

Press release September 2019
For immediate release

John
Hansard
Gallery

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

Haroon Mirza

Waves and Forms

John Hansard Gallery
19 October 2019 to
11 January 2020

#JHGMirza

John Hansard Gallery, part of the University of Southampton, is delighted to present **Waves and Forms**, a keynote exhibition by Haroon Mirza.

This exhibition highlights the artist's ongoing exploration of waveforms: how they are perceived, the emotional and physical responses they create and the various ways in which we relate to them.

Mirza's artworks are united by an enduring preoccupation and engagement with diverse disciplines including physics, shamanism, artificial intelligence and astrology.

He has won international acclaim for installations that test the interplay and friction between sound waves, light waves and electric current.

As an advocate of interference, Mirza creates situations that purposefully cross wires. He devises sculptures, performances and immersive installations that skilfully blend ancient and contemporary technologies, offering up composite installations that mix an electric range of materials.

At John Hansard Gallery, Mirza will fill all the gallery space across both floors, including the distinctive prism gallery, with works focussed on sound, light, electricity and water, and the interaction between these waveforms. He describes himself as a composer, working with physical phenomena and found and created instruments, to create complex works that embrace both the everyday and the sublime. Through his work, processes are left exposed and sounds occupy space in an unruly way, testing codes of conduct and charging the atmosphere.

Λ/ΛΛ Λ/ΛΛ (2017) takes the form of several elements, including 4-channels of videos, 8-channels of audio, 8-channels of LEDs and a semi-anechoic chamber, which come together throughout the space to make a single work. These elements are combined simultaneously with electrical signal illuminating LEDs and generating sound to create an audio-visual installation that is automated live in 12-channel surround sound. Read as 'Aquarius', the zigzag form is a typographic interpretation of the astrological sign and translates an undulating movement as a geometric version of a wave. The work references both constellation and astrological sign, as well as the Age of Aquarius, which the earth is about to enter and heralds an epoch of rediscovered harmony.

Pavilion for Optimisation (2013) is a purpose-built sound chamber designed to create maximum reverberation, with participants invited to enter the chamber and experience the continuous prolongation of a sound. This work takes its central theme from the optimisation algorithms used in satellite navigation, which in turn are derived from the organic networked optimisation logic systems of ant colonies. Understood by chaos theory, these patterns – both chaotic and controlled – are observable across the natural world, from rain descending a window pane to the fractals observable throughout nature and in the human mind through the ingestion of psychedelics.

Solar Symphony Solar_Corb B/Solar Symphony Solar_Corb D (2014) are freestanding and self-powering sculptures that generate electronic audio compositions, in part governed by the amount of natural light they are exposed to. Commercial solar panels in a modular system are combined with household electronics such as LED lighting and bicycle lights are combined and connected to speaker systems, sometimes directional, to amplify the sound of the electricity passing through them. As the amount of electricity changes in relation to the amount of light the sculptures are exposed to, the Solar Symphonies orchestrate fragmented sound along with subtle LED lights flickering, evoking synaesthetic senses of the audience as they walk into this space filled with light energy, sound and electromagnetic waves.

Dreamachine 2.0 (2019) is a system to induce dreamlike states. It was developed in homage to the Dreamachine, a stroboscopic device created by Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs with the help of Ian Sommerville. The original machine was a cylindrical form, with holes cut out of its surface, rotating on a turntable. A light bulb suspended in its centre radiated flickering light around the room at a constant frequency and induced hallucinations of geometric patterns when viewed with one's eyes closed.

Artist, Siobhan Coen, initially reimagined this historical device using microcontroller driven LEDs. During a residency at hrm199, Haroon Mirza's studio platform, a dialogue began between the two artists to introduce sound into the system and work with frequencies relating to certain neural oscillations such as alpha and theta brainwaves. In consultation with neuroscientists at Imperial College, the pair developed an audio-visual version of the Dreamachine to create an

all-encompassing and intense experiential work in which constantly changing frequencies of red, green and blue light and their corresponding sound waves produce increasingly complex images existing only in the viewers mind.

Skip_loop (2019) shows an animation of a view of the sea and is a simulated rendering which is systematically processed. The digital reproduction of nature showing a realm of the naturally beautiful collapses in the six second interval (of the loop). Six seconds is a time-span that also tallies with the average viewing time for a painting or an artwork in a museum. Skip_loop presented in the exhibition is a new realization of an existing work from 2005, and made specifically for John Hansard Gallery's 6k screens.

Haroon Mirza was born in 1977 in London where he lives and works. He has a BA in Painting from Winchester School of Art, an MA in Design Critical Practice and Theory from Goldsmiths College (2006) and an MA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design (2007).

