

# *Re-Re-imagining Citizenship*

Interactive exhibition and participatory project  
Martin Hall Exhibition Space  
13 March - 29 March 2019

What is at stake in re-imagining new forms of citizenship and modes of civic participation? How can the notion of citizenship - in our trans/post-national society - be reconfigured without subjection? How can it help us to transform our practices, behaviours and environments?

The exhibition brings together a range of audio-visual and text-based responses with contributions by students, researchers and artists from across and beyond the University.

*Re-imagining Citizenship* is a collaborative project initiated by the Politicized Practice/Anarchism/Theatre Activism Research Groups at Loughborough University. The project is supported by the Institute of Advanced Studies and Enterprise Projects Group.

**Re-imagine, participate, respond! Help us develop and share new, creative approaches to citizenship!**

# Exhibits and contributors

## ***Re-imagining Citizenship Activity Book/Re-imagining Citizenship Living Archive***

Media: Risograph printed books, activity station housing laptop with online access

The *Re-imagining Citizenship Activity Book* and the *Re-imagining Citizenship Living Archive* (online at [www.re-imagining.org](http://www.re-imagining.org)) will be launched at 4pm Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March in the Exhibition Space. The book includes 30 different activities and each one includes a set of instructions which invite readers to respond creatively (using text, video, images etc) and to upload their responses to us via the QR code in the book which links to the *Living Archive* website. This will provide an ongoing generative resource for future research, educational initiatives, local and community-based workshops and temporary online exhibitions.

The Activity Station which houses the *Re-imagining Citizenship Activity Books* and laptop (providing access to [www.re-imagining.org](http://www.re-imagining.org)) in the Exhibition Space has been designed and constructed by Chiara Dellerba/Johanna Hallsten/Zak Jones/Assunta Ruocco. The *Re-imagining Citizenship Activity Book* and the *Re-imagining Citizenship Living Archive*, along with a modified version of the Activity Station, will form an interactive exhibit at the European Cultural Centre at the Venice Biennale from 11 May to 24 November 2019. Various members of the Politicized Practice/Anarchism/Theatre Activism Research Groups will run workshops related to the Book and Archive project throughout the exhibition period.

## ***Nest***

Daniel Fountain

Media: Found and discarded objects: tattered curtains, ex-boyfriend's shirts, stained clothing, old bedsheets, plastic bags, waste threads

Whilst nests are sometimes constructed elaborately and in an aesthetically pleasing way, they are more importantly a space of function and comfort; to raise young, to court, to mate, to call home. The way in which such structures are constructed from 'nothingness' continues to inform recent research exploring the relationship into queer craft and 'worldmaking' practices. Given that queer citizens often feel cast aside or 'refused' in society, it felt fitting to construct my own nest using materials that have been discarded, tainted, unloved and marginalised. The aim here is to give agency to these shunned objects and to create a space for unwanted citizens to call home; please sit, contemplate, read, enjoy and revel in the salvage.

Daniel Fountain is an artist and lecturer currently exploring a practice-based PhD at Loughborough University which examines the intersection between queer identity and craft practices. Alongside many commissions and exhibitions he has also written numerous academic publications and journal articles for organisations such as ArtsProfessional and Engage. Further details and a portfolio of his work can be found at:

[www.danielfountain.com](http://www.danielfountain.com)

## ***Foreignhood: the state of being foreign, 2019-ongoing***

Johanna Hallsten/Mary Rose O'Neill

Media: Sound, 3.13mins

The recording draws on 32 voices from as many countries, many speaking in a language which is not their mother tongue - addresses the universality of the experience of otherness. The recognition affords the possibility of commonality and defuses fear and distrust.

## ***Foreignhood: the state of being foreign, 2019 - ongoing***

Johanna Hallsten/Mary Rose O'Neill

Media: 25mm badge, text and plinth (from 20 March)

Leading up to Brexit Day (29th of March), we ask people to celebrate their own national and racial identity and the racially diverse nature of contemporary British society by wearing a 'Foreign' badge. The wearing of an indicator of ones otherness makes reference to a time when this was a requirement and is a reminder of the risks of scapegoating groups and the ultimate cost of racism and racial hatred. One of the many consequences of Brexit has been that it has legitimised some forms of racism and given a voice to those who wish to devalue the contribution that foreigners have made to the United Kingdom. We hope that this project will be a small opportunity to celebrate all those who live and work here, who started out somewhere else, or whose parents made the United Kingdom their home. We would ask everyone regardless of national or racial identity to celebrate the contributions of foreigners by wearing a 'FOREIGN' badge.

Johanna Hällsten is a Swedish born artist now living in the UK. Working with text, sound and performance, Hällsten's work focuses on translation between different cultures, species, and forms, to address the interrelation between sounds and environments.

Mary Rose O'Neill is an Irish born artist who now lives between France and the U.K. O'Neill's work address issues related to narrative, memory, loss and failure. Working with text, images, and performance, the work is 'slight', leaving little physical presence and in many cases only exists in memory. The text based works are often incomplete encompassing loss and failure in both content and form.

