

Lucy Orta *Procession Banners*

Ikon off-site at Medicine Bakery & Gallery
23 October 2018 – 20 January 2019



PROCESSIONS (2018). Photograph courtesy Michelle Marshall.

Ikon presents *Procession Banners* by British artist Lucy Orta, a selection of banners made by female residents of HMP Downview. These works are displayed for the first time at Medicine Bakery and Gallery – formerly the gallery of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists - where it provides a unique context for the city's engagement with the history of suffrage.

Early this year Lucy Orta began collaborating with HMP Downview residents as part of the *Making for Change* programme, established by London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London. Commissioned by Historic England as part of the

HerStories campaign, the group designed 30 banners to mark 100 years since British women won the vote.

In 2016, many residents were transferred to HMP Downview after the closure of HMP Holloway, then the largest all-women prison in Europe, and the notorious site where over 1,000 suffragettes had been imprisoned during their struggle for the vote. Through workshops Orta collected testimonies about what it means to be a woman today, the power of the vote and our shared future. Seven banners were carried by student volunteers from London College of Fashion as part of *PROCESSIONS*, the mass participation artwork produced by Artichoke and commissioned by 14-18 NOW, which took place in London, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast on Sunday 10 June 2018.

The weekly meetings in the Making for Change fashion manufacturing unit at HMP Downview brought together women from all ages, backgrounds, races and cultures. Sharing craft techniques provided a common creative environment, a neutral safe space, to reflect on what it means to be a woman today and our shared future. The banners reflect the power of a collective women's voice. Lucy Orta

During November 2018, Orta is the final artist-in-residence for Ikon's 2018 *Looping the Loop* programme, a three year project (2017-19) taking place on board *Slow Boat*, a converted narrowboat, and community spaces in Birmingham's Ladywood district. During her residency, Orta and MotherShip Projects join together with local communities to create a processional banner based on personal experiences. On Saturday 17 November, 10am-12.30pm, to mark the centenary of women's suffrage, Lucy Orta, MotherShip and students from Birmingham City University lead a procession through the streets of Birmingham headed by the finished banner.

Medicine Bakery and Gallery, 69 New Street, Birmingham B2 4DU. Open Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-5pm, free entry. Please note Medicine Bakery is only accessible via a steep staircase.

Associated Events

Exhibition opening

Lucy Orta, *Procession Banners*

Tuesday 23 October, 6-8pm – FREE

Medicine Bakery and Gallery

Join us to celebrate the opening night for Lucy Orta's new exhibition.

Pressing On

Saturday 17 November, 10am–12.30pm – FREE

Booking essential, meet at Ikon Gallery

To mark the centenary of women's suffrage, join a procession led by Lucy Orta, MotherShip and students from Birmingham City University, headed by a banner made by groups of women, representing their journey and experiences. The procession starts with a tour of Polly Apfelbaum's exhibition at Ikon, moves to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery for an introduction to *Women Power Protest*, an Arts Council Collection National Partners exhibition, and ends with a visit to Lucy Orta's *Procession Banners* at Medicine Bakery and Gallery. Followed by tea, cake and conversation. Please note Medicine is only accessible via a steep staircase.

For more information, high-res images and to request interviews please contact Emily Luxford on 0121 248 0708 or email e.luxford@ikon-gallery.org

Social Media Handles:

Instagram, Twitter and Facebook: @ikongallery #IkonGallery @medicinebrum

Links: ikon-gallery.org medicinebakery.co.uk

Note to Editors:

1. Exhibition opening: Tuesday 23 October, 6-8pm. Medicine Bakery and Gallery, 69 New Street, Birmingham B2 4DU.
2. Ikon is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art venue situated in central Birmingham. Established in 1964 by a group of artists, Ikon is an educational charity and works to encourage public engagement with contemporary art through exhibiting new work in a context of debate and participation. The gallery programme features artists from around the world and a variety of media, including sound, film, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and installation. Ikon's off-site programme develops dynamic relationships between art, artists and audiences outside the gallery. Projects vary enormously in scale, duration and location, challenging expectations of where art can be seen and by whom. Education is at the heart of Ikon's activities, stimulating public interest in and understanding of contemporary visual art. Through a variety of talks, tours, workshops and seminars, Ikon's Learning Team aims to build dynamic relationships with audiences, enabling visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on contemporary art. www.ikon-gallery.org
3. Ikon is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am - 5pm. Admission is free. Ikon Gallery is supported using public funding from Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council. For the latest news and events follow @ikongallery on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).
4. Medicine was born out of a discovery of abandoned space, of new possibilities and an inquisitive quality for creating something vital and diverse. An artisan bakery and kitchen, café and gallery, which is rooted in its heritage in both Birmingham and Wolverhampton, Medicine represents a new format of social space. It finds its niche through a carefully curated menu of ethical products, whilst offering a daily fix of cultural inspiration in an environment which promotes a debate about art and culture.

