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ARNOLFINI ANNOUNCES 2025 EXHIBITION PROGRAMME



Barbara Walker, *End of the Affair* 2023

Sahara Longe, *Bad Dreams (after Ferdinand Hodler)*, 2024

Dana Awartani, *Come, let me heal your wounds. Let me mend your broken bones*, 2024

Emma Talbot, *In the end, the beginning*, 2023. Installation view, Kesselhaus, KINDL

Arnolfini, Bristol's international centre for contemporary arts, is delighted to announce an ambitious 2025 exhibition programme, featuring four extraordinary artists whose work spans painting, drawing, sculpture and installation, each addressing complex questions about the world in which we live.

The year begins with *Being Here* (8 March to 25 May), the first major survey exhibition by acclaimed British artist **Barbara Walker**. Following its successful run at The Whitworth, this comprehensive exhibition presents nearly 60 works, including Walker's Turner Prize-nominated series 'Burden of Proof'. The exhibition charts Walker's compelling figurative practice from the 1990s to present day, showcasing her dedication to creating space for Black presence, power and belonging through various media, from delicate graphite drawings to embossed reliefs.

Summer brings together two powerful exhibitions (28 June to 28 September) featuring British artist **Sahara Longe's** first institutional solo exhibition alongside artist **Dana Awartani**, Saudi Arabian born and of Palestinian descent, in her first European solo show.

Longe presents a new body of work continuing her exploration of semi-abstract figures moving between private and public spaces, including two monumental 4-metre-long paintings, whilst Awartani's multimedia work honours traditional craft-making techniques, exploring themes of collective healing and cultural sustainability, including her poignant Venice Biennale commission *Come, let me heal your wounds. Let me mend your broken bones* (2024).

The Autumn programme welcomes British artist **Emma Talbot** (18 October 2025 to 8 February 2026), whose exhibition features drawing, silk paintings, sculpture, installation and animation.

Centred around the multi-part installation *Are you a living thing that is dying or a dying thing that is living?/Everything is Energy*, co-commissioned with Copenhagen Contemporary, Talbot's work explores our relationship with the natural and technological world through her distinctive visual poetry.

Gemma Brace, Head of Exhibitions at Arnolfini, says: "Our exhibitions programme for the year ahead reflects the diversity and complexity of contemporary life – asking questions about identity, presence, conflict, cultural heritage, technological progress and societal alienation – whilst creating a platform for artists at multiple stages of their career and celebrating the many communities that we represent."

All exhibitions are brought to life through an accompanying programme of workshops, live events, family activities, community gatherings and tours for visually impaired audiences, delivered in collaboration with Arnolfini's creatives in residence and community partners.

Entry to all exhibitions remains free, with donations welcomed. Arnolfini is open Tuesday to Sunday, 11am to 6pm.

- ends -

Images: **Barbara Walker**, *End of the Affair* 2023

Sahara Longe, *Bad Dreams (after Ferdinand Hodler)*, 2024

Dana Awartani, *Come, let me heal your wounds. Let me mend your broken bones*, 2024

Emma Talbot, *In the end, the beginning*, 2023. Installation view, Kesselhaus, **KINDL**

All images and full credits available [here](#)

@ArnolfiniArts Instagram / Threads / LinkedIn / Facebook /
www.arnolfini.org.uk

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Barbara Walker: *Being Here*

Credits

Curated by Poppy Bowers (Senior Curator, the Whitworth) and Hannah Vollam (Assistant Curator, the Whitworth), and adapted for Arnolfini by Gemma Brace, (Head of Exhibitions) and Kiara Corales (Exhibitions Producer). The exhibition was initiated by Leanne Green (Head of Exhibitions & Displays, Tate Liverpool, formerly Curator at the Whitworth). The exhibition is generously supported by Cristea Roberts Gallery.

