagation. They appeared to have a sentient consciousness despite it being a purely physical process. The act of sowing and germination was a ritual, and was tied to the harvest being a traditional festival for communities to come together and celebrate food and song.

Talk: Oat Library at Soil City, Glasgow International 2016

Exhibition: Video and artefacts associated with the OAT LIBRARY SINGS performance were shown at The Uncommon Beauty of Common Things, a group exhibition for Architecture Fringe 2018, curated by Hoskins Architects at The Pipe Factory, Glasgow.

**Supported by: Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival (SMHAFF), Glasgow International 2016, Hoskins Architects & Architecture Fringe.**

## 2016

### ABC ROUTES

Markinch, Fife, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: ABC ROUTES Colouring Book.  
Video: Project documented by Hanna Ford.

ABC ROUTES broke new ground for public art by integrating an artist-conceived strategy into the architecture of the built environment. Unique traffic signs were attached to lamp posts to create an evolving set of new routes for the community to discover. Each route had a glyph - an intricate hand drawn design with an individual colour - that could be discovered from sign to sign in a journey through the town. Routes were installed in sets each month from February to September 2016. When a new set was introduced, the previous signs were removed.

Walkers and cyclists were inspired to discover new ways to travel to the places they love. Children were given safe and intriguing routes from drop-off points to the school gate, and drivers were encouraged to slow down, with each sign being within the 20mph area of Markinch.

Contemporary road signage, with its use of the Transport typeface and flat design, was aimed at communicating a very limited amount of information very quickly. The ABC ROUTES glyphs have a very different intention. They inspired curiosity and encouraged commuters to slow down and discover.

Drawing on extensive research into sign, logo and glyph design principles, the artist had formed an entirely new visual alphabet. The glyphs featured no text or numbers, and had been crafted to have differentiated and characterful silhouettes. Each featured fine, dense and organic pen-and-ink detailing within broad graphic shapes. The glyphs had an assigned colour, which further individualised them and completed the identity of each route. The signs were custom produced in a three-panel triangular prism shape and could be read easily when approached from any direction. The form of the signs were conceived by the studio and were original to the project.

**Supported by: Markinch Community Council, Sustrans Scotland & Fife Council.**

## 2016

### PLACING THINGS ON SHELVES

Duke Street, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

Nicola Atkinson's installation piece PLACING THINGS ON SHELVES continued her exploration of the meanings applied to porcelain work within an art context.

Each porcelain 'thing' was placed in a deliberate series across whitewashed shelves, forming a visual language through colour and placement. Each tone had a meaning that was contingent on its position in the series. The work could be read left to right in a language of coloured, sequenced objects; an imagined predecessor to the glyphs of our own text.

The close-set shelves, placed above eye-level, created a singular architectural line through the two spaces. Their narrow depth and the position of the porcelain in single file gave the suggestion of scenery flats or an abstracted Potemkin vista; the appearance of a world, but without any continuation beyond these signifiers.

The flat, literal description of the work's title was a play on the perceived functionality of porcelain and the impact of context.

**Text & Curated by Caspar J Wilson.**

**Supported by: NADFLY.**

## 2015 - 2016

### URBAN OATS

Glasgow, Scotland. (Non-locational adaptation)

Medium: Oats and various.  
Dimensions: Various.

URBAN OATS wished to challenge perceived notions of sustainability, transforming city-dwellers into 'urban crofters' by use of the humble oat. Traditional crofting utilised small plots of land within the vicinity of the home to grow enough food to sustain the family living on the croft. The aim was to create an oat meadow on a brown-field site in Central Glasgow (one hectare in size), highlighting and contrasting the disused or paused space by growing a traditional crop, a practice which was once so integral to our culture and heritage.

Following this, a harvest celebration event would occur in George Square feeding commuters, city workers, tourists and school children. The bowl of URBAN OATS would turn into energy, which would then translate into a critical mass cycle and walking event leaving from this civic square - the final stage in the process of energy generation.

Unfortunately, this project did not physically take place due to the legacy of Glasgow's industrial past, as no suitable site for seeding the oats could be found.

**Winner of the Central Scotland Green Network Ideas Fund 2015.**

**Supported by: Central Scotland Green Network Ideas.**

## 2013 - 2017

### DUMFRIES ARCHWAY & GATEWAY

Dumfries, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: DUMFRIES GATEWAYS  
Video: Project documented by Hanna Ford & Sustrans Scotland.

Nicola Atkinson worked with Sustrans' street design team in an integrated way to engage and inspire a town centre neighbourhood to make changes that improved their locality and made it easier and more pleasant to walk, cycle and enjoy the streets. The project would improve places for people and onward movement links in all directions. As part of her involvement, several distinct installations, social interventions and broadened conversations resulted in a more holistic set of design changes that were implemented through a period of time.

Nicola designed two pieces for the Queen Street neighbourhood to frame the area and function as social landmarks. These were fabricated by The Forge Squad and featured hand painted ceramics by the artist. These supported a defined identity of the Queen Street neighbourhood, and inspired an emotional engagement with the cultural history of the area.

Through consultation with the artist, the community expressed a desire to celebrate the Victorian heritage of Dumfries and re-emphasise the history of the Queen Street area. Pteridomania, the intense 19th century cultural vogue for ferns, was chosen as the core theme of the approach. This became an opportunity to utilise traditional design and access the inventiveness and culture of the Victorian era in a new and unexpected way. Pteridomania-influenced organic designs were painted on the pavement outside houses in Dumfries and the personal crafting element of these works recalled the Victorian penchant for drawing with chalk on doorsteps and thresholds. The popularity of these resulted in many households requesting their own. This intervention saw a cohesive landscape design elements flourish and grow.

DUMFRIES ARCHWAY Seats were installed in each pillar of the archway at Brooms Road car park, inviting couples to experience the tension of separation at an unusual distance. Sightlines were broken and remade as people walked through the archway, creating a dynamic and disrupted intimacy.

DUMFRIES GATEWAY at Brooke Street was composed of two triangular markers with a fern design that links it aesthetically with the archway. Lit from the inside, the markers illuminate the pathway and highlight their intricate design. The gateway & archway structure a relationship with the adjacent town centre and form a set of parameters for the area. They have a serendipitous role in encouraging residents and visitors to engage with their built environment through light, colour, shadow and conversation.

**Winner of the Scottish Government planning partnership award 2018, Scottish Civic Trust Civic Champion My Place Award 2018 & Keep Scotland Beautiful its your neighbourhood award 2018**

**Supported by: Sustrans Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway Council and DG1 Neighbours.**

## 2015 - 2016

### NO MANNERS

Mengi, Reykjavik, Iceland.

Stephen Glassman Studio, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Retramp Gallery, Neukolln, Berlin, Germany.

Medium: Porcelain bowls & Various.

Dimensions: Various.

Video: Project documented by Hanna Ford & Lyn M. Watanabe.

NO MANNERS began as an artistic collaboration between Nicola Atkinson and Benedikt Hermannsson. The instruments were individually unique porcelain bowls, that varied in size and were irregular in shape. Trained musicians were invited to use arrangements of these music bowls to play with the idea of musical production, in one-off performances in artistic cities worldwide.

The absence of standardisation in the instruments supported an intuitive and spontaneous approach to performance. Musicians discovered tones and effects through trial and experimentation. NO MANNERS encouraged discovery without the restrictions that were present when using conventional instrumentation. To play with these bowls was to experiment with them; the two processes cannot be separated. Each musician began by sampling the tones and effects that each bowl offered. As they did so, they could arrange the bowls into groups and patterns to suit their choice of expression, and develop these as they continued. These arrangements reflected the identity of each musician and their personal artistic process. The approach precluded the use of prepared music and placed experimentation and expression as the product.

The process supported an intuitive and spontaneous form of performance that was largely innocent of the burdens of received knowledge. This presented trained musicians with both a conflict and an opportunity. The performances, art directed by Atkinson, created a powerful experience for musicians and audience, and created relationships through the collaborative process that was at the heart of NO MANNERS.

Participating musicians in Reykjavik:

Guðmundur Steinn Gunnarsson, Páll Ivan Pálsson, Kristín Anna Valtýsdóttir, Arnljótur Sigurðsson, Hildigunnur Birgisdóttir, Una Sveinbjarnardóttir, Ólafur Björn Ólafsson, Guðmundur Vignir Karlsson, Gylfi Freeland Sigurðsson, Kristín Björk Kristjánsdóttir and Benedikt H. Hermannsson.

Participating musicians in Los Angeles:

Kío Griffith, Gregory Lenczycki, Laurie Steelink, Gabie Strong, Joe Berardi, Breeze Smith, Ralph Gorodetsky and Dan Clucas.

Participating musicians in Berlin:

David Kristjánsson, Rowan Coupland, Bastian Hagedorn and Jessica Fabre.

**Collaboration with Benedikt Hermannsson.**

**Supported by: Mengi, Reykjavik, Iceland, Stephen Glassman Studio, Los Angeles, CA, USA & Retramp Gallery, Neukolln, Berlin, Germany.**

## 2015

### PEPPERSOLO

Experience events: Welcome Home, CCA, and at Open Studios, South Block, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Porcelain

Dimensions: cup 80mm x 40mm x cat 20mm x 20mm.

PEPPERSOLO was a handcrafted porcelain cup and a small cat figure that could be used to mark out a mindful moment in your day.

Each cup was an organic shape that filled the hand with warmth from the peppermint tea within, and could be used whenever you felt the need to stop and pause. The unique hand-painted creature accompanied you while you observed your thoughts during this brief daily ritual. Each PEPPERSOLO was available to purchase from a numbered limited edition of 120, and each one came carefully wrapped and boxed with a card about the work.

**Supported by: NADFLY.**

## 2015

### LIGHT AS A FEATHER

Main Atrium Wall

NHS Forth Valley Hospital, Larbert, Scotland.

Medium: Paint & Black Ink.

Dimensions: 4m x 15m.

LIGHT AS A FEATHER was a one-month temporary intervention on the main Atrium Wall in NHS Forth Valley Hospital.

To be light as a feather might be hard to experience as you walk into a Hospital. But seeing the impossible being painted everyday was strangely uplifting and strengthening. The tumbling feathers flowing across the wall moved in unison with the visitors as they travelled through the space. Associations with weightlessness and flight lifted up the burdens of those who experienced the mural. The intense colour and bold design had a powerful effect on the human dynamic in this section of the hospital.

In addition to the mural, two small echoes of curved feathers were painted nearby. These were painted in black ink on a white walls; inviting a more intimate encounter.

**Supported by: NHS Forth Valley Hospital.**

## 2014

### NADFLY PONDS

David Ross Design Pond Life Laser Lamps

The Lighthouse, Glasgow and South Block Exhibition, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Lamps

Dimensions: Various.

Small self-assembly lamp-kits which have been inspired by the designer David Ross' ongoing interest in ponds, particularly the creatures, plants and structures that make up a pond's ecosystem. The paper lamp-shade diffusers are printed with pond-life themed artworks. Several original artworks were available, designed by artists, illustrators and designers based around the UK.

NADFLY PONDS designs were created using hand-formed porcelain paint palettes with pools of colours. The Pond Life Laser Lamp's light, softly filtered through these creative pools. The magic of the design function was that these pools would live on, serving as receptacles for new ideas in the future.

**Artists, illustrators and designers : Nicola Atkinson, Jennifer Argo, Dan Castro, Rosemary Ferrier, Graeme Kennedy, Louise Lockhart, Bart Manders, Craig McIntosh, Chris Watson & Bespoke Atelier.**

**Supported by: David Ross Design.**

## 2014

### GRAFFITI TILING

NCP Carpark on the corner of King St. and Osborne St, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Porcelain tiles.  
Dimensions: Various.

The design and testing process of previous project, Never Far Away resulted in having approximately 300 testing tiles. Nicola designed an intervention using the test tiles as a new public art work on land belonging to a NCP car park near her old South Block Studio. During one night and without permission, four friends helped install the tiles. The owners of the car park were pleased with it and allowed further work. Local residents and businesses found this change of public space inspiring, with one of the park attendants developing his own “crazy paving style” piece every Sunday over the course of a few weeks. That public art without permission can have a profound effect on an area.

**Supported by: NADFLY.**

## 2014

### KITCHEN IMPLEMENTS

**SAVING THE SEASON BOOK; The Essential Guide to Home Canning, Pickling, and Preserving written by Kevin West, Random House. ISBN: 978-0-307-59948-3**

Medium: Illustrations.  
Dimensions: Various.

A stylish, practical guide for home cooks and preserving enthusiasts richly illustrated by Nicola. Ink drawings of KITCHEN IMPLEMENTS gave the first cookbook from journalist Kevin West, turned author, a unique and quirky character. Incorporating classic favourites and new flavours, the book had more than one hundred recipes organized by season, containing: sweet preserves and savoury pickles, easy-to-cook vegetables and fruits, condiments such as relishes, chutneys, and salsas, and cordials, candies, and cocktails.

**P.468 of the book featured the artist's published recipe of Scottish Scones.**

**Supported by: Kevin West & Random House.**

## 2014

### HEAD ON

Various locations including Kelvinbridge, Drygate & Charing Cross, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Porcelain and Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

HEAD ON was an artwork that encouraged writers to take a fictional approach to public art. Small in scale, intimate in design but large in concept, HEAD ON engaged writers and the public with art through storytelling and the creation of new characters in familiar and unfamiliar corners of the city. Each 11 writers chose a tiny, hand painted porcelain head made by Nicola. Creating a story of 500 words inspired by the character they imagined for the porcelain head, and set it in the City of Glasgow. The story included a generic location which each writer was assigned from a lottery.

The heads were installed at each location by the writer and the artist over a period of 11 weeks. At the conclusion a public walking event was held, where the writers read their story at each location.

- Martin MacInnes - Public Park / Location: Island on A804, near North Street, Glasgow, G3 7DN

- Philip Miller - From the Glasgow Book of the Dead / Location: Kersland Lane. Glasgow City, G12.

- Katy McAulay - Don't Touch / Location: Bus Stop, across from the Kelvingrove Museum & Art Gallery.

- Shirley Whiteside - Bridewell / Location: 40 Drygate, Glasgow G4.

- Richard W Strachan - Motor-Way / Location: Castlebank Street, A814 motorway, with the Riverside Museum on the right.

- Tawona Sithole - Shapeless Forms / Location: The river bank railings between the two trees where the Albert Bridge meets Clyde St.

- Julie Fraser - Albert and Dolores / Location: Merkland Street, Partick, Glasgow, G11.

## 2013 - 2015

**FLOWERS & PARKS & WISHES Street Design Project**  
Pathhead, Kirkcaldy, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Sustrans Scotland .

FLOWERS & PARKS & WISHES created a thematic design to visually improve the local streets and to create safer entrances and play areas at Pathhead Primary School. Local residents were participants in the process to ensure that the community embraced and took ownership of this intervention, in what was a historically deprived neighbourhood.

The flower thematic was chosen as a result of the engagement work, and for its potential to encourage thoughtful and imaginative interaction with the environment.

### NARRATIVE GATE

Pathhead Primary NARRATIVE GATE was part of a series of projects involving local people of all ages helping to redesign their area in collaboration with NADFLY.

The NARRATIVE GATE depicted detailed flower designs rising progressively across the gate and fencing, floating upwards. This represented the narrative of growth that each child will experience in their journey through education. The gate was set back into an arc, creating a communal space where parents could gather naturally at the entrance to the school. Each flower was based on original hand painted designs that were then replicated into wooden casts at scale. The casts were then jet-cut into flowers out of highgrade galvanised steel. The Narrative Gate created a safe and inspiring portal for children, teachers and parents for their place of learning.

The original Pathhead Primary School building was destroyed by fire and replaced by a new school built in 1991. The only thing that remained of the previous structure were the walls which surrounded the playground and the sandstone entrance hidden by nature.

The artist worked with pupils in the school to produce drawings of plants and flowers, and out of these, five were then chosen to be featured in the work.

- Ross McCleary - A Moment in the Twinkling / Location: 55°51'45.2" N 4°13'57.0" W.

- John Binne - Side Street / Location: The Hidden Lane, Argyle Court, 1103 Argyle Street, G3.

- Emily Munro - Jacinta's Blog / Location: Glasgow Architectural Salvage, 1394 South Street, 1 Albion Industrial Complex, G14.

- Gary McNair - A Bridge without a View / Location: The little bridge over the River Kelvin next to Glasgow Botanic Gardens, dissecting the 'v' in the river.

**Supported by: NADFLY.**

## 2013

### SOFT TOYS SOFT MUSIC

University of the West of Scotland, Ayr, Scotland.

Medium: Soft toys and Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

SOFT TOYS SOFT MUSIC project worked with the Students of the Music Department of the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) to develop their entrepreneurial skill sets. They were given the opportunity to design, fabricate and develop marketing for a soft toy.

The soft toy functioned as an analogy - rather than have them make and market music, they were instead supported to create and work with something unfamiliar to them. This could free individuals from the knowledge and associations they have in their specialist subject and encourage freedom of experimentation.

Soft Toys taught students to take a product to market with all work done by themselves, from fabrication to commercial strategy. It empowered them to step outside their specialist area and learn skills that could then be applied to the music industry.

**Supported by: University of the West of Scotland.**

The designs were adapted from the drawings and made into new, slate colour tiles, that were then incorporated into the walls to look like an exposed history.

By chipping away fragments of the existing white porcelain tiling and filling these in an organic fashion with new designs, a patchwork of new heritage and archaeology was created.

#### STOP HERE TO MAKE A WISH

What would you stop for? This was the question posed by the artist. Maybe a wish - a moment to pause and to dream - could prevent you from rushing through the school gates, hurrying across the road, or running to the park. With this in mind, a stainless steel flower design, embossed with the words “STOP HERE TO MAKE A WISH” was installed at the two exit/entrances of Pathhead Primary School.

