



□ MATERIAL ENVIRONMENTS EXHIBITION

■ ARTISTS' STUDIO

## EVENTS

**THE TETLEY WEEKENDER: EXPERIMENTS WORKSHOP**

19 & 20 MAY | 11am–5pm, FREE, all welcome.

Our annual micro-festival taking inspiration from the current exhibition with activities for all the family, artist-led events, plus great food and drink. See a list of all events on our website and details on how to book.

**EXHIBITION TOURS**

Saturday 12 & 26 May, 9 & 23 June, 2pm, FREE, all welcome.

Join one of our programme assistants for a tour of the *Material Environments* exhibition.

**READING THE REALNESS**

Wednesday 4 July, 6pm, FREE, all welcome.

A performance devised by Harold Offeh focusing on interviews, talk shows and audio material transcribed into scripts, and activated by a collective reading that explores identity, realness and authenticity.

**HAROLD OFFEH: LOUNGING AND CURATOR'S TOUR**

Saturday 7 July, 2pm, FREE, booking essential.

Join curator of *Material Environments*, Ben Roberts, for a tour of the exhibition including the chance to see Harold Offeh's *Lounging Performance*.

The Tetley, Hunslet Road, Leeds LS10 1JQ

@The\_Tetley / @T\_BarAndKitchen / facebook.com/TheTetleyLeeds

Reception 0113 3202323 / Bar & Kitchen 0113 3202423 / thetetley.org

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# Material Environments

Phoebe Cummings / Keith Harrison / Serena Korda  
Harold Offeh / Joanna Piotrowska

Curated by Ben Roberts

4 May – 8 July 2018

*Material Environments* is an exhibition of live production, making and participation. In the exhibition five artists experiment with ideas of physical and psychological transformation, through works that deal with subjects ranging from social media, botany and chemical science to architecture and music. This exhibition makes visible the processes and thinking, trial and error, that are at the centre of contemporary art practice; the artists' curiosity and engagement with the world. It is an articulation of making as a way of thinking, as a form of research.

The artists in this exhibition represent a broad spectrum of practices from photography and sculpture, to performance and sound. Rather than presenting finished works, as might be expected in a gallery, each of them has responded to the invitation present their work as an ongoing investigation. The resulting exhibition will grow and evolve over the span of its time in the gallery operating as studios, installations, workshops and laboratories.

At the centre of the exhibition will be the *Experiments Workshop*, a set of workshops, performances and experiments staged by the artists within the exhibition itself which animates their projects. From the production of CO2 gas to designing plants, visitors will be able to work with the artists as they experiment with the ideas and materials that inform their work.

## PHOEBE CUMMINGS

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### LEEDS BECKETT ATRIUM

Phoebe Cummings makes baroque clay sculptures, combining impossible assemblages of plants and fauna with lush, imagined landscapes. For *Material Environments* Cummings has created a huge new immersive environment in the Leeds Beckett Atrium. During the course of the exhibition Cummings will return to this world within a world, adding to it and creating further plants over time.

Visitors are invited to enter this construction, to explore the botanical fantasy which Cummings has created and, when she is present, discuss the evolution of the work as it progresses.

### GALLERY 3

Here Cummings has installed a research room of key texts relating to her work, interest in science fiction and the creation of fictional, fantastical worlds. Visitors can read these books in the gallery but are asked to leave them behind for others to enjoy. Alongside these books are two 19th-century Rococo style candle sticks, their intricate and at times excessive decoration referencing the lush, sculptural growths in the atrium. These historic and cultural references, with their imagined, mutated depictions of nature, bind Cummings' work together and offer a perspective on our often detached relationship with the natural world.

In the cabinet are the tools, press moulds and the clay Cummings uses to make her work.

## KEITH HARRISON

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### GALLERIES 1 & 2

Keith Harrison's practice focuses on manipulations and juxtapositions of materials. Testing and stretching the properties of the physical world, his practice is an ongoing process of experimental investigations producing both sculptural and performative events such as cars flying through a forest, or sound waves destroying a building. Harrison's works are also rooted in our social and cultural history. He has previously worked with the ceramics collections at the V&A, death metal bands and the decline of Britain's motor industry as his subjects.

He is interested in the possibility for objects and materials to represent a culture or a moment in time, and how their physical properties make this possible, such as recording music on a vinyl disk.

For *Material Environments* Harrison has chosen to engage with the history of The Tetley as a site of

production, brewing large quantities of CO2 gas in a manner reminiscent of beer production. The installation across two galleries is both sculptural and practical. Harrison will use the gas and the liquid by-products of the process to stage a series of experiments in front of the Tetley during the course of the exhibition, while at the same time the objects of production and storage become a form of sculptural installation.