About Barbara Walker

Barbara Walker MBE, RA (born 1964, Birmingham, UK) is a British artist described by art historian Eddie Chambers as “one of the most talented, productive and committed artists of her generation.” Walker studied Art and Design at the University of Central England, Birmingham (1993-96) and Wolverhampton University (2003 to 2004). She has had regular solo shows throughout her career including at Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham (2002, 2007, 2016); Jerwood Gallery, Hastings (2018); and Turner Contemporary, Margate (2019 to 2021).

Her work has been included in over sixty group presentations since 1995, most recently: *The Time is Always Now: Artists Reframe the Black Figure*, National Portrait Gallery, London (2024); *Black Atlantic: Power, People, Resistance*, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (2023); *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present* (2023); *Life Between Islands, Caribbean - British Art, 50s to Now*, Art Gallery Ontario, Canada (2023) and Tate Britain (2021) and *Lahore Biennale 02: Between the Sun and the Moon* (2020). In 2023 Walker was nominated for the Turner Prize and elected to the Royal Academy of Arts.

In 2021 the Whitworth acquired three works from Walker's *Shock and Awe* series (2015 to 2020). Her work is held in public collections including Arts Council Collection, UK; British Museum, UK; Government Art Collection, UK; Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA; Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE; Tate, UK; and Yale Center for British Art, USA.

About Sahara Longe

Sahara Longe (born 1994, London) is a British figurative painter who lives and works in London. Longe trained for four years at the Florentine atelier Charles H. Cecil Studio, where she studied classical drawing and painting with an emphasis on creating portraits from live models. During this time, Longe learned traditional oil-painting techniques used by the old masters, which she continues to employ in her work today. She is celebrated for her soft, flat-edged portraits that capture the essences of their sitters with minimal details.

Longe positions her subjects against semi-abstracted backgrounds, often using rich swaths of carmine, chartreuse, and dove grey. Their quiet faces are barely delineated but recognizable by the tilt of a head or the bend of arms where hands are stuffed in pockets.

As the artist has described, she was struck by a friend's observation that one "can recognise someone you know just by the back of them, just by the way they stand and by the way they use their hands," and her paintings in oil on linen tenderly capture these identifying gestures. Longe applied this sensitivity to her sitter as one of ten internationally acclaimed artists commissioned by His Majesty King Charles III to contribute portraits honouring pioneering members of Britain's Windrush Generation. First unveiled in June 2023, her intimate portrait remained on view at the National Portrait Gallery until April 2024. The artist will mount her first institutional solo exhibition at the Arnolfini in Bristol, UK summer 2025. www.timothytaylor.com/artists/sahara-longe

About Dana Awartani

Dana Awartani engages in critical and contemporary reinterpretations of the forms, techniques, concepts and spatial constructs that shape Middle Eastern culture. Steeped in a multitude of historical references, especially Islamic and Arab art-making traditions, Awartani's practice straddles continuity and innovation, aesthetic experimentation and social relevance. Spanning painting, sculpture, performance and installation, Awartani's commitment to historically situated and locally sourced materials lends a rare sensitivity to urgent political concerns of gender, healing, cultural destruction and sustainability. Consistent throughout the artist's work has been her philosophical elaboration of geometric patterns as an alternative genealogy of abstraction.

In her ongoing series, *Come, let me heal your wounds. Let me mend your broken bones* (2019-2024) Awartani meditates on themes of sustainability and cultural destruction. The work is composed of naturally dyed silk fabrics, handmade in Kerala in south India, which have been stretched onto frames or draped in a serial manner. The fabrics are saturated with a multitude of natural herbs and spices with specific medicinal functions, but are also spliced and disrupted by tears and holes, which correspond to buildings or locations that have been subjected to sustained violence or outright destruction through war, colonialism or acts of terror. Mending these punctures through a process of darning, Awartani's work metaphorises possibilities of collective healing while recalling a venerable tradition of repairing and revering objects. Her material choices speak to the ethical and ecological terms of production and embody acts of resistance through the dual emphasis on artisanal production and indigenous knowledges. This approach can be seen in an earlier performative work, *I went away and forgot you. A while ago I remembered. I remembered I'd forgotten you. I was*

dreaming (2017), in which she sweeps away a pattern painstakingly created from handdyed sand to resemble a traditional tiled floor, seemingly in the name of progress.

