



THE SIXTY TWO GROUP OF TEXTILE ARTISTS

Members Newsletter Summer 2020 Issue 63

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@sallyspinks.art

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear members,

What a strange and disconcerting three months these have been, and I hope that you have managed to find a way through it all and have kept well.

It has been quiet on the 62 Group front, but nevertheless the committee has been working away in the background to get future events sorted out.

Dates for 2020 postponed events have now been rearranged.

The 3rd annual Fashion and Textile Museum Lecture will take place on 10 September 2020 with Emily Jo Gibbs and Richard McVetis speaking.

The *Conversations* exhibition at St. Barbe Museum and Art Centre, Lymington, has been rescheduled and will now take place from 20 March to 2 May 2021. The committee have

decided that there will be another opportunity for members to make a submission or to change their submission for this exhibition and details will follow in due course.

Let's hope that both these events will be able to take place!

We are excited to have been asked to take part in the British Textile Biennial in 2021 and you will have received the thought-provoking brief for the exhibition that will take place next October. We have been asked to develop work around the theme of the Biennial which is *'the global nature of textiles, textile production and the relationships it creates both historically and now'*. The venue has now been organised and the exhibition will be at The Whitaker in Rossendale, Lancashire, <https://www.thewhitaker.org/>. The gallery is currently being refurbished and looks as if it will be a fantastic exhibiting space. The details of the brief and gallery will be up on the members area of the website soon and I'd like to remind you that this will be the first digital selection.

The committee had its first Zoom meeting a couple of weeks ago (who had even heard of Zoom before lockdown?). We had a full turn out of committee members and an efficient meeting that saved both time and money for everyone. Apart from the AGM, I am going to suggest that we continue to have meetings this way in the future.

The first stage selection for new members also took place on Zoom with 5 members on the selection committee. Out of 43 applicants, 9 people have been taken forward to the second stage. The second stage selection committee want to see actual work from these people and obviously this will be difficult in the present circumstances. Therefore, the selection date has been postponed until the committee can meet in person.

