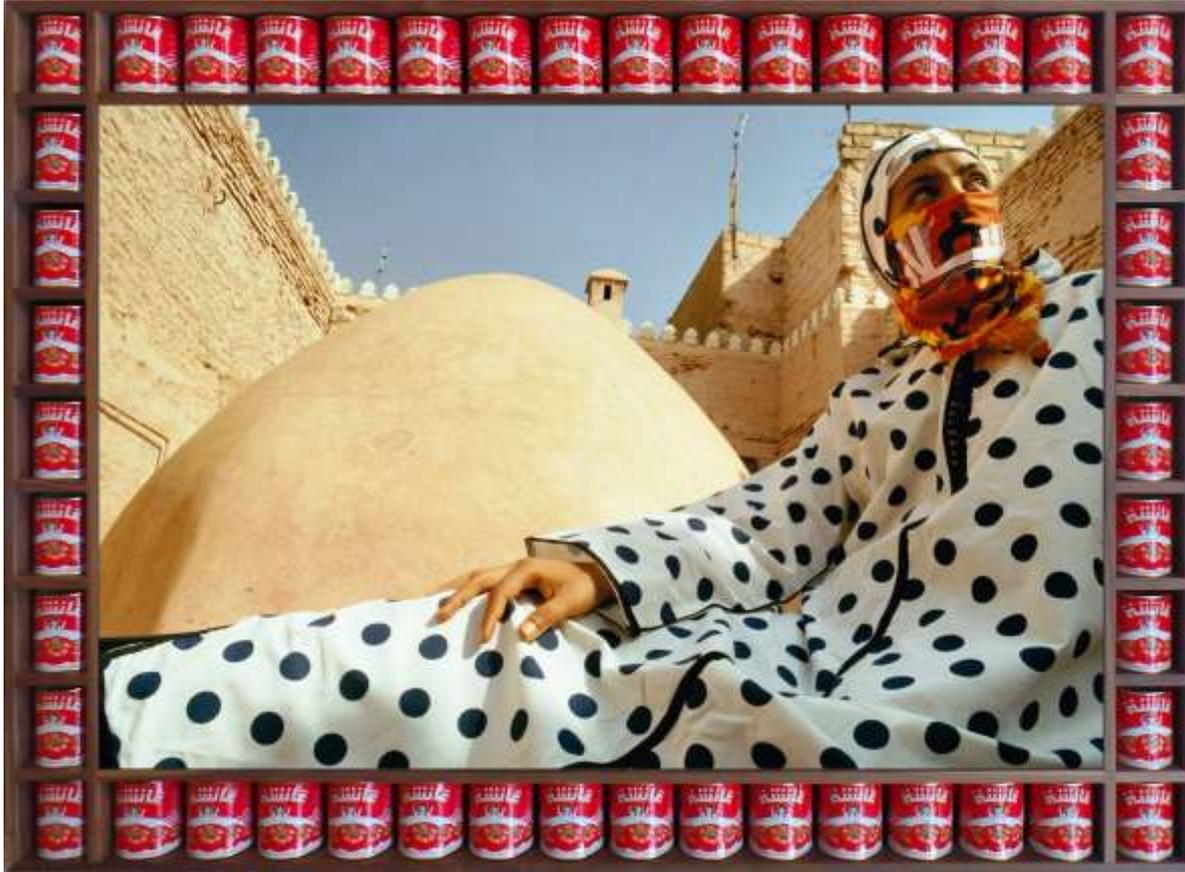


Press Release: July 2020

**ARNOLFINI REOPENS WITH *HASSAN HAJJAJ: THE PATH***  
**30 July to 1 November 2020**



*Dotted Peace, 2000* by Hassan Hajjaj. © Hassan Hajjaj courtesy of the artist and New Art Exchange  
*Hassan Hajjaj: The Path* is a touring exhibition by New Art Exchange, Nottingham, curated by Ekow Eshun.

Arnolfini, Bristol's international centre of contemporary arts in Bristol, is to reopen post lockdown from Thursday 30 July, with a major exhibition by photographer **Hassan Hajjaj**.

With his exuberant melee of colours, patterns, appropriated brand logos and found objects, acclaimed Moroccan-British photographer **Hassan Hajjaj** invites you on an exploration of global culture across continents in his series ***Hassan Hajjaj: The Path***.

*Hassan Hajjaj: The Path* is a touring exhibition by New Art Exchange (NAE), a contemporary arts space in Nottingham dedicated to stimulating new perspectives on the value of diversity in art and society, assembled for NAE by renowned curator, writer and broadcaster Ekow Eshun.

