



Exploring Creative Ambitions

A Loudspeaker project
Winter/Spring 2021

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“I enjoyed the exhibitions of Grace Jones and Jimmy Robert. They made me realise that art can be very versatile and it does not only consist of painting and drawing.

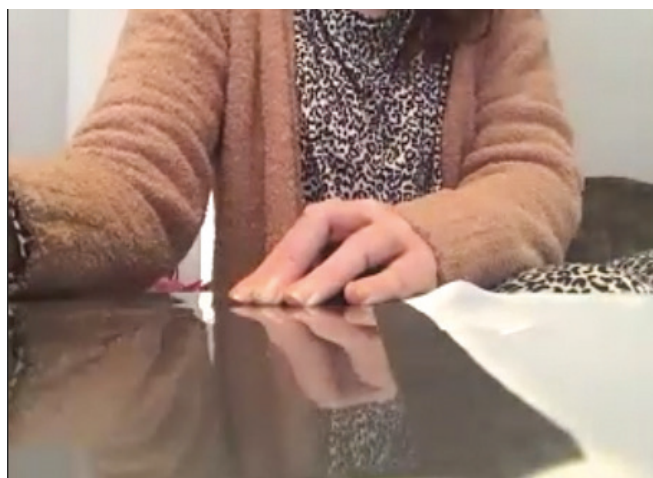
Art can mean different things to different people and it’s enjoyable to listen to what people think about certain art.”

The Loudspeaker programme is delivered by Nottingham Contemporary as part of the Opportunity and Change project, which is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund.

The programme is offered in 10 week projects of which there have been 12 so far.

Women are offered a supportive, caring environment to help see things differently, feel positive about the future and move away from challenging circumstances.

Loudspeaker sessions are an opportunity to take a break, build confidence, become inspired, and meet new people.



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This book presents the outcomes of creative explorations made by a group of eight women from the East Midlands in Winter and Spring 2021.

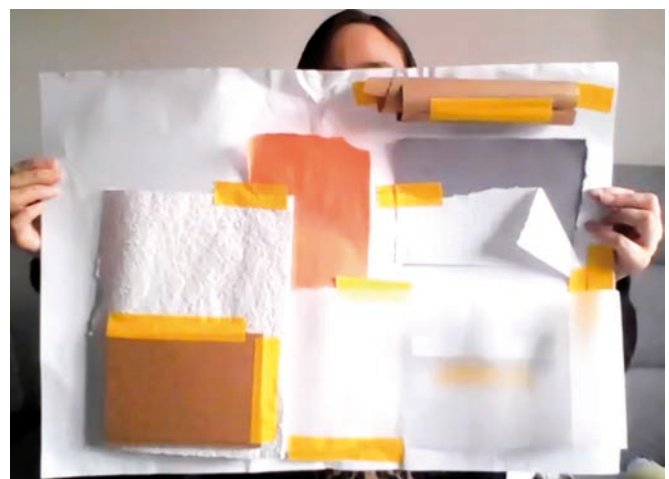
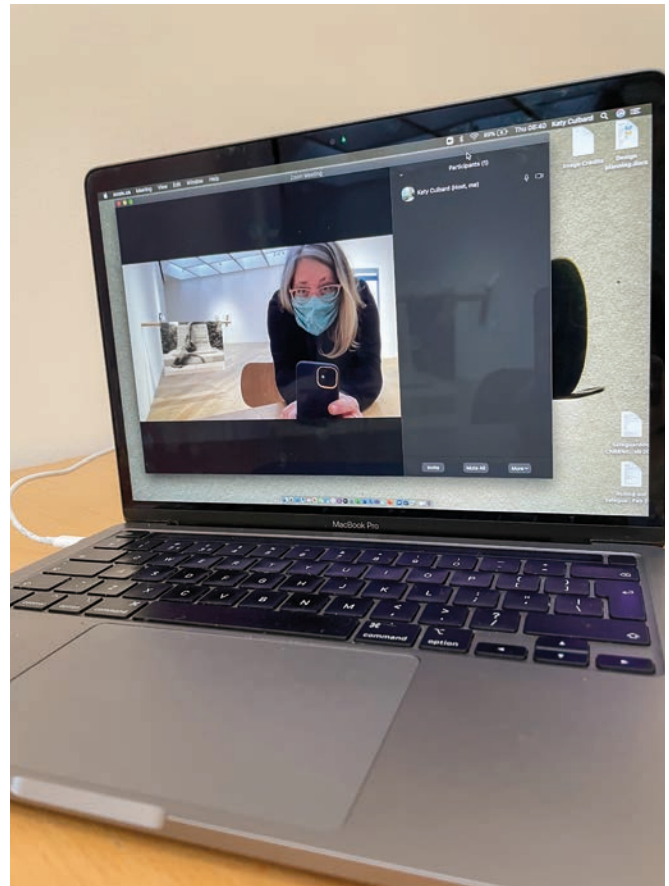
Due to COVID-19, this Loudspeaker project was unable to take place at Nottingham Contemporary. All sessions took place though video meetings.