5. Previous Ikon exhibition at Medicine Bakery and Gallery: *Young Birmingham Artists: Ikon artists from the 1960s* (11 July – 19 August 2018) - an exhibition of work by the artists who founded Ikon in 1964.
6. *Looping the Loop* (2017–2019) takes place on-board *Slow Boat* and in community spaces across Birmingham's Ladywood district and is supported by Arts Council Strategic Touring, Michael Marsh Charitable Trust, W.A. Cadbury Trust, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Canal & River Trust and Grantham Yorke Trust.

A converted narrow boat, *Slow Boat* is a unique floating space for local communities and artists to make and experience art in a stimulating and creative environment. *Slow Boat* is curated by Ikon's Learning Team with members of Ikon Youth Programme (IYP).

7. *Making for Change* is a fashion training and manufacturing unit within HMP Downview women's prison. Established by the Ministry of Justice and LCF in 2014, the project aims to increase well-being and reduce reoffending rates amongst participants by equipping them with professional skills and qualifications within a supportive environment.
8. *PROCESSIONS* was a UK-wide, mass participation artwork that took place in the summer of 2018 to mark the centenary of the Representation of the People Act, which gave the first UK women the right to vote. Women and girls were invited to mark this historic moment by becoming part of a living portrait of women in the 21st century. On Sunday 10th June, tens of thousands of women streamed through the streets of Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and London, wearing scarves of green, white and violet. As part of the project, one hundred women artists were commissioned to work with organisations and communities across the UK to make centenary banners. *PROCESSIONS* was produced by arts charity Artichoke and commissioned by 14-18 NOW, the UK's arts programme for the First World War centenary.
9. Each of the residents from HMP Downview who participated in *PROCESSIONS* 2018, were awarded a Gold Koestler Award for their contribution to the project. [Koestler Awards](#) is an annual arts prize for offenders, secure patients and detainees from across the UK.

Image reproduction terms and conditions:

- Credit information must accompany each photo that you publish: credits are as per their file titles with the credit 'Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, ikon-gallery.org'
- No cropping or text overlay of any kind is permitted without permission
- Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, you will have the non-exclusive license to use each Photo for one-time print and online editorial purposes only
- Except as expressly permitted by this Agreement, you may not copy, reproduce, market, sell, distribute, publish, display, perform, modify, create derivative works of, download, or transmit, in any form or by any means, electronic, optical, mechanical or otherwise, any Photos. This restriction includes the distribution, marketing and selling of unauthorised "hard copies" of Photos and the distribution, marketing and selling of Photos through any electronic medium or any electronic storage device.
- You may store Photos electronically until such time as the Photo is used in your publication. You are not allowed to enter Photos into a database or hold them longer than you need to for publication.



PROCESSIONS (2018). Photograph courtesy Lance Tabraham.



PROCESSIONS (2018). Photograph courtesy Michelle Marshall.

IKON

Ikon Gallery
1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / www.ikon-gallery.org
Open Tuesday-Sunday & Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-5pm / free entry
Registered charity no. 528892



PROCESSIONS (2018). Photograph courtesy Michelle Marshall.



PROCESSIONS (2018). Photograph courtesy Lance Tabraham.

IKON

Ikon Gallery
1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / www.ikon-gallery.org
Open Tuesday-Sunday & Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-5pm / free entry
Registered charity no. 528892



PROCESSIONS rehearsal at HMP Downview. Photograph courtesy Lance Tabraham.



PROCESSIONS rehearsal at HMP Downview. Photograph courtesy Lance Tabraham.