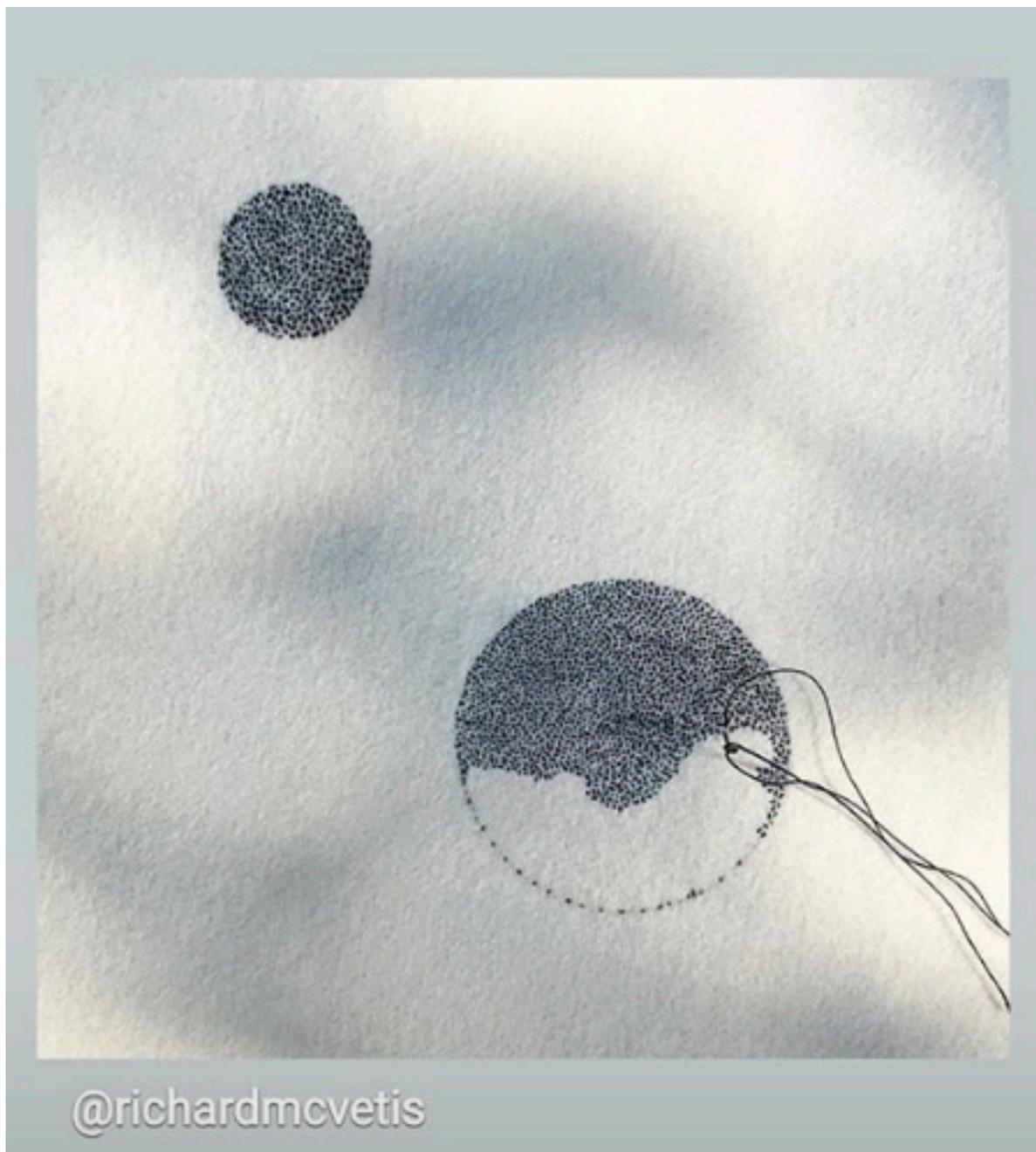
Finally, the committee has been giving some thought to equality and diversity and how these issues impact the 62 Group. Hannah Lamb has written a comprehensive report laying out ideas for discussion and possible actions. I would very much appreciate it if you would take the time to read it and I would like to hear your response. Please do email me at chair@62group.co.uk.

The photos in this newsletter have all been taken from Instagram and show what members have been up to recently.

Take care.

Best wishes

Debbie



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Your Committee 2020

Officers

Debbie Lyddon - Chair chair@62group.co.uk

Elizabeth Tarr – Treasurer tarrboiger@gmail.com

Imogen Aust - Secretary iaust@dmu.ac.uk

Committee Members

Jane McKeating - Education j.mckeating@mmu.ac.uk

Richard McVetis - Exhibitions richard.mcvetis@network.rca.ac.uk

Hannah Lamb - Publicity hannahjlamb@hotmail.com

Emily Jo Gibbs - Public Newsletter Editor emily.jogibbs@btinternet.com

Imogen Aust - Joint New Members iaust@dmu.ac.uk

Catherine Dormor - Joint New Members c.dormor66@gmail.com

Daisy Collingridge - General daisymaycollingridge@gmail.com

Nigel Cheney - Social Media nigelcheney@gmail.com

Co-opted members for specific roles (no voting rights at CMs)

Louise Baldwin - Archives louise@louisebaldwin.me.uk

Lucy Brown - Handling Box lucybrownmakes@btinternet.com

Caron Penney - FTM & exhibitions assistant caron.penney@weftfaced.com

Isobel Currie - Membership Secretary i.currie@myphone.coop

Contacts

Imogen Aust: iaust@dmu.ac.uk to send information to all members.

Isobel Currie - Membership Secretary: i.currie@myphone.coop to update your contact details.

David Pitcher: davidpitcher@me.com to update your personal web page info/ images & CV or to get your login for the member's area.

Newsletters

We have 2 newsletters

Members' Newsletter, which contains a letter from the chair, important news about 62 Group news and events, membership news & committee reports and decisions and actions. This is sent out quarterly in Winter, Spring, Summer & Autumn each year.