#### PATHHEAD FLOWERS

The existing street signage in Pathhead was in a state of disrepair and no longer effectively functioned. This became an opportunity to bring a unified visual identity to the area in a way that embodied a function as well as an aesthetic. Each sign required the permission of the residents in the house for it to be mounted outside. The handcrafted signs were made using enamel paint on jet cut aluminium, and have become a treasured placemaking signifier for the neighbourhood.

#### PATHHEAD FLOWERS on Houses & Garage

The large flowers were hand-painted by the artist on people's houses and the garage on Hayfield Road. Each of the unique designs added a splash of bold colour to the neighbourhood.

FLOWERS & PARKS & WISHES events and public artworks encouraged the streets to be seen in a more positive, social way in order for walking and cycling to become more attractive ways of travelling to and from the neighbourhood and other local destinations.

**FLOWERS & PARKS & WISHES Street Design Project received the 2014 Carnegie Prize for Design and Wellbeing. The project was discussed in the Scottish Parliament as an example of how to revive neighbourhoods with a new identity.**

**Supported by: Sustrans Scotland & Fife Council.**

## 2013

### ALL YOU NEED

18 homes and the Briggait, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Stoneware and various.  
Dimensions: Various.

How does a beautiful, designed object impact upon your daily life?

A bowl, a cup and a spoon set - hand-moulded, pinched crockery - in an off-white colour, matt glaze and purposefully non-mass produced quality gave the air of simplicity and function. The thin gold line and embellishment weighs up the notion of gold having a universally recognised value that transcended borders and currency.

18 women participated by using the stoneware set as their main eating objects when eating alone, and/or alongside their family members, lovers, friends or housemates. All of their meals were eaten using these objects, creating a shared conceptual design island. The provision of these pared-down objects was to make the person aware of their own habits surrounding the act of eating. ALL YOU NEED revealed how design could affect or change your life in previously unnoticed ways.

The everyday use of these objects was a study of the rituals of food and eating within the wider context of our modern beliefs of what was “essential” in life.

Event/dinner parties were held in the artist's home, and the 18 women who attended were given the ALL YOU NEED set of crockery as thanks for their participation. With the hope being that they would use it in the future to help them create a place of focus.

ALL YOU NEED was introduced as part of Victoria Evans THE STANDING STONES Exhibition.

**Supported by: NADFLY.**

## 2012

### THE FISH PEOPLE CAFÉ

350A Scotland St, Glasgow G5 8QF.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

Nicola Atkinson created an entirely new exterior and interior design for THE FISH PEOPLE CAFÉ Hand-drawn designs of various fish species were installed on the windows, the glass interiors, the walls and the tarpaulin outside. The logos and designs worked together to create a unique and unifying look for the business.

The striking signage and graphics for THE FISH PEOPLE CAFÉ sat alongside seven cinematic, black and white photographs of the customers and fishmongers working at the Fish People shop. Taken by Nicola on her 1967 Rollei 35mm camera to give the photos a grainy, documentary feel and an intimate insight into this family run business. THE FISH PEOPLE CAFÉ has won rave reviews and a reputation as the best place to eat fish and seafood in the city since it opened in August 2012 with awards from The List Magazine and the Scottish Restaurant Awards 2013.

**Supported by: The Bell Family & The FISH PEOPLE.**

## 2012 - 2013

### ODD NUMBERS

Milton, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Stoneware and Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: ODD NUMBERS.

ODD NUMBERS was a site-specific engagement work comprising 365 hand-sculpted stoneware figures, 10 - 20cm in size. Each was a symbolic representation of a person in Milton, giving form to their conception of themselves as a creature or animal.

The creatures were exhibited in locations in the neighbourhood with local people being given the opportunity to select and adopt a creature for a two-week period. During this period the participant was tasked with producing a creative response that acted as a record of their time with the creature; the simplest response being to give it a name.

The approach was to capture the essence of a person and to represent this in the symbolic, analogous form of the creature. The owner brought a depth and relationship to the figure by adopting it for a fixed period The creatures, now with their own identities, mythologies and associations were then returned to the artists and buried in Milton. The act of burying created a future archaeological site and a place of history in a neighbourhood that did not exist until the 1950s.

ODD NUMBERS was a Remaking Society commission funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council that explored how forms of art affect individuals in areas of deprivation. The project was incorporated into a unique live research programme by University of the West of Scotland and CADISPA. The concept was developed in collaboration with architect Lee Ivett, who also designed and built the exhibition display structures.

**Collaboration with Lee Ivett.**

**Supported by: Arts & Humanities Research Council, University of the West of Scotland & CADISPA.**

## 2012

### MACABRE BEASTIES: A BURNS NIGHTMARE

Alloway Auld Kirk, Ayrshire, Scotland.

Medium: Various.

Dimensions: Various.

Video: Project documented by Cairn Production.

Nicola Atkinson created a stunning series of macabre line-drawings inspired by the nightmare creatures found in Tam O'Shanter, one of Robert Burns' best-known poems. The beasties could be glimpsed as part of a unique lighting installation by the lighting designer Nich Smith at Alloway Auld Kirk, a ruined 16th Century church, near the village of Alloway in Ayrshire, Scotland.

A sophisticated lighting control system allowed playback of pre-programmed lighting scenes. Sensors triggered lighting sequences drawn from the narrative of Tam O'Shanter. The floodlit scene increased in complexity and brightness as the lighting beneath the gravestones flickered into life. The light inside the ruined church intensified, and the shadows of Atkinson's nightmare creatures appeared.

Burns' affection for the church was so great that he wrote his masterpiece, Tam O'Shanter in order to ensure the inclusion of it in The Antiquities of Scotland. The poem was based on various folk tales Burns had heard, set largely in the Alloway Auld Kirk and surrounding countryside.

Managed by the National Trust for Scotland, the kirk was part of the award-winning Robert Burns Birthplace Museum.

### 2013 Scottish Design Award for Lighting Design.

### Collaboration with Nich Smith.

**Supported by: Robert Burns Birthplace Museum, National Trust for Scotland & South Ayrshire Council.**

## 2012

### CREATURES, SHOES, JUNCTION & MAP, JIGSAW PUZZLE WAITING & PARENTS SHELTER DESIGNS

Sinclairtown, Kirkcaldy, Scotland.

Medium: Various.

Dimensions: Various.

### AN INNOVATIVE STREET DESIGN PROJECT.

#### CREATURES

Fifteen colourful bespoke waymarkers were specially designed with site-specific, concrete and porcelain hand-painted tiles and used to link the school to two new Park and Walk sites. Parents who had chosen to drive their children to school could if they wished, park and walk the last part of the journey, thereby reducing the levels of traffic surrounding the school. The waymarkers added some much-needed points of interest to the school journey and injected a sense of fun with their vibrant colours and lively animal images.

The following creatures were selected because of their local origin; bat, bee, cat, crow, dog, fly, fox, goldfinch, goldfish, magpie, mouse, owl, pigeon, robin, and starling.

#### SHOES

Shoes was a public artwork created to stimulate a thoughtful walk to the Sinclairtown Primary School. The inspiration for the walking route came from the famous Shoe Tree and the surrounding gardens. Pupils from Sinclairtown Primary School collaborated with the artist Nicola to create the shoe drawings for her tiles, which were then installed at the front of the school. The tiles gave a visual clue to drivers that they should be aware that this was a place associated with young people, and to be alert for children crossing the roads.

Extensive work with the local community (pupils, school staff, parents and local residents), combined with funding from Road Safety Scotland/ Transport Scotland, resulted in changes to the neighbourhood that encouraged more active travel to school and has helped to reduce congestion during the school-peak time.

## 2012

### THE BUG WALK

Katrine Crescent, Kirkcaldy, Scotland.

**Medium: Tiles.**

**Dimensions: Various.**

THE BUG WALK celebrated the life of the Scottish insects through the eyes of Kirkcaldy children and featured 102 hand drawn bugs. A neglected stairwell on Katrine Crescent in Kirkcaldy was transformed as part of a project to redesign the street.

Pupils from Torbain and Fair Isle Primary collaborated with Nicola to create the new artwork THE BUG WALK for the stairwell. The pupils learned in-depth about the fascinating lives of insects and made new hybrid creatures to create their own unique insect. The love of nature came to life.

**Supported by: Sustrans Scotland & Fife Council.**

## 2012

### INVENT A GAME

Cockmuir Place, Elgin, Scotland.

Medium: 156 Stoneware & Various.

Dimensions: Various.

Nicola Atkinson collaborated with Sustrans' Street Design team on this pilot project, engaging with the community as part of an opportunity to redesign the street to improve its quality for residents and better accommodate school journeys. The project needed something more than infrastructure changes, and Nicola joined to bring her participative approach in engaging school children and the community in developing artistic products that would continue, after the project was completed, to connect people to place, strengthened community identity and created a more playful and engaging journey to school for children.

The starting point of INVENT A GAME at Cockmuir Place placemaking work was that a public artwork could be small and intimate, but also still be powerful and inspiring to people.

INVENT A GAME was devised so that the public could create their own journey and invent new street games every time. The work consisted of 156 tiny, unique paintings that were all hand-painted on zero temperature resistant stoneware and laid within acid-wash white cement.

The paintings are designed to be discovered over time, like fragments of a colourful plate found in a garden while digging. They were created with the acceptance of the location and weather, as snow and dirt might cover or hide them, but at one point in the future, the paintings would reappear.

The new games should not be as formal as traditional street games, such as hopscotch, but be timeless and imaginative.

Since installing the INVENT A GAME, people, young and old, were still enjoying stepping on, around and over, using them as stepping stones, focusing their eyes, on their feet and playing. Returning in 2018 the artist was pleased to see it still working and looking as good as new.

**The first collaboration with Sustrans Scotland on a Street Design project.**

**Working with Alex Bottrill**

**Supported by: Sustrans Scotland & Moray Council.**

## 2012

### PET TONGUES

Monorail, Glasgow, Scotland.  
Look Again @Seventeen, Aberdeen, Scotland.  
Avalanche Records, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

Record Store was a curated project created by visual artists Chris Biddlecombe and Janie Nicoll, aka Obstacle Soup. It was a hybrid fictional record store interior that was the result of a collaboration involving the creation of over 60 fictional record cover artworks and poster works by a range of Scottish artists each of whom have a strong interest in or connection to music making.

Exploring ideas of authorship and fiction, art and merchandise, shared histories, and sound and performance interpreted through the visual, the project placed the artwork at the centre of the action, while the music remained entirely imaginary.

Atkinson “The concept of PET TONGUES had existed since people decided that animals were not just for guarding, farming, hunting and or running free. It was the human desire for company that started this pet movement. Collected together here was the celebration of that movement. PET TONGUES could be experienced in one’s home, lap, the park or with other pet lovers. Just close your eyes and enjoy PET TONGUES here without boundaries”.

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, Alexander Violette, Amy Marletta, Baldwin Ringsted, Brian Hartley, Chris Biddlecombe, Douglas Morland, Fiona Danskin, Hrafnhildur Halldórsdóttir (Rafla), Ian Smith, Jim Colquhoun, Janie Nicoll, Jason Nelson, Jim Lambie, Jonnie Wilkes, Karen Vaughan, Kevin Hutcheson, Kevin Reid, Ronnie Heeps and Ross Sinclair.

**Supported by: Obstacle Soup, Monorail, Seventeen, Avalanche Records & Look Again Aberdeen.**

## 2011 - 2012

### WEE

Sanctuary Gallery, Boyle Heights, Cal, USA.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Video: Project documented by Lyn M. Watanabe

WEE was a series of public works that brought together artist and curator Nicola Atkinson, musician and songwriter Stevie Jackson from the band Belle & Sebastian, and architect Lee Ivett all based in Glasgow.

The word “Wee” was the starting point for this collaboration to explore what it means to work in a small way, and what it means to work as part of a collective, as “we”. Of particular importance was also the idea of the “given” and the “extra” – at what point does “given” become “extra”. All the pieces within this exhibition communicated the possibility of the extra, through the manipulation of an object that was considered by the artists to be a given. Within this perceived impossibility there was a relationship of scale with a longing of past functional use. The collective arrived in Boyle Heights to present several “Wee” interventions including singing and exchanging objects / structures for discussion about the impact of working in a “wee” way. They were inspired by the subsistence farming of the historical crofting communities in Scotland, which has almost been lost. Stevie and Nicola created new Scottish work songs with the themes of present day toil of production in the tradition of the crofter’s work tweed songs. The local participants of the music master class made up the ‘Wee Band’ which performed at the gallery opening.

Lee and Nicola’s installation took on a useful form of exchange via hand-formed objects, which acted as a catalyst. Their installation was a proposal of ideas about how sustainability could be achieved by both the individual and the collective in a manner that was suggestive and reflective of current trends that advocate a move back towards localism in terms of agriculture, production, arts and employment.

WEE BAND: Nicola Atkinson, Stevie Jackson, Jay Africa, Erin Schroettinger, Diana Barraza, Yana Sercarz and Peter Sean Maloney.

**Collaboration with Lee Ivett and Stevie Jackson.**  
**Supported by: Urban: Sanctuary Gallery, Boyle Heights.**

## 2011

### (I CAN’T GET NO) STEVIE JACKSON

Medium: Album.  
Dimensions: 13.36 x 13.64 x 0.48 cm; 63.5 Grams.

Nicola Atkinson worked with Stevie Jackson on songs. Jackson describes the work, and Nicola’s involvement in his own words.

### BIRD’S EYE VIEW SONG

“In 2007, I was asked to contribute to the Abbey View project by the artist in residence, Nicola Atkinson. This is a song from it. Abbey View is an area in Dunfermline, Scotland which was under redevelopment at the time, including the demolition of groups of modern flats which must have been built in the 70’s. The flats were in a semi circle around a large piece of greenery.

I couldn’t help but think of how idealistic it must have seemed at the planning stage, a brave new world full of space and fresh air. Of course the flats whilst they looked ok were actually shoddily made with cheap materials, the usual scenario with the whole thing falling to pieces within a few short years. Which is not to say that the residents didn’t take pride and care of their homes, they did. One of the inspirations was a piece written by Carole Lambie, another one of the artists Nicola had engaged, actually entitled Bird’s Eye View which describes conversations with one such resident. Some of the images came from photographs taken from inside one of the derelict flats by Nicola Atkinson.” - Stevie Jackson

### KUROSAWA SONG

“Another Movie Director song. I’m a bit confused by this one. I started off writing about Kurosawa but the song ended up being more about Ozu, another great Japanese director and particularly a film called Good Morning.” - Stevie Jackson

**Songwriting with Stevie Jackson.**

**Supported by: Stevie Jackson & Banchory.**

## 2011

**REPLACE**

Mono, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: REPLACE.

Do we REPLACE or do we not in order to create an alternative design and lifestyle? Can we celebrate the random, the second hand, the recycled and not buy prefab items from IKEA? How hard is it to create without making or buying new products? What does an alternative design and lifestyle look like today?

Nicola Atkinson and Marion Preez tuned into the Mono's furniture, the stage, the bar and the toilets, and attached hidden labels 'imagined' thoughts and sayings in Swedish and English, in order to find a new connecting voice (or perhaps to find answers). Mono is the place in Glasgow to eat vegan food and drink, buy or listen to music, be online and meet or make friends. It has the feel of the familiar, such as you might find in Gothenburg or Los Angeles. A safe environment where you could come and go, and be free to be yourself. Its interior was made up of second hand or hand crafted individual items, recycled chairs, tables, sofas, various accessories, a stage, a bar and a record shop. A great place with various uses and activities that seemed to overlap at random with ease.

The collaboration addressed their continued interest in the public place, site-specific interventions and engagement. Nicola's burnt orange and ochre flaska saker were made in Lidköping, Sweden, to suit one's hands easily, a safety net. In the language of ceramics there was either a demand for function or to be an object on a shelf – these might be both. Within the interior, Marion's intimate button-garters quietly dressed the table legs and chair arms. Nicola and Marion designed elements to unify visually through colour, form, expression and with references to the current environmental debate of ideas surrounding recycling and sustainability in design.

**Collaboration with Marion Preez.**

**Supported by: Mono, Marion Preez & Nicola Atkinson.**

## 2011

**BOY IN A CUP**

Glasgow Citizens Rose Garden, Gorbals & Speirs Lock Studios on Garscube Road, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

BOY IN A CUP Nicola Atkinson & architect Lee Ivett engaged with Tom Pritchard in a week's Dance House Creative Lab research into the impact improvisation might have on the way we view urban regeneration from a sensitive and bodily perspective. They worked in two sites: The Citizen's Rose Garden in the Gorbals and a derelict refuse factory in Speirs Lock. Both were run down sites in Glasgow known as areas for possible regeneration.

Following time spent in both sites, the Rose Garden began a period of regeneration. Colourful Flags were made planted and shared with the public. The work stimulated lengthy conversations with locals who recalled the Rose Garden as a formally safe, social area for the community to meet and play, before it was abused by drug use and then destroyed as a short-term method of control by Glasgow City Council. The site in Speirs Lock retained much of our 'installation' for many months and much of the more permanent markings (paint on walls, etc) remain to this day. It still lies derelict though it remains an interesting potential space for site-specific work.

**Collaboration with Lee Ivett & Tom Pritchard.**

**Supported by: Dance House Creative Lab.**

## 2010

**NEVER FAR AWAY**

Under Past Elgin, Moray, Scotland.

Medium: Porcelain tiles, Sandblasted Toughened Glass & Painted Font.  
Dimensions: Various.

NEVER FAR AWAY redeveloped a piece of town centre infrastructure into a placemaking artwork, reimagining a heavily used underpass. The journey into the tiled underpass from above evoked imagery of descending into the ground itself, with the tiles displaying the Earth in a cross section. Sixteen-hundred porcelain tiles designed by Nicola Atkinson were handmade and painted at the Porslinsfabriken Rörstrand ceramic factory in Sweden.

Each tile was unique and therefore vital to the end result, meaning that no breakages could occur at any stage in the transportation or production process.

