

PRESS RELEASE

**CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT & FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE  
DIPLOMA GRAD SHOW  
THE ART ACADEMY LONDON**

**Thursday 5 to Sunday 8 July 2018**

**The Former Newington Library**  
155 Walworth Road, London SE17 1RS

**Private View 6 to 9pm Thursday 5 July 2018**

**What is the relevance of portraiture and figurative sculpture today?**

It's a question the eight students on the specialist courses in these areas at The Art Academy London hear frequently and their stock answer is: 'it depends on your response.'

There is no more reason for either discipline to be stuck in a world of 'fusty,' 'commemorative' and mere 'likeness' any more than contemporary art be tied to the religious iconography of the past – these genres are as open to personal and political interpretation as any other.

For the past two years, these students have been fortunate to study at a creative and independent school on two specialist courses taught by some of the leading artists in their fields.

The Contemporary Portrait students have honed their skills under tutors including Tai-Shan Schierenberg, Tim Benson, Robin-Lee Hall, Antony Williams, Roxana Halls and Sadie Lee, while all the time creatively testing the concept of portraiture and mining their own experiences to find depth.

The Figurative Sculpture artists – the first to graduate from this bespoke course – have explored alternative and abstract approaches alongside more figurative techniques to hone unique voices.

**Show highlights:**

Former Olympic rower Fiona Land explores the physical and mental endurance demanded to become an elite athlete in a series of portraits that capture a lesser-seen side – Dame Katherine Grainger is just one of her Olympic champion sitters.

Co-founder of the Black Ink publishing house Desrie Thomson-George uses mixed media for her life-size figures that challenge preconceived conceptions of the black woman.

The majority of the themes explore the state of humanity from its pure fragility and the inevitable pain of loss, to debunking prejudice and stereotypes in order to see the world more clearly.

*'We are all mature students, counting an architect, pastor, former magazine editor and linguists among our number, and we are proud of the life experiences we bring to our work. This show is the culmination of intensive and immersive study, but it is also an exciting new beginning to be celebrated.'* Helen Stone, CPD student

#### CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT DIPLOMA – Exhibitors:

**Fiona Land** – [www.fionaland.art](http://www.fionaland.art)

**Alessandra Bettolo** – [www.krop.com/alessandrabetto](http://www.krop.com/alessandrabetto)

**Caroline Wong** – [www.carolinewongart.com](http://www.carolinewongart.com)

**Joanna Watts** – [www.joannawatts.co.uk](http://www.joannawatts.co.uk)

**Helen Stone** – [www.helenstoneart.com](http://www.helenstoneart.com)

**Sarah Rigler** – [www.sarahrigler.com](http://www.sarahrigler.com)

#### FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE DIPLOMA – Exhibitors:

**Desrie Thomson-George** – [www.desriethomson-george.art](http://www.desriethomson-george.art)

**Felicity Whitehead** – [www.felicityclarewhiteheadart.co.uk](http://www.felicityclarewhiteheadart.co.uk)

#### Also showing:

Year 3 Fine Art Diploma students

#### Events:

The show is open **12noon to 5pm, 6 to 8 July**. Please **RSVP** for the PV on **Thursday 5 July, 6 to 9pm** at [facebook.com/LondonCP8](http://facebook.com/LondonCP8) or email [londoncp8@outlook.com](mailto:londoncp8@outlook.com)

We will also be running a programme of drop-in events **Friday 6, Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 July** including 'meet the artist' tours, talks, performance and art workshops. Please see [facebook.com/LondonCP8](http://facebook.com/LondonCP8) or [instagram.com/londoncp8](http://instagram.com/londoncp8) for up to date details.

#### Find us:



The Former Newington Library, 155 Walworth Road, London SE17 1RS

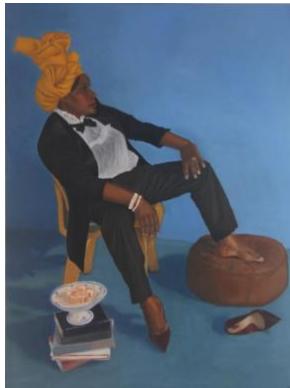
**Nearest Tube/ Rail:** Elephant & Castle (5 minute walk).

#### Press requests:

Please email [londoncp8@outlook.com](mailto:londoncp8@outlook.com) for more info and hi res images (see attached image sheet)

Find out about studying at The Art Academy at [www.artacademy.org.uk](http://www.artacademy.org.uk)

PRESS IMAGES  
CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT & FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE DIPLOMA GRAD SHOW



**Le Smoking**  
©Alessandra Bettolo  
Oil on canvas



**Trousseau 1/13**  
©Helen Stone  
Mixed media with stitch



**Dave**  
©Joanna Watts  
Oil on canvas



**88 (Two Fat Ladies)** ©Caroline Wong  
Acrylic on canvas



**At Home (for now)** ©Fiona Land  
Oil on canvas



**Liberated**  
© Desrie Thomson-George  
Textiles, plaster, acrylic and bronze powder



**We are All but Part of the Whole**  
©Felicity Clare Whitehead  
Black iron wire

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