## ***People make paydays possible***

Zak Jones

Media: Silk banner, 100cm x 140cm

For years I have been an activist on the streets. Seasons change, governments change, haircuts change and the price of beers change, yet vital policies for fair citizenship remain stagnant or are removed - social justice is so often in crisis. For me taking my banners on the street is a constant lifestyle activity, like going to the gym - only, by attending demos you still keep fit and at the same time hopefully effect social and political change, not just your waistline. I always have a favourite bit of the street, a corner, a bench or a particular tree - a spot to meet my regular

demo mates. This becomes my special demo place where I can relax for a while when tired, watching fellow citizens with their banners.

Zak Jones is a London-based writer/activist/artist working in various media, predominantly textiles. He was awarded his doctorate by Loughborough University in 2018.

### ***Citizen Media Reader***

Sophia Kier-Byfield/Tom Nys

Media: Printed texts, wall collage

*Citizen Media Reader* presents a random selection of recent articles concerning issues of citizenship in Europe. The term "citizenship" now arises constantly in the media, particularly in the recent years since the Brexit referendum and the phenomenon of ISIS, their fighters and their brides. Even since 9/11, sensibilities around citizenship have been changing, which is made obvious by diverse political shifts and subsequent legal amendments. What this selection makes clear is that the term is now used arbitrarily: citizenship has become something one can easily lose but struggle to gain. It is a simple, superficial label that can be attached to you or snatched away. Simultaneously, it is a stamp of approval, signifying good quality human beings. This is enhanced by a populist rhetoric about what constitutes the notion of *being one of us*. Citizenship, feeling that you belong to a place and have rights, is a far more complex issue than the discourse, and indeed the law, allows for.

Sophia Kier-Byfield is a PhD student at the Centre for Doctoral Training: Feminism, Sexual Politics and Visual Culture, based at Loughborough University. Her research focuses on feminist pedagogies for the humanities in contemporary higher education. She is an angry dual national of the UK and Denmark, two countries that regularly commit crimes against human and non-human rights and deny citizenship to those who need it most.

Tom Nys is a Belgian curator and arts writer who also worked in abortion care. Currently, he is pursuing a PhD at Loughborough University (UK) about contemporary visual arts that deal with abortion, and how such artworks and art projects can help to counter abortion stigma. Tom does not believe citizenship starts at conception.

### ***Should I Stay Or Should I Go? (SISOSIG)***

Ruth Kinna et al

Media: Laptops, printed forms for post-test reflection, corkboard

*Should I Stay Or Should I Go? (SISOSIG)* is an invitation to take the LIFE IN THE UK practice test (24 multiple choice questions). The real test is a requirement for citizenship and indefinite leave to remain applications. The practice gives you a flavour of the information non-citizens have to master to become UK citizens and our feedback form provides an opportunity to evaluate the exercise.

Ruth Kinna is a pragmatic utopian with ancestral links to Jewish, Russian, Scottish and London communities and anarchist socialist leanings.

## ***One Last Dance – An Chéad Damhsa***

Rita Marcalo/Instant Dissidence

Media: Film (to be screened continuously from 20 March)

This film documents a perambulating dance between Guildford (the location she lived in when she first arrived in the UK as an Erasmus student in 1994) and Cloughjordan (the rural Irish village that she has now moved to, following the Brexit vote) – Rita's final love letter to the UK. Rita will do a talk and performance in the gallery 12.30 Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Rita Marcalo is a Portuguese choreographer, Artistic Director of Instant Dissidence. Between September and October 2018 she undertook *One Last Dance – An Chéad Damhsa*: a two-month perambulating dance between Guildford (the location she lived in when she first arrived in the UK as an Erasmus student in 1994) and Cloughjordan (the rural Irish village that she is moving to post-Brexit). Instant Dissidence ([www.instantdissidence.org](http://www.instantdissidence.org)) is Rita's way of bringing different artists together, in different combinations, to realise different ideas. It is a socially-engaged practice where the company foregrounds the role that dance/choreography can play as a social engine: we are 'artivists' who believe in the power of connecting art and social consciousness.

## ***Our Nation's Future: Loughborough Youth Creative Visions***

Marco Antonsich, Leila Wilmers, Panagiota Sotiropoulou, Cuomu Zhaxi and Sophie Hyde, Loughborough University Nationalism Network

Media: Loop of stills, photographs of artworks

The slideshow presents a selection of artworks created by young people in Loughborough to express their visions of the future of Britain after Brexit. The artworks were compiled and displayed at a public exhibition and debate held in November 2017 by Loughborough University Nationalism Network in collaboration with Charnwood Arts and Frenzy Youth Theatre as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences 2017. A discussion on the themes emerging from the artworks can be found in: Antonsich, M., Sotiropoulou, P., Wilmers, L., Zhaxi, C., Hyde, S. (2019), "'Our Nation's Future": Youth visions of a post-Brexit Britain' in *Youth and the Politics of the Present: Coping with Complexity and Ambivalence*, eds: Enzo Colombo and Paola Rebughini, Routledge

The Loughborough University Nationalism Network aims to map the multifarious ways through which nations are made present rhetorically, practically, materially, and artistically in our societies. Rather than being by-passed by transnational, cosmopolitan or new urban forms of living, the national dimension continues to coexist with these registers, constantly adjusting itself to changing social, political and economic circumstances. LUNN activities revolve around a monthly seminar series, occasional workshops and conferences, teaching activities and ad hoc editorial projects.

For more information or if you want to get involved in the project, check out [www.re-imagining.org](http://www.re-imagining.org) or

email Gill Whiteley at [G.Whiteley@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:G.Whiteley@lboro.ac.uk)