Public Newsletter which is mailed out on 1st March, 1st June, 1st September, 1st December and includes 62 Group news and events and also individual members' news. To share your news with the public please contact Emily Jo Gibbs - Public Newsletter Editor or add emily.jogibbs@btinternet.com to your newsletter mailing list so she can share your news in the Public Newsletter

Social Media: contact Social Media nigelcheney@gmail.com

Facebook @62groupoftextileartists

Twitter @62group

Instagram - the62group

In the members area of the 62 Group website you can find information and sending-in documents for exhibitions, newsletters and the full minutes of committee meetings.



@lynnsettingington

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Fashion and Textile Museum: Third Annual Lecture -The Skill of Narrative:

Stitched Textiles. 83 Bermondsey St, Bermondsey, London SE1 3XF, 10 September 2020

Conversations: People, Places, Materials, Objects, 20 March – 2 May 2021, St

Barbe Museum and Art Gallery, New Street, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 9BH

British Textile Biennial, <https://britishtextilebiennial.co.uk>, The Whitaker, Haslingden Rd, Rawtenstall, Rossendale BB4 6RE, October 2021 (exact dates tba)



@annagravelle

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IN THE 62 GROUP OF TEXTILE ARTISTS BY HANNAH LAMB

Please read and send your comments to Debbie Lyddon
chair@62group.co.uk

As some of you know, I have previously raised the issue of a lack of diversity in the 62 Groups membership and what we can do to remedy that. As a committee we have been keen to discuss ideas but this has not resulted in concrete action. Recent events, namely the brutal killing of George Floyd in the USA, worldwide protests and awareness raising for the Black Lives Matter movement have created a wave of activism. It has raised my awareness that it is not enough to say I am not a racist, I have to be anti-racist.

In this committee meeting I would like to encourage us to put Equality & Diversity issues permanently on the agenda (literally) and to commit to taking positive steps to address the issue of diversity in the group. I would like to make it clear that I am not an expert on

Diversity issues and these are just my own thoughts.

Below are some notes for discussion:

What can be done to increase the diversity of membership?

How can we better support Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) textile artists?

LISTEN to the voices/stories of diverse people

ACT - commit to concrete actions

AMPLIFY the voices/work of diverse artists

EDUCATE ourselves (do the work)

STRIVE TO DO BETTER

Make ourselves accountable. Equality and Diversity needs to be a permanent committee agenda item. If we haven't done anything on that subject we should be asking ourselves 'why not?'

Gather information from our membership. Suggest an anonymous questionnaire to gather data on the protected characteristics: gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion/belief. There is some work to be done about how to collect this information sensitively and legally, with due attention to GDPR.

Publish the data (see above) and **Use the data to check ourselves.** How diverse are we as a group? Are there groups that are under-represented? How can we address this?

The constitution of the group is deliberately exclusive - i.e. we select for membership on the grounds of merit. This is an important aspect of the group which we should not seek to change. However we need to be mindful that privilege can play a part and that **some people may feel MORE excluded (on the grounds of difference) and less inclined to apply.**

Check how we project ourselves as a group. Is it enough to say "Membership of the 62 Group of Textile Artists is open to those of any age, gender or nationality working in any textile media worldwide." **Do we need an equality & diversity statement?**

Encourage membership through **directly targeting individual BAME textile artists** - i.e. have you thought about joining...? This could be an incredibly powerful way reach out to people who may not feel the group is for them. Consider people within (or on the fringes of) our networks.

Recruit BAME Honorary Members and 'Friends'. I would like to encourage members to think about anyone who has made a suitable contribution to textile art who we might like to invite. We should make a conscious effort to diversify membership.

Use our profile to **increase awareness of BAME textile artists**. Examples could include:

- Ensuring that a certain percentage of our social media posts include non-white British female artists
- Mark particular events on social media as an opportunity to amplify diverse narratives (e.g. Black History month, Holocaust Memorial Day).
- Developing projects where members work with lead BAME artists (ensuring the lead artist is paid and appropriately acknowledged for their role).

Education - targeted outreach projects - Jane McKeating has already discussed ideas about working with groups and linking with organisations connected to gallery hosts.

Financial support (bursary) targeted towards BAME / diverse students? Or projects working with disadvantaged groups.