NEVER FAR AWAY public art work created an organic vitality in a previously austere underpass space. Large bold lettering across corrugated metal-cladding displays the words 'NEVER' 'AWAY' with light bathing the 'FAR', leading you toward the exit ahead. The walkway handrails at the entrances were decorated with sandblasted versions of the tile designs on toughened glass.

During the repeated every day commute the pedestrian was exposed to the NEVER FARAWAY text as it accompanies their travel. This reflective phrase encourages contemplation and stimulates thoughts of closeness to people, special hopes or goals in life. So NEVER FARAWAY was a hopeful term for all and remains a treasured piece in Elgin.

**Supported by: Moray Council.**

## 2010

**RETURN2YOU**

The Arches, Glasgow, Scotland.  
Tafelhalle, Nürnberg, Germany.  
The Briggait, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: RETURN2YOU.

To celebrate the twinning of the cities of Glasgow and Nürnberg the event choreographer, Susanna Curtis (Nürnberg-based, but Glasgow raised) joined forces with Dance House and Glasgow artist Nicola Atkinson and architect Lee Ivett on a creative trans European journey. European Dance Theatre Collaboration, Nürnberg, Germany & Glasgow, Scotland.

For the performances a bespoke portable stage was designed and built, and these sets were decorated with ink drawings of tourist-style collectables and common human objects such as shoes, glasses and suitcases. These movable partitions help define the performance area for the dancers, as they played with ideas of space and travel.

RETURN2YOU was concerned with social identity. In a society where we publicly advertise ourselves on a daily basis, on websites, in blogs, on Facebook and other social networks, how often do we stop to think who we really are and what has made us who we are? It was a trip back to the past, with the possibility of creating an alternative future.

Glasgow dance artists, Lisa Sinclair and Tom Pritchard, were selected to be involved in the creative process, alongside Nurembergers - Tina Essl and Dave Laera.

**Collaboration with Lee Ivett & Susanna Curtis.**

**Supported by: Stadt Nürnberg, Amt für Internationale Beziehungen, Lord Provost & International Office, Glasgow City Council.**

## 2010

**CROSSING ILLUSION**

Blaue Nacht, Nürnberg, Germany.

Medium: Various.

Dimensions: Various.

Video: Project documented by City of Nürnberg.

Each year the whole City of Nürnberg is taken over by different events in celebration of the annual “Blaue Nacht”. Nicola Atkinson was the artist chosen to represent Glasgow on the 25th anniversary of its twinning with Nürnberg.

CROSSING ILLUSION was a participatory, performance, sound and lighting Installation created by artist Nicola Atkinson and Lighting Designer, Nich Smith.

This three-part artwork took place in the Nürnberg Rathaus Entrance Hall, Inner Courtyard and Great Assembly Hall. The work was about a journey of choice and self-determination.

Has the freedom of travel been lost? How far could one travel before the barriers and borders, instructions and queues overshadow the experience of finding oneself in a new place? We were interested in this movement and choice through emotion and engagement. At what point do our choices become consciously or subconsciously overruled, and do we notice our choices being made for us? Do we decide our destinations autonomously or do we follow where others lead? We invited the public to CROSSING ILLUSION to experience this notion with friends, family & fellow travellers.

At the beginning of CROSSING ILLUSION, the audience was invited to choose to “take” or to “make”: if they choose “take” the participant joined a queue with others in the inner courtyard, who have made the same choice and await their turn to take a paper facsimile of an Imperial crown. If they choose to “make” they were quickly ushered into a different room to hastily and easily assemble the same paper crown, resulting in a far faster journey to the Nürnberg, Rathaus Great Assembly Hall.

Approximately 8000 people over the course of four hours were ushered into the Great Assembly Hall to watch and listen to Atkinson’s performance of her song, “BEHOLDEN”. Each performance lasted for 5 to 8 minutes.

The next day the remaining paper crowns were left outside for the public to play with, resulting in a large crowd gathering and spontaneously taking and wearing the crowns, and again becoming Emperors.

The dress worn by the artist was gifted to the City of Nürnberg and is in the city art collection.

**Collaboration with Nich Smith.**

**Supported by: Stadt Nürnberg, Amt für Internationale Beziehungen, Lord Provost & International Office, Glasgow City Council.**

## 2010

**THIS WAS PERMANENT/GLASGOW WALKS**

A Pop Up Shop & Salon, 921 7th Street, Santa Monica, Cal, USA.

Medium: Various.

Dimensions: Various.

THIS WAS PERMANENT was a salon event in house in Santa Monica that featured a pop-up shop and events that took place over the course of a month.

Nicola Atkinson returned to Los Angeles from Glasgow with GLASGOW WALKS; illustrated portraits on ceramics of people going about their business in Glasgow City Centre. The images were devoid of personal history or direction, leaving you wondering where they were going and who they were. With everyone you find yourself studying the clothes and demeanour, searching for their story and destination. The 20 people were hand drawn and placed on hand thrown stoneware cups, with white and green glaze and 14 Karat-gold rims.

Lauren Michele Kasmer created limited edition fabrics and unique wearables by selectively altering and reinterpreting her own artworks and collections, as well the designs of her mother, Irene Kasmer, the pioneering California fashion designer whose career spanned more than 50 years, notably the inventor of the hip-hugger in 1957. Each individual wearable and accessory was accompanied by the story of its past and the process of its creation.

The 15 TIPS salon concluded with a Bon Voyage Party as Nicola returned to Glasgow.

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, Lauren Michele Kasmer, Annna Homler, Jorge Martin, Greg Lenczycki, Yana Sercaz, Marie Rooney-Hardwick, Philip Miller and Cindy Ojeda.

**Collaboration with Lauren Michele Kasmer.**

**Supported by: L M K & NADFLY.**

## 2010

**LOS ANGELES ELECTRIC**

Los Angeles Cal, USA & Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Stoneware.

Dimensions: 100 x Various.

LOS ANGELES ELECTRIC works of tea & spirit cups & jugs. This series was inspired by the time Nicola spent in Los Angeles while presenting the second phase of her artwork CUP THOUGHTS for the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery as part of the Actions, Conversations & Intersections exhibition.

During her stay she noticed the unique nature of the electric poles in Los Angeles, each one showing the process of human activity and decisions over time. There appears to be no format or rules for the wiring, seeming to connect in such an ad hoc way to each other or to the residences and shops.

The ink drawings of the electric poles feature on the individually thrown stoneware cups & jugs, beautifully glazed with ‘LA blue’ on the exterior and ‘Pacific sand’ in the interior. The cups & jugs, drawings and colours were created especially for the LOS ANGELES ELECTRIC series. Nicola’s ceramic works have been created with the Print&Design and Porslinsfabriken in Lidköping Sweden.

**In the collection of Blythe Duff, Glasgow, Scotland.**

**Supported by: Blythe Duff.**

## 2009 - 12

### PROMENAD

Lidköping, Sweden.

Medium: Ink Drawings & Porcelain Ware.  
Dimensions: Various.

PROMENAD was commissioned by Print & Design, a company in Rörstrand Center, Lidköping, Sweden.

Typical Lidköping promotions often featured their iconic red Town Hall. PROMENAD series deliberately used images of the inhabitants in unique locations. The ink drawings of Lidköping were featured on the PROMENAD design line on plates, cups and tiles.

These were sold throughout Lidköping and Sweden. This was the artist's first commercial ceramic design job.

**Supported by: Print & Design.**

## 2009 - 2010

### CUP THOUGHTS

Cultural and Porcelain Festival in the Rorstrand Center, Lidköping, Sweden & Actions, Conversations, and Intersections, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Cal, USA.

Medium: Ceramic.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: Actions, Conversations, and Intersections.

The CUP THOUGHTS artwork took place over two years.

The first CUP THOUGHTS / Fika event took place in Lidköping in 2009 with 101 people as part of the Cultural and Porcelain Festival in the Rorstrand Center, and in 2010 as part of Actions, Conversations, and Intersections, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery.

To open CUP THOUGHTS in Lidköping and Los Angeles, the song Sweet Cake by Nicola Atkinson, a love song to a Swedish cake was sung by the artist.

Based around the social institution of taking coffee, the public artwork CUP THOUGHTS brought people together in two very separate places: Los Angeles, USA and Lidköping, Sweden. The project focussed on big and small actions within the larger contexts of community and dialogue - all symbolized by the single cup of coffee. It involved the exchange of both physical objects and intangible ideas; it was about conversations and intersections that occurred on both a local and a global scale.

In Sweden the 'Fika', is the social institution of taking coffee. It is about taking a break or pausing from one's daily activities through sharing coffee and cake with colleagues, friends and family.

The starting point of CUP THOUGHTS was a simple question – how do we take our coffee? This art project set out to discover the effects of the 'Fika' on people and their work environment.

Taking a simple, very human ritual of having a coffee break, Nicola transformed it into an opportunity for discovery and dialogue, not only between Lidköping and Los Angeles but also between its people and their everyday, interesting lives. The project used modest means to reach into the intimate patterns of life, using the connections between individuals to reflect on the nature of collaboration and sharing. It brought art directly into the lives of its participants and it offered a model for future collaborative projects.

Hand-thrown ceramic cups and plates were used that had been designed and produced by Nicola in the Rorstrand Center, the ceramic centre for contemporary design and production, located in the historic Rorstrand factory. Nicola placed the drawings of her 1947 Swedish house on the cup and her garage on the plate creating a bird's eye view of her plot.

The 101 participants in Lidköping were asked to think of a person in Los Angeles whom they would like to drink and eat from the same coffee cup & plate (after washing of course). Some of the participants wanted a person in Los Angeles just like themselves, but many were just open to someone new and unknown. As might be expected, Nicola received four requests for famous people: Clint Eastwood, Sam Elliot, Sam Harris and Kat von D.

Nicola spent three months in Los Angeles finding 101 people to match the people in Lidköping. So the people in Los Angeles could drink from their cup.

**Curated by Edith Abeyta and Michael Lewis Miller**

**Supported by: 202 participants in Lidköping & Los Angeles, individual donations to the NADFLY FIKA SHOP. Funded by the Rörstrand Center, Sweden, NBV, Västra Götalandsregionen, EU funded, Lidköpings kommun, Porslinsfabriken i AB, Accents jewelry design & Department of Cultural Affairs, the City of Los Angeles.**

## 2009

### SWEET CAKES, Album

Recorded at Banchory & A GLO-SPOT Sound.

Medium: Music/CD.  
Dimensions: Various.

Album launch and live performance in the ballroom at Sloans, Glasgow with Nicola Atkinson, Stevie Jackson and Friends.

The pieces performed were:

#### ALICE

Nicola Atkinson words and vocals, Stevie Jackson guitar & Peter Nicholson cello.

#### MOVING

Nicola Atkinson words and vocals, Stevie Jackson guitar, George J Murray trombone, Aby Vulliamy viola & Bill Wells bass guitar.

#### REIGNING FAMILIES

Nicola Atkinson words and vocals, Stevie Jackson guitar, George J Murray trombone, Bill Wells bass guitar, John Cavanagh, Hanna Tuulikki & Aby Vulliamy backing vocals.

#### LORRIES

Nicola Atkinson & Stevie Jackson words and vocals, Stevie Jackson guitar, George J Murray trombone, Hanna Tuulikki flute, Aby Vulliamy viola & Bill Wells bass guitar.

#### LITTLE MAN

Nicola Atkinson words and vocals, Mick Cooke drums, Chris Geddes bass guitar, Stevie Jackson guitar, Bob Kildea guitar, Stuart Murdoch Farfisa organ & Gary Thom tambourine.

#### SWEET CAKES

Nicola Atkinson vocal, Stevie Jackson guitar, George J Murray trombone, Hanna Tuulikki percussion & Aby Vulliamy viola.

**Little Man produced by Mick Cooke. All other recordings produced by John Cavanagh.**

**Mick Cooke, Chris Geddes, Stevie Jackson, Bob Kildea & Stuart Murdoch appears courtesy of Rough Trade Records.**

Nicola's band LAURENCE AND PEDRO consists of many invited guests such as: Emma Peebles, Stevie Jackson, Lee Ivett and Daniel Padden, George J Murray, Hanna Tuulikki, Bill Wells & Aby Vulliamy continue to play every few years live.

**Supported by: LAURENCE AND PEDRO.**

## 2008

**VICTORIAN MARKET / BWCART**

Victorian Market, Inverness, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: VICTORIAN MARKET / BWCART.

A Public Art event for the traders in a Victorian Market for future development. The purpose of the two events primarily was to engage with the public and the traders at the Victorian Market.

HIGH TEA was an ‘intimate’ affair where we invited all the traders to participate in afternoon tea and cake. The majority of the traders participated by coming along and when people couldn’t make it along (this was usually due to the fact that traders couldn’t ‘shut up shop’ and potentially lose customers) the artists took the tea and cake to them.

At John Cavanagh Radio VM 37 traders became involved with each other by exchanging songs and stories. The song choices were quite revealing to the traders as new aspects of their ‘neighbours’ personalities were discovered that had not previously been acknowledged.

**Collaboration with Hanna Tuulikki and Karen Vaughan.**

**Supported by: The Scottish Arts Council, Public Art Scotland & Inverness Old Town art.**

## 2008

**WILD SHADES/VILDA LAMPSKÄRM**

Stenportsgatan Lidköping, Sweden.

Medium: 24 Lights, 10 Lamps Per Light, 240 Light Shades, Textile & Fabric.  
Dimensions: Various.

The centre of Lidköping had not undergone major redevelopment since the 1970s. WILD SHADES/VILDA LAMPSKÄRM was a temporary intervention and consultation with the community

through action, demonstrating the effect and impact of trying to accommodate every opinion. It prepared the community for a programme of major works, and led to an understanding of the choices that go into urban planning.

WILD SHADES/VILDA LAMPSKÄRM was a public artwork that explored the ideas, conflicts and solutions that arise when the public want to reach a consensus on a public artwork.

Understanding the needs and desires of the public was a significant initial stage for all major works by public and private institutions, especially when working in the built environment. Nicola Atkinson specialised in community engagement through action, not just observation.

Nicola Atkinson gave the community of Lidköping an opportunity to see the process of ‘a personal choice’ in action. Residents and employees of the shops on Stenportsgarden, the pedestrianized High Street, were asked to select a colour and create a single light shade out of cotton fabric for one lamp of a streetlight. The streetlights featured 10 globes protruding in a way reminiscent of a blueberry bush full of fruit. With 24 streetlights to cover, a total of 240 bespoke light shades were commissioned.

The personal tastes and artistic preferences of those many individuals were on display for four weeks, temporarily changing an acceptance of conformity with a burst of spontaneous expression and 100 colours.. The 240 people were sworn to secrecy and the work was installed at night in order to have maximum impact.

The Stenportsgarden was remodelled with new lighting, street furniture, sculptural public art, widened access and other improvements. WILD SHADES/VILDA LAMPSKÄRM was the method through which the department of democracy at the Lidköping Municipality was able to engage, inform and understand the community they serve in their regeneration of the central shopping district.

**Supported by: Department of Democracy, Lidköping Municipality.**

## 2008

**IN A BLINK OF AN EYE / WORDS 2008**

Mitchell Library, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Installation, Frames, 37 Ink Drawings & Prints.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: Let’s Pretend 37 Stories about (in)fidelity.

WORDS 2008 was a collaboration based on new writing from the Creative Writing MLitt programme at Glasgow University. It was organised by Lucy Adams, Susan Kemp, Fiona Rintoul and Adrian Searle in conjunction with public artist Nicola Atkinson. The exhibition was unique in that it took the normally solitary process of writing out into the public domain. By doing so, Words 2008 sought both to promote new literary talent in Scotland and to engage a wide range of people with contemporary writing.

Nicola created an art installation inspired by an anthology collection of new writings - Let’s Pretend 37 Stories about (in)fidelity, published by Glasgow University Masters course in Creative Writing. The 37 ink drawings created contain the essence of each story and act as points of interest for the texts displayed in the Mitchell Library. Each writer felt that the visual interpretations captured their stories perfectly. The images were hung A0 on the walls and placed in velvet covered stand-up frames and situated vertically in series on the floor, creating a walkway in the Mitchell Library space.

Writers: Celaen Chapman, Joe McInnes, Roy McGregor, Jenni Brooks, Susan Reid Sexton, Patricia Ace, Fiona Rintoul, Deborah Andrews, Adrian Searle, Elinor Brown, JL Williams, Liam Murray Bell, EGJ, Colin Begg, Margaret Callaghan, Ulrich Hansen, Sue Wilson, Lucy Adams, Fiona Montgomery, EJ Patience, A Singerman, Helen Sedgwick, Susan Kemp, William Gault Bonar, Mary Paulson-Ellis, Kirsty Logan, Tom Rae, Kate Tough, Amy Burns, Alison Sommerville, Barry Gornell, Jennifer Adcock, Lucy West, Euan McClymont, Jessica Parkinson, Joyce Henderson, Maria Di Mario and Sean McLaughlin.

**Supported by: Creative Writing MLitt programme Glasgow University & Mitchell Library, Glasgow, Scotland.**

## 2007

**702 DWELLINGS**

Abbeyview, Dunfermline, Scotland.

Medium: Cardboard embossed with gold-leaf.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: SEE EYE.

702 DWELLINGS presented a vision of Abbeyview in the form of miniature cardboard houses embossed with gold-leaf drawings, serving as a memorial to the 702 dwellings that had been or were due to be demolished as part of the regeneration process. They were constructed and personalised by both the SEE EYE team and students of Woodmill High School, and presented as an installation in Flat 120 on Allan Crescent, as a series of dwellings in the shape of a single dwelling within the old living room.

The work was originally conceived of as a way of engaging the young people of Abbeyview in the SEE EYE artwork, providing an art-based response to the regeneration process. Their personalization of the houses brought about many revelations. By presenting something that was seemingly complete, and then creating a further dialogue, the artwork had engendered an imaginative response, with each house representing an individual and their creative potential.