The women experienced the exhibitions **Jimmy Robert: Akimbo** and **Grace Before Jones** through Virtual Reality and video links. Together they discussed their responses and experimented with a range of art materials and methods to make their own interpretations.

Materials were sent out by post for the women to get creative with. They took photos of their work and shared them through a messaging app.

The women also received a weekly activity to do between sessions.

Through taking part, the women have discussed ideas about art, feminism, race and identity.





Shape, Texture, Layers

We visited the gallery through Virtual Reality and looked at 'Untitled (wall)' by Jimmy Robert, made in 2015.

It was interesting how the artist had made the collage artwork 3D by using hanging scrolls of paper.

We constructed our own pieces from different shapes, colours and textures of paper, thinking about their placement. It was good to think about the different textures and materials, and how to get the piece to look 3D.



Untitled (Wall), 2015 by Jimmy Robert.
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Leighton Gallery, Berlin

“[I will take away...] how a simple piece of paper can open people’s minds to what they can do and make with it.”



Constructing an Image

We looked at a photo of Grace Jones, that had been doctored into an extreme pose by Jean-Paul Goude.

With the observation that this was a Black woman making her mark which was difficult at the time, her masculine side really comes out – there's more to her than meets the eye. She has her own style which is very unique, and she seems like she has had a lot going on in her personal life.

It was interesting to piece together the parts of photos of Laura-Jade and put them together in different ways, and to use the paint pens to exaggerate certain parts.

“I felt empowered by Grace’s confidence and androgyny. Something I will take away is that you should be comfortable and confident in your own skin”



GRACE REVISED AND UPDATED.
PHOTO, 1978
Jean-Paul Goude



GRACE REVISED AND UPDATED.
PAINTED PHOTO, 1978
Jean-Paul Goude



GRACE REVISED AND UPDATED.
PAINTED PHOTO, 1978
Jean-Paul Goude



21st Century Monuments?

Together we looked at Jimmy Robert's work 'Untitled (Ompdrailles)' from 2013, where he was photographed becoming part of a public monument in Brussels.

We thought about how public monuments have taken on new significance since the Black Lives Matter protests, discussed what they may represent today to different people and considered their relevance in today's society.

We each had an image of a different local public monument, including Queen Victoria, Robert Peel, Bonny Prince Charlie and William Booth. We created 3D cardboard cut-outs of the monuments and made changes using acrylic paint pens so that they became more relevant to the 21st Century.

All of us had a very different thought processes and responses, and the debate was more complex than we first thought. This led us to consider alternatives to monuments for public spaces.



Untitled (Ompdrailles), 2013
Jimmy Robert.
Courtesy of FRAC Grand Large, Dunkerque



“When it came to looking at Jimmy Robert’s art, I like the variety of art that he did and the person he is, and understanding the struggle that he has gone through, and how he has represented this in his art.

