



Made in the Middle: Contemporary craft from the Midlands

Craftspace presents a wealth of original craft from across the Midlands

On **5 April 2025** **Craftspace's** Made in the Middle touring exhibition, opens at the **Hub, Sleaford**. The exhibition draws together **37 regional artists** whose work highlights the innovative contemporary crafts being made in the Midlands today. The artists represent the region's vibrant and diverse creative community and include both emerging talents and established names.

31 exceptional artists, ranging from 22 to 84 years old, were selected by a panel of curators and craft sector specialists. 6 artists have been invited by Guest Curator Jazz Swali with Curatorial Support from Marta Marsicka to emphasise the enriching cultural impact of global migration to the region. Their work highlights powerful stories about the world we live in.

There will be a wide variety of techniques and disciplines on display including textiles, ceramics, mixed media, jewellery, metalwork and biomaterials. Made in the Middle has inspiration for anyone interested in making, seeing or buying craft.

Invited maker, **Christopher Day**, from Lichfield, creates stunning blown glass work. His career comes after more than two decades as a plumber and his work investigates the treatment of black people in Britain & the USA.

Natalie Cole, from Wolverhampton, is experimenting with new eco-friendly materials. She creates designs which divert nutrient-rich 'waste' like egg and mussel shells from landfill to create new experimental compostable materials for use in contemporary furniture and objects for the home. The products are designed so that when no longer wanted, they can be disassembled and buried in the garden to break down and replenish the soil.

Mahawa Keita, from Birmingham, uses traditional textile techniques including knitting and macramé to make large contemporary, conceptual pieces which are visually striking.

Deirdre Figueiredo, Director Craftspace said "In 2025, the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, the exhibition shows how artists are playing their role in evolving the cultural voice and identity of the Midlands. The curation of the exhibition gives artists an unusual opportunity to experiment, speculate and make work freely without commercial constraints and audiences will be amazed and inspired."

The exhibition is the ninth in the Made in the Middle series and will tour to galleries across the Midlands into 2026 raising the profile of regional artists and providing an opportunity to sell. For the public and collectors, it's a chance to commission a unique artwork or buy existing pieces to suit all budgets. Artists' work is also available to buy online through Craftspace's shop at craftspace.co.uk

Made in the Middle is a regional touring exhibition curated by Craftspace in partnership with Leicester Gallery at De Montfort University, funded by Arts Council England.

#MadeITM

craftspace.co.uk

madeinthemiddle.org

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Media Contact

Please contact for further information or images:

Lisa Falaschi, Craftspace, 0121 608 6668, l.falaschi@craftspace.co.uk

Emma Daker, Craftspace, 0121 608 6668, e.daker@craftspace.co.uk

Editors Notes

Online

craftspace.co.uk

madeinthemiddle.org

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Information for visitors – Hub, Sleaford

The Hub, Sleaford, Navigation Wharf, Carre Street, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7TW
5 April – 6 July 2025

Opening Times:

Mon to Sat – 10am-5pm

Sun & Bank Holidays – 10am-4pm

Easter opening times:

Good Friday 18 Apr - 10am-4pm

Easter Sunday 20 Apr - 10am-2pm

Bank Holiday Monday 21 Apr - 10am - 4pm

<https://hub-sleaford.org.uk/visit>

Artists (Selected)

Aishah Carberry	Keisha Brittle	Olivia Ricketts
Clare Pentlow	Lucy Baxendale	Oxana Geets
Emma-Jane Rule	Mahawa Keita	Paul McAllister
Fran Buxton	Martha Wiles	Rachael Colley
Jade Webb	Melanie Tomlinson	Robert Maurice King
Jennifer Collier	Michaela McMillan	Roo Dhissou
Jo Cope	Natalie Cole	Ruiya Xu
Johnny Armstrong	Nilupa Yasmin	Sara May Johnson
Karina Thompson	Nobuko Okumura	Verity Howard
Katie Smith	Oliver Bliss	Zoë Hillyard
Keeley Traae		

Artists (Invited) curated by Jazz Swali

Chris Day, Farwa Moledina, Halima Cassel, Klara Szafranska, Tereza Buskova and Xin Chen.

Tour schedule

Leicester Gallery, De Montfort University 25 January – 22 March 2025

Hub, Sleaford 5 April – 6 July 2025

Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery 27 September – 22 November 2025

MAC Birmingham 14 February – 11 April 2026

Craftspace: craftspace.co.uk

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 35+ 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.

Arts Council England: artscouncil.org.uk

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in *Let's Create* that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.

Craftspace

Tel: 0121 608 6668

info@craftspace.co.uk

craftspace.co.uk

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Images: Michaela McMillan, Chris Day, Jennifer Collier.



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