

Looping the Loop with Ikon's Slow Boat



Ikon Gallery's Slow Boat has recently undergone a transformation as it embarks on its next three year programme, *Looping the Loop*.

Featuring a new design by Lamorna Conlon (a member of Ikon Youth Programme), Ikon's Slow Boat boasts a bold and striking exterior which reflects the colours used by the gallery's founding artists.

Slow Boat, crewed by members of the Ikon Youth Programme (IYP) alongside a selection of artists, will navigate the Birmingham and Sandwell canals from Icknield Port Loop to the Smethwick Pumping House, engaging local residents in workshops, performances and screenings.

For the remainder of 2017, IYP will collaborate with Flatpack to take Slow Boat to different arts, heritage and community festivals, including Birmingham Heritage Week (9 September), Tipton Canal and Community Festival (16 September), Birmingham Weekender (24 September) and Birmingham Canal Navigations Society Rally 4 (November).

Providing a distinctive social space, Slow Boat's residency programme is a unique opportunity for artists to explore ways of working with new audiences. Throughout August, the Sidney Nolan Trust collaborated with local youth groups and artists Dan 'Newso' Lickiss and Free Radical to produce spray painted and word portraits. Slow Boat will then be an open studio for James Lomax researching and responding to the

manufacturing history of Icknield Port Loop (24 August – 4 October) and former Ladywood resident and artist Mahtab Hussain to examine high rise tower life through photography and films (16 – 29 October). In spring 2018, Japanese artist Rie Nakajima will perform on Slow Boat as it moves between her exhibition at Ikon Gallery and Max Eastley's sound installation at Perrott's Folly.

Streamed across social media, Slow Boat's artist residencies will be interspersed with evenings of music, dining and talks, all whilst looping the local ports. Details of the events will be advertised on Ikon's website.

Ian Hyde, Ikon's Deputy Director said: 'we are thrilled with Slow Boat's new look and know that it will provide a real focal point for the *Looping the Loop* project. As an educational charity encouraging engagement in contemporary arts, the boat and the project will allow us to reach new audiences and take Ikon's ethos and work to communities along the local canal network.'

For more information about Slow Boat and Looping Loop visit ikon-gallery.org.

Notes

Social Media Handles:

Instagram, Twitter and Facebook: @ikongallery #ikonGallery #ikonslowboat

Note to Editors:

1. 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 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. 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
2. 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](#).

3. Looping the Loop is supported by Arts Council Strategic Touring, Sandwell Council, Michael Marsh Charitable Trust, W.E. Cadbury Trust and the Grantham Yorke Trust.
4. Coinciding with Birmingham Heritage Week and Heritage Open Days, Birmingham based Flatpack (the team behind the city's Flatpack Film Festival) will be hosting Flatpack Floating Cinema Shorts on Saturday 9 September 2017 (12pm – 4pm). The free event features screenings of films of Ladywood (from the 1950s to 1980s).
5. Ikon Youth Programme (IYP) is a group of young people, aged 16-21 years old, who share an interest in visual art. Ikon Youth Programme meets once a week at Ikon to tour the exhibitions, get to know the Ikon team, share ideas and work with artists. These sessions are relaxed, friendly and informal. For more information contact James Cockbill on 0121 248 0708 or visit www.ikon-gallery.org/iyp
6. For more information or high-res images please contact Neil Anderson, Head of Communications (Maternity Cover) or Emily Luxford, Communications Manager at Ikon on 0121 248 0708 or email n.anderson@ikon-gallery.org or e.luxford@ikon-gallery.org

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.