Hajjaj moved to London in the 1970s and has since lived and worked between Morocco and the UK. Heavily influenced by the club, hip-hop, and reggae scenes of London as well as by his North African heritage, his artistic practice reveals his capacity to bridge both cultures, as well as the interweaving worlds of art, music and fashion. His recent work includes an exhibition at Fotografiskain Stockholm entitled *Vogue, The Arab Issue*, as well as privately commissioned portraits of Billie Eilish for US *Vogue*.

Showing for the first time in Bristol, the city's rich musical heritage and complex social and cultural history provides an additional layer of context to Hajjaj's work, explored through the exhibition's different bodies of work and associated programme.

The first series *Dakka Marrakchia*, sees women pose like fashion models on the streets and rooftops of Marrakech while dressed in camouflage pattern abayas and Louis Vuitton print face veils, the portraits offering a deliberate rebuff of stereotypes of Islamic women as subjugated and disempowered.

In *My Rockstars* Hajjaj turns his focus to British personalities, concentrating primarily on figures such as jazz musician Kamaal Williams. As always, his subjects hail from a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds creating, in composite, a portrait of Britain at its most dynamically diverse.

A small selection of reproduced images from *Between* represent Hajjaj's focus on landscape, place and sensibility, rather than portraiture. Reflecting the artist's travels in Africa and the Middle East, the photographs reveal Hajjaj in a new light, as a photographer concerned with the intimacies of everyday life as well as the performed presentation of the self. Hajjaj shifts the focus away from a narrative that positions the ordinary people of the developing world as extras in the drama of globalisation – as refugees, migrants and dollar-a-day strugglers. In Hajjaj's portraits they are not figures on the margins. They are no less than rock stars in the waiting.

Explored within the context of Arnolfini's dual local and international outlook, Hajjaj's focus encourages conversations both across city and continents, where cultural identity is seen as fluid and multiple – welcome to Hassan's world!

Gary Topp, Arnolfini's Executive Director said "Hassan's show is a wonderful way to reopen Arnolfini's galleries; accessible, challenging and vibrant work from an artist at the forefront of contemporary practice."

"We have been in discussions with Hassan about coming to Arnolfini since November last year, with a view to the exhibition opening this March. Events were obviously overtaken by Covid-19 but we're delighted Hassan's show has now finally come to fruition and we can welcome everyone safely back into Bristol's Centre for International Contemporary Arts."

*Hassan Hajjaj: The Path* is part of a wider programme featuring family workshops and screenings both in-house at Arnolfini and available online. Admission to the exhibition is free and will be bookable in advance. Full details at [www.arnolfini.org.uk](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk) and via socials @ArnolfiniArts.

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For further information please contact Sara Blair: [sara.blair@arnolfini.org.uk](mailto:sara.blair@arnolfini.org.uk)

Additional [images here](#) **Twitter / Facebook / Instagram / [www.arnolfini.org.uk](http://www.arnolfini.org.uk)**

## LISTINGS:

### **Exhibition | *Hassan Hajjaj: The Path* 30 July to 1 November 2020**

Vibrant, contemporary pop art photographic portraiture showcasing the wealth of work from the unique talent that is Hassan Hajjaj. With an exuberant melee of colours, patterns, appropriated brand logos and found objects, Hassan Hajjaj: The Path is a timely exploration of global culture across continents through the unique lens of the acclaimed Moroccan-British photographer.

Thursday to Sunday, 12pm to 5pm daily. Exhibition slots are free, bookable in advance.

Arnolfini asks all visitors to wear face masks.

16 Narrow Quay, Bristol BS1 4QA

[Arnolfini.org.uk](http://Arnolfini.org.uk)

@ArnolfiniArts

**#ArnolfiniArts #HassanHajjaj #ThePath #EkowEshun #newartexchange #VigoGallery**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **About Hassan Hajjaj**

Hassan Hajjaj (Moroccan, b.1961) was born in Larache, Morocco, and immigrated to London at an early age. Heavily influenced by the club, hip-hop, and reggae scenes of the city, as well as by his North African heritage, Hajjaj is a self-taught, versatile artist whose work includes portraiture, installation, performance, fashion, and interior design, including furniture made from recycled objects, such as Coca-Cola crates and aluminium cans. In the late 1980s, Hajjaj began experimenting with photography, taking studio portraits of friends, musicians, and artists, as well as people on the streets of Marrakech.