The cardboard houses were full of symbols. The gold-leafing referenced the everyday sight of the sun hitting the windows. The cut-outs were made from cardboard. The shadow of a tree highlighted the roots of the community and it’s branching out over time. The fact that the trees were bare suggests that it was going through a metaphorical winter, in anticipation of the coming spring. The pupils augmented these themes in a creative way, responding to the ideas already present and transforming the work – through extensions on the houses, decoration, and by giving them a personalised aspect. With 702 Dwellings, engagement with the Woodmill High School pupils provided the most effective way of accessing the public as a whole – as teenagers constituted a large percentage of the Abbeyview population – giving young people a forum in which to voice their aspirations. The process of visualizing this has hopefully provided a link between the dwellings and their occupants, and the future.

**Supported by: Fife Council & Communities Scotland.**

## 2006 - 2008

**SEE EYE - COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTIONS. R.A.D.A.R (Random And Dynamic Art Risks) / TWEED STREET TOUR/ PUBLIC ART GATHERINGS**  
Abbeyview, Dunfermline, Scotland.

Medium: Various.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: SEE EYE & ART AS EVIDENCE Books with Knitted Covers.

SEE EYE - COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTIONS brought together a group of creative people, working with the Abbeyview community to provide an artistic accompaniment to the regeneration scheme. This was made possible through interaction with a number of individuals and organisations in Abbeyview, alongside funding from Fife Council and Communities Scotland.

The SEE EYE team was put together by artist Nicola Atkinson as a means of working in collaboration with other artists, alongside the people of Abbeyview, on a series of artistic 'collaborative interventions'.

The premise of collaboration coordinated everyone's individual approach from the outset. Nicola provided the hub or point of contact for this, with each individual artist acting as a satellite, bringing new ideas to the project and collaborating with each other.

There were many unknowns, such as which groups we would engage with, and a concern that we wouldn't be able to engage with the community as fully as we would like within a short time. Each individual had their own unique approach and skills, whether it be conceptualising, constructing work, making films and installations, playing music, or organising events and it was both challenging and rewarding to channel this into collaborative works.

Nicola talked of the idea of the 'phantom community', the idea that someone else speaking on behalf of the people could only offer an abstract idea of what their thoughts were. The reality was always much more complex, and by taking this into account SEE EYE provided a varied programme of works which were responsive to the entire area of Abbeyview, its people and environs.

The opportunity to present works in alternative spaces, such as a vacant block of flats, as well as efforts to enhance living and working environments such as the library, the regeneration office, and the eco house, led to the creation of a number of works, some transient in nature and others more permanent.

The SEE EYE team decided that a temporary piece was the most powerful representation of Abbeyview given the fact that it was in a process of transition. A lot of the work interpreted destruction in an artistic way, and alluded to re-growth and an awareness of what had passed.

Metaphors and symbols abound - the uprooting of trees, family ties, the flight of birds, the black crows on the estate - alongside music, celebration and the use of light. Even though many of the works were temporary they will mutate into other forms - Ben Spencer's yew trees found their way to Pittencrieff Park, Hanna Tuulikki's lanterns will entertain the children of Abbeyview crèche, hopefully for years to come, and Stevie Jackson's anthem for Abbeyview was played at the in Los Angeles at the The Walt Disney Concert Hall. The Cabinet of Curiosities, constructed by Nick Millar, as an artistic resource, housing individual art works alongside books chosen by the artists was exhibited far and wide in Scotland.

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, Hanna Tuulikki, Stevie Jackson, Carol Lambie, Ben Spencer, Chris Hladowski, Nick Millar, Michael Wilson, Alan Grieve, Luke Fowler, Sophia Pankenier, Marisa Privitera, Gerry Love, John Cavanagh, Philip Miller, Nick Fells, Clare Simpson, Aby Vulliamy, Luke Fowler & Claire Barclay.

**Supported by: Fife Council & Communities Scotland.**

## 2007

**ODE TO JEALOUSY**  
Fürth's Saumweber, Schwabacher Str, Fürth, Germany.

Medium: Vinyl, Mirrors, Thread & Powder-coated Metal.  
Dimensions: Various.

Change of use/Gebrauchs Wandel  
Change of mind/Gesinnungswandel  
Change of identity/Identitätswandel  
Change of industry/ Industriehandel  
Change of place/Ortswechsel

Nicola Atkinson's ODE TO JEALOUSY exhibition for the City of Fürth, pulled together different threads of history to form its basis. Referencing the poem Ode to Jealousy by Robert Tannahill 1774 - 1810. It invites you to look at yourself through someone else's profile, cut out in silhouette, using mirrors and framing each site, to introduce inward reflection of desires, our sense of freedom and our place within the world.

In the 17th and early 18th century, the silhouette was a very popular affordable form of portraiture before the invention of the photograph. The use of the cut-out silhouette as a way to present the profile evokes the cutting away process of creating patterns for the shawls. Instead of paper the cut-out materials it was made from laser cut powder coated metal and mirror to reference the important mirror production history of Fürth.

The profile in the artwork is that of a contemporary Scottish artisan, Anne Phillips, creating a link between the skilled workers of the past and those of the present working in Scotland.

**In the collection in Paisley Museum & Art Galleries are 6 A0 photographs by Nicola Atkinson City of Fürth, mirror-reflected silhouette images.**

**Supported by: Paisley Museum & Art Galleries & Fürth, Germany.**

## 2006

**HANGING BY A THREAD / An einem Faden hängen**  
Paisley Museum & Art Galleries, Scotland.

Medium: Mirrors, Thread, Photographs, Recycled Tin Cans & Sound works.  
Dimensions: Various.

Paisley became twinned with the town of Fürth in Southern Germany in 1969, and Glasgow was twinned with Nürnberg in 1985. It had been said that Glasgow was to Paisley as Nürnberg was to Fürth, in that they have similarly ambiguous relationships, based on their city/town rivalries. Each of these places had a strong identity as a result of their individual histories and all of them were undergoing a period of re-definition.

Both Paisley and Fürth had lost some of their population and their old, established industries. Their identities were in danger of disappearing and they sought new roles. However, they were unsure of the nature of their own personality and like individual people, sometimes when we try to become someone or something else, the ghosts of the past re-assert themselves. Each place had clearly paid a price for its industrial development.

HANGING BY A THREAD involved a series of 'Fun Houses' that allowed the viewer to not only contemplate each place, but also to feel their nightmarish qualities; places where fears and fantasies were reflected back on oneself. To be concerned with looking and being in two state

**Collaboration with Hanna Tuulikki and Bill Wells on the sound work 'Glass Mountain' created from field recordings at the William Tracey Recycling Depot Paisley, and played in the Paisley Museum & Art Galleries.**

**Supported by: Paisley Museum & Art Galleries & William Tracey Recycling.**

## 2006

### THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING WITH US!!

International Conference on Power, Freedom, and Coalitions, Hamburg, Germany.

Medium: Number Tags, Plastic Bag & Electric Fan.  
Dimensions: Various.

28 people received a number tag and were invited to enter the room alone or in one group of three. (no one went in alone) All participants were requested to keep the experience in the room a secret... and wait.

Only when entering the room, did they discover that there was just a plastic shopping bag, with the words ‘thank you for shopping with us!’ printed in red. The bag was suspended in the air by a thread attached to a whirring metal fan. The fan was bought in Hamburg and then subsequently returned.

THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING WITH US!! work raised ideas of consumerism, ownership and group dynamics

Participants: Andreozzi Luciano, Bernie Grofman, Donald Wittman, Frantiek Turnovec, Friedel Bolle, Gianfranco Gambarelli, Hannu Nurmi, Jacek Mercik, Keith Dowding, Marties Ahlert, Mika Widgren, Moshe Machover, Norman Schofield, Stefan Napel, Sue Grofman, Steven Brams, Timo Airaksinen, D. Marc Kilgour, Martin Leroch, Nicola Maaser, René van den Brink, Illana Machover, Jörg Gröndahl, Manfred J. Holler, Matthew Braham, Frank Steffen, Barbara Klose-Ullmann & Alexander Close.

**Supported by: International Conference on Power, Freedom, and Coalitions, Hamburg, Germany.**

## 2006

### BRING THE GLAM TO EAST KILBRIDE

East Kilbride Art Centre, East Kilbride, Scotland.

Medium: Vinyl LPs & Various.  
Dimensions: Various.

A unique vinyl LP was recorded in the artist’s front room and the East Kilbride Underpass by Rachel Devine (The Porch Song Anthology), Chris Hladowski (Nalle, Scatter & The One Ensemble), Stevie Jackson (Belle & Sebastian & Bill Wells Trio) & Aby Vulliamy (Nalle & Scatter, The One Ensemble). It hangs in the East Kilbride Art Centre in a frame never to be played. The insert featured the writing of Duncan McLaren’s teenage angst and memories of a ball-game.

The Glam Cafe exhibition was created with Nicola & Eddy Steele the Super Marc Bolan fan, encompassing an investigation of the Music of T-Rex, album covers, fans, memories and borrowed objects. A Glam menu was created with everything renamed to Marc Bolan food specials.

A film of the tattooing of Marc Bolan’s image on the Super Fan was shown at the musical performance at East Kilbride Art Centre.

### MY TEENAGE DREAMS

“I was listening to Teenage Dream by Marc Bolan on my iPod, as I walked towards the interview at the East Kilbride Arts Centre. It gave me such a feeling of joy that East Kilbride and this song became linked. When asked at the end of the interview what I would do for the residency, I said it would just have to feature the song Teenage Dream. I felt it was a slightly mad idea at the moment, but I got a call the following day, saying I would start in a few weeks. The day before starting the project, as I walked down Victoria Road in Queens Park, Glasgow, I noticed several T. Rex & Marc Bolan LPs on display in the window of the Oxfam shop. The idea was given new vigour by a conversation with Eddy, the Marc Bolan super fan and volunteer in Oxfam, who talked fondly of the 2000 Scottish fans that have to go down to England to celebrate their hero. It made me wonder, “Could I create an event and a new venue in EK, introducing a new community to this new town?”

As I was exploring the town, I caught sight of a plaque, which commemorated the declaration of East Kilbride as a New Town by King George VI in 1947.

It was then that I realised that Marc and EK were almost twins, being born in the year of post war utility Britain, and that BRING THE GLAM TO EAST KILBRIDE made real sense as an idea. I decided that I needed a special item that the fans would come to see in EK.

In late June I took my annual trip to Los Angeles to see friends and found out that Marc Bolan’s son, Rolan Bolan, lived in L.A. It became a quest to try and meet him.

I contacted friends in LA who might help and continued my search. As I walked with my friend Britt on Venice Boardwalk one day, he called his friend Larry, who was at that very moment in a recording studio that Rolan was in two months ago. Larry would get back to me, but on second thoughts his girlfriend (who was just flying in from Chicago) had a story... and picture... and it all looked good... but she left town before we could meet.

In the meantime, I went to the Hollywood Bowl to see Belle & Sebastian play. It was a beautiful night and afterwards we gathered in the VIP area where I was introduced to a man who might have Rolan’s number. Intensely he searched his cell phone/small computer but no luck. I left without meeting Rolan. Back in Glasgow I spoke to Stevie Jackson from Belle & Sebastian. During our conversation Stevie mentioned, “You’ll never guess who was at the Hollywood Bowl, Rolan Bolan! Stuart met him, if only I had seen him, it would have been great for you both to meet” **an essay by Nicola Atkinson.**

**Supported by: South Lanarkshire Council in partnership with Community Regeneration Partnership Changing Places, South Lanarkshire Greenspace and the National Trust for Scotland the David Livingstone Centre.**

## 2006

### GREEN DOT / DER GRÜNE PUNKT

Schloss (Castle) Almoshof, Nürnberg, Germany.  
International Artist’s exchange residency.

Medium: 100 Cloth Sacks & Photographs.  
Dimensions: Various.

“On arriving from Glasgow for the first time I walked the streets of Almoshof. It was a hot summer night and I noticed these yellow sacks outside people’s homes. The contents of each sack were clearly visible and inadvertently exposed to the world. I could see if they ate meat, kept dogs or had a secret love of chocolate. It was quite an intimate portrait of the people of Almoshof who, at that moment, were still strangers to me. It made me wonder... where do our items go once we place them into the yellow sacks? I wanted to catch these everyday items in their journey from usefulness to being recycled and present them in a new way.

I decided to involve 100 people who live in Almoshof, identifying the main road that passes the Schoss as the place to hand deliver the participation invitation. Since I do not speak a word of German I was aware that it may have created extra tension in the working process, but not so. With the help of either Veronika Weindler or Gabriele Wahl of the Schoss, I visited each recipient and asked for one item from their recycling bag/yellow sacks. The reactions ranged from a man giving us a fully functional 1940’s radio to those who wouldn’t even talk to us. In between were these amazing encounters: meeting a woman who was partly nursing her father with her four other siblings and who gave us his feeding sack; a woman who devotedly loved her dog and a man who owned a brush company across the road.

In the end 53 people became anonymously involved and 53 items were collected. I placed the items on cloth bags, the symbol of our support in preserving our landfill sites of plastic bags. They became transformed into a classic still life and could perhaps be seen as ‘new’ desirable objects. I produced, I hope, an intimate portrait of the lives in the area, they were not such strangers anymore. We invited the 53 people of Almoshof who participated, to the opening and, as my gift, they received their own personal cloth bag adorned with an image of their item. The time I spent at Nuremberg had been great, and I wish to thank everyone who made my stay warm and welcoming.” **an essay by Nicola Atkinson.**

**Supported by: International Artist’s exchange residency, Schloss (Castle) Almoshof & Glasgow City Council Lord Provost & International Office.**

## 2006

**I AM A DISH**

Keswick & Keswick Museum and Art Gallery, Cumbria, UK.

Medium: Badges & The Musical Stones of Skiddaw.  
Dimensions: Various.

A public artwork was devised by Nicola Atkinson as the starting point for creating a Public Art Strategy for a Keswick Town Centre Master Plan, which aimed to integrate public art within the public realm, and to provide engagement with public art strategy.

I AM A DISH aimed to connect Keswick people through the shared passion of food by asking the community to identify, and identify with, our favourite meal. Everyone who participated received a badge to wear. By wearing them in the street, connections were made with other badge wearers via an acknowledgement of the project, and their choice of food. This process had hopefully brought a greater understanding of the public and their perception of art in order to formulate what the town wants in terms of public art.

I AM A DISH performance and exhibition at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery featured musicians brought to Keswick as part of the public engagement strategy.

“We (Aby Vulliamy, George Murray, Bill Wells, Hanna Tuulikki, and myself) played 4 pieces at the performance, all of which included the stone xylophon in some capacity, and all of which had at least a vague association with foodstuffs. We opened with ‘Souling Song’, an autumnal folksong and antecedent to Hallowe’en, All Saints and All Souls, which describes the old tradition of children knocking on peoples’ doors and asking for ‘soul cakes’ in order the placate the dead, who are able to journey more easily into the world of the living at this time of year. The piece has an unusual, quite primitive sounding trichordal harmony that wonderfully evokes the mystery of autumn.

Bill wrote “Liquorice Tics”, a piece that also features on his latest album, a collaboration with the Japanese band Maher Shalal Hash Baz. The title is apparently an intuitive spelling of liquorice sticks (not, as I had wondered, a new variety of edible parasites invented by Bassett’s). I hit the wrong rocks in the actual performance but it didn’t seem to matter.

We had practiced this piece in the dining room of the bed and breakfast earlier in the day, shortly after the last of the soggy cornflakes had been cleared away. It felt like Sly and the Family circa “There’s a Riot Goin’ On”. No one was feeling sheepish on this one.” **excerpt from an essay from Chris Hladowski**

Musical Stones Performance by Bill Wells, Hanna Tuulikki, Chris Hladowski, Aby Vulliamy & George Murray.

**Working with and supported by: Willie Miller Urban Design, Yellow Book, Martin Shockley Associates & Ryden.**

## 2006

**FLIGHT / VUELO**

Glasgow International 2006, Gilmorehill G12 Theatre, Glasgow, Scotland / Havana, Cuba.

Medium: Music & Moving Images.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: FLIGHT / VUELO & CD.

FLIGHT / VUELO was created as a curatorial challenge from Atkinson and Yuneiky’s Villalonga to the artists based in Havana and Glasgow. In these collaborations new artistic hybrids were created that were grounded in experimentation. Scottish musicians played their new, specially commissioned pieces, in live collaboration with DVD artworks, the Cuban visual artists.

Four years after Havana was twinned with Glasgow in December 2002. The event sought to engage with people from the two countries and from different sectors of the art world, to creatively express new cultural developments within the wider community.

“The artworks created for FLIGHT / VUELO were not presented in the same manner as contemporary video. The approach was closer to the origins of the cinema, with musicians live scoring in reaction to the visuals. The methods of video art installation were transformed into performance.

## 2006

**COOL AS A CUCUMBER/EIGHT WORKS**

Triptych, Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Music & Film.  
Duration: between 3 - 5 min.

A collaboration between Nicola Atkinson & Stevie Jackson, centred around an experimental film and music process of creating live scores to real time events. Standing playing harmonica in an ice cold field, as a tractor slowly moving across in Peebles, playing guitar to the intense traffic of the M8 motorway in Glasgow, and or singing to the crowds of the Braehead playing Shopping Centre, all capture the essence of life with a beautiful live soundtrack.

Glasgow on April 30 2006. Triptych was a Scottish Festival that straddles three cities Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow. The 8 vignettes were shown for the first time at Belle & Sebastian’s all-day Triptych event at Tramway,

**Collaboration with Stevie Jackson.**

**Supported by: Triptych, Tramway & Belle & Sebastian.**

Flight as a metaphor is readily associated with the lightness and levity of things. We tend to take a ‘bird’s eye view’ of what we are not interested in rather than examining it in depth. At the same time however, the flight of a bird is always associated with a certain spatial ubiquity. From on high we make out locations that are humanly impossible to occupy, or even comprehend. In many cases (as in the flight of a bird of prey) the view is, on the contrary, very detailed and acute.

