



Ikon Gallery

1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham B1 2HS

0121 248 0708 / www.ikon-gallery.org

Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon, registered charity no. 528892

16 June 2014

Black Country Voyages

- ◇ Converted narrow boat will tour the Black Country canals
- ◇ Birmingham-based Juneau Projects to be lead artists
- ◇ Project to link young people with Black Country arts, heritage and cultural organisations

The Aaron Manby - a converted narrow boat measuring 72 feet in length - will navigate the Black Country's industrial canal routes visiting Cradley Heath, Tipton, Brownhills, Smethwick, Oldbury, Langley Green, Netherton, Brierley Hill and Stourbridge this summer, as part of **Ikon's** *Black Country Voyages* (2014-17).

Black Country Voyages is an art project for local young people, aged 15-19 years old, involving members of the Ikon Youth Programme (IYP). The project takes place on board a canal boat generously leased from Sandwell Council.

Midlands artists Juneau Projects are leading *Black Country Voyages* in 2014, and will curate a programme of events, performances and exhibitions, related to and inspired by the heritage of the Black Country, and nature's interaction with society. This interactive project will see Juneau Projects travel along local canals with the IYP, engaging local audiences through workshops, live performances and exhibitions. Throughout the journey they will transform the interior and exterior of the boat into a hand-painted archive of people's ideas of the natural world.

Black Country Voyages is in partnership with many local arts, heritage and educational organisations including the Cradley Heath Collective, RSA Academy Tipton, Birmingham Canal Navigations Society, Smethwick Galton Valley Centre, Smethwick Heritage Centre, The Red House Glass Cone and Glass House College in Stourbridge and Sandwell Community Libraries. *Black Country Voyages* is organised in collaboration with the Canal & River Trust.

Ikon was awarded funding by Arts Council England to bring *Black Country Voyages* to fruition as part of Arts Council England's Strategic Touring Programme, which supports arts venues to tour their work for the enjoyment of many more people.

To celebrate Black Country Day on 14 July, **Ikon** launches www.blackcountryvoyages.org by Birmingham designers Substrakt. Visit the site to track the boat's journey and find out about events.
Facebook: [blackcountryvoyages](https://www.facebook.com/blackcountryvoyages)
Twitter: @bcvoyages #blackcountryvoyages

Associated Events

Black Country Voyages at Saltwells Nature Reserve

Doulton Clay Pits Open Day

Saturday 26 July, 12-4pm - FREE

Saltwells Nature Reserve, off Coppice Road, Quarry Bank, Dudley, West Midlands, DY5 1TF

Artists Clayground Collective host an informal event inspired by Doulton's clay pits. The activities include walks and creative workshops for looking and making. During the event clay samples will be excavated and transported on-board **Ikon's** canal boat to Birmingham for an event later this year. This event is a part of Clayground's *Clay Cargo 2013-2015* renewing historic links between ceramics and the canal system in London, Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent.

www.claygroundcollective.org

www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/environment/countryside/nature-reserves/saltwells-local-nature-reserve

Black Country Voyages in Tipton

Tuesday 29 July & Friday 1 August, 1-4pm – FREE

Birmingham Canal, Owen Street, Tipton

Black Country Voyages tours to Tipton and moors in Jubilee Park. Members of IYP lead practical workshops including painting, badge-making, zine-making and hosting public talks.

www.blackcountryvoyages.org

Painting Workshop with Juneau Projects

Thursday 7 August, 2-4.30pm - £4 per person*

Meet at **Ikon Gallery**, Brindleyplace

A practical painting session led by Midlands artists Juneau Projects, inspired by **Ikon's** *Black Country Voyages* project 2014. This hands-on workshop, devised especially for adults, takes place on board **Ikon's** canal boat, with limited spaces and access. Booking essential, visit www.ikon-gallery.org to book online or call **Ikon** Shop on 0121 248 0711. *Cost includes refreshments and materials.

Black Country Voyages in Netherton

Wednesday 13 August, 10–2pm – FREE

Canalside, Bumblehole Conservation Group Visitor Centre, Windmill End, Netherton, Dudley, DY2 9HU

Black Country Voyages tours to Netherton and moors at the Windmill End Junction.

Join us for an informal afternoon of workshops including painting, drawing and walks, all taking place around the visitor centre and nature reserve.

www.blackcountryvoyages.org

Black Country Voyages Stourbridge

Friday 22 August, 12.30 – 1.30pm, 1.30 – 2.30pm, 2.30 – 3.30pm

£2.25 per person payable on the day

The Red House Glass Cone, High St, Stourbridge DY8 4AZ



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Black Country Voyages tours to Stourbridge, and hosts a week-long summer school for local young people. Join us and celebrate the summer exhibition, *Nature*, (9 August – 13 September) with an afternoon of family-friendly. Make your own fused glass trinkets, work with artists Juneau Projects and visit our canal boat.

www.dudley.gov.uk/see-and-do/museums

Events for young people

Known as IYP, the Ikon Youth Programme is a group of young people, aged 15-19 years old, who share an interest in visual art. Meeting regularly at **Ikon Gallery** since 2009, participants are encouraged to devise creative projects, establish links with other youth groups and share their opinions about a range of topics.

www.ikon-gallery.org/iyp

Open Social

Friday 8 August, 6.30-8pm - FREE

A chance for young people to visit the current exhibitions and enjoy live performances. Booking is essential. Please email Kate Self at k.self@ikon-gallery.org or call 0121 248 0708.

IYP Presents

Saturday 16 August, 1-4pm – FREE

A regular workshop ideal for young people. Visit Ikon's current exhibition and take part in a practical activity. No need to book, just drop in.

Notes for Editors:

- Ikon is an internationally acclaimed art museum situated in central Birmingham. Housed in a magnificent neo-gothic school building, it 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. A variety of media is represented, 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. Ikon is open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am - 6pm. Admission is free. www.ikon-gallery.org
- Juneau Projects was formed in 2001 by Philip Duckworth and Ben Sadler. The majority of their work includes participatory elements and involves projection, sound, music, animation and installation. They are particularly interested in the rapidly increasing speed of technological development, and its associated obsolescence. Recent work has examined the overlap between performance as musicians, sculpture and installation, an example of which

are a series of homemade devices which attempt to function as both sculpture and playable musical instrument. Their new wall-based works examine equipment-fetishism and the DIY processes which facilitate their electronic music. www.juneauprojects.co.uk

- Ikon Gallery is supported using public funding from Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council.
- *Black Country Voyages* is organised in collaboration with the Canal & River Trust.
- For more information, images and interviews please contact Sophie Campos or Emma Gilhooly at Pelham Communications on 020 8969 3959 or email sophie@pelhamcommunications.com or emma@pelhamcommunications.com.

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Sample image:



Juneau Projects, *Data Ritual*, 2013, photo: Anna Arca, courtesy the artist, Ceri Hand Gallery and Ikon