

BALTIC flies the flag for local artists by placing their artwork images outdoors across NewcastleGateshead #BalticOpenOut



Steven Wood, *Self-Portrait* Photo Colin Davison © BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, 2021 and Lady Kitt *Open. Bloom. Flourish. Nourish.* © BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, 2021

This April BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art's **BALTIC Open Out** sees 43 images of artworks from regional artists distributed across outdoor areas and travel networks in NewcastleGateshead. These works are a taster of 158 works that form part of BALTIC's forthcoming exhibition **BALTIC Open Submission** that is ready to be seen as soon as BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead re-opens.

Each year, BALTIC usually welcomes 450,000 visitors but has had to remain closed since early November with the ongoing lockdown. Last summer BALTIC put out a call for artists of all types and ability to submit works for an Open Submission exhibition. From over 500 entries, 158 works were selected for a group show celebrating the art made by the people of the region. The works are by artists who have been making throughout their lifetime, to those just beginning; those who have studied fine art, to self-taught creatives.

BALTIC is looking forward to sharing this exhibition with the public when it re-opens from **Wednesday 19 May 2021 (roadmaps stages permitting).**

In the meantime BALTIC is taking a selection of reproductions of these striking artworks out into the streets and outdoor areas in NewcastleGateshead to be seen on everyday routes, daily commutes and local walks from Monday 29 March onwards. **43 different artwork images will be seen** across various locations including Metro train windows, rears of buses, Bus stop shelters in Birtley and digital billboard screens on the approach to the Tyne Bridge and in Newcastle city centre, and in Sunderland.

In an exciting partnership with Nexus, work by thirteen different artists from the *Open Submission* exhibition will be seen on Metro Station platforms at Bede, Cullercoats, Hebburn, Wallsend and West Jesmond and will remain in place right through the summer.

On the Quayside, BALTIC's home location, a new work can now be seen by one of the three judges who made the final selections from the positive public submissions. Lady Kitt's new work entitled *Open. Bloom. Flourish. Nourish.* will be seen flying proudly on a flag from a flagpole on top of

BALTIC's building, created in partnership with Harrison Flagpoles. The artwork on the flag is inspired by Lady Kitt's collaboration with deaf performer Colly Metcalf. Three pairs of hands made of brown, 3D sculpted paper create 3 stages of the BSL sign for "Bloom".

With #BalticOpenOut, BALTIC wants to inspire and reconnect its audiences it has missed dearly during lockdown and whilst celebrating the creativity, resilience and artwork of people based in the North East. As lockdowns has begun easing BALTIC encourages people to look out for the works in their local areas and take photos to share with others using the hashtag #BalticOpenOut on social media or sending in messages to friends and family.

BALTIC also invites everyone to continue creating their own art at home and share what they have been creating at home during lockdown using the same hashtag #BalticOpenOut. BALTIC plans to then share these art creations with others online and in its building in the coming months.

For those who are able to get online, all 158 artworks can also be seen in BALTIC's [3D virtual tour](http://www.baltic.art/openout) of the full exhibition, available at www.baltic.art/openout

Sarah Munro, BALTIC Director said:

"Placing these artworks out into NewcastleGateshead brings with it a great sense of pride we can share the talent and creativity of the region. We can't wait to share this exhibition with the public when BALTIC Gateshead re-opens in May. Right now people can see a selection of these wonderful works on buses, on digital billboards and in Metro station platforms and a flag flying from BALTIC."

Collaborating with Nexus has enabled BALTIC to really amplify the reach of these artworks. Work by 13 different artists will be seen across the Bede, Hebburn, Wallsend, Cullercoats and West Jesmond Metro station platforms across the summer right into early autumn.

We also ensured we placed artworks in Birtley to inspire and reach the local communities from Birtley that we regularly connect with throughout the year providing activity packs and food parcels in each school half term when holiday hunger becomes a real issue for those in receipt of free school meals"

Huw Lewis, Customer Services Director at Nexus, said:

"We're really proud to link up with BALTIC to showcase this amazing new art project on Metro."

These displays on our stations and on our trains are a teaser of what people can expect from the exhibition when it opens in May when BALTIC is able to re-open on May 19.

As more passengers start to return to Metro more and more will be able to see these art works every single day.

Metro has an extensive art on transport programme down the years, with a wide and varied range of works displayed in permanent and temporary installations. I'm really pleased we have been able to carry that on through this project as we start to emerge from lockdown."

Lady Kitt commented on their work that will be seen on the flagpole:

"I wanted the piece Open. Bloom. Flourish. Nourish to be connected to the word 'open' because that's the name of the exhibition and also because it seemed really poignant to me, the idea of things opening up and people coming together again."

Jill Tate, exhibiting artist said:

"I was thrilled to find out that my work would be on display at Bede as part of the Open Out project. It's been an exciting and unique experience seeing my work on a Metro platform! I think it's brilliant that works from the exhibition are out in the community, being viewed by a wider audience."

NOTES TO EDITORS

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About BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art

BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art creates and produces exhibitions, events and learning opportunities which explore the role of artists from across the world. Located on Gateshead quayside, BALTIC has 2,600 square metres of exhibition space making it the UK's largest gallery dedicated to the art and artists of today and tomorrow.

BALTIC welcomes visitors free of charge, all year round to experience art, talks, performance and activities in a fully accessible building. Over 8 million have walked through its doors so far. Beyond its bricks, BALTIC connects and exchange with communities, individuals and groups exploring creativity, social connections and wider understanding of the world.

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