

# DEPARTURE LOUNGE

## Wafted from Paradise | Maria Meyer

03 March – 07 May 2022

*Private View: Thursday 3 March, 6-8pm*

Departure Lounge are delighted to present *Wafted from Paradise*, a newly commissioned project from multidisciplinary artist Maria Meyer into the typography and visual culture of Luton's diverse landscapes. Originally from Leicester, Meyer felt a sense of nostalgia and familiarity, particularly while spending time in Luton's varied and vibrant multicultural retail areas.

Reading widely around art and architecture Meyer came across the seminal publication *Learning from Las Vegas* by architects Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown – designers of the Sainsbury Wing at London's National Gallery. Venturi & Scott-Brown coined the term 'decorated shed' to describe the diverse signage and built environment lining the strip in Vegas, with Scott-Brown describing her attraction to the kitsch, assemblages of typography and building materials as 'hate-love exhilaration'.

During numerous visits to Luton researching and developing her new commission, Meyer began to see parallels between assemblages of typography and signage in the shop fronts of Luton's Bury Park and Hightown neighbourhoods and the larger-than-life mishmash of styles in Las Vegas.

Adopting an amalgamation of cultural products, graphic design and signage appropriated from the town, this exhibition draws on these parallels, using a combination of digital photographic collage and typographic works to explore Luton's remarkable retail environments. With local businesses often accommodating multiple unrelated businesses and services under one roof, these new works highlight the gritty optimism and entrepreneurial spirit of Luton's communities. Beyond false nails, fried chicken, fruit and furniture, these shops offer nourishment, home comforts and connection to a community, which accommodates a diversity of beliefs and heritage, but which shares many of the same values.

### Events

#### **Saturday 5 March & Saturday 12 March, 2- 4pm**

Join artist Maria Meyer for our creative drop in-sessions where you will use collage and typography to create your own postcard of Luton. All postcards will be displayed in our window for the duration of the exhibition. No artistic experience necessary! Suitable for 5+ (all children must be accompanied by an adult). See our website for further details.



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*Wafted from Paradise* is generously funded by Arts Council England. It is organised by Departure Lounge and is delivered in partnership with The Culture Trust Luton.

PRESS ENQUIRIES: For further information, interview requests and images please contact: Sammy Maitland: [sammy@departure-lounge.org.uk](mailto:sammy@departure-lounge.org.uk)

## Notes to Editors

### Visitor information

Departure Lounge, 64 Bute Street, Luton LU1 2EY

Open Thursday – Saturday 1.00pm– 6.00pm, and by appointment

Admission free

[www.departure-lounge.org.uk](http://www.departure-lounge.org.uk) / email: [gallery@departure-lounge.org.uk](mailto:gallery@departure-lounge.org.uk)

**Maria Meyer's** practice includes sculpture, photography, installation, and film. Returning to her fine art practice after a career in advertising, her skills and knowledge in that sphere now inform her current practice. Exploring ideas around simulacra and the inherent deception of image manipulation, her work looks at our relationship with visual communication both on and offline, and the way it infiltrates our consciousness and identity. The composition in Meyer's work has a painterly quality, but the work is firmly grounded in photographic territory, with the tension between photograph and object at the foreground of ideas within the work.

**Departure Lounge** was set up in Luton 2010 initially organising a series of international contemporary art exhibitions in empty shops. With a particular emphasis on photography and portraiture, we curate an independent programme of exhibitions and commissions with the support of The Culture Trust Luton and, on a project-by-project basis, Arts Council England and other funders.

**The Culture Trust Luton** is an arts and cultural charity providing exceptional and meaningful engagement with museums, arts centres, libraries, and public art for the people of Luton and beyond. Luton Culture aims to deliver exemplary public engagement with arts and culture through its locally relevant and nationally important arts and cultural programmes, whilst actively nurturing creativity and artistic talent.



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