

# EXHIBITION GUIDE

EPISODE 13: LAILA MAJID & LOUIS BLUE NEWBY  
*INNER HEAT*  
08 Nov 24–12 Jan 25

Goldsmiths CCA presents the first institutional exhibition by artist duo Laila Majid and Louis Blue Newby. *Inner Heat* features new drawings in conversation with sculptural elements of public infrastructure, examining the dynamic between private image consumption and the public realm.

Both solo practising artists, Newby and Majid's shared practice has evolved through a constant exchange of found imagery, gathered to create an archive of printed and digital material, in what has become an instinctive shared language. Fluidly moving between mediums, their work has reconfigured visuals scraped from sources such as online forums, social feeds, subreddits and Pornhub. Developed via mediation and presented through a distorting lens – at times overlaying constellations of images with translucent resin, cast from leather to look like skin (*Spread*, 2022-ongoing); at others, using 16mm film to capture a screen showing a sequence of amorphous AI generated samples (*south florida sky*, 2022) – their work coaxes distance between audience and image, and in doing so gestures to an alternate style of image consumption: one in which the passive is made intimate and active.

At the centre of *Inner Heat* is the *Contact* series. A departure from Newby and Majid's previous manipulation of images found largely in printed source materials like magazines, manuals, comics and books, *Contact* is derived entirely from found digital images, painstakingly translated into drawings. The source images are recognisable as archetypes of a collectively understood memetic internet culture.

*Contact (Forum)* is a 3 meter long work composed of 6 drawings, their respective images taken from indeterminate sources. Decontextualized from the social media feeds where they were found, the figures in this work become resonant for the transformative and subversive quality of their content, and the severe austerity of the work's formal format. Each image can be read as deviant, tracing gender fluidity, non-normative sexual practices, or anthropomorphic transformation. *Contact (Bucks)* shows figures stuck in mud, a literal metaphor for the stickiness of the images that hold Majid and Newby's attention.

The physicality of the production process adds a temporal aspect to Newby and Majid's visual language of mediation. In opposition to the levity and accessibility of their 'throw away' source imagery, *Contact* works are slowly and painstakingly produced in graphite on paper.

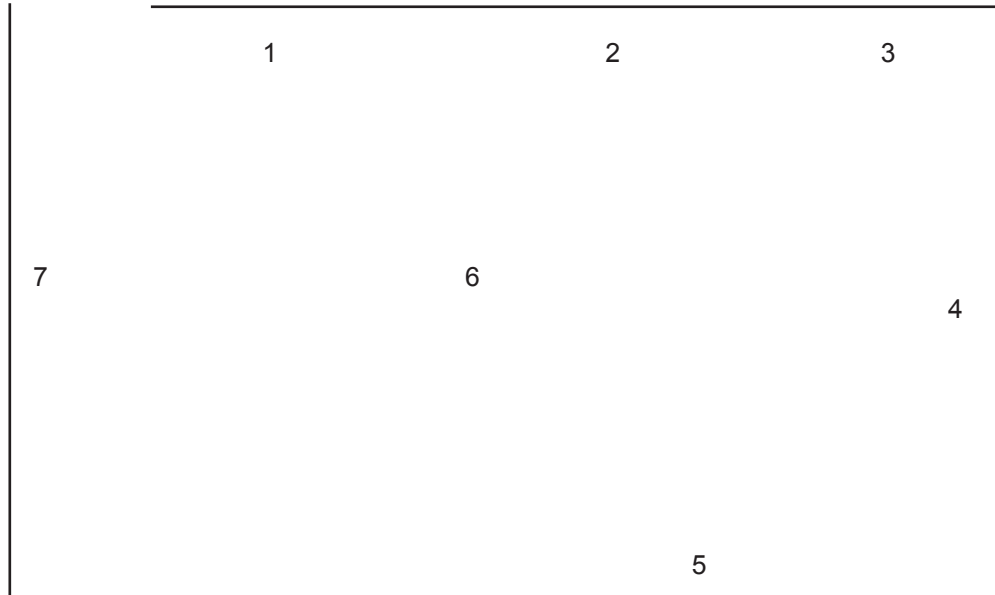
Photographing each image using low resolution digital thermal transfer printing generates an imperceptible linear structure; a grid that is only visible when the image is enlarged and reprinted. Embodying the idea of reading images through touch, the artists reproduce the thousands of data-loaded strips by hand, a laborious mechanical process which removes traces of individual artists' identity from the artwork's production.

The effect of the process of erasure and recreation of the lines that constitute the image is an analogue texture that emulates a grain. Simultaneously soft and sharp, the instability of the image created by this textural materiality is redolent of the unknowable journey of the image from its original producer. The time intensive manual photocopying process requires close contact with the work for an extended period of time; through this punishing intimacy the artists question how we engage with imagery in the first place – how can we truly read, process and be with images?

If the raw images used in the *Contact* drawings instantly feel familiar, the fine mediated texture of the lines of each drawing has the effect of withholding information from the viewer at first glance. This sense of both knowing and not knowing is furthered by taking not only images from the public realm, but elements of infrastructure often found in public space. The metal perch benches proffer rest at a detriment to privacy. Set too close together for comfort, and designed for perching rather than relaxing, the discomfiting intimacy instigated by the installation subverts the dynamic between viewer and object. The handrails under *Contact (Forum)* limit proximity to the drawing. The artists explore what Michael Taussig defines as “a nervous system poetics of concealment and revelation”, instigating a current of push and pull within the space; an explosive tension that simmers with its own “inner heat”.

This libidinal flashpoint is represented in the film *Inner Heat*, displayed on a large monitor in the space. A telegraph pole erupts with electricity when its cable shorts, casting a flash across the snowy landscape. The original video gathered a million views when posted online, and has been reshot by the artists on grainy DV camera. A moment of quotidian beauty, endlessly looping, and endlessly distributed.

# FLOORPLAN



## WORKS LIST

- 1** *Contact (Blessed)*, 2024  
Graphite on paper, perspex and wood frame  
117 x 46.5 x 5cm framed
- 2** *Contact (Graph of Desire)*, 2024  
Graphite on paper, perspex and wood frame  
67 x 46.5 x 5cm framed
- 3** *Contact (Send)*, 2024  
Graphite on paper, perspex and wood frame  
36.5 x 46.5cm x 5cm framed
- 4** *Contact (Forum)*, 2024  
Graphite on paper, perspex and wood frame  
308 x 46.5cm x 5cm framed
- 5** *Contact (Bucks)*, 2024  
Graphite on paper, perspex and wood frame  
87 x 46.5cm x 5cm framed
- 6** Steel Benches
- 7** *Inner Heat*, 2024  
4k video, with sound  
2 mins 30 secs

## EVENTS

- 14 Nov, 7–8.30pm TALK:  
*DR LARNE ABSE GOGARTY W/  
LAILA MAJID AND LOUIS BLUE  
NEWBY*
- An in-conversation exploring the duos' new series of works for their exhibition *Inner Heat*. Issues of how we live amongst distributed images will be explored by the speakers in light of Dr Abse Gogarty's recent publication, *What We Do Is Secret: Contemporary Art and Antinomies of Conspiracy* (2023, Sternberg).
- 05 Dec, 7.30–8.30pm POETRY READING  
*SECRECY AND EXPOSURE*
- Feat: Fintain Calpin, Hasti, Donna Markus and D Mortimer. Poets have been invited by Majid and Newby to respond to the ideas of secrecy and exposure which animate their works. The poets will perform texts within the exhibition space itself, activating new readings of the artworks.
- For more information on upcoming events visit [goldsmithscca.art](http://goldsmithscca.art)