

Augustas Serapinas

*Physical Culture*

06.06 – 06.09.26

*Physical Culture* is the first institutional solo exhibition in England by Lithuanian artist Augustas Serapinas (b. 1990, Vilnius). The first iteration of *Physical Culture* was created in 2012 while Serapinas was a third-year student at the Vilnius Academy of Arts' Sculpture Department, where art education follows a classical methodology emphasising the importance of traditional techniques and mastery of life drawing, painting and sculptural practices.

Revisiting the art school's archives, Serapinas has reconstructed copies of his own student work, including portraits of his classmates, an earthworm, and an alien, as well as plaster models once used for drawing classes, and replicas of well-known sculptures, such as Michelangelo's *David* (16<sup>th</sup> century) and *Apollo Belvedere* (2<sup>nd</sup> century), long considered exemplars of classical antiquity. Fixed to metal exercise machines typically found in gyms, the work looks at crossovers between the repetitive and diligent skills required to create classical forms in Western art history, and the discipline required to sculpt the body in

the gym. In this vein, the work draws attention to the dominance of able-bodied white male canonical figures in fine art education and the structured beauty standards still prevalent today.

A running track connects the gym installation across Galleries 2 and 3, punctuated by newly created hurdles incorporating casts of the *Waverley Heads*. These sculptural busts were made of figures chosen as pillars of Western art history, including Raphael, Benvenuto Cellini, and William Hogarth, to decorate the exterior of the *Waverley Building* - purpose-built to house Nottingham

School of Art in 1865. The casts – developed in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University (NTU) Archive and NTU casting specialists – map Nottingham's own art education histories as embedded in the school's architectural frontage, bringing questions about the canon of Western art history, the function of institutions, and collective cultural memory into focus within a local site.

The exhibition will be regularly activated by a variety of performative and participatory mixed ability workout sessions, organised with Nottingham based personal trainers and community groups, as well as student-led

life drawing classes organised  
with NTU BA Fine Art students.

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This exhibition was made possible thanks to the generous support of The Augustas Serapinas Exhibition Circle: Ilma Nausedaite, Lithuanian Council for Culture, Lithuanian Culture Institute, APALAZZOGALLERY and Emalin, London.

The Nottingham Contemporary Commissioning Circle: Nissreen Darawish, Gabriela Galcerán, Il Posto, Rafik&Najoua, Hamza Serafi and Mercedes Vilardel.

Waverley Heads casting by Dr. Richard Arm and Andreea Pîslaru.

Waverley Heads loan courtesy of Nottingham Trent University Art Collection.

We would like to extend our deepest thanks to Tom Godfrey, NTU The Square Gallery, Jayni Patel, Rita Parmar, Dr. Paul Jones, Dr. Emily Strange, students and staff at Nottingham Trent University, Marta Marsicka, July Styles, Jason Redwood, Dominik Ozga, and Sarogini Reddiar. And finally, a very special thanks to the entire team at Nottingham Contemporary.

Exhibition graphics by Waste Studio.

Nottingham Contemporary is a registered charity and dependent on the generosity of our visitors, partners and supporters.

If you would like to use any alternative forms of interpretation, we have a range of accessible versions on our Access Wall beside Reception or alongside the wall text in the exhibition.

Environmental: Nottingham Contemporary is committed to advancing sustainability within the organisation and aims to explore and embed sustainable

working practices and habits within our workplace and across the sector. This includes standardising environmental considerations at all stages of decision making.

Where possible other materials have been borrowed, re-used or re-purposed. Our exhibitions are always built and installed by local fine art technicians. The exhibition graphics have been produced and installed by local suppliers Hayman Creative. Since spring 2026 we have switched our wall texts from cut vinyl to Xanitaprint, a recyclable material. Our exhibition notes are printed on FSC Mix paper (Forest Stewardship Council<sup>®</sup>)

certified products manufactured with a variety of sources including FSC-certified virgin fibre, controlled wood and/or recycled materials).

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## RELATED EVENTS

### WALKTHROUGHS

Wed 17 Jun, 12pm

Welcome Walkthrough

Explore the exhibition with

Sarogini Reddiar and our team

followed by a creative workshop  
in Studio 1.

**Wed 8 Jul, 1pm**

**Curators' Walkthrough**

Join Nottingham Contemporary's  
curators for a tour of our  
summer exhibitions.

**Wed 22 Jul, 1pm**

**BSL Exhibition Tour**

With Jason Redwood, BSL tour  
guide for the Turner  
Contemporary & British Museum,  
BSL teacher & presenter.

**Wed 29 Jul, 1pm**

with Marta Marsicka, curator,  
researcher, and art historian.

**Wed 2 Sep, 1pm**

With July Styles, trauma informed coach.

## INSTALLATION ACTIVATIONS

Watch local exercise groups activate the gym installation alongside life drawing classes run by The Square Gallery. Sign up to join a free life drawing class by visiting our website.

**Fri 5 Jun, 6.30pm**

With The Square Gallery and July Styles

**Sat 18 Jul, 12pm**

With The Square Gallery and Dominik Ozga

**Sat 15 Aug, 12pm**

With The Square Gallery and  
Dominik Ozga

Guided 1:1 Work Out Sessions  
organised by July Styles

Sign up to join a free public  
work out session by visiting our  
website.

Wed 24 Jun, 12 Aug & 19 Aug,  
12pm

12.30 Talks

12.30pm every Tue, Thu, Sat &  
Sun, starting Tue 16 Jun

Join one of our friendly Gallery  
Assistants for a short  
exploration of one of our  
current exhibitions. For more  
details visit our website.

For more information about the exhibition, related events and learning programmes, visit [nottinghamcontemporary.org](http://nottinghamcontemporary.org) or scan here:



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The exhibition is curated by  
Katie Simpson and Klara  
Szafrńska

Exhibition build lead: David  
Thomas

Exhibition build and installation:  
Helen Bartholomew, Jon  
Chambers, Craig David Parr,

Billy Hughes, Jack Narewski,  
Emily Stollery, and Hannah  
Templeman

Condition Checking: Lachlan Hui,  
Jenna Jones, Lara Mattinson,  
Millie Quick and Simon Withers

Development: Emma Graves and  
Antonia Seroff

Marketing: Catherine Masters  
and Holly Nowak

Learning programme: Sandra  
Austerfield, Amelia Daiz, Chan  
Hyacinth Fagan, Pasha Kincaid,  
Susannah Lambert, Milee Lee,  
Holly Nowak, Ursula Rae, Peter  
Rumney, Rachel Scanlon, Amanda  
Spruyt, Andrew Martyn Sugars,

Holly Tea, Charlotte Tupper and  
Sian Watson Taylor

Exhibition Invigilators: Winter  
Beaumont, Tom Chamberlain,  
Nadim Chaudry, Lynn  
Chippendale, Olwen Davies,  
Quinn Greytryx, Lachlan Hui,  
Jenna Jones, Milee Lee, Karen  
Lunt, Holly Matthews, Lara  
Mattinson, Craig David Parr,  
Millie Quick, Nikki Stevenson,  
Olu Taiwo and Simon Withers

Visitor Experience: Emma  
Beischer, Paul Buddle, Nadim  
Chaudry, Olwen Davies, Craig  
David Parr, Sam Harrison, Jenna  
Jones, Lucy Martin, Holly  
Matthews and Jordan Sterry

People and Culture: Lauren Riley

Finance and Operations: Andy  
Batson, Jon Chambers, Mandy  
Newbold and David Thomas