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Notes to Editors

Haroon Mirza was born in 1977 in London where he lives and works. He has a BA in Painting from Winchester School of Art, an MA in Design Critical Practice and Theory from Goldsmiths College (2006) and an MA in Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design (2007). Recent solo exhibitions have been held at Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing, China (2019); Ikon, Birmingham, UK (2018); Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, CA, USA (2018); Farol Santander, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2018); Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen, Denmark (2018); Zabłudowicz Collection, London, UK (2017); LiFE, Saint-Nazaire, France (2017); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, BC, Canada (2017); Summerhall, Edinburgh, UK (2016); Pivô, São Paulo, Brazil (2016); Nam June Paik Center, Seoul, South Korea (2015); Matadero, Madrid, Spain (2015); Museum Tinguely, Basel, Switzerland (2015); Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich, Switzerland (2014); Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Poissy, France (2014); IMMA, Dublin, Ireland (2014); Le Grand Café, Saint-Nazaire, France (2014); The Hepworth, Wakefield, UK (2013); MIMA, Middlesbrough, UK (2013); The New Museum, New York, NY, USA (2012); Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, St Gallen, Switzerland (2012); University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, USA (2012); Camden Arts Centre, London, UK (2011) and A-Foundation, Liverpool, UK (2009). His work was included in the 7th Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale, China (2012) and the 54th Venice Biennale, Italy (2011), where he was awarded the Silver Lion. He was awarded the Northern Art Prize in 2011, the DAIWA Foundation Art Prize in 2012, the Zurich Art Prize in 2013, the Nam June Paik Art Center Prize in 2014, the Calder Art Prize in 2015 and the COLLIDE International Award in 2017 which has given place to a two-month residency at CERN, Switzerland in the course of 2018. In spring 2018, Haroon Mirza unveiled 'Stone Circle', a large-scale outdoor sculpture commissioned by Ballroom Marfa, Texas, which will remain in the landscape for five years.

Siobhan Coen was born in 1967 in Orpington, UK, and lives and works in London. She has a BA Fine Art, from Slade School of Fine Art (2017). Selected solo exhibitions include: 'Unknown Knowns', Firstsite, Colchester, 2019. 'Zabłudowicz Invites', Zabłudowicz Collection, London, 2018. Selected group exhibitions include: ARTAGON III, Paris, 2017; Celeste Prize, finalists' exhibition, OXO Tower, London, 2016; Members' Show,

OUTPOST, Norwich, selected by Lynda Morris & Chris Rawcliffe, 2016; Open Film 2016, OUTPOST, Norwich, and also presented at a.m London, selected by Ed Atkins, 2016. Awards include: UCL Arts & Humanities Dean's List, 2017; The Stanbury Prize, 2017; The Herbert Seaborn Memorial Scholarship, 2016; The Slade Prize, 2014.

John Hansard Gallery

John Hansard Gallery is an internationally recognised and locally engaged contemporary art gallery in Southampton. Being part of the University of Southampton, the Gallery aims to change the world for the better through great art. To realise this the Gallery creates innovative and critically acclaimed contemporary art exhibitions, events, engagement and research projects that excite, challenge, represent and reach the widest possible public audience. From 1979 the Gallery was located on the University's Highfield Campus. In 2018 the Gallery relocated to a new purpose-built arts complex in Southampton's city centre, significantly increasing the space available for exhibitions, events and integrated programming. Learning and engagement are at the heart of the Gallery and underpin all its activities. The innovative education and public programme is accompanied by special community-focused projects, including activities for all ages and levels of experience. John Hansard Gallery is supported using public funding as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England.

www.jhg.art

University of Southampton

The University of Southampton is one of the UK's leading teaching and research institutions, with a global reputation for research and scholarship across a wide range of subjects. The University combines academic excellence with an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to research, supporting a culture that engages and challenges students and staff in their pursuit of learning.

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Arts at University of Southampton offers a wealth of inspiring cultural experiences and opportunities, showcasing emerging talent and renowned international artists. From visual arts, music and literature, to theatre and film, there's something for everyone.

The University of Southampton has rich heritage and long-standing commitment to arts and culture as an essential part of university life. The University is proud of its unique relationship with three Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. The Nuffield Theatre opened at its Highfield Campus in 1964 and was joined by the University's concert hall Turner Sims and John Hansard Gallery in the 1970s. The relocation of the John Hansard Gallery to its new purpose-built home in the heart of the city's Cultural Quarter increases the University of Southampton's presence in that area, close to its Mayflower Halls and administrative offices in Guildhall Square. The opening of Studio 144 symbolises an extraordinary moment for Southampton and the University will be working closely with John Hansard Gallery, City Eye and NST to deepen public engagement, to share its research and present inspiring and accessible cultural opportunities for all.

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