



'Lingua Franker' Press release

An exhibition of work by Alice Dawson, Dora Lam, Mary Amelia London, Matvei Matveev, Kerri McEvoy, Megumi Ohata, Rabiya Nagi, Gema Sainz, Zearo & Zhenzhen

HOXTON 253's 'Lingua Franker' is platform to [Shiftists](#), a group of emerging artists formed while studying at the Royal College of Art on the Graduate Diploma in Art & Design. Interdisciplinary in nature, the programme navigated each individual to a position from which to consider the potential of art to interpret, to give voice and to initiate change. The critical activity emerging from the group takes its coordinates from an acute awareness of the contemporary world as a dynamically interconnected assemblage of systems expanding into diverse perspectives and broader frameworks beyond fine art practice. In this exhibition the gallery functions as a site of investigation and site of reflection expressed through distinct media and modes of practice networking a mycorrhiza of enquiry.

'Lingua Franker' presents divergent strands of art that take on the conditions of personal, environmental, social, economic and cultural politics of contemporary lived experiences to address the issues of our time. United through the principles of cross-pollination of ideas allows the artists to pioneer the types of collaborative approaches that can lead to new findings. The exhibition title originates from the concept of a common language 'Lingua', whilst the collective name of the group 'Shiftists' references a shared artistic approach grounded in ceaseless enquiry and the shifting of ideas and beliefs as a mechanism for affecting change. The show is curated by RCA academic and artist [Isabel Young](#).

[Alice Dawson's](#) provocative installations addressing human rights violations are articulated as an expression of trauma through the macabre materials of animal carcasses. Death and decay are present confronting a death-denying culture and asserting a demand for social and environmental justice. [Mary Amelia London](#) equally takes on the role of activist through 'domestic protest art', taking its stand from the site of the kitchen. Materials are sourced from the detritus of everyday life – the cardboard packaging of consumption – to be sawn, stapled and defaced with slogans that punch with a fist from the heart exposing gender inequality.

Dealing with identity and diaspora [Dora Lam](#) explores cultural complexity through her community engaged practice. In the beautifully emotive film 'Making Clay Dumplings' a family sits down to the everyday communal labour of dumpling making. The rich and spontaneous dialogue that unfurls articulates the profound intimacy of human relationships and collective cultural heritages. Conversation itself becomes the material of the artwork, and the dumpling sculptures a by-product. Similarly, [Rabiya Nagi's](#) work challenges memory, personal history, identity and culture through the lens of multi-media and moving image. Framing at intimate close range in 'Do You See Me Now' the camera observes an understated view of hands folded in a lap. The barely perceptible movements of the bejewelled fingers take on symbolic significance when with the flick of an eye they are stripped bare of their assets.

Exploring identity, gender and the body [Megumi Ohata](#) has recently ventured into the propagation of liquid bioplastics solidified into sculptural form in silicone moulds. Describing this process as when the "birth of an organism is simulated", Ohata moves into the territory of BioArt. [Zearo's](#) work explores sexuality and desire through the medium of paint. His figurative work evokes a narrative of intimacy, longing and desire. More recently his paintings have engaged the spatial dimensions of expanded painting subsuming the canvas substrate under latex gloves.

[Matvei Matveev's](#) practice is described as a 'ritual' to deal with a life lived through transience and a way of grounding a world in perpetual transition. The work moves between deliberately static and graphic painted forms into the fluidity of moving image and animation. As an interdisciplinary artist [Kerri McEvoy](#) too finds voice in multiple media where she navigates personal trauma using methods of redaction to obscure legal documents to be pulped and pressed back into paper for later re-typing.

[Gema Sainz](#) explores different versions and notions of reality and perceptions of certainty. She works with the tactile qualities of book binding and paper often using layering to create three-dimensional forms and subtle gradations of line with the ephemeral quality of shadows. [Zhenzhen Ma](#) works with moving image and painting as a mode of expression to be explored as an intuitive material with a capacity for imaginative thinking, and to spark imagination in others.

The private view will be held on Wednesday 7 July from 6 – 9pm. The exhibition is open to the public from Wednesday 7 July to Monday 12 July 2021, 11am – 9pm.