As well as changing the perspective of how people would interpret his art, Robert helps them consider the way people should think about difference in society and being more accepting”.



Black and White

This work was inspired by photographs of Grace Jones by Robert Mapplethorpe, where her body has been painted by artist Keith Haring.

It was challenging because we were making an accessory to be worn, using black and white card, and tape.

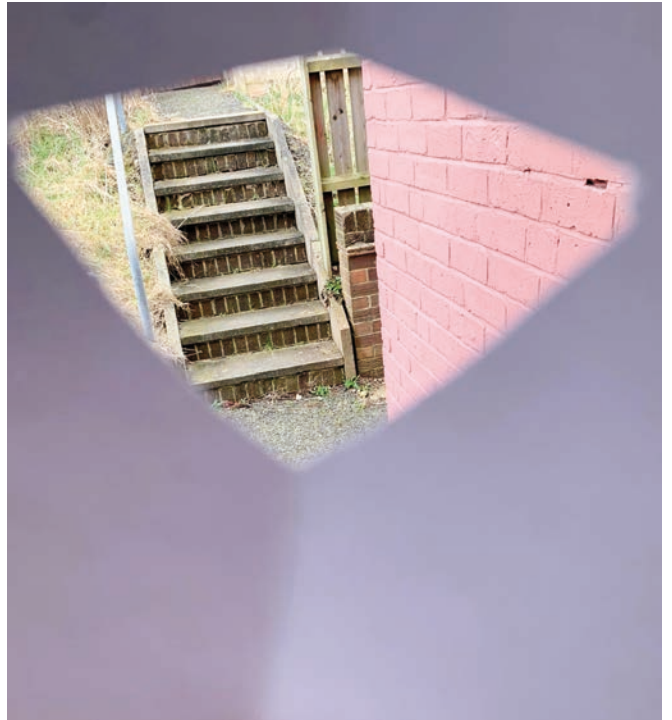
We enjoyed working with just black and white; something we wouldn't normally work with.



Grace Jones, 1984 by Robert Mapplethorpe.
Copyright Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation,
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“Grace Jones is an icon for being different and accepting yourself for who you are and showing that proudly, no matter how much others will judge.

She has strength that I really appreciate and should present in myself. I enjoyed taking part in the artworks inspired by her.”



People in Space

We watched 'Paramètres', a video by Jimmy Robert.

Jimmy fits his face into cut-out spaces of architects' plans of buildings, showing how he fits in society as a Black, gay man.

We used our phones to take photos of places around our homes which are not well-designed for our lives.

By using shapes cut in card as view-finders to frame our images, the camera captured different focusses.



Paramètres, 2012
Jimmy Robert.
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Leighton Gallery, Berlin

"It has been an eye-opener for me... it's a new experience as it makes me realise I am not the only one to experience things, and learning about other people's experience and life has a major positive impact in my life."



Fashion Collage

We looked at two artworks by Derrick Adams – paintings and collages on paper that include clothing patterns, fabric and metal zippers.

Afterwards, we made abstract collages using different types of materials – zips, fabric, ribbon, papers, emphasising the shapes, textures and colours.

