



**Wysing Arts Centre announce  
new partners, Artist Advisor  
and Coordinator to deliver  
Syllabus VII**



Syllabus V at Spike Island, 2021

Wysing Arts Centre, together with Syllabus partners Eastside Projects, Spike Island and Studio Voltaire, are thrilled to announce a new chapter for the Syllabus programme, with new partners and team to deliver Syllabus VII.

Syllabus is a collaboratively produced alternative learning programme that supports ten artists each year. Over a ten-month programme, Syllabus offers time to come together with artists from across the UK to discuss ideas, work, life and approaches to practice.

In 2021, Freelands Foundation agreed a landmark £500,000 grant to fund Syllabus as part of its multimillion-pound commitment to support the work of organisations addressing racial inequality in the arts.

With this grant, the future of Syllabus is secure for the next ten years and able to offer an expanded programme with three new partner institutions, New Art Exchange (Nottingham), PS<sup>2</sup> (Belfast) and TACO! (Thamesmead), each of whom bring distinct networks, expertise, practices and perspectives to the programme.

Additionally the artists will each receive a £1000 bursary to support their involvement in the programme and an access budget for those who require it.

Natasha Ruwona has been appointed as a dedicated Syllabus Coordinator and Uma Breakdown has been appointed as Artist Advisor for Syllabus VII. From June 2024, Natasha Ruwona and Uma Breakdown will work

with the artists and partner organisations to co-develop a roaming programme of intensive gatherings across the UK as well as an online programme of activity and support.

### **New Partners: New Art Exchange, PS<sup>2</sup> and Taco!**

New Art Exchange, Nottingham; PS<sup>2</sup>, Belfast and TACO!, Thamesmead will join existing partners Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridgeshire; Eastside Projects, Birmingham; Spike Island, Bristol; and Studio Voltaire (Associate Partner), London;. TACO! will join as the inaugural Syllabus Guest Partner.

**New Art Exchange** is the largest gallery in the UK dedicated to championing Global Ethnic Majority Voices and, under the directorship of Saad Eddine-Said, is pioneering a new model of a responsive Citizen's Gallery.

**PS<sup>2</sup>** (Paragon Studios x Project Space) is an artist-led organisation in Belfast. Drawing on their experience of delivering the Freelands Artist Development programme (2018 - 2023), PS<sup>2</sup> will, for the very first time, enable the Syllabus programme to work with artists, organisations, and other practitioners in Northern Ireland.

**TACO!** is an artist-led enquiry that provides space for research, production, and exchange. Located in Thamesmead, South East London, TACO! are appointed as a Guest Partner for Syllabus VII as part of a new commitment to invite organisations into the programme who have not historically been able to participate. This could include organisations without regular funding, those with experimental organisational structures or particularly small teams.



### **Artist Advisor: Uma Breakdown**

The Syllabus partners appoint artist Uma Breakdown as the Artist Advisor for Syllabus VII. The Artist Advisor is a key role in the Syllabus programme, offering mentoring, guidance and delivering activity for the ten Syllabus artists. Along with the Syllabus Coordinator, the Artist Advisor programmes the first gathering of the programme, setting the tone for each year of Syllabus.

Uma Breakdown brings a wealth of experience as an artist, writer, access consultant and educator. Uma is a disabled artist, writer, and award winning game designer interested in animals, horror, and queer feminist literature. Their appointment builds on a six-year history of working with Wysing across exhibitions, residencies, digital and with Wysing's Creative Youth Festival.

## Syllabus Coordinator: Natasha Ruwona



Natasha Ruwona joins the Syllabus team in a new role, as Syllabus Coordinator. The main responsibilities of the Syllabus coordinator are to provide pastoral care, mentoring and central coordination of the programme.

Natasha brings experience as an artist, producer, and coordinator from ID.Y, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow Film Festival and Buzzcut Festival.

### Quotes:

Rosie Cooper, Director, Wysing Arts Centre says:

*We are thrilled to be beginning this new phase of Syllabus. The new partnerships that Freelands funding has enabled bring fresh energy to this vital programme, which is potentially a generation-changer for artists at a time when supporting artists at critical moments in their careers seems more important than ever.*

Saad Eddine-Said, Director and Michael Radford, Head of Neighbourhoods, New Art Exchange say:

*We are thrilled about our exciting collaboration with Syllabus. Joining this innovative and inclusive learning programme aligns with our dedication to supporting artists and creatives from diverse backgrounds. Together with all the partners, we look forward to contributing to the further development and diversification of the arts sector. We are looking forward to embarking on this important partnership.*

Jane Morrow, Co-Director, PS<sup>2</sup> says:

*We are delighted to be a new Permanent Partner in Syllabus VII; a vital, urgent and dynamic addition to our work in artist development and the wider artist-led ecosystem in Northern Ireland. In our thirtieth year, it is exciting for us to enter a new iteration of our support for artists with such an esteemed programme. We look forward to learning from and collaborating with this amazingly exciting cohort of partners and artists from around the UK.*

Mat Jenner, Director, TACO! says:

*We are honored to be contributing to Syllabus VII. The peer led, artist centered approach embodied by the Syllabus programme has increasing urgency in the face of the challenges faced by artists wanting to develop their practice in the UK today. This is a special moment for us to be working in partnership with brilliant arts organisations and exciting new artistic talent from around the country.*

### **Notes to Editors**

Images: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X-BnSiOvybQKHPBLOTmrg8Yn3PBbJTPF?usp=sharing>

### **SYLLABUS**

Syllabus is a collaboratively produced alternative learning programme in its seventh year that will support ten artists across ten months.

Syllabus offers time to come together with artists from across the UK to discuss ideas, work, life and approaches to practice.