The artworks being created for FLIGHT/VUELO will not be presented as contemporary video is conventionally shown today. The approach is closer to the origins of the cinema. Thus we invite the Scottish musicians to produce the sound, and to play live, on the basis of the visual stimulus supplied by the Cubans and Nicola’s dancing man work.

The dancing man (Steve Gray) is not a stage actor but a dancer-lover, and we are interested in the little personal story that he has to ‘narrate’ through the music. The dancing is performed with all of the requisite charisma and skill it needs, to seduce. The pieces will not be shown in a gallery but in a theatre, which is at the same time the stage where our protagonist dances. But in dancing man, Gilmorehill G12 does not have its usual black curtains. The piece gives back to the spectator the architectural qualities of this space: the stylized stained-glass windows and the light of the subdued (as compared with Havana) Scottish atmosphere.

For a short time a time that will have passed after this presentation, as the crow flies musicians and visual artists of Glasgow and Havana coincided in art.’ **excerpt from an essay from Yuneikys Villalonga.**

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, Alasdair Roberts, Rachel Devine with The Porch Song Anthology, Alejandro González, Peter Nicholson, Glenda León, Hanna Tuulikki, Pavel Acosta & Daniel Padden. With musical Interludes: John Cavanagh.

**Collaboration with Yuneikys Villalonga.**

**Supported by: Glasgow International, the Hunterian Art Gallery, British Council, Glasgow City Council, University of Glasgow, Radisson Blu & Gilmorehill G12 Theatre.**

## 2005 - 2006

### BUTTONS UP

Havana/ NY / LA / UK.

Medium: 300 25mm Badges.  
Dimensions: Each badge - 25mm circle.

Artists & Writers created artworks on a badge (25mm). Worldwide human mobile exhibition. It was the wee'st art show in the world.

BUTTONS UP was a carefree and easy way to show small works. Taking place both outdoors and indoors in Havana, New York, Los Angeles and the UK. The artists & writers were the masters of their own ten badges, to display however they wish, at any location or on any person. Curating and promoting their artwork. The freedom of showing their badges in a place of their choice: on a person, in a shop, a theatre, in a gallery, their home, on a plane, in a car or train or on the street - anywhere - with no borders.

Buttons Up HAVANA

Curated by Yuneikys Villalonga.

Fidel García, James Bonachea, Jairo Alfonso, Alejandro González, Alain Pino, Glenda León, Abigail Hernández, Carlos José García & Yuneikys Villalonga.

Buttons Up NY

Curated by Michael Wilson.

Ellen Harvey, Michael Wilson, Becky Beasley, Anselm Berrigan, Daniel Jewesbury, Scott Zieher, Jonathan Raymond, Elizabeth Schambelan, Kate Scrivener, Iain Forsyth & Jane Pollard.

Buttons Up LA

Curated by Nicola Atkinson.

Sandra Tsing Loh, Barbara McCarren, Jud Fine, Britt Ehringer, Phyllis Green, Ave Pildas, Michael Lewis Miller, Tulsa Kinney, Adam Simon, Kio Griffith, Nicholas Lowie & Sheridan Lowrey.

Buttons Up UK

Curated by Nicola Atkinson.

Craig Coulthard, Sharon Roulston, Michael Visocchi, Jim Colquhoun, Jasper Hamill, Karen Dickson, Nicola Atkinson, Emily Fogarty, Jo Wilson & Sarah Warden.

**Supported by: NADFLY.**

## 2005

### RED SHOES

Los Angeles, Havana and Glasgow.

Medium: One pair of Red Shoes, DVD.  
Duration: 15 minutes.  
Dimensions: Various.

The artist walked in Los Angeles and Havana wearing the same pair of red shoes, emphasizing the same first person point of view in two opposing places. Like magic she is walking from one place to another, despite the shifting political terrain.

RED SHOES was inspired by two tales, the Hans Christian Andersen tale, The Red Shoes (fairy tale). Which tells a moral tale based upon the idea of temptation and eventual redemption. Also Wizard of Oz in which the red slippers represent the little guy's ability to triumph over powerful forces.

**Supported by: The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.**

## 2005

### BLACK SUITCASE FROM KARACHI (ON TOUR)

Welcome Inn Motel, Eagle Rock, Cal, USA.

The Glasgow Art Fair, George Square, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: 10,000 glass bangles, Black Suitcase, Light & Fabric.  
Dimensions: Various.

"I asked my friend who owned the Shanazia fabric shop in Pollokshields, Glasgow if he could get me some glass bangles from Karachi. He got in touch with people he knew who owned shops all over Pakistan and asked for donations of bangles.

They then put the 10,000 glass bangles in a large black suitcase with no padding. The suitcase had travelled all the way from Pakistan through various sets of baggage handlers and luggage holds to arrive almost completely intact in Glasgow with only 20 broken.... it was incredible. With this I intended to take this piece on tour, starting with the Glasgow Art Fair and then on to Los Angeles.

These beautiful objects were a celebration of femininity and tradition, contrasting with our own perception of the other or the unknown. The unusual location and use of the Black Suitcase in performance inspired conversations of change and optimism in the public audience who viewed the piece.

During the Los Angeles exhibition, a maid who cleaned the Welcome Inn Motel rooms where the installation took place felt inspired by the unique and unusual nature of the work. She felt that it took her out of her every day and made her think about the possibilities of her life." **an essay by Nicola Atkinson.**

**Laurie Steelink exhibited a long side Nicola in the Welcome Inn Motel, Bathroom.**

**Supported by: The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.**

## 2005

### STORM /Terrible Beauty / Strasna Ljepota.

Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Public, Jubilee Arts, West Bromwich & Bosnia and Herzegovina UK Network, UK.

Medium: DVD.  
Duration: 3 minutes.

STORM was the part of the series, entitled Terrible Beauty / Strasna Ljepota, inspired by the artist's trip to Mostar in 2004.

"I was filming my driver, Viteskic Samir, as we drove through a storm. He was singing an old Bosnian song, and outside you could hear the storm and see the changing landscape, with all these new buildings rising up next to the ones destroyed by the war. And surrounding it all was the permanence of the weather and the natural world.

I hoped that I'd created something that Bosnians would actually want to have and be a part of: something that had a weight of understanding to it, but which also conveyed that weight without making explicit reference to the war". **Nicola Atkinson.**

The following year STORM was projected on a gable end of a building in Mostar. Those present began to sing in unison with the traditional Bosnian song sung by Viteskic Samir in the work.

**Music: Directorsound and Ibrica Amanet.**

**Supported by: Arts Council England, Bosnia UK Network and The Public a multi-purpose venue and art gallery in West Bromwich, West Midlands, England, at the forefront of a regional regeneration programme.**

## 2004

### SWING

The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

Medium: DVD.  
Duration: 4:36 minutes.

MAY: 2:18  
MAXWELL: 2:18

SWING was a disturbing reminder of how much information we really needed in order to make a true judgement.

The macro filming in May precludes an informative context, so the effect was strangely unsettling, conversely the distant filming in Maxwell Park also left questions unanswered. The same intense cello piece is the soundtrack for both pieces.

MAY was a child in deep sleep in the South Bank, London and MAXWELL was of teenagers aggressively playing on swings. Hopefully leaves questions, were we watching restful sleep or anarchy?

**Soundtrack by Isobel Campbell.**

**Supported by: The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.**

## 2004 - 5

### ROOTS: TERRIBLE BEAUTY / STRASNA LJEPOTA

The Public/Jubilee Arts West Bromwich & Bosnia and Herzegovina UK Network, UK.

Medium: 42 Watercolours, Watercolour Paper, Silver Frames & DVD.  
Dimensions: w3.5m x b2cm x h55cm.

ROOTS was part of the series, entitled TERRIBLE BEAUTY / STRASNA LJEPOTA, inspired by the artist's trip to Bosnia and subsequent conversations with seven Bosnian families who have made the UK their home.

These families came from communities that were hundreds of kilometres apart including, Prijedor, Lukavac, Sarajevo, Gorazde, Mostar and Trebinje. They had now made their homes together and were living within a few square miles of each other in the Birmingham areas of Bordesley, Small Heath, Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath. It was their shared history that brought them to the United Kingdom, but it was their faith, friends and their surviving families that has enabled them to build a new life here.

ROOTS was the part of a series of 42 watercolour paintings in silver frames were gifted to the families. Copies were made for all of the Bosnia and Herzegovina UK Network, establishing an ongoing relationship with each other. The framed watercolours were fragile roots but had a striking use of intense colour. The work was visceral, evoking pulmonary imagery.

**Supported by: Arts Council England, Bosnia UK Network and The Public/Jubilee Arts (was multi-purpose venue and art gallery in West Bromwich).**

## 2004

### FLUORESCENCE / FLUORESCENCIA

City Wide, Havana, Cuba.

Medium: 30 Fluorescent Lights with Blue Gels in Various Forms.  
Dimensions: 1000mm x 30mm.

The end of the PINTURA DE MAR / SEA PAINTING exhibition involved it being disassembled and fragmented. The fate of the fluorescent lights gave rise in turn to a new project involving a group of Cuban artists: FLUORESCENCE / FLUORESCENCIA. The thirty fluorescent lights with their respective blue filters - integral parts of Nicola's work in the Centre for the Development of Visual Arts in Old Havana - were given to a group of young Cuban visual artists.

They were given complete creative freedom to do whatever they wished with the fluorescent lights: no limits or restrictions were put on their use. Implicit in this action of giving light was the idea of sharing, with the hope of continuity.

The curators Yuneikys Villalonga and Nicola Atkinson of FLUORESCENCE / FLUORESCENCIA did not set out to make an aesthetic proposal in the traditional sense. This was a virtual project and the goal was none other than 'fluorescence' itself; the illumination of the Cuban art scene.

Artists: Harold Vázquez, Rubert Quintana, Alain Pino, James Bonachea, Pavel Acosta, Analía Amaya, Iván Capote, Yoan Capote, Helga Montalbán, Duvier del Dago, Humberto Díaz, Edgar Echavarría, David Beltrán, Fidel Ernesto and Carlos José García.

**Collaboration with Yuneikys Villalonga.**

**Supported by: The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts & the British Council.**

## 2004

### PINTURA DE MAR / SEA PAINTING

Centro de Desarrollo de las Artes Visuales, La Habana, Cuba.

Medium: Silk, Chiffon, Wood, Fans, Fluorescent Lights & Sounds.  
Dimensions: w5m x b5m x h3m.

PINTURA DE MAR / SEA PAINTING was held on the top floor of the Centre for the Development of Visual Arts in Havana. This was an official cultural activity under the terms of the City Twinning Agreement signed between Havana and Glasgow in December 2002.

Nicola Atkinson used her own experiences of her childhood home near the white cliffs of Peacehaven on the south coast of England, to contrast and comment on the unique seascape of the shores of Havana.

An elliptical spiral was situated in the centre of the gallery space; lengths of satin and chiffon fell from above and created shadows in different tones of green and blue. A series of fans suspended from the ceiling produced "swells" in the delicate fabrics.

Above the rustle of the fabrics, the hum of the fans and the footsteps of the visitors, the roar of a football stadium could be discerned. These were the voices of victory and disappointment mixed together, rising and falling in the manner of the tides.

A key element in Nicola's work is her exploration of the role of the individual in society, by expanding the notion of participation. At the same time, she set out to create a piece of universal art, an art that was capable of travelling not only geographically but also culturally.

At the close of the show, PINTURA DE MAR / SEA PAINTING was divided into 156 fragments, which were given at random to 156 of its visitors. The show was well attended and involved an interview with the artist broadcast on Cuban TV.

**Supported by: The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, the British Council, Glasgow City Council, Woolgar Hunter of Glasgow & Coral Capital in Cuba.**

## 2003

### CLEAR

PilotSpace, New York City, USA.

Medium: Music, Video & Acrylic, Wood, Canvas & Watercolour.  
Duration: 3 - 24 minutes.  
Dimensions: Various.

Nicola Atkinson transformed a meat fridge warehouse unit with Seth Howe, artist and architect, to perfectly show her work, creating and designing a new gallery space called PilotSpace - it showed her paintings and videos on the west-side of Manhattan in New York City, home of The High Line.

'There's a point in Nicola Atkinson's new video at which the viewer either gets bored and turns away, or relaxes and begins to experience the work as it was intended. That point coincides with the realisation that, while it has a narrative flow of sorts, the beginning, middle and end of the work are not marked by any decisive action. Neither does the gentle musical accompaniment, constructed from a single sample, offer many clues. If it accentuates certain gestures or patterns of light, the significance of those particular things remains elusive. The same may be said for the ambient sounds of wind and traffic, with only the rhythmic swish of a brush standing out as distinct. This is evidently not a film for the cinema. Rather, it has the neutral feel, if not the grainy, monochrome look, of surveillance footage. The angle of the camera never changes, its subjects appear oblivious.

So, rather than an unfolding drama, what we are presented with here is a situation, a 'moment' extended over a period of time. It can be watched from beginning to end quite easily, but this is by no means a prerequisite for its appreciation. It can also, of course, be watched more than once, and while this may well prove rewarding in the way that any act of observation may, it will not reveal any buried symbols or other 'hidden' keys to meaning. What is happening here is in fact quite shockingly ordinary, framed by the camera lens and monitor screen and subtly inflected by the silent and unseen presence of the artist, but otherwise unmanipulated and undramatic.

Nevertheless, there are elements not apparent in the footage itself that have the potential to affect our understanding of the action. One is a knowledge of Nicola's established predilection for 'entering' situations while striving to avoid the ethical and artistic pitfalls of voyeurism. She sets up her camera without permission or explanation, remains for a while, then packs up and leaves. She never announces her intentions, but nor does she seek to hide or disguise them. This straightforwardness of method reflects her aim for renewed simplicity and directness in her practice as a whole, especially where it intersects with the public realm. Hence 'CLEAR.'

Another piece of information that skews our reading of the video's central image is the fact that the people seen maintaining the house do not live there. They are an immigrant family who, while they look very much at ease, spend most of their time elsewhere. Thus the space of the video is not just physical but ideational; corresponding with the home we can see is another that we can only imagine. The one we are presented with looks well-appointed, expensive, with a large car parked outside; the workers' seems unlikely to be quite the same. But the dialogue implied is about more than just economic inequality; it is concerned too with the assumptions we make based on visual evidence alone, and about place and property, public and private in a broader and more complex sense.

Artists are more inclined than most to romanticise childhood, jealous of the unencumbered freedom to dream and play that it seems to offer. Yet while the young girl in Atkinson's video has one foot in a parallel world of her own, the other drags behind.

It is all too easy to see the shadows of the adult world falling over her skipping, twirling, restless figure. We find ourselves prompted to ask ourselves questions about her position in her family, her community, her society, her time. She straddles, as does the scene as a whole, visible and invisible realms.

If the action of the adults in Nicola's video is centred around keeping nature at bay, the substance of her watercolours is frequently quite the opposite. Simple shapes suspended against clean white and pastel-tinted grounds, they suggest firing neurones, wriggling spermatozoa, cells, nerves and veins. Amoebae, or more precisely the semi-permeable membranes in which they are wrapped, become signifiers of the flow of roles and ideas within, beyond and through existing

boundaries. Sometimes elements of landscape appear, at others the tendency is towards pure abstraction, reflecting an uncomplicated delight in mark-making. There are decorative patterns and calligraphic flourishes, fields and flares of pure colour. One might think of them as mental maps, wiring diagrams to subconscious circuitry, or cosmic mugshots, sketches of heavenly bodies and mysterious deep space phenomena. There is a logic at work here, but it is decidedly fuzzy, organic, wilful. Extropy and entropy coexist.

The juxtaposition of painting, especially in such a traditionally genteel medium, with digital video is an unexpected one. The two aesthetics are divergent, even jarring, yet also make a certain kind of sense together here. Landscape is the conventional watercolourist's genre of choice, and Nicola's video is certainly a landscape of sorts, (one that is, as Moria Jeffrey writes, "reminiscent of the golden age of Dutch painting"). For their part, the watercolours have something of a cartoonish look, suggesting movement by evoking the style of abstract animation in the manner of John and Faith Hubley's Benny Carter and Lionel Hampton-scored short Adventures of an \* from 1957. The two media share a certain immediacy; video with its capacity for hands-free documentation, watercolour with its gestural fluidity and lightness.

CLEAR marks another new arrival, in New York, and another reappraisal of Nicola's relationship to the ideas of ownership and occupancy. The fact that it is the first project in a newly converted interior (PilotSpace was previously a meatpacking cooler) only adds to its resonance.'

**Excerpt from an essay from Michael Wilson.**

**Smoke Music: Plinth, Susumu Yokota**

**Close Music: Directorsound, Damon & Naomi with Ghost and Bill Wells.**

**Supported by: The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts & Seth Howe.**

## 2001

### THE MUSICAL HARE

University Hospital Hairmyres, East Kilbride, Scotland.

Medium: Ink Drawing, Acrylic on Ash Wood.  
Dimensions: w40m x b8cm x h10m.

THE MUSICAL HARE took the historical musical activity of the hospital and transformed it into a public artwork. An installation in the main atrium of the new hospital gave patients and visitors a moment to reflect on the history of the hospital and on their own thoughts and concerns.

The surrounding area of the hospital featured two colour fields consisting of 181 ash-painted coloured boxes, where each colour was used to represent a letter. The boxes spelt out the lyric of two songs and each song produced a colour pattern of its own. Within an alcove across from the atrium, collected together were thousands people favourite songs, frozen in time from the year of 2001 and to be viewed forever

**Supported by: University Hospital Hairmyres, Lanarkshire Acute Hospital NHS Trust, South Lanarkshire Council, East Kilbride Art Centre & PACE.**

## 2001

### A PIECE OF SKY

3.703 million Population City, Los Angeles, Cal, USA.

Medium: Website & Automobile Ornaments.  
Dimensions: Various.