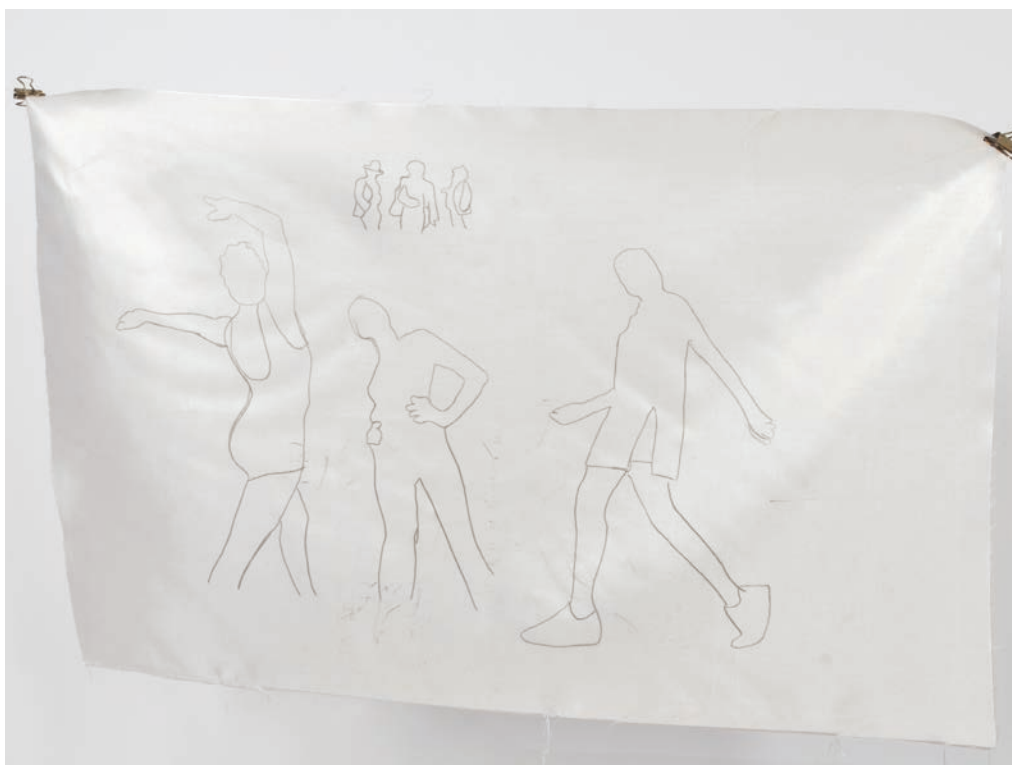


Dress Rehearsal 4, 2018 by Derrick Adams.
Courtesy Gallerie Anne de Villepoix



“It was really a fun to create abstract art, making different choices and seeing everybody’s perspective of using the same materials in different ways.

I learnt to make different choices to create something new.”



Visible Invisible

We looked at 'Silk' by Jimmy Robert, which are simple line drawings of people on fabric.

The process of making our pieces, where we traced images onto acetate and then transferred them onto silk using carbon paper was very enjoyable.

We chose carefully which details to draw and which to leave out.



When we used to be at school, we always used to do art on paper, so we never experienced other materials and stuff, but I did enjoy the silk - drawing on silk - it's different and I think that's what I like about it, that it's different.



Jimmy Robert Silk, 2015, detail.
Photography: Sam Kirby.



Captured Moments

We looked at various artworks – a chandelier, a coat on the back of chair, and some behind the scenes footage of Grace Jones getting ready for a show or photoshoot. We discussed our thoughts on each piece and what we thought it represented.

Then we photographed something at home that showed we've been there without being in the picture ourselves.

Next we arranged and photographed a set-up of certain objects, controlling what we wanted to portray in the photo in order to tell a story.



Untitled Chair, 2015 by Nicole Wermers.
Private collection, London



“I used to think that art is something that you just draw, but it’s actually about objects and items as well which have their own story to tell, and I like the fact that everybody has a different view about a chair and coat – what story it has”

Thank you

The Participants

Bethany
Charlene
Genevieve
Maria
Patricia
Sharon
Shazia
Sidra
Stephanie
Zamira

The Loudspeaker team

Associate Artist Gillian Brent
Programme Manager Katy Culbard
Support Worker Veronica O’Callaghan
Marketing Manager and ‘model’
Laura-Jade Vaughan



“...both artists’ exhibitions have made me think a little deeper on matters of race and equality.”

“It has increased my confidence and has given me the space to be myself again. It has helped me control my anxiety and to begin to see a way forward and I have always felt safe and heard.

Receiving the parcel each week reminded me to keep moving forward. This project was a lot of fun.”

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