In 2009, Hajjaj was shortlisted for the Victoria & Albert Museum's Jameel Prize for Islamic Art. His solo exhibitions have been held at The Third Line, Dubai; Rose Issa Projects, London; Freies Museum, Berlin; as well as group exhibitions at The Marrakesh Art Biennale; Edge of Arabia, London; Photoqua, Paris; and Re-orientations at Rose Issa Projects; among others. His work is in the collections of the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the Farjam Collection, Dubai; Institut des Cultures d'Islam, Paris; Kamel Lazaar Foundation, Tunisia; Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond, VA; and more. The artist lives and works in London and Marrakech.

### **About Ekow Eshun**

Ekow Eshun is a writer and curator. He is Chairman of the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group, and the author of *Africa State of Mind: Contemporary Photographers Reimagine a Continent*. He was the Director of the ICA, London, from 2005-10.

### **About New Art Exchange**

*Hassan Hajjaj: The Path* is a touring exhibition by New Art Exchange (NAE), a contemporary arts space in Nottingham that celebrates the region's cultural richness and diversity. It is the largest gallery in the UK dedicated to culturally diverse contemporary visual arts. Their programme of activity, which comprises exhibitions, touring, public engagement, learning, talent development and international projects, is dedicated to stimulating new perspectives on the value of diversity within art and society. NAE's distinct agenda is shaped by the organisation's neighbourhood setting and draws inspiration from the experiences, histories, perspectives and needs of their local black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. As such, NAE endeavours to create accessible programmes that are meaningful locally, yet nationally relevant, through the work of both emerging and world renowned British and international artists. To date, amongst others, these have included Hurvin Anderson, Zarina Bhimji, Nikhil Chopra, Hetain Patel, Larissa Sansour, Sonia Boyce, Rashid Rana, Zineb Sedira, Zanele Muholi, Mahtab Hussain, Doug Fishbone, Akram Zaatari and John Akomfrah.

*Hassan Hajjaj: The Path* is a project strand of NAE's international Here, There & Everywhere programme which has been supported by Arts Council, England's, Ambitions for Excellence funds.



[www.nae.org.uk](http://www.nae.org.uk) / [@newartexchange](https://twitter.com/newartexchange) / [@new\\_art\\_exchange](https://twitter.com/new_art_exchange)

## **About Arnolfini**

Woven into the fabric of Bristol since 1961, Arnolfini is a pioneer of interdisciplinary contemporary arts, presenting an ambitious, eclectic programme of visual art, performance, dance, film and music, carefully curated to appeal to a broad audience.

Housed in a prominent Grade II listed, accessible building on Bristol's harbourside, Arnolfini is an inspiring public space for contemporary arts and learning, greeting over half a million visitors each year and offering an innovative, inclusive and engaging experience for all.

An internationally-renowned institution, throughout its history Arnolfini's programme has welcomed artists from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds, supporting and developing their work, investigating their influences and aspirations.

Arnolfini has long-standing relationships with a variety of partners and celebrates the heritage and wide-reaching impact of the organisation through sharing a 60 year archive of exhibition slides, publications and artist book collection.

In 2019, Arnolfini relaunched its major exhibition programme with *Still I Rise: Feminism, Gender and Resistance Act 3* and continues to build on the multicultural, diverse and inclusive ethos that has prevailed since its inception.

Arnolfini remains at the heart of the Bristol community, always mindful of founding director Jeremy Rees' principle to 'Enjoy Yourself', inviting everyone to join in.

## **About UWE Bristol**

The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) has a global and inclusive outlook, with approximately 30,000 students and strong industry networks and connections with over 1,000 employers. Research at UWE Bristol focuses on real world problems and the University plays a pivotal role in the regional economy. With over £300 million invested in infrastructure, buildings and facilities across all Campuses, UWE Bristol is creating a place for learning that is innovative, ambitious, connected, enabling and inclusive. UWE Bristol is ranked 28<sup>th</sup> in the Guardian university league table, as well as 11<sup>th</sup> in the UK for student satisfaction, and has recently been awarded the highest possible rating in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) 2018, achieving GOLD Standard.

## **About Arts Council England**

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. 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. Between 2018 and 2022, we will invest £1.45 billion of public money from government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help deliver this vision. [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

## **About Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust**

Arnolfini Gallery is supported by a linked charity, the Ashley Clinton Barker Mills Trust (ACBMT). Arnolfini founders Jeremy and Annabel Rees were first introduced to the artists and benefactors Peter and Caroline Barker-Mill in 1963, by the London gallerist Lesley Waddington. It was a fortuitous meeting that was the catalyst in allowing Arnolfini to develop from a small volunteer-run private gallery into a major international arts centre. The Trust's principle object is to 'support' Arnolfini and it does this primarily by making annual grants from the income earned on its investments to make quarterly payments. It has also been able to make small fund one-off capital grants to help the Arnolfini transition to its current financial model.