



Press release

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Leeds Arts University appoints artist Katrina Cowling to new sculpture fellowship

Leeds Arts University has appointed Katrina Cowling to the Kenneth Armitage Sculpture Fellowship, Leeds, a two-year post based within the University.

The Fellowship is a new partnership initiative from Leeds Arts University and the Kenneth Armitage Foundation, in association with the Henry Moore Foundation. The Fellowship celebrates the significant contribution made by the sculptor Kenneth Armitage (1916-2002) to the evolution of British sculpture.

Katrina Cowling is a Bradford-based artist whose work spans sculpture and installation with a focus on materiality, process and the body in space. A trained glass-bender, she has explored the combination of light, electricity, glass and noble gases for over six years. She has exhibited new and commissioned works across the UK, most recently at Sunny Bank Mills, Leeds. In 2019 she was the recipient of the *Pangaea Sculpture Production Award* and invited to exhibit at Coventry Biennial, and in 2021 was shortlisted for the Mark Tanner Sculpture Award.

Cowling will be provided with studio space, access to University resources and a research and production budget for the tenure of the Fellowship.

Katrina Cowling said:

"It is an unexpected privilege and a joy to be appointed to this fellowship and to be a part of Kenneth Armitage's legacy alongside such brilliant and diverse fellows. I hope to utilise the precious time and space that this role provides to expand and sharpen my sculptural vocabulary. I am delighted to be situated at Leeds Arts University for the tenure of the fellowship; the world class facilities and potential for the cross pollination of disciplines is of particular interest to me, along with the chance to get to know students and staff at LAU and to contribute to the wider sculptural discourse. I'm excited to see where this significant moment might take my practice; a generous opportunity in which there is plenty of room for play, reflection and new material encounters."

Professor Sheila Gaffney, Programme Director, Leeds Arts University said:

"Katrina's professionalism as an ambitious young sculptor stood out at interview and I am now delighted to welcome her into the Fine Art community at the University. Her residency is an opportunity to practise sculpture, with the freedom to innovate, experiment, explore and develop new ideas. I anticipate that our students will benefit greatly from her presence."

Robert Hiscox, Chair, The Kenneth Armitage Foundation said:

"Trustees warmly congratulate Katrina Cowling as the inaugural Kenneth Armitage Fellow at Leeds Arts University. We are grateful to the University and to the Henry Moore Foundation for their support in establishing this post to enable artists to benefit from, and to contribute to, the rich sculpture resources of Leeds and Yorkshire."

Laurence Sillars, Head of the Henry Moore Institute said:

“The Henry Moore Foundation is delighted to be collaborating with Leeds Arts University and the Kenneth Armitage Foundation on this exciting new partnership. Henry Moore and Kenneth Armitage launched their international careers as graduates of Leeds Arts University. To celebrate their legacies by supporting the next generation of artists through this fellowship feels especially fitting. Leeds and Yorkshire have become the home of British sculpture not only through this rich history but also its specialist sculpture institutions. We very much look forward to welcoming Katrina to this unique context and to working with her over the next two years.”

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Image credits:

1. Katrina Cowling, *Roughcast*, 2018. Photo credit: Kieran Leach
2. Katrina Cowling, *propelling her shiny vehicle*, 2019 Photo credit: Alexander Hoyles

Notes to editors:

Katrina Cowling

Katrina Cowling's work spans sculpture and installation. Amidst a time marked by virtuality, technological acceleration and relentless noise, both auditory and visual, Cowling navigates the space in-between; the liminal, the transitory, the periphery, to create spaces of stillness. She playfully challenges the formal and conceptual tropes of glass bending, a strange and elusive science and a complex medium that speaks both of a nostalgic past and a bright, uncertain future. It is in this temporal and historical dislocation that she finds an interesting point of departure. Sensuous sculptural landscapes are littered with relic-like objects; the ephemeral, disposable and scavenged abutting the cold hard lines of post-modernism, creating atmospheric environments which speak of alienation, dislocation, ritual and place.

Leeds Arts University

Founded in 1846 as the Leeds Government School of Art and Design, Leeds Arts University has contributed significantly to the development of art education in Britain and across the world. In 2016 the University was granted Taught Degree Awarding Powers, and in 2017 was awarded full university status, making it the only specialist arts university in the North of England.

Leeds Arts University has been recognised for its industry-standard facilities at the Whatuni awards (winners in 2019 and 2016, runner up in 2020), and was announced winner for Student Support in 2020. The University was number one for Design & Crafts in the Guardian University League Table 2019 and the winner of The Sunday Times 'University of the Year for Student Retention' 2019. In 2021 Leeds Arts University appointed acclaimed musician Skin to the role of Chancellor.

The Kenneth Armitage Foundation

The Kenneth Armitage Foundation is the charitable legacy of Kenneth Armitage, one of the first young, post-war British sculptors to receive international acclaim. The Foundation supports sculptural practice through The Kenneth Armitage Sculpture Fellowship, London and The Kenneth Armitage Sculpture Fellowship, Leeds; and by awarding prizes to graduates from the art schools with which he was associated. Kenneth Armitage was born in Leeds, studied at Leeds College of Art (now Leeds Arts University) from 1934-1937 and was a Gregory Fellow at the University of Leeds 1953-1955.

The Henry Moore Foundation

The Henry Moore Foundation was founded by the artist and his family in 1977 to encourage public appreciation of the visual arts. Moore was an alumnus of Leeds Arts University where he studied a year-long sculpture programme in 1920. Today the Henry Moore Foundation support innovative sculpture projects, devise an imaginative programme of exhibitions and research worldwide, and preserve the legacy of Moore himself: one of the great sculptors of the 20th century, who did so much to bring the art form to a wider audience.



The **Kenneth Armitage** Foundation