The **legal position** is that it is against the law to discriminate even if the intention is supposed to be positive, however 'Positive Action', is allowed but needs to be supported by evidence (hence why we need to collect data):

In the workplace, positive action means the steps that an employer can take to encourage people from groups sharing a protected characteristic who:

- *have different needs*
- *have a past track record of disadvantage*
- *have a record of low participation*

For example, to help people sharing a particular protected characteristic to apply for a job or to be developed for promotion. These steps might include providing work experience, mentoring or training.

When an organisation is providing services, these are steps it can take to help or encourage people from groups who share a protected characteristic to participate, or overcome a particular disadvantage that they have.

Positive action is lawful if there is evidence that it is needed. For example, the level of participation by people from that group is lower than could reasonably be expected.

Equality & Human Rights Commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/commonly-used-terms-equal-rights#positive>

Encourage members to use their privilege and status to apply pressure to organisations to act, to reach out and **amplify the voices of BAME and diverse textiles artists.**

The exhibition for British Textile Biennial provides a good opportunity for members to consider diverse voices and the complexity of global connections and influences in textiles. I think we should encourage members to discover, explore and discuss these issues, whilst being aware of cultural sensitivities, i.e.:

- Acknowledge the original sources of cultural capital
- Be aware of borrowed image/pattern/identities and its cultural meaning/significance
- Acknowledge bias in historical and contemporary narrative

RESOURCES:

Below I have gathered a few resources I thought were of interest, and perhaps other members might have some things they might like to recommend.

'What's Wrong with Cultural

Appropriation?' <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/06/cultural-appropriation-wrong/>

We Wear Culture *"Explore over 400 stories by curators from leading institutions across the world"* <https://artsandculture.google.com/project/fashion>

Feldman, J. (2017) *'Stella McCartney Accused Of Cultural Appropriation For Using Ankara Prints In Her Spring Collection'*, Huffpost

[Online] https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/stella-mccartney-cultural-appropriation_n_59d62f70e4b0becae802b7d0

'The True Cost of Fast Fashion' <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/the-true-cost-of-fast-fashion/iQLSkbO2dHPflw>

Equality Act 2010 <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act>



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DECISIONS AND ACTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Saturday 20 June 2020 - Online Zoom meeting

Protocol

Apologies for Absence

Minutes of last meeting 14/03/20 and Matters Arising - Minutes approved

Finance - Elizabeth Tarr

Online banking - waiting committee signatures before being set up

New Members - Catherine Dormor

43 submissions including International. Selection 21/06/20

Publicity - Hannah Lamb

Advertising went ahead for exhibitions now postponed.

Advertising for New members was low key, Social Media had worked very well

Social media - Nigel Cheney

Little to report

Using archive - called for more members to share images and posts

Newsletter & Public Newsletter - Emily Jo Gibbs

Has gone out, but was thin with little content

Exhibitions and Events - Richard McVetis

- CTRL/Shift Final Update (SS). Final AC monies should be in now. Catalogues still being sold online.
- St Barbe. Exhibition rescheduled – Dates 20 March – 2 May 2021. Submission to opened up to the membership again for 2021
- British Textile Biennial: October 2021. Venue: The Whittaker, Lancashire. Confirmed brief has gone out to members, lots of scope and a great venue.
- Fashion & Textile Museum lectures (CP). Rescheduled 10thSept 2020.
- Fashion and Textile museum Installation 2022 - DL to announce brief next summer to give time for selection, successful member to find funding and complete making.
- Events/exhibitions for 60thanniversary 2022 – Jessica Hemmings curation – nothing to report

Education - Jane McKeating

- Workshops at St Barbe. Jane to confirm with venue and artists for new dates.
- Workshops for British Textile Biennial. Jane to begin discussions with Jenny at The Whittaker.

AOB

- **Website** Suggested exhibitions on the website are 'Postponed ' be replaced by 'coming soon'- agreed
- Equality and diversity report - HL. Group need to focus on Equality & Diversity. Great discussion on how we can actively address diversity in membership etc.

Date of the next meeting: 12 September 2020

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