A PIECE OF SKY was a proposed artwork intended to engage the diverse communities of Los Angeles in a city-wide dialogue about the creative process and individual expression. Encompassing the whole of the city; its freeways, streets, homes, shops and parking lots, the artwork acted as a frame through which to focus the creative thoughts of Angeleños and to foster a greater sense of shared community.

A PIECE OF SKY began as an exploration of the ways in which Angeleños achieved personal expression through ornamentation

of their automobiles. Such seemingly trivial totems and icons could be imbued with great personal significance in this city where so much of peoples' interaction was mediated by the experience of being isolated in individual automobiles. Collectively, these kinds of objects formed a sort of symbolic language that helped Angeleños identify themselves to one another.

Functionally, the artwork involved the production and widespread distribution of artistic "sky ornaments" which could be displayed, dangling from the rear-view mirror in the car, in a kitchen window, a workplace, storefront, on the handbag of a person riding Metro Rail or the bus, or even on a scooter.

Unfortunately, A PIECE OF SKY did not physically take place due to the events of 11th September 2001.

**Supported by: The Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.**

## 2001

### SLEEP

Road Works, Bulkhead, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: DVD.  
Duration: 42 minutes.

A single screen, in the 24hr Window, showed a hooded figure pacing back and forth, going through the motions of walking within the confines of a small white room that was the gallery space. The artist considered whether walking had become unnecessary in the urban landscape, perhaps even alienating and unreal. The duration of the journey\* however still remains in the illusion of the imagination. This mirrors the activity outside on the street, like walking in your sleep. The work was about not being conscious, about the inside and the outside. SLEEP is considering the journey as a ritual.

\*The journey from the Southside of Glasgow to the city centre took around 42 minutes, if one walked at a fast pace, green lights allowed, with no distraction or people to talk to.

**Supported by: Bulkhead.**

## 2000

**CONNECTED**

British Airways / Year of the Artist, Glasgow, Scotland & Los Angeles, CA USA.

Medium: Several British Airways Planes, Photographs & Printed Material.

Dimensions: Various.

Video: Project documented by Emma Davie.

Nicola Atkinson was the Artist in Residence on an outward and return British Airways flight between Glasgow and Los Angeles. Creating a dialogue between the artist and passengers during the shared experience of flight.

CONNECTED provided the transitory community of the flight with an opportunity to engage in the production of a series of artworks exploring the departure from one state to another through a journey, both physical and metaphysical. The work created a dialogue between the artist and subject within the context of the shared experience of flight.

“On the plane there exists an environment which is an intimate sanctuary, encouraging reflective questioning of life and our faith in the possibility that human beings could really fly. In this shared destiny of belief and invention, we could lose a sense of whether this was real or whether we were still on the ground and the images were just a film.” - **Nicola Atkinson.**

CONNECTED artwork proved to be a unique experience for the artist and passengers, as there had never been an artist-in-residence on a plane before, and unfortunately due to aviation security changes post-September 11th 2001, a repetition of the event would not be possible.

**Supported by: Scotland’s Year of the Artist Residency Programme, British Airways, Bulkhead, Arts 2000, The Scottish Arts Council, National Lottery Fund & Millennium Festival.**

## 2000

**CHOICE TAKES**

Glasgow, Scotland

Medium: DVD.

Duration: 15 minutes.

Editor: Holger Mohaupt.

Assistant Editor: Rosalind Nashashibi.

CHOICE TAKES gently expose what makes the heart of a city beat. Nicola Atkinson documented 11 Glaswegians’ thoughts - a series of interconnected characters. Each participant told stories about themselves, about each other and about other people in their lives.

As part of Glasgow’s millennium cultural programme, Nicola Atkinson interviewed a series of Glaswegians, who were selected in a unique chain of associations, originating with one person choosing two individuals whom she felt were significant in her life.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted, and from these scripts, Atkinson developed her strategy for the filmed conversations, in which she interwoven images from the daily environments of the subjects.

The result was CHOICE TAKES, first shown at a private view for those who had featured in this unique glimpse of Glasgow’s people at the turn of the new century.

**Supported by: The Scottish Arts Council, Glasgow City Council & Millennium Festival.**

## 1999 - 2001

**THE BULKHEAD PRIZE, 24 HOUR WINDOW & THE ADD HAWK GALLERY SPACE**

264 High Street, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.

Dimensions: Various.

Publication: Bulkhead Prize: Number 1, 2 & 3.

Nicola Atkinson was BULKHEAD Creative Director & Curator BULKHEAD curated and organised exhibitions with 32 artists and 18 artworks/projects in the public domain, with support from a total of 48 sponsors and public bodies. It was established to exhibit contemporary artwork at local and international sites. As a registered Scottish Charity SC 029098, it had its own exhibition venue at 264 High Street, Glasgow.

In early 1997, Frank Brown, Managing Director of Fairway Forklifts became involved with Bulkhead by agreeing to sponsor ON THE BUSES, WITH THESE HANDS OF MINE. This allowed Glaswegians, including schoolchildren, scientists, and artists - to communicate with the public through posters on the city’s 1200 buses. The consistently high-quality and accessibility of the programme’s artwork and the accompanying good publicity for his company encouraged Frank to be further involved in Bulkhead.

After a long discussion around the notion of creating dynamic support from the business community for the visual arts, THE BULKHEAD PRIZE was born. It was devised to provide the opportunity for artists to realise and present an idea without having to work to a detailed brief.

A simple five-point structure for implementation:

- The artist must have a Glasgow address.
- The work must be sited within the Glasgow City boundary.
- The work must be completed within four months.
- The finished work must be publicly accessible for a period of one month.
- The three Bulkhead Prize judges should not know one another.

THE BULKHEAD PRIZE supported new public art by raising sponsorship and technical assistance for projects including Lisa Gallagher’s mending of a derelict Gorbals building with a giant needle and thread.

THE ADD HAWK GALLERY SPACE in BULKHEAD’S interior hosted projects like Claire Barclay’s Welcome for Sea and Game.

24 HOUR WINDOW, the shop front exhibition space on the High Street that refreshed the parts other galleries failed to reach. The window brought contemporary art works to passing buses, car drivers, shoppers, and those staggering home in the wee small hours, providing exposure 24/7 for emerging artists as well as those of national and international standing. Such as Scott Myles’s, SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE, taking artwork to Christchurch and back to Glasgow

Artists: Lisa Gallagher, Roddy Mathieson, Chris Wallace, Aileen Campbell, Sally Chapman, Stuart Gurden, Jay – Go, Mick Peters, Susan Roan, Gareth Reid, Sarah Smith, Rob Kennedy, Jess Worrall, Jane Topping, James Thornhill, Shauna McMullan, Anna Lobner, Julian Kildear, Wendy Wilmurt-Brown, Holger Mohaupt, Kathleen Little, Joanne Tatham & Tom O’Sullivan, Daisy Richardson, Matt Hulse, Gitte Griffith, Douglas Morland, Victoria Halford, Scott Myles, Claire Barclay, Karen Vaughan, Rachel Mimiec, Kevin Hutcheson and Claire Stephenson.

**Supported by: Fairway Forklifts Ltd, Arts & Business, P.S.S.L, Southside, A Right Pair of Chancers co, M & S Engineering Ltd, Strathclyde University, Aon Consulting, The Baby Grand, Gael Force, Pearce Institute, Dickie The builder, Woolgar Hunter, Glasgow City Council, Wark Clements, Ross Promotional Products, Richer Sounds, People Show, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Trust, The Scottish Arts Council & Air New Zealand.**

## 1999 - 2000

### VANISHING POINT

New Music 2000, Chesterfield Suite New Art, Chesterfield, UK.

Medium: Animation.  
Duration: 23 minutes.  
Publication: New Music 2000.

It was a quiet half-day closing on a Wednesday in Chesterfield, and this was the day Nicola Atkinson chose to arrive in town to document a trip through its streets. Were the people going home, to work or engaged in other business which was perhaps not so mundane?

She charted a 23-minute journey in a loop; beginning and ending at The Market Place & The Shambles. She had captured the normally unobserved everyday activities of people going about their business between two different points - within their own vanishing point.

VANISHING POINT's two thousands hand-coloured video frames of local scenes reflected a parallel reality in the manner of a landscape painter. This public artwork enabled the people of Chesterfield to focus their attention on a hitherto unnoticed time in their town's history, thereby establishing an indelible image of a moment which normally would be forgotten. Wednesday the 8th of September 1999 between the hours of 2.00pm and 3.00pm now took on a new significance.

Music: Bill Wells Trio - Chesterfield Walk (for Nicola Atkinson).

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, David Mach & Stuart Jones.

**Supported by: Centros Miller, Arts & Business, RSA Art for Architecture & Chesterfield Borough Council.**

## 1998

### WITH THESE HANDS OF MINE

BULKHEAD on 1,200 First Glasgow Buses, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Printed material & Photographs on the bulkhead of the buses.  
Dimensions: w270mm x h420mm.  
Publication: ON THE BUSES, BULKHEAD.

WITH THESE HANDS OF MINE was a series of photographs portraying the hands of a lawyer, a nurse, a bank manager, a publican, a journalist and a water department worker. Moving through the streets people rarely appreciate the spectrum of industry, which supports city life, but this piece approached the workers of Glasgow in a direct way. Faces remained hidden, but through the stories held in every pair of hands, we were encouraged to imagine a thousand explanations.

**Supported by: Fairway Forklifts Ltd, Adshel, Glasgow 1999 UK City of Architecture and Design & First Glasgow.**

## 1997 - 1999

### ON THE BUSES

BULKHEAD on 1,200 First Glasgow Buses & Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Bus ticket, Printed Material & Photographs on the bulkhead of the buses.  
Dimensions: w270mm x h420mm.  
Publication: ON THE BUSES, BULKHEAD.

Creating the role of Cultural Liaison Officer, Nicola Atkinson extended the bus residency to curate eleven exhibitions, with 33 artists on 1,200 buses across Glasgow, reaching an estimated audience of 110 million people over an eleven month period. This project created an unusual exhibition venue for visual art and offered named people from Glasgow; including scientists, schoolchildren, architects and artists, the opportunity to present their ideas to the public as posters on the buses. Advertising space was reclaimed and repurposed as a gallery of new ideas.

## 1998

### KEYS TO THE CITY

Dundee City & Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland.

Medium: 36 Keys & 10,000 Printed Questionnaires.  
Dimensions: Various.

Nicola Atkinson developed KEYS TO THE CITY from a week spent exploring Dundee. As an artist whose work had involved taking art practice to unusual places, Atkinson never sets out with a preconceived idea - it was the city or the site which informed the work. This particular idea emerged from an ongoing discussion in Dundee and indeed, throughout the country, regarding how it was possible to gauge or measure the effect of cultural activities on a city's inhabitants.

Atkinson asks what is needed to engage people in thinking about contemporary art. How do you get people to talk about abstract ideas? How does the artist create a structure to inform the development of a local authority arts policy? How can the Council be truly accountable to its tax payers?

Following an invitation to the city, Atkinson was commissioned by Dundee Contemporary Arts and The McManus Art Gallery & Museum, Dundee City Council Art & Heritage to carry out her own proposal to address these issues. Working in each of the city's 36 local wards to identify 36 key holders, the artist was involved in engaging with the city's political processes to develop an audience. Gathering these 36 people from all sorts of backgrounds became the work itself.

A questionnaire was devised to make people think about ideas and developed into a grand piece of the work. KEYS TO THE CITY is about ideas and imagination, subverting city structures, and was truly radical in that the processes are not controlled. The awarded 36 key holders became a conduit to report back on arts activity in the city. This was a truly creative act, free of institutional control, and self-perpetuated by the key holders themselves.

**Supported by: The McManus Art Gallery & Museum, Dundee City Council Art & Heritage & D.C.A. Dundee Contemporary Art.**

A central theme of the work was the idea that these images could be just another window on the bus. The A3 posters were a glimpse into the lives, work and careers of different people.

Creating art in a public space as an artist can be challenging, but people are exposed to art in all forms, and it received a positive response from the audience as soon as it was presented.

A selection of the work called THE END was also presented in Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow. The exhibition in the Eclipse Gallery had a unique shape and viewers' experienced this as an area of transit, drawing recollection with their earlier experiences on the buses.

As part of the project, Nicola created her own work, WITH THESE HANDS OF MINE. After its use as an art gallery, the bulkhead on the buses was never used again for advertising.

Artists: Tabatha Andrews, Jade Armstrong, Nicola Atkinson, Hassan Aziz, Stuart Beel, Kelly Begley, Marianne Carey, Charlotte Collingwood, Alan Crosson, Des Dillon, Ashley Fletcher, Kenny Glenman, Greater Glasgow Primary Schools, Anne Hardy, Graham Head, Edward Henry, Pritpal Kalsi, Harry Kinloch, Sharon Lawson, Leithland Primary School, Oscar McLennan, Maggie MacRitchie, Johnny Martin, McKeown Alexander Architects, Emma McKittrick, Joe Murray, Dan Norton, Anya O'Neil, Karen Reynolds, Joanna Rucklidge, Yasmin Sanderson, Lesley Shearer, Martha Sills, Chris Stewart Architects, St John's Primary School, Tanitoc, Iseult Timmermans, Stewart Trainor, Chris Watson, Paul Welsh, University of Glasgow, University of Wales, The Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics & Quantum Optics, University of Strathclyde & National Museums of Scotland.

**Working with Karen Vaughan.**

**Supported by: Fairway Forklifts Ltd, Adshel, Microcentre, Technology Ventures, The Scottish Arts Council, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Film Office, Glasgow 1999 UK City of Architecture and Design, John Smith & Son, University of Glasgow, First Glasgow & Glasgow Museum of Modern of Art.**

1997

**TRUCK ART**

Museum of Transport, Glasgow, Scotland and traveling around the City of Glasgow, Scotland & Pakistan.

Medium: Vinyl Text, Coloured Vinyl, Metal Chain, Bus, Truck, Bells, Metal Tea Pots & Car Paint.  
Dimensions: Minivan w2m x b1.5m x h1.5m. Coach w2.5m x b1.1m x h3.5m.

TRUCK ART was part of the City of Glasgow marking the 50th Anniversary of the foundation of the State of Pakistan

Nicola Atkinson was invited to Karachi School of Art on a two-week research project to Karachi, Pakistan to learn about ‘Truck Art’ in order to develop new work for the Glasgow Museum of Transport.

TRUCK ART is a form of popular Pakistani public art dedicated to honouring one’s vehicle. Truck drivers can spend up to two years’ salary decorating their vehicles with colourful and ornate art. It is a talismanic tradition featuring exciting designs such as flame motifs and images of movie stars. While in Pakistan, Atkinson met and worked with the Karachi artist Afshan Ali who then also returned to Glasgow to help complete the work.

A minivan and coach were chosen to be transformed into new TRUCK ART pieces. The painted minivan was permanently installed in Glasgow Museum of Transport, while the painted First Bus coach was used during events of the 50th Anniversary in the City of Glasgow.

**Supported by: Karachi School of Art, Glasgow City Council, Strathclyde Buses, First Glasgow, Museum of Transport, Glasgow Museum & British Council.**

1997

**ON THE 34**

The Fringe Gallery, Castlemilk, The Pearce Institute, Govan, and on the no. 34 bus (Strathclyde Buses), Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: 34 hand-painted portraits on wood and vinyl.  
Dimensions: Various.

Nicola Atkinson was Artist in Residence on the no. 34 bus as it travelled the daily route taken from Govan to Castlemilk.

“The double-decker winding its way through a housing estate is an integral part of urban life, linking places and people together. The bus is a poignant place, a place where people visit memories. The bus lets us know we are not alone. It’s a separate community all on its own.” Nicola Atkinson

In a novel change to the typical notion of ‘residency’, ON THE 34 took place in a moving environment while accessing a captive audience. The artist invited the passengers to have their portrait painted and used the form of the classical portrait. This focus of attention, contradicted the anonymity of sitting on the bus. An exhibition of the collected 34 hand-painted portraits brought the participants together. Quotes, questions and the everyday thoughts of people in travel such as “Will this journey take forever?” were placed on the ceiling of the no. 34 buses and the walls of the Pearce Institute cafe.

The work was placed firmly in the public domain, transforming everyday activities and bringing creative ideas to a wider public.

**Supported by: Glasgow City Council, The Fringe Gallery, Castlemilk, the Pearce Institute, Govan & 240 Strathclyde Buses.**

1996

**WHERE WERE YOU GOING?**

Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Galvanised Steel, Fluorescent & Theatrical Lights, Vinyl Text, String, Black Cardboard Boxes, Tea Cups & Saucers, Clothes, Blue Gels & Metal Chain.  
Dimensions: w20m x b5m x h3m.  
Publication: WHERE WERE YOU GOING?

In this project for Tramway entitled WHERE WERE YOU GOING? Nicola Atkinson was Artist in Residence in seven different households.

For one week each, within a one mile radius of Tramway. She superimposed a drawing of a tram wheel upon a map of Glasgow with Tramway at the centre and the spokes radiating half a mile. Those people who took part were identified by writing to 1200 addresses in the streets contained within the spokes, and by displaying three hundred posters throughout the area. Thirty applicants were then interviewed and videotaped.

The exhibition is the culmination of Nicola spending time with the individuals in their homes, at work, with their families, with friends and in other social situations. She has tried to distill the essence of their patterns, traditions and thoughts on their existence; concerned with not simply recording their ‘stories’ and felt the need to transform the material into form.

Nicola went to live with people in order to further develop ideas which had their origin far from Glasgow. The city, however, had altered her methodology as she no longer felt that the unknown was around another corner, but was contained in the interior lives of those who were all around her as she moved through the streets.

The work evoked the act of sitting on a train or subway and secretly examining fellow passengers. Details of their lives were imagined by inspecting their clothing, the shoes that they wore or the newspaper or book which they read.

As an artist, Nicola is naturally interested in questioning how far everyday life can be framed. To present this process in public, the participants’ stories are carefully given physical

form; a single kitchen cabinet hanging in space represents a house, a wall mounted text entwines the participants’ stories together, black boxes contain poetical fragments of their daily lives, memories and dreams. While trying to just be, the artist recognises the whole process is totally performed.

