

Craftspace

Craft & the Commons (working title) - Exhibition for Hire

“The commons means:
Things we share/ Places
we share/ Systems we
share/ Ideas we share/
Culture we share”

Peter Barnes, On the
Commons co-founder



Reknit spectrum samples
Amy Twigger Holroyd



14GB

Amy Twigger Holroyd

Amy explores Commons themes in her work; Reknit Revolution represents a proposition to use making as a means of overcoming the enclosure of the fashion commons.

reknitrevolution.org

Outline

Why the commons?

We are currently witnessing the increasing privatisation of publicly owned assets in the UK. Many areas are experiencing the erosion of local common resources (e.g. parks and libraries).

Some countercultural movements that have emerged in recent decades have begun to challenge corporate forms of enclosure. They champion the sharing economy, peer to peer economy, open source and social charters to reclaim the commons.

In 'Mapping the New Commons' Charlotte Hess suggests that divergent disciplines, political interests, and geographical regions are increasingly finding the term 'commons' crucial in

addressing issues of social dilemmas, degradation, and sustainability of a wide variety of shared resources.

Historian Peter Linebaugh has popularised the term 'commoning' which in modern times is about activating the power of social cooperation to get things done.

Commons leader Julie Ristau describes how "the act of commoning draws on a network of relationships made under the expectation that we will each take care of one another and with a shared understanding that some things belong to all of us. The practice of commoning demonstrates a shift in thinking from the prevailing ethic of "you're on your own" to "we're in this together."



Launching: 2020/21

Tour: 18 months

A national touring exhibition

Co-curated and organised by Craftspace

Craft can join the campaign to make a powerful commentary on what society stands to gain from acting to protect and reclaim our global commons. Through new commissions and the lens of craft, making and materials - makers can highlight the issues, contribute their thought leadership and participate in a call to action.

Exhibition Development

The exhibition will be informed by a range of cross disciplinary perspectives (including culture, geography, social sciences, history of ideas, philosophy). To this end, we are working in partnership with Nottingham Trent University to bid for an Arts and Humanities Research Council network grant. We will create a network of craft practitioners, researchers/academics and campaigners/activists to participate in a series of workshops and discussions, which will feed into a blog. The content will interrogate current issues and ideas relating to the commons including the creative, neighbourhood and knowledge commons.

Exhibition

The exhibition will feature approximately twelve new commissions created in response to the project themes. These cross discipline projects will be collaborations between artist and commons activists. Two of the commissions will be international. Three of these works will represent the outcomes of site specific, socially engaged residencies.

Exhibition Aims

- Explore craft as a form of commons.
- Inspire audiences through thought provoking, engaging and interactive content (physical and digital).
- Showcase the creative outcomes of 3 collaborative, site specific and socially engaged residencies.
- Feature a series of British and international commissioned artworks, produced through pairing commons activists with makers to respond creatively to shared concerns.
- Reflect on the re-emergence of social charters and identify who are today's commoners and what are their aspirations.
- Explore how grassroots community groups can and are reclaiming the commons.
- Highlight the acts of 'commoning' that are shaping community futures and the world they want to live in.

About Craftspace

Craftspace is a charity creating opportunities to see, make and be curious about exceptional contemporary craft. We are based in Birmingham and work collaboratively regionally, nationally and internationally. We build relationships between artists, people and organisations and encourage the sharing of ideas, skills and knowledge.

We have 30 years' experience and continue to learn, push boundaries and challenge ideas.

Craftspace initiates artistic programmes which stimulate creative excellence, critical thinking and understanding of contemporary crafts in the widest social and cultural contexts.

Craftspace

Tel: 0121 608 6668

info@craftspace.co.uk

www.craftspace.co.uk

f facebook.com/craftspace

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Target Audience

Artists.

Cross subject academics/scholars.

Commons activists (local, national, international).

Socially engaged public.

Online audiences through the exhibition blog and social media.

Tour

Midlands Arts Centre will be a key partner in the development of the exhibition and will launch the tour in September 2020.

The exhibition will tour for 18 months. The following tour slots are available:

12 December – 6 February 2021

20 February – 17 April 2021

1 May – 26 June 2021

19 July – 4 September 2021

8 September – 13 November 2021

27 November 2021 – 22 January 2022

5 February – 2 April 2022

These dates can be negotiated.

Venue Requirements

Space: approximately 200 square metres.

Security: full time invigilation or CCTV

Cost

£2500 based on 8 weeks – the number of weeks can be negotiated.

Hire fee includes all display cases/stands and interpretation, education, family and marketing/PR resources.

Venues must insure the exhibition shelf-to-shelf and undertake one-way (onward) transport as well as fulfilling Craftspace's Conditions of Hire.

Contact

Emma Daker, Exhibitions and Project Development Manager at Craftspace

E: e.daker@craftspace.co.uk

T: 0121 608 6668

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Midlands Arts Centre



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