Born in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 1987 and of Palestinian descent, Dana Awartani lives and works in between New York and Jeddah. She has a BA in Fine Art from Central St Martin's College of Art and Design, London and a Master's degree in Traditional Arts from The Prince's School of Traditional Arts, London. Dana Awartani has held solo exhibitions at the Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide, Australia (2024); the Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah, UAE (2018); Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit, USA (2017) and Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia (2015). Her works have also been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including Venice Biennale, Italy (2024); Sharjah Biennale 15, Sharjah, UAE (2023); Louvre Abu Dhabi, UAE (2022); Lyon Biennale, Lyon, France (2022); Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden Washington, DC, USA (2022); Desert X Al-Ula, Al-Ula, Saudi Arabia (2022); Diriyah Biennale, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2021); BNKR, Munich, Germany (2021); British Museum, London, UK (2021); Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid, Spain (2020); Contemporary Art Biennial Sesc Videobrasil, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2019); Cambridge Arts Gallery, Cambridge, USA (2018); Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, Australia (2018); United Nations, New York, USA (2017); The Mosaic Rooms, London, UK (2017); Institute of Arab and Islamic Art, New York, United States (2017); Minnesota Street Project, San Francisco, USA (2016); Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kochi, India (2016); Jewish Museum, New York, USA (2016); US Embassy, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2015); Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2013).

London, UK (2017); Institute of Arab and Islamic Art, New York, United States (2017); Minnesota Street Project, San Francisco, USA (2016); Kochi-Muziris

Biennale, Kochi, India (2016); Yinchuan Biennale, Museum of Contemporary Art, Yinchuan, China (2016); Jewish Museum, New York, USA (2016); US Embassy, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2015); Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2013).

www.danaawartani.com

About Emma Talbot

Emma Talbot (born 1969, Stourbridge) lives and works in London. She studied at the Birmingham Institute of Art & Design and Royal College of Art. Working in drawing, painting, animation and sculpture Talbot often articulates internal narratives as visual poems or associative ruminations, based on her own experience, memories and psychological projections. Incorporating her own writing and references to other literary and poetic sources, Talbot's work considers complex issues such as feminist theory and storytelling; ecopolitics and the natural world; and pertinent questions regarding our shifting relationships to technology, language and communication.

Talbot has been awarded the 2020 8th Max Mara Art Prize for Women, 2018 Bryan Robertson Trust Award, 1998 City of Rochester Award, 1995-6 Rome Scholarship, British School at Rome.

Her work has been included in *Milk of Dreams* at The 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia (2022). Recent solo exhibitions include: *A Journey You Take Alone*, Kunsthalle Giessen (2023-2024), *In The End The Beginning*, Kesselhaus Kindl, Berlin (2023); *The Human Experience*, Kunsthall Stavanger (2023); *21st Century Herbal*, Beiqiu Museum, Nanjing, China (2023); *Spaceship Earth (Plant Your Seeds of Hope)*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam (2023); *The Age/L'Età*, Collezione Maramotti, Italy and Whitechapel Gallery, London (2022); *Mirrored Landscape*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam (2022); *Let Poets Speak*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam (2022); *Meditations*, Petra Rink Galerie, *Düsseldorf*, Germany (2022); *When Screens Break* Eastside Projects, Birmingham (2020); *Ghost Calls*, DCA, Dundee (2020); *Ghost Calls and Meditations* Kunsthau Pasquart, Biel (2021); *Sounders of The Depths*, GEM Kunstmuseum, The Hague, Netherlands (2019-20); *Emma/Ursula*, Petra Rinck Galerie Dusseldorf (2020); ArtNight 2019 commission:

Your Own Authority, William Morris Gallery; 21st Century Sleepwalk, Caustic Coastal and Salford Lad's Club, Salford (2018); *Woman-Snake-Bird*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam (2018); *Open Thoughts*, Neuer Aachener Kunstverein (2017); *The World Blown Apart*, Galerie Onrust, Amsterdam 2017; *Stained With Marks Of Love*, Arcadia Missa, New York (2017).