**Supported by: Tramway, Glasgow City Council, The Scottish Arts Council, Glasgow Festival of Visual Arts, Strathclyde European Partnership.**

1996 - 2015

**SECRETS OF THE WORLD**

University of Hamburg, Karachi School of Art & Worldwide.

Medium: Envelopes & Secret.  
Dimensions: Various.

Publication: SECRETS OF THE WORLD, Homo Oeconomicus.

“In 1996, I had the pleasure to organise and to attend the Oberseminar at the University of Hamburg when Nicola Atkinson asked the participants to write down their personal, private and public secrets. I have to confess that I did not ask for Nicola’s permission to replicate her work but I do not feel guilty. Pieces of art belong to the public - at least, the ideas, questions and experiences which they provide. Replications are a means to find answers to the questions and new arguments for the discussion. Of course, I refer to Nicola as the inventor of the original experiment. In the sequel I will present some corresponding facts and interpretations. I will start with some observations related to the Hamburg experiment: There were close to 40 participants at the Oberseminar. This was at least double the number of the regular seminar sessions which are on economic theory, or, more specifically, on economic model building and game theory. More than 10 participants were attracted by the fact that an artist pre-sented some material; they would not attend the Oberseminar on issues of economics.

Another 10 participants were doctorate students of economics from various institutes. They were attracted by the expectation to spend two hours with problems which do not have an obvious relation to their regular work. They were trapped by

their curiosity - the curiosity which is the heart of research work. The rest of the participants were people connected as members, guests, external or former Ph.D. students to the Institute of SocioEconomics which was responsible for the Oberseminar's programme. It might be important to consider the heterogeneity of the participants for the interpretation of what follows.

After Nicola's lecture on some of her previous art work, which was supported by Alan and a senile slide projector, she distributed to each participant a sheet of paper with the three categories personal, private and public secret type-written on it together with a greyish green envelop. The envelopes were donated by the Institute of Socio Economics and looked very bureaucratic. Immediately, discussions started between neighbouring participants as to the difference between public, private and personal secrets. After a while the bilateral discussions turned into multilateral discussions and in the end there was a general discussion which ended with Nicola asking for a resolution. Most participants appeared satisfied by Nicola's response.

Only then the discussion started whether the secrets were safe with Nicola. There were no doubts expressed that Nicola would try to keep the envelope closed and keep the secrets secret, however, does she have the ultimate power to do so? What if she gets robbed on her way back to Scotland, or if somebody broke into her home while she is in California? The general conclusion was that Nicola might guarantee that the secrets will be kept secret but that there was a very small probability that she might fail.

The discussion then moved on to the quest for secrets. Isn't such a question taste- less, impolite or even immoral? Why not ask for something else? However, nobody - even days after - could think of something equivalent to secrets. Ask yourself this question and you will have the same experience.

A branch of the discussion led some participants to discuss the nature of information as complementary to secret. For example, it was argued that one can destroy the secrets in the greyish-green envelope, as locked away in a steel box in Glasgow, by making the information in the envelopes public knowledge. (I was thinking of exam questions which are a secret only up to the exam day when the secret is destroyed.)

Discussion about asymmetric and private information, which are basic concepts of modern microeconomics, continued to dominate lunch conversations for several weeks - in connection with questions of trust and power.

Slightly more than half of the participants returned a closed envelope to Nicola. Some of the other half claimed that they abstained because they could not solve the classification into public, private and personal secrets. Others felt like they were under a shock: they could not cope with being asked to write down their secrets. I had the impression that the number of abstentions and the arguments which supported this reaction could not be differentiated between the group of economists, trained in rational choice modelling, and the other participants with no similar training. However, I have to admit that I did no survey analysis on these reactions and cannot claim scientific status for this observation. I felt myself much too involved and some arguments became only clear days after. Needless to say that my curiosity was not satisfied and I took the next opportunity, however, five years later, to replicate Nicola's work on secrets." **an essay by Manfred J. Holler.**

This work 'Secrets of the World' bridged art and game theory. Game-theoretical interpretations, players and many papers have been published such as the quarterly journal Homo Oeconomicus and The Economics of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Secrets, Desires, and Second-Mover Advantages by Manfred J. Holler.

**Supported by: University of Hamburg & The Scottish Arts Council.**

## 1995 - 1996

### P.I.E.S.

The Pearce Institute Exhibition Spaces, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Various.

Dimensions: Within The Pearce Institute building.

A formal programme of five exhibitions began with the formation of P.I.E.S. in early 1995 by Nicola Atkinson as the curator. There was a general feeling that the building, being a constantly active scene of diverse activities, would be an interesting place for artists to show work. It was also recognised that it was not an easy place to exhibit artwork due to its ceaseless use.

The curatorial approach was that the artists engaged with the users of the building to negotiate the use of the space. Other people were using it for other activities such as Scouts, AA meetings, community meetings, snooker, exercise and meetings.

Artists: Peter Gilmour, Anne Elliot, Karen Vaughan, Theresa Quinn, Tom Leonard, Gerry Loose, Kathy Galloway, David Shrigley, Donald Judd, Lucy Byatt, Christina McBride, Shauna McCubbin, Theo Sims, Alan Currall, Margaret Archibald, Tanya Leighton, Mary Redmond, Dane Chappell, Iain Kettles, Susie Hunter, Mary McIntyre, Andrew Miller and Mark Orange.

**Supported by: The Scottish Arts Council & The Pearce Institute. Glasgow.**

## 1995

### MY HOME IS DUBLIN

Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Eire.

Medium: 24 Framed Photographs.

Dimensions: w27cm x h21cm.

In residency at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, Nicola Atkinson wondered how to portray the city and link its people together. She engaged with 24 households across the city through photographing objects (a table, a sofa, an ironing board, a food cupboard, a sink etc.) to establish one whole 'home' of Dublin.

MY HOME IS DUBLIN became a thread through the city, linking homes and people together with their everyday objects which was essential to everyone's life. The 24 households retain their own identities, beliefs and status but were brought together in one 'Home' across Dublin.

People were brought together by the love of their own individual objects and new friendships were formed.

**Supported by: Irish Museum of Modern Art.**

## 1995

### CAPTURED

Art Machine 95, McLellan Galleries, Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Fabric, Pencil, Mild Steel, Lights, Car Windscreen Wipers, Perspex & Printed Material.

Dimensions: w10m x b15m x h3m.

In order to question the public presentation of art, Nicola Atkinson created a net across the former Strathclyde Region. The artist talked to 300 people in total from Girvan, Lanark, Cumbernauld, Campbeltown, Tobermory and Glasgow, and asked: “What did you do yesterday? What was your perfect day?” The stories were recorded, and the texts returned to each participant for approval. This private, personal engagement was fundamental to the project. To present the work in public, the texts were transcribed by hand into books which were held by the spine on a steel frame structure around the walls of a room. Every five minutes the pages became alive, expressing a printing press type movement and reflecting the chaos of life. The installation created a powerful place, reminiscent of a library, but also a cage. Peoples’ experiences were captured and yet invested with great reverence.

CAPTURED proved extremely popular with the public over its five-month duration, and was visited 39,990 times.

Curator: Kathleen O’Neill in partnership with Richard Layzell (artistic consultant), James Engel (design consultant) and Gary Brunton (lighting consultant)

**Supported by: Glasgow Museums, Strathclyde Regional Council & The Scottish Arts Council.**

## 1994

### MY VIEW

Love in the Ruins, Art and the Inspiration of L.A., Long Beach Museum of Art, CA, USA.

Medium: Removal of a wall in Long Beach Museum of Art, to uncover a blocked up window. Sound System, Velvet Curtains, Wooden Bench, Photographs, Postcards, Cassettes, Wooden Frame & Perspex Holders & Cassettes for the car tour.

Dimensions: Various.

Publication: Love in the Ruins, Art and the Inspiration of L.A.

“The “studio” of Nicola Atkinson changes location with each project, but it is generally an urban area with which she is initially unfamiliar. Her conviction that art is useful in making connections between places and people is evident in her process: she identifies a ‘site’ through her subjective impression of a place, then penetrates that site through her involvement with its inhabitants. The memories and aspirations of the people she interviews form a collective history that maps the “underside” of imagination – aspects of a place that do not yield to casual observation. In her varied investigation of places as disparate as Los Angeles and Glasgow, Nicola has aimed to “reframe the view” – a purpose suggestive of a landscape, which, in a sense, she is.

Nicola challenges her audience to leave the gallery and engage with reality. Through framing a sequence of seven views across Long Beach, she creates a route across nine miles of the city, each viewpoint looking out to the next. Of the seven locations only two acknowledge points of interest, the others are important nodes for people who live and work in each area. Each view can be contemplated in the gallery through formal, sparse photographs, but Nicola attempts to force people out of the gallery to experience the intensity of the locations identified.

The views are distributed on postcards, showing a detail from each location and including a map on the back. An audiotape of sounds and interviews, recorded at each site, captures the chaos of the city to give each some reality and transcribes Nicola’s account of the process her view. She contrasts the beautiful, rarefied, protected art environment with these extreme urban spaces.

She also raises the notion of being a tourist in your own city and that points of interest are often narrowly defined. We all look out and say this is my view, but do we really understand, or want to take the responsibility for, that thought.” **an essay by Curator Noriko Gamblin.**

Artists: Max Almy and Teri Yarbrow, Nicola Atkinson, John Baldessari, Uta Barth, Nancy Barton, Karen Carson, Vija Celmins, Eileen Cowin, Steven Criqui, Russell Crotty, John Divola, Judy Fiskin, Anthony Hernandez, Linda Hudson, Larry Johnson, Edward Kienholz, Catherine Opie, Jorge Pardo, Lari Pittman, George Porcari, Edward Ruscha and Robert Yarber.

**Curator Noriko Gamblin.**

**Supported by: Dr Richard Guttler, Long Beach Museum of Art, California Arts Council and City of Long Beach.**

## 1993

### LOST & FOUND

The Pearce Institute Govan, Springburn Local History Museum and North Glasgow College (now known as Abbeymill Business Centre), Glasgow, Scotland.

Medium: Galvanised Steel, Copper Wire, Teaspoons, Buttons, Theatrical Lights, 39 Framed Photographs, Printed Material, Cardboard, Glass Jars & Sound System.

Dimensions: Various.

Arriving as a stranger in Glasgow, Nicola pondered how to locate herself in the city and reflect on the changing identity of its neighbourhoods. Through LOST & FOUND she found her way around, and connected with people, by tracing a six-mile route across the city linking two similar, yet distinct, districts. The artist sought the involvement of everyone along the route by asking to borrow an everyday item: a button or a teaspoon. By collecting these items, Nicola touched people’s lives. Although in daily use, and also easily lost, these objects had meaning, some even with special significance.

As an alchemist, Nicola transformed the collected objects into a powerful and symbolic work. Atkinson collected 1314 teaspoons and 480 button collections and formed two sculptures, one at

each end of her route. The spoons were transformed into an elegant 16ft diameter chandelier, a beautiful circle hanging in the vast space of the Pearce Institute, embracing the lives of the people along the route. At North Glasgow College, Springburn the buttons were put into jars stacked up to suggest part of an iron water tower, reflecting the historical locus of settlement. Placed in front of the memorial window, the tower was flooded with and refracted light to become a memorial itself. The return of the objects was one of the most important parts of the work, leaving only a powerful memory of the collective activity, the people and lost identities of the city.

Initially the project was to be 3 months in duration, but eventually increased to 8 months because as Nicola returned the teaspoons and buttons, she shared many conversations and cups of tea with the participants. The borrowing created a relationship, similar in nature to a contract. The relationships were initially more intense, but people gave more as they knew it would be returned. This trust was a fundamental part of the project.

“Nicola Atkinson works within the community she inhabits, but her work avoids the do-gooder connotations that come with the “community art” territory. Instead, it displays a bizarre humour and a fine aesthetic quality. Her previous exhibitions include Lost and Found, which involved her knocking on the door of every house along a six-mile route across Glasgow from Springburn to Govan, and asking for a teaspoon. Far from chasing her away, most people were happy to donate their cutlery. She collected 1,314 spoons which she labelled with the donor’s name and then used to construct a 15-foot diameter chandelier.” **an article in G2 in The Guardian, March 31st 1997 by Lawrence Donegan.**

**Supported by: Glasgow City Council Arts Development Fund, Glasgow Museums, The Scottish Arts Council, Pearce Institute, North Glasgow College, Springburn Museum Trust, Govan Initiative, Strathclyde Regional Council, MI Technologies, Capital Copiers, United Glass, Epilepsy Association of Scotland, Rowats Foods, Computerland, Skylight International Ltd, United Distillers, Accolade & Montgomery Movers.**

1993

**HANGING SPACE**

Apt#306 Main Street, Santa Monica the artist's home.  
BOOKS, Exhibition, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, CA, USA.

Medium: Wood, String, Fabric, Acrylic Paint & Wooden Washing Pegs.  
Dimensions: Various.

HANGING SPACE was created over a period of 7 months. Nicola Atkinson wondered: "What if I created every idea I think of and live with it?" and the result was a recorded document of her consciousness. Nicola set out to record each day through a visual diary of artwork (in mixed media: wood, paper, string, paint and everyday objects). Every thought was represented in physical form. Some days just one piece was made and other days, many pieces. Each one was hung from a washing line rope and slowly filled Nicola's living space. The task was to see and live with these ideas and thoughts constantly present.. HANGING SPACE was later seen in public as part of an exhibition entitled: BOOKS in Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Cal, USA.

**Supported by: Nicola Atkinson & Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Cal, USA.**

1992

**A PAIR OF SHOES / UN PAR DE ZAPATO**

Santa Monica Place, Santa Monica, CA, USA.

Medium: 24 New and 24 Old Shoes, Museum Display Boxes, Wood Stands, Acrylic, Cardboard Tags & Blackout Material.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: A PAIR OF SHOES / UN PAR DE ZAPATO.

"“On the face of it, it seems rather simple - borrow a pair of shoes from a number of people who work in a huge shopping centre; exhibit each pair in its own vitrine; attach a portrait photograph of the donor along with the story of their working day wearing those very shoes. A simple, neat way of bringing to the attention of those who shop in the centre, something of the experience of those who serve them day in, day out.

Simple, on the face of it, but complex too at other levels in what it offers both the shoppers who view the works and read the stories, and those who work in the shopping centre. Simple but clever and imaginative - often the simplest strategies are the best.

So-called, 'reality TV', has shown that people are fascinated by the lives of other people. In this work the voyeur in all of us has been tapped to illuminate the experience of those who work in the shopping centre to those who shop there who, like most of us, are in the habit of taking the shop assistants for granted. And more than that, the shop assistants, released from their anonymity, achieve a certain dignity in becoming recognised as individuals; they gain a certain sense of pride and a stronger sense of who they are. Of course the USA seems to have bred the notion of 'letting it all hang out' - the 'Oprah effect' would describe it - the urge to expose one's intimate personal details for public consumption. But in this work this is not quite the case. There are no bitching, fights and bloodletting here. Here it is specific within a clearly defined strategy and is imbued with a generosity of spirit leading to a formal presentation within an artwork. It also takes place within a certain kind of community. What makes a community is, of course, notoriously difficult to define and the term may be least well applied to a shopping centre. But of course that is precisely one of the issues with which this work is concerned. A shopping centre is, at the very least, a community of interest - that of buying and selling. Both buyer and seller are involved in this commercial exchange. Shopping centres are simply the latest form in which we buy and sell goods. Traditional open-air markets contribute to a sense of community just as the 'high street' does. The fact that the ever-growing number and size of shopping centres are, regrettably, killing off local shopping does not mean that the shopping centre cannot be a focus for the notion of community.

This work, "A PAIR OF SHOES" by Nicola Atkinson, draws attention to the fact that community, or the potential for it, exists in every sector and all levels of society. The work evolves directly from the context and its appropriateness is endorsed by the fact that the employees enter into an exchange of goods with the artist and the retail outlets for, in return for their participation and the loan of their old shoes to the project, each of the participants was given a pair of new shoes, to be chosen from any of the shoe shops in the centre. The axiom, 'the gift is not free,' is clearly demonstrated in this exchange.

1992

**BLOOD & WATER**

Breaking Barriers Re-visualizing the Urban Landscape, Santa Monica Museum of Art, CA, USA.

Medium: Acrylic, Painted Glass, Found Wood & 60 Watt Light.  
Dimensions: w30cm x b20cm x h12cm.

"On April 26th 1992, days before the Los Angeles riots I was in Compton researching a public art commission for Artesia Metro Station which I had been shortlisted for. My guide around the community was Milton Pitman and as we drove about Compton he talked about the Watts riots of 1965.

Milton and I kept in touch throughout the Los Angeles riots and were both able to exchange our experience as the riots unfold in different parts of the city.

Five months later, I asked Milton and he agreed to collaborate on a piece of artwork for Breaking Barriers Re-visualizing the Urban Landscape exhibition - that was to raise funds for people affected by the riots .

Milton built a box made from found wood left over from the riots. I interviewed him about his life experience and these words were painted on glass frontage.

His words asked for reconciliation, illuminated by a singular 60 Watt light which hung in the interior of the empty raw box. When the public tried to read his thoughts they were blinded by the light. BLOOD & WATER artwork did raise money for people affected by the riots .

"The curators decided to place all work depending on location - this became a dilemma since I live in Santa Monica and Milton in Compton" **an essay by Nicola Atkinson.**

**Collaboration with Milton Pitman.**

**Supported by: Nicola Atkinson & Milton Pitman.**

Furthermore the artist has gone right to the heart of mindless consumerism by attacking it. The exhibiting, in various locations throughout the shopping centre, of 24 pairs of old, worn shoes in 24 display cabinets, usually reserved for the newest and latest product, contrasts sharply with the - 'you must have these' promotional pressure of purely commercial interests. And yet passers by are irresistibly drawn to this strange dislocation of normal commercial practice.