Starting in June 2024 the Syllabus VII curriculum will be built around a series of six intensive in-person weekend gatherings and an online programme, which the ten selected artists will collaboratively develop with curators and artists who work with the partner organisations, the Syllabus Coordinator and this year's Artist Advisor.

Syllabus VII is led by Wysing Arts Centre and jointly delivered with Eastside Projects, New Art Exchange, PS2, Spike Island, Studio Voltaire and TACO!. Syllabus is funded by Freelands Foundation and Arts Council England.

### **ARTIST ADVISOR BIOGRAPHY**

**Uma Breakdown** is a disabled artist, writer, and award winning game designer interested in animals, horror, and queer feminist literature. Everything they make is about some combination of love, grief, hallucination, and an excess of joy. Recent projects include Earth AD (Wysing Arts Centre, FACT, Liverpool; QUAD, Derby 2022–2024); The Speculative Dismemberment of Agent Leon Kennedy (Market Gallery, Glasgow, 2022), Hinterlands (Baltic, Gateshead, 2022), The Joy of Destruction (Backlit, Nottingham, 2023), Elan Vitale (Container Magazine, Bristol, 2023).

### **SYLLABUS COORDINATOR BIOGRAPHY**

**Natasha Ruwona** is a writer, artist and curator-programmer-producer. She has worked with organisations including BUZZCUT Festival, Fringe of Colour Films, and Rhubaba Gallery & Studios to deliver public programmes and support artist projects. Natasha is currently a film programmer for the 2024 editions of Glasgow Film Festival and Manipulate Festival, Edinburgh.

## **PARTNER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Wysing Arts Centre** is based in rural Cambridgeshire, UK, ten miles from central Cambridge city. Set across 11 acres and comprising studios, accommodation, fields, a woodland, ceramics and recording facilities, Wysing supports artists through residencies and commissions, engaging publics of all ages through workshops, events, online activity and gatherings. Wysing celebrates the freewheeling imagination; it supports ideas and practices that shape the world. More can be discovered about Wysing's programme and history at [wysingartscentre.org/](http://wysingartscentre.org/) and [wysingbroadcasts.art/](http://wysingbroadcasts.art/)

### **Eastside Projects, Birmingham**

**Eastside Projects** is an artist-run multiverse based in a free public gallery in Digbeth. We say multiverse because 'organisation' or 'space' are not enough. We mean that we imagine Eastside Projects as a process, as a place where multiple narratives and experiences coexist, where we make visible an evolving set of possible realities.

<https://eastsideprojects.org/about/>

### **New Art Exchange, Nottingham**

New Art Exchange (NAE) is a groundbreaking and award-winning creative space in the heart of Hyson Green, Nottingham. It is an organisation of national significance and is the largest gallery in the UK dedicated to contemporary visual arts from the Global Ethnic Majority. Situated at the forefront of reshaping the narrative of contemporary art, NAE is grounded in a commitment to celebrating diversity, fostering inclusivity, and providing a platform for voices that have historically been underrepresented in the art world.

NAE believes in the profound impact of art to transcend boundaries, ignite meaningful dialogue, and unify communities. Our mission is to curate a space where art reflects the diverse spectrum of human experiences, challenging societal norms, and offering a stage for both emerging and established artists.

Dedicated to championing diversity in all its forms, NAE actively works to amplify voices that are often marginalised. This commitment is not just a statement but an integral part of our programming, collaborations, and community engagement.

We believe in the transformative power of art to inspire, educate, and connect people. Our community-centric approach involves a variety of initiatives, and partnerships designed to make art accessible to all.

### **PS<sup>2</sup>, Belfast**

PS<sup>2</sup> = Paragon Studios x Project Space, an artist-led organisation established in Belfast in 1994. We support artists through the provision of nine artists' studios, three workspaces for our annual in-residence programmes for a writer/s, collective, and curator/s and multi-annual artist development programmes. We welcome audiences and artists to our city-centre Project Space: an extension of the studios which offers an open, temporary gallery for experimental enquiries. We also undertake creative projects offsite in urban, suburban and rural locations throughout Northern Ireland, including PeasPark: our outdoor community garden and art project in North Belfast.

### **Spike Island, Bristol**

Spike Island supports, produces and presents contemporary art and culture across an 80,000 square foot former industrial building in Bristol. Its diverse artistic programme includes free major exhibitions, events and engagement activities taking place on-site and online. Championing outstanding work by emerging and underrepresented local, national and international artists, the programme enhances access to contemporary art for audiences from all backgrounds.

Alongside its public offer, Spike Island directly supports artists through new commissions, over 70 subsidised studios, and sector-leading artist development opportunities that widen access to its programme and facilities. Its Exhibition Services business supports the bespoke production and installation of artists' film and video throughout the UK and internationally. Spike Island is home to a dynamic community of hundreds of artists and creative businesses, working in flexible, affordable workspaces, alongside UWE Bristol's Fine Art department, Spike Print Studio, and café bar Emmeline. [www.spikeisland.org.uk](http://www.spikeisland.org.uk)

### **Studio Voltaire, London**

Studio Voltaire is one of the UK's leading not-for-profit arts and education organisations. Championing emerging and under-represented artists, we commission and produce exhibitions, collaborative projects, artist development programmes, live events and offsite projects. Studio Voltaire is a registered charity and part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio. We fundraise for our work through the kind support of individuals, sponsors, public funders, charitable trusts and foundations, and sales of our renowned limited edition artworks from House of Voltaire. <https://studiovoltaire.org>

### **TACO!, London (Guest Partner)**

TACO! is an artist-led enquiry that provides a space for research, production, and exchange. Located in Thamesmead, SE London, TACO! is engaged with its local context and centres the work and role of artists in all the work it undertakes, supporting a dialogue between artists, audiences, community and place.

<https://taco.org.uk/>

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