Her work is held in the collections of Guerlain, Paris, British Council Collection, Arts Council Collection, City of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, David Roberts Collection, Saatchi Collection, University of the Arts London, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Fries Museum NL, Arnhem Museum NL, KRC Collection NL, AkzoNobel NL. www.emmatalbot.org.uk

About Arnolfini

Woven into the fabric of Bristol since 1961, Arnolfini is an international centre of interdisciplinary contemporary arts, presenting an ambitious and wide-ranging programme of visual art, performance, dance, film, and music.

Housed in Bush House, a prominent 19th century former warehouse on the city's harbourside, Arnolfini is a pioneering, inspiring public space for arts and learning, offering an innovative, inclusive and engaging experience for all.

Arnolfini has welcomed artists from around world throughout its history – sharing works by Paula Rego, Jannis Kounellis, John Akomfrah, Grayson Perry, Rachel Whiteread, Peter Doig, Richard Long, Veronica Ryan, Chantal Joffe, Sonia Boyce, Alice Kettle and Frank Bowling, to name just a few - as well as supporting talent from in and around Bristol.

Alongside its main programme, Arnolfini is a centre of everyday creativity and learning, working with a wide range of community and artistic partners, while continuing to explore and develop new collaborations across the city and beyond. Spaces are used regularly by families, schools and colleges, health and wellbeing groups.

Through sharing a 63+ year archive of exhibition slides, publications and an extensive artist book collection, Arnolfini celebrates its heritage and the wide-reaching impact the organisation has had since its foundation.

The team at Arnolfini strive to honour founder Jeremy Rees' principle to 'Enjoy Yourself', welcoming everyone into the accessible space, and inviting engagement, in any number of ways.

Arnolfini is part of the University of the West of England and a key element of their City Campus.

An independent charity (CIO), Arnolfini is supported by Arts Council England and the Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust. www.arnolfini.org.uk

About The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol)

The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) has a global and inclusive outlook, with approximately 38,000 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 £400 million invested in infrastructure, buildings and facilities across all campuses in the past 10 years, UWE Bristol is creating a place for learning that is innovative, ambitious, connected, enabling and inclusive. The University is a '1st Class' university for sustainability, ranked 11th out of 151 higher education institutions in People & Planet's latest sustainability league table. www.uwe.ac.uk

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. Our vision, set out in our strategy *Let's Create*, is that 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 every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. Between 2023 and 2026 we will have invested over £467 million of public money from Government, alongside an estimated £250 million each year from The National Lottery, to help ensure that people in every part of the country have access to culture and creativity in the places where they live. Until Autumn 2025, the National Lottery is celebrating its 30th anniversary of supporting good causes in the United Kingdom: since the first draw was held in 1994, it has raised £49 billion and awarded more than 690,000 individual grants. www.artscouncil.org.uk.

About Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust

Arnolfini has been supported by a linked charity, the Ashley Clinton Barker Mills Trust (ACBMT) for almost 60 years.

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 Ashley Clinton Barker-Mills Trust (ACBMT) principle is to work with Arnolfini, primarily by making annual grants from the income earned on its investments, as well as funding modest, one-off capital grants to help the Arnolfini transition to its current financial model. In more recent years members of the ACBMT have become more involved working with Arnolfini to help plan its future. www.arnolfini.org.uk/about/ashley-clinton-barker-mills-trust