In 1992 Atkinson was appointed, for a period of three months, the artist-in-residence to Santa Monica Place, a huge mall of 117 retail outlets in Santa Monica, California. I did not actually see the work on site but, when the artist described it to me in 1993, I was immediately struck by the imaginative audacity of the work and the quality of the process, which she had adopted. I know from experience how difficult it is for artists to make work of real consequence in shopping centres. The owners and managers of such places are very cautious of anything that might interfere with the selling of goods. Usually they want artists to make work that will decorate, enhance or promote the centre to the buying public. Atkinson has managed to avoid these problems by focusing attention on the employees and not on the products or the corporate image of the place and by so doing makes a dramatic comment on consumerism itself. It was this strategy that made the work intriguing to me. Twenty-four workers in the centre agreed to participate. Most were strangers to each other though they worked in the same building. Involved in this artwork they get to know each other through their shared commitment to the project and forge a criss-cross network of personal linkages throughout the shopping centre, establishing new friendships and relationships. The project therefore becomes a catalyst for a new level of social interaction among employees." **from an essay by David Harding, THE GIFT IS NOT FREE - TWO PAIRS OF SHOES.**

**Supported by: City of Santa Monica Arts Division in conjunction with Santa Monica Place, Santa Monica Art Foundation and with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Frances Balcomb, Dr Richard Guttler, Louise Hayter, Maria Herrera, Robin Faulk, Susan Stringfellow, Athlete's Foot, Cobbie Shop, Dolcis, Florsheim, Foot locker, Freeman, Joyce Selby, Kinnet Shoes, Lady Foot Locker, Leeds, Thom McAnn & Vine Baker.**

1992

**CHARTED COLLECTED & CAREFULLY COUNTED**

Security Pacific Gallery, Costa Mesa, CA, USA.

Medium: Mirror, Velvet Curtains, Wooden Panels, Washing Line, Blackout Material, Steel, Lights, String, Wheat Seed, Seed Pods, Glass, Acrylic Paint, Printed Material & Gold Paper.  
Dimensions: w17m x b5m x h3m.

CHARTED, COLLECTED AND CAREFULLY COUNTED explored the presentation of people's private experience in the public domain by asking for written memories to "Locate your thoughts in Costa Mesa. While there was not necessarily any direct contact with the contributor, Nicola Atkinson transcribed these recollections by hand, painting the thoughts onto small cotton seed sacks which were filled with wheat berries and hung across the gallery like washing. The installation grew over 5 months, as more contributions were received, to create a many layered exhibition filled with the diverse, pregnant thoughts of the participants. Plaques on the wall recorded who had donated memories. The plan of a suburb was painted onto the glass of the gallery window and filled with quotations from city documents. Personal lives were placed in the context of the revealed city structure to create complex comment on everyday life in a beautiful, still, thoughtful space

James Turrell's installation Night Light 1989, was the first show at Security Pacific Gallery. Which determine the dimensions of the gallery space.

**Supported by: Security Pacific Gallery.**

1991

**A FORMAL SETTING**

Urban Landscape II, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, CA, USA.

Medium: Pencil, Green Carpet, Acrylic, Plywood, Hardware, Canvas & Small Lights.  
Dimensions: w10m x b5m x h3m.

Nicola Atkinson was Invited to show GENTLE BREEZES BLOWING in a gallery A FORMAL SETTING. This addressed the dilemma of how an artist could humanely present the private and personal connection of working with people. Nicola created a revered space within the gallery to imbue the intimate process of her work with respect. The 'real' was taken out of context and transported into a gallery setting.

A raw plywood style shipping container presented a bleak urban exterior to the work, but within was a jewel-like shrine. The walls were decorated with beautiful wallpaper made from the transcribed thoughts of the city block, quotes from the people from the block in Spanish and Korean. The piece invited the viewer to focus on carefully framed portraits of the occupants of the city block: 18th Street, Manhattan Place, Western Avenue, West Washington Blvd.

A key point of the work was to make sure the audience was conscious of the fact that it was a privilege to be viewing the lives of the people of the block. This was a shrine to be invited into and be a tender viewer. Nicola acted as a conduit for the external to view the internal and this relationship had to be explained and protected. The space was imbued with a sense of respect with no sense of voyeurism.

**Supported by: Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, California USA.**

1990

**GENTLE BREEZES BLOWING**

18th Street, Manhattan Place, Western Avenue, West Washington Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, 90018 USA.

Medium: Wood Frames, Acrylic Paintings, Printed Map & Map Holders.  
Dimensions: City Block, Los Angeles, CA, 90018.

The turning point in Nicola Atkinson's career was GENTLE BREEZES BLOWING which began her exploration of ideas on how to collaborate with people. Nicola took a city block in Los Angeles and engaged with all the occupants of the neighbourhood wondering how this disparate community could be linked together. The final work superimposed a fantasy landscape over the block to bring an imaginary place and a little bit of beauty into their everyday lives. The occupants of this shared realm, both real and imaginary, were all connected by being given a map of the fantasy island and an abstract detail of the landscape, which Nicola painted, relating to their particular location. The work aligned the community for a moment, creating a fragmentary link through the common ownership of Nicola's work. This gift was also crucial to the project as an exchange for letting an outsider in.

Witnessing the destruction of the area on television during the Los Angeles riots in 1992, made her realise the enormity of the problems associated with that city and the fact her work could not significantly impact upon them. This did not give her a feeling of futility but rather, a clearer perspective.

**Supported by: The Foundation for Art Resources Inc (F.A.R.) founded in 1977 to facilitate the production and presentation of work by artists who challenge and expand the boundaries of established notions of art and art making.**

1990

**MONUMENTAL ACTIVITY PART 11/111**

Material Consequences, Otis Parsons Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Medium: Blue Prints, Wooden Block, Acrylic Paint, Colours, Gels & Lights.  
Dimensions: Various.  
Publication: Material Consequences by Anne Ayres.

Nicola Atkinson's largest work to date at this time, MONUMENTAL ACTIVITY: a proposal to adorn the outside wall of the gallery building was not realised, but implied using the architectural language of the blueprint as a map for the imagination.

At first glance, these works appeared anomalous to Nicola's practice and yet each appeared to hint at what was to develop; forcing people to interact with her work, engaging directly with the public, using maps and drawing on her fine-art background to produce delicately decorative work.

Material Consequences presented five emerging artists whose different visions were linked by the use of ordinary materials and humble processes of making art. As a whole, the work in the exhibition established a tension between spare, rigorous minimal art and a romantic embrace geared to eccentric form and emotional content.

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, Jeff Colson, Jacci Den Hartog, Peter Levinson and Patrick Nickell.

**Lighting design: R.S. Hoyes.**

**Supported by: Otis Parsons Gallery.**

1989

**PERFECT ACTIVITY**

4th Annual L.A.C.E, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Medium: Wood, Hardware & Acrylic Paint.  
Dimensions: w4m x b5m x h4m.

PERFECT ACTIVITY explored the nature of architectural space and people's movement within it. The gallery was filled by a huge set of steps placed in a painted corner full of patterns and vibrant colour. The spectator had to squeeze between the installation to reach the first tread. The audience, interacting with the work, was obscured and subsequently revealed. The piece explored four stages of self: protected, shy, thoughtful and extrovert.

All installations created during this creative period were made into model form first, but also produced to scale without correction by the fabricator. This allowed the artist to be more adventurous but also gave the work a sense of the unreal due to unusual measurements or altered proportions kept throughout this development process.

**Supported by: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions.**

1989

**INTIMATE ACTIVITY & ANOTHER VERSION OF A PURE ACT**

USC Atelier, Santa Monica Place, CA 90401 USA.  
(Located in a shop unit in a busy shopping center)

Medium: River Rocks, Acrylic, Wood, Sound System, Record Player, Bathroom Tiles & Theatrical Lights.  
Dimensions: w5m x b6m x h3m.

INTIMATE ACTIVITY was a room size environment which dramatised domestic thoughts and activities in a theatrical manner to produce what the artist describes as a “sensuously provocative” experience for the viewer. What is “domestic” isn't traditionally considered seductive because it is so ordinary. The work was intended to overwhelm the senses through the arrangement of colour form and structure, to seduce the viewer with the domestic. The installation INTIMATE ACTIVITY created a beautiful space within a shopping mall unit and the artist sat polishing rocks, arranging them thematically on shelves that were magnified by a scale of five. The general populace possibly does not realise that many everyday objects are standardised in form and size across the various manufacturing processes it takes to make them. A creaking sound was played during a call and response to its own architectural noise made by the building. Nicola utilised this subconscious experience to place perceptual subtleties in the work.

ANOTHER VERSION OF A PURE ACT artwork was situated in a small head size space in the exterior of the unit, with 24/7 access. Capturing light as it fell on a tile surface of the space, you were able to hear a passage from Thomas Hardy's Tess of the d'Urbervilles 'Her feelings almost filled her ears like a babble of waves, and surged up to her eyes.' These works magnified the scale of ordinary objects (a set of steps in PERFECT ACTIVITY, shop fittings in INTIMATE ACTIVITY, the gallery building as display cases in MONUMENTAL ACTIVITY) inviting the audience to interact with each installation and to consider their presence in comparison to the distorted scale of the object.

**Audio recorded: Harry Shearer.**  
**Lighting design: R.S. Hoyes.**

**Supported by: USC University of Southern California.**

1989

**SHADOWS OF IDEAS**

Santa Monica Art Gallery, Santa Monica, CA, USA.

Medium: Acrylic Paint, Wood, Canvas & Theatrical Lights.  
Dimensions: w6m x b4m x h3m.

“I do not think of this space as a room,” Nicola Atkinson has written about her latest installations, SHADOW OF IDEAS. “It is neither indoors or outdoors. It is an investigation of structures expansive and confining.” And , she might have added, reassuring and confusing, alluring and repelling. Taking off from the Regency architecture and design with which she was familiar enough in her native England, Atkinson created a space in which vivid colours and insistent patterns cover most surfaces, and the scale relationships of recognizable things - chairs, tables, fences - don't compute even though everything fits together formally. It's not a Pee-wee Herman stage-set-cum-funhouse. Atkinson's has constructed; it's something more restrained, goofy in a sly, almost sinister way.

What is it about SHADOW OF IDEAS about that perturbs beneath the wit and gaiety? “The scale of childhood” hints at the artists. “What was it like to first see your mother's skirt, or rug, or your first patch of wallpaper? Ordinary things, made fantastical by the impression of a first experience...a sense of reminiscence,” she continues, “ and melancholy and loss” There is definitely something Proustian in Atkinson 's vocabulary of recognizable, but perhaps not identifiable, shapes; they recollect not objects per se but our memories - especially preliterate memories, memories accrued at that time in our infancy before we could name and categorize the world's contents but were first feeling the urge to name and categorize. We may not share Atkinson's specific recollections (Regency homes do not comprise the bulk of America's housing stock), but we did all start out as children; the fears and obsessions that now burden us first trained themselves on the banal particulars of the outside world at this point in our development, prefiguring ideas and still lurking as shadows in the recesses of our recall.” **an article by Peter Frank in the LA Weekly ART PICK OF THE WEEK March 10 - 16 1989**

**Lighting Design by R.S. Hoyes.**

**Supported by: Santa Monica Art Gallery.**

1987

**THE DRAWING ROOM**

Newcomers group show,  
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, CA, 90027 USA.

Medium: Acrylic Paint, Wood, Canvas & Theatrical Lights.  
Dimensions: w8m x b4m x h3m.

THE DRAWING ROOM played on the terms, 'drawing', 'to draw', 'to be drawn into' and a drawing room which was a room in a house where visitors may have withdrawn to for more privacy. It contemplated the idea of what was 'public' and what was 'private'. The bold colourful installation dominated the entrance of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and the public who entered to become part of the spectacle and contemplation.

THE DRAWING ROOM was her first installation artwork. Nicola's career moved away from the private art collectors market and became focused more on making site specific installation and temporary intervention. A period that would last until 2009.

**Supported by: City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.**

## 1985

### THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL HAS NO TEETH

Lhasa Club, Hollywood, CA, USA.

Medium: Filmed Live performance.  
Dimensions: 1.26 min.

THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL HAS NO TEETH performance can be viewed on @LhasaLargoLuna

The Lhasa Club was the main venue in Hollywood where both unknown or established artists would showcase and develop new works. The unique wealth of talents brought about the idea of filming 100 short performances in order to capture a record of the “performance art” scene at the time.

The setup was simple and relatively raw: one camera, one shot, one short performance. Cheap high definition cameras did not exist at this time and neither did personal computers.

The filming was never completed but this little time capsule of 22 performances remains to give a teaser of what was happening.

Featured artists: Nicola Atkinson, David Settle, Henry Rollins, Exene Cervenka, Kim Fowley, Victoria Williams, John Fleck, Tomata Du Plenty, Fayette Hauser, Weba Family Singers, Philip Littell, Barbara Smith, Rikky George, Linda J. Albertano, The Visiting Kids, Jane Anderson, Brian Chic, Linda Sibio, James Trivers, Greg Travis, Marina La Palma, Laura Lee Coles and Colin Gorman.

**Collaboration with David Settle.**

**Supported by: Lhasa Club, CA, USA.**

## 1984

### IMPRESSIONS OF LOS ANGELES; Ten British Artists

Bernard Jacobson Gallery, CA, USA.

Medium: Watercolours & Graphite on Water Paper.  
Dimensions: w2m x h3m & 500mm x 250mm.

As part of the group show, Nicola Atkinson created expressive wall-scale watercolours and graphite on paper which investigated the state of the mind and body.

During the same period of making video art, Atkinson wanted to create the same emotional impact as those pieces but through the medium of painting. The figurative paintings ‘Running’ & ‘Cool’ were expressive, colourfully, primal and were recognised for their social commentary and energetic style.

Artists: Nicola Atkinson, Ivor Abrahams, Derek Boshier, Robert Bradford, Ian Colverson, Michael Heindorff, David Hockney, Patrick Morrison, Nick Taggart & William Tillyer.

**Supported by: Bernard Jacobson Gallery, CA, USA.**

## 1982 - 1985

### GOLDEN MOMENTS / MEMORY OF YOUR NOSE

**The Second link: viewpoints on video in the eighties:** Walter Philip Gallery, Banff, Toronto, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, A - Space, Toronto, The Museum of Modern Art, NY, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, Long Beach Museum of Art, CA, Lhasa Club, CA, USA, EZTV, CA, USA, LVA Show Air Gallery, UK, The Third Bracknell Festival, UK, The Royal College of Art, UK, Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art, Hokkaido, Education Cultural City of Sapporo, Sapporo, Hyogo, Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe Saitama, Japan.

Medium: Video.  
Duration: 15 Minutes.  
Publication: The Second Link: Viewpoints on Video in the Eighties ISBN 0-920159-00-1.

Inspired by the writing of author Philip K. Dick and his commentary on fame, GOLDEN MOMENTS / MEMORY OF YOUR NOSE was a deliberate effort to disrupt the forms of the music video and video art. Self-knowing, quirky and funny, but vigorous in meaning and commentary on the nature of the medium.

Nicola Atkinson was featured as a social stereotype, such as a terrorist, housewife or music star. The pieces were created just as the concept of music videos began to emerge and responds to their overly synthetic nature by embracing the real. GOLDEN MOMENTS / MEMORY OF YOUR NOSE was deliberately visceral and energetic.

‘My Surprise by Memory of Your Nose is a compilation of performance and music; the performance by Nicola Rosalie Atkinson-Griffith (aka Nicola Atkinson) and the music by Tom Hickmore and associates. The performance is shot first, then edited, often with repeats and cut-backs. The musicians work to the edited tape, and then the music is dubbed back on to the tape with the original spoken parts. Promo tape is turned inside out, not only is sound/performance scenario reversed, but the performance is far too threatening to ‘promote’ anything directly. In the second half (this tape is two parts of an eventual five part sequence), the unnerving sharp focus, combined with strong lighting from under the performer, on hands, eyes, tongue and lips is too close for any comfort. The performer is in turn gauche, confrontational, alert, sexy and sinister. Whose surprise? Voyeurism is neatly exposed as a camera shoots a second shot from outside the studio window. Both format and performance seem to be in question. It might seem like conjection if it were not for the humour and the discomfort created by the almost embarrassingly close relation between performer and (through the camera) viewer.’ **from an essay THE VIDEO MIX by Sandy Nairne.**

‘These works prefigured the use of sampling to create popular music - although what Memory of your Nose did was more than just music, we made the video art and the song at the same time.’ **Nicola Atkinson**

The works are in museum collections all over the world and were shown on Netherlands Television.

**Collaboration with Tom Hickmore.**

**Supported by: Walter Philip Gallery, Banff, Toronto, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, A - Space, Toronto, The Museum of Modern Art, NY, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, Long Beach Museum of Art, CA, Lhasa Club, CA, USA, EZTV, CA, USA, LVA Show Air Gallery, UK, The Third Bracknell Festival, UK, The Royal College of Art, UK, Fukuoka Art Museum, Fukuoka, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, Hokkaido Asahikawa Museum of Art, Hokkaido, Education Cultural City of Sapporo, Sapporo, Hyogo, Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, Kobe Saitama, Japan.**

## 1981 - 86

### PAINTINGS

Los Angeles, CA, USA.

Medium: Watercolours & Graphite on 300 grams Water Paper.  
Dimensions: Various.

Bold colourful expressive wall-scale paintings which investigated the state of people’s mind and body, during social engagements such as: gigs, gatherings and parties.

For example : ‘OUR PARTY 1981 It’s a witty, satirical and colourful painting filled with the head and shoulders of ten characters. They appear anxious to be there, as they crane their necks and jostle against each other, to be noticed, to be included. Some smile inately, others feign boredom. Others preen with self importance, and there’s a rather nervous over jolly man who seems to have just arrived. The hostess is both generous and patronising as she reaches out to tickle the rather bewildered man under his chin.’ **Jill Vedebrand.**

**Supported by: The people who have purchased the paintings.**

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