



MFA student Celia Burbush, MFA co-Programme Leader Gavin Butt and Deputy Head of Arts, Steve Gilroy, are pictured outside the new look Gallery North.

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## Gallery refurbishment marked by exhibition launch

A contemporary art gallery at the heart of Northumbria University's City Campus has been relaunched following refurbishment with a brand new exhibition.

Gallery North, part of [The University Gallery](#), is central to the thriving arts teaching, practice and research community at Northumbria, and now has a fresh new look. New signage, lighting and flooring has been installed at the

gallery which presents exhibitions of both home-grown talent and international artists.

Deputy Head of [Arts at Northumbria University](#), Associate Professor [Steve Gilroy](#), said the refurbishment offered an opportunity to relaunch the venue as a public space which engages with communities well beyond the University campus at Northumbria.

“The whole Arts department is committed to further strengthening our relationships with external organisations and Gallery North presents an opportunity to bring to life the work we do with our external cultural and industry partners, through pop-up exhibitions and events,” he explained. “We’re developing a diverse programme of exhibitions and events which we hope can be a beacon of arts and culture found in the heart of Northumbria’s City Campus.”

The investment in Gallery North follows the news that the University’s research power continues to grow with results from the Research Excellence Framework (REF2021) showing Northumbria University with the [biggest rise in research power ranking of any UK university](#). Its research power ranking rose to 23<sup>rd</sup>, having previously risen to 50<sup>th</sup> in 2014 from 80<sup>th</sup> in 2008, making Northumbria the sector’s largest riser in research power ranking for the second time.

Dr Solomon Lennox, Head of the Department of Arts at Northumbria University, explained, “The relaunch of Gallery North provides a timely opportunity to demonstrate the absolute best of our research-enriched teaching and to highlight the quality of our practice-research. The power of our research was recognised in the recent Research Excellence Framework (RF 2021), where work submitted by the Department of Arts and School of Design was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> for research power in the UK. We are very excited to share the work of our staff and students with external audiences.”

The gallery reopened on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May with the BALTIC x Northumbria University Master of Fine Art Graduate Exhibition, staged by students on the Master of Fine Art (MFA) degree programme, run in partnership with the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art.

BALTIC is a [key cultural partner](#) of Northumbria University and the two organisations have worked together closely for more than a decade to

develop new artistic and research opportunities, in the North East and beyond.

Held as a model of best practice across the higher education and cultural sectors, the partnership co-delivers teaching and learning, research and impact activities to further understanding of contemporary fine art practice and to engage students and the public in key debates in the discipline today.

At the core of the dynamic partnership is the BALTIC x Northumbria University Institute, a base for world-class teaching and mentorship in contemporary art practice and research. The Institute fosters research and experimentation in curatorial and art practice through its lively programme of public events and discussions.

[My own little world, I made it for you](#) is an exhibition of work from eight artists, which has been staged at Gallery North, as well as in studio spaces in three other buildings at City Campus, where students have made use of cinema, TV and dance spaces in order to create immersive experiences for visitors.

Celia Burbush, one of the MFA students exhibiting their work, said: “I am inspired by a mixture of things, the history of community art, and collaborative ways of working. I enjoy exploring subterranean worlds, such as old mines, and sites that evoke the journey to the underworld. The artwork I am presenting, which will be situated in a dark labyrinthine basement, is an immersive experience, with paintings, mixed media and audio that relate to each other across space.

“Gallery North provides a visible hub for exhibition visitors, from which they can explore a mini festival of artworks. This makes it an exciting campus to curate an exhibition across. The technical facilities and tuition on the MFA course, along with research trips across the country with tutors, give a very practical and applied knowledge to compliment the academic discussion.”

The exhibition, beginning at Gallery North, Sandyford Building, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QE, will be available to view on Thursdays (12-4pm), Fridays (12-4pm) and Saturdays (10am-2pm) until 28<sup>th</sup> May.

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