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## New generation of ceramic talents selected for *Fresh* at the British Ceramics Biennial



Twenty-one of the UK's most talented recent ceramics graduates have been selected for *Fresh*, one of the flagship exhibitions in the British Ceramics Biennial (BCB), the UK's biennial celebration of contemporary ceramics taking place in Stoke-on-Trent from 7 September to 13 October. *Fresh* celebrates and gives a critical platform for the new wave of makers, artists and designers working in clay as they begin their creative careers.

From ceramic tiles inspired by Pakistani truck art to a Delftware collection reflecting on transgender issues, work by these artists brings together the full ceramics spectrum: studio pottery, tableware, industrial design, figurative and abstract sculpture and installation. BCB in partnership with NACHE (National Association for Ceramics in Higher Education) co-select and curate *Fresh* as an exhibition that establishes a strong collective voice for emerging makers, bringing them to critical public attention as they start their career following their graduation from UK further and higher education in 2018 and 2019.

The 2019 *Fresh* line-up includes makers responding to issues of identity, such as **Nehal Aamir**, whose ceramic tile panels represent her experiences as a Pakistani Muslim woman living in the UK and **Rose Schmits**, who has created a collection of Delftware that reflects on her experience as a trans woman. Other makers are experimenting with new processes, such as **Luke Fuller** who creates his objects using a layering technique inspired by sedimentary rock formations and **Lisa Allen**, whose ceramic figurines that have been regenerated from her collection of charity-shop finds. Taking inspiration from the built environment, **Alice Walton** works with coloured clay throughout its plastic state to create sculptural and abstract forms inspired by common street objects, while **Chloé Bell's** tableware designs explore the dialogues formed between people and the landscapes from which they work and live, with a particular interest in the relationships developed in the food industry.

Work by the 21 *Fresh* exhibitors will be on show in The China Hall of the original Spode Factory Site, the hub of the BCB festival. On 3 October during the BCB 2019 AWARDS night, two *Fresh* exhibitors will be awarded a one-month residency opportunity with Guldagergaard International Ceramic Research Centre, Denmark and with BCB Studio in Stoke-on-Trent.



In addition, the inaugural Fresh Talent Award will be presented this year, with the support from the two principal sponsors of *Fresh*, Staffordshire University and Wedgwood. Two *Fresh* exhibitors will be given a three-month artist residency in Stoke-on-Trent hosted by Wedgwood and Staffordshire University in partnership with BCB during 2020. They will have privileged access to the studio facilities, materials, technical expertise and professional mentoring from each of the partner organisations, as well as the opportunity to connect into BCB's year-round programmes of artists' commissions, international exchange, community and education engagement initiatives, and present outcomes from their residencies within the 2021 British Ceramics Biennial festival. The winners will also be announced at the BCB 2019 AWARDS night.

The *Fresh* selection panel comprises: Artist and Curator Helen Felcey; Artist and Professor of Ceramics at Staffordshire University, Neil Brownsword; Artist and Fresh 2017 winner, Eusebio Sanchez; Rhiannon Ewing-James, Creative Producer, British Ceramics Biennial and Dik Delaney, Global Design Director WWRD.

The British Ceramics Biennial takes place in Stoke-on-Trent from 7 September to 13 October 2019 for its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. More than than 300 contemporary artists and makers will come together in a vibrant programme of exhibitions, installations and events taking place in six cultural venues across the city. *Fresh* is one of 13 exhibitions taking place in the post-industrial setting of the China Hall of the original Spode factory site, once again the main hub of the BCB festival.

**-Ends-**

For more information visit [www.britishceramicsbiennial.com](http://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com)

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### **Notes to editors**

*Captions for images at the top of the release (left to right)*  
*Alice Walton, Mori Pali, coloured porcelain, 2019*  
*Nehal Aamir, earthenware, 2019, photo credit Joe Roper*

### **The 2019 *Fresh* exhibitors are:**

Alice Walton, Royal College of Art  
Benjamin Kew, Plymouth College of Art  
Chloe Bell, Royal College of Art  
Nghah Tho Ng (Debbie), Staffordshire University  
Elizabeth Degenszejn, City Lit  
Emily Stapleton-Jefferis, Royal College of Art  
Eunjung Suh, Royal College of Art  
Gina Baum, Royal College of Art  
Ho Jung Kim, Royal College of Art  
Ho Lai, Royal College of Art  
Laura Plant, Staffordshire University  
Lisa Allan, Ulster University  
Loh Lik Kian, Staffordshire University  
Luke Fuller, University of Brighton



# British Ceramics Biennial Stoke- on-Trent

Nehal Amir, Central Saint Martins  
Pam Su, Royal College of Art  
Rose Schmits, City and Guilds London Art School  
Steven Edwards, University for the Creative Arts  
Steven Sales, Bath Spa University  
Tim Martin, City Lit  
Toni De-Jesus, Cardiff Metropolitan University

*Fresh* is generously sponsored by Staffordshire University and Wedgwood.

*Fresh* international residency is supported by Guldagergaard International Ceramic Research Centre.

## **About the British Ceramics Biennial:**

This year's festival runs from 7 September to 13 October 2019.

The British Ceramics Biennial is a prestigious cultural event taking place in Stoke-on-Trent every two years. The five-week long festival presents work from the UK's leading contemporary ceramic artists in a series of new exhibitions and special events in the city, embracing the heritage of Stoke-on-Trent as the home of British ceramics, and celebrating the city's creative edge as an international centre for excellence in contemporary ceramics.

The British Ceramics Biennial launched in 2009 as a new initiative of residencies, fellowships, commissions, education and enterprise projects running year round with a major festival every two years. There have been five festivals to date. The BCB initiative is intended to be a catalyst for regeneration in the region and to create a platform for innovation and excellence celebrating the best in current ceramic design, both nationally and internationally.

The Biennial draws on the historical strengths of the past in championing new future directions for the city.

The Biennial works in partnership with organisations and individuals in the museums, cultural, industry, business, education, community and voluntary sectors across the city in the development and delivery of projects year round with a particular focus on public engagement.

The festival and supporting community and education programme highlights and raises the profile of the many ceramics industries still working in Stoke-on-Trent, but also creates commissioning and exhibition opportunities for local ceramic artists as well as national and international artists.

2019 saw BCB become an Arts Council NPO (National Portfolio Organisation) in recognition of the quality of both its artistic programming and engagement activity.

## **British Ceramics Biennial funders:**

The British Ceramics Biennial Ltd is funded by Arts Council England, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Stoke-on-Trent Cultural Destinations.



# British Ceramics Biennial Stoke-on-Trent

## BCB IS SUPPORTED BY

- Staffordshire University
- Headley Trust
- World of Wedgwood
- Creative Europe Programme of the European Union
- KMF Engineering
- Potclays Ltd
- Valentines Clay

BCB is proud to be part of Stoke-on-Trent Cultural Destinations, which brings the city's arts, culture and destination management organisations together to promote the city's rich year-round cultural offer.



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