The cabinet contains ingredients for the production of CO2.

## SERENA KORDA

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### GALLERIES 4, 5 & 6

Serena Korda primarily works with sculpture and performance. However for this exhibition Korda has chosen to respond to the invitation to experiment within her practice and develop a new audio work at The Tetley. Sound has become an increasingly important part of her practice, staging performances using sculptural instruments such as Bellarmine jugs or giant ceramic mushrooms and working with musicians and others on audio collaborations.

The installation *Clairaudience* is a direct development of that work. Literally translated as Clear Hearing, the work has been made using field recordings taken at Todmorden and other sites around Leeds combined with audio from her astral dipole radio telescope, installed on the roof of The Tetley's restaurant. The resulting soundscape invites audiences to listen more closely to their environment and reflect on the ways sound can shape our perception of the world. Todmorden is one of the most notorious sites in the UK for extra-terrestrial activity. In making this work, Korda connected with a community of UFO watchers and documenters based in the area. Alongside the audio work are a selection of rare UFO Magazines, a map detailing the recording sites and a glass harp which Korda has made for the exhibition.

The glass harp will form part of a two day collaborative performance with Chris Egon Searle staged as part of the *Experiments Workshop* event on 19 and 20 May.

## HAROLD OFFEH

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### GALLERY 7

For *Material Environments*, Harold Offeh has created a live archive entitled *The Real Thing: Towards an Authentic Live Archive*. Offeh is concerned with ideas of reality, realness and authenticity; concepts which in recent years

have taken on new meanings in our increasingly mediated lives. Presented across three gallery spaces, Offeh's evolving installation will bring together artefacts, images, actions, performances and workshops. Gallery 7 displays a selection from Offeh's collection of vinyl LPs which all have the title 'The Real Thing' alongside a compilation of film works by students at Leeds Beckett University. The students have been invited to each make a new film responding to Offeh's work in a collaboration entitled *Muse Me*. During the course of the exhibition further films will be added to this collection.

### GALLERY 8

Gallery 8 is a presentation of Offeh's own films. More than a presentation of single works, the proximity of images and sound combine to create a sense of a wider whole something greater than the sum of its parts.

### SHIRLEY COOPER GALLERY

The Shirley Cooper Gallery will be used by Offeh to present a series of performance works alongside prints from his *Lounging* series in which people are invited to perform the lounging pose. The work is based on Offeh's collection of 1980s album covers of Black male singers, such as Lionel Richie and Michael Jackson in reclining poses, which examines the adoption of both classical repose and their occupying presence within the gallery. This installation raises questions of authenticity within popular culture inviting visitors to consider the origins and development of images, ideas and

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The *Experiments Workshop* is the centrepiece to The Tetley Weekender, our annual micro-festival that takes inspiration from the current exhibition with activities for all the family, artist-led events, plus great food and drink. It's the perfect introduction to everything we do at The Tetley!

A collaboration between the Artists' Research Centre and The Tetley, The *Experiments Workshop* is the focal point of the *Material Environments* exhibition. Over the weekend, artists exhibiting in the exhibition are offered space and time to stage public experiments relating to their work in the show.

The resulting performances, collaborations, workshops, mistakes and triumphs will be staged in and around the galleries activating the work and offering new insights into the creative process. Highlights will include Keith Harrison's CO2 experiments, Phoebe Cummings' sci-fi writing and making workshop, Serena Korda's sonic collaboration with Chris Egon Searle and Harold Offeh's *Reading the Realness* performance.

Some artist events are bookable. To find out more, please visit our website - [thetetley.org](http://thetetley.org)

The *Experiments Workshop* is supported by Arts Council England.

cultural archetypes and the ways in which they can be manipulated.

## JOANNA PIOTROWSKA

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### GALLERY 9 & WALKWAY

A selection of Joanna Piotrowska's photographic works are installed throughout the exhibition. For this series Piotrowska visited people in their homes and invited them to create constructions, dens and habitations from the furniture within their living spaces. The resulting constructions are a reflection of their creator's state of mind; transforming space and material into something deeply personal.

Piotrowska's works are poised between a depiction of the personal and the public. It is striking how her subjects choose to present themselves – at times absent from the image, with only the construction to mark their presence – in others creating seemingly deliberate narratives and cultural references around themselves. This is the first time Piotrowska has shown these images outside a white cube gallery space. Sited in the offices of the old Tetley Brewery HQ, the exhibition establishes a direct relationship between the photographs and the spaces in which they are shown. Looking at these images as we pass through the galleries, it is possible to imagine these office spaces as places of retreat and sanctuary as much as sources of authority and power. Piotrowska's photographs are a reminder that our environment is a product of the way we use it.