

Baptist Coelho

air(edge)air

(Solo Exhibition)

23 - 27 October 2006

Birmingham Institute of Art & Design, UK

Supported by Birmingham Institute of Art & Design, UK

www.baptistcoelho.com

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Updated: September 2017

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Exhibition Invite



Front

Baptist Coelho

air(edge)air

Tues 24 - Fri 27 Oct.'06

10.00am - 5.00pm

UCE Birmingham Institute of Art & Design

Department of Visual Communication

Corporation Street, Birmingham B4 7DX

Tel: 0121 331 5830

Private View

Mon 23 Oct. 6.00pm - 8.00pm

RSVP and further information

Email: baptistc27@rediffmail.com

Tel: +44(0)7900625140

Image overleaf - *RE(WIND)*

Back

Exhibition Note

air(edge)air, consists of works that explore one of the four essential elements shaping our existence. Baptist Coelho sets out to investigate our interconnectedness with air, an invisible substance that cannot be defined by itself. Through the examination of the many causes and effects that involve air, both directly and indirectly, viewers come to terms with their perceptions of reality. This element, which we are not separate from, forms an intimate part of our existence.

The atmospheres created in this project, act as stimuli, where viewers can reflect on their personal surroundings. The artist, deploying a combination of various media in his work, consciously interweaves thought-provoking ideas to highlight environmental, social and personal questions. This project continues to grow as developing research unfolds.

- *Davide Allison*

Artworks Images and Notes

re(wind), 2006

Air(Travel) Set #1, 2006

“Four attempts to understand static and dynamic air”, 2006

The Jungfrau - 3D, 2006

Fragrant, 2006

Stained, 2006

Silver Lining, 2006

Limbo, 2006

“First attempt to understand breathing space”, 2006

“Being there and not here”, 2006

Helium, 2006

On the edge #1, 2006

On the edge #2, 2006

“Action of the air, intention of the artist”, 2006

“am I?”, 2006

GairS...LIQUairD...SOLairD, 2006

re(wind), 2006

Site-specific installation with paper airplanes, metal wire and adhesive tape

Installation dimensions: variable

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69028231>

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In **re(wind)**, Baptist explores the fundamental element of air while reflecting on his childhood memories of creating and flying paper airplanes. These planes are deceptively simple, hand-made objects; their fragile nature at variance with the complex technology of today's machines. This site-specific installation reflects on the basic act of folding of paper and the magical moment of flight. These airplanes suspended in air, appear to be caught between two worlds, an interior world of the present world and an exterior world of the past. The artwork also captures the essence of childhood and its impermanence.

While gathering his research for **re(wind)**, Baptist recognized that this experience of making paper airplanes represented a universal symbol of a child's need to play, learn and experience the environment around him. Elaborating on this idea, the artist began collaborating with schools throughout India and around the world to develop the **Paper Airplane Project**, 2008. This workshop became an effective communication tool for children to express themselves and visualize their dreams and aspirations.

- Davide Allison



Installation view



Installation details

Air(Travel) Set #1, 2006

14 glass bottles with plastic & metal lids, containing leaves and air along with 14 notes on paper

Display dimensions: variable

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69022090>

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Air(Travel) Set #1, consist of fourteen glass bottles with plastic & metal lids, containing leaves and air along with fourteen notes on paper. The work draws together an ethereal connection between the air of a specific location and the private thoughts of people who have experienced a particular moment. This project began with the idea of collecting air from diverse individuals who sealed leaves and various objects into bottles; noted their random thoughts and listed details on paper including: name, date, time, location and temperature.

- *Davide Allison*



View



View & details

“Four attempts to understand static and dynamic air”, 2006

2 channel audio/video running time: 3 minutes loop

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69016031>

Audio/video extract: <https://vimeo.com/69020640>

Complete audio/video: <https://vimeo.com/69018012>

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Static and dynamic properties facilitate our understanding, about the nature of air and our intrinsic relationship to it. Air, which can not actually be seen, is witnessed during the most transitory of experiences; like through the movement of human hair. This two channel video, **“Four attempts to understand static and dynamic air”**, explores the basic principles of how air is observed and becomes noticeable upon a given place and time. Through the exploration of positive and negative space, the video documents how this interaction creates an atmosphere from where the qualities of air and hair are defined.

Coelho elaborates on this inter-relationship further by conceiving a metaphor for hair as a way to represent the feminine and its counterpart, air, to symbolize the masculine element. While observing the interactions of these two elements, it may appear that they are in opposition; but like the essential elements of Yin and Yang, they are both defined through each other. This interplay between the ebb and flow of these elements captures the existence of static and dynamic forces; which inevitably defines our existence.

- Davide Allison



View



View & details



DVD stills Channel 1



DVD stills Channel 2

The Jungfrau - 3D, 2006

Installation with aluminium ducts, metal diffusers and audio

2 channel audio running time: 00 minute loop

Installation dimensions: variable

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69013667>

Audio extract: <https://vimeo.com/69014572>

Complete audio: <https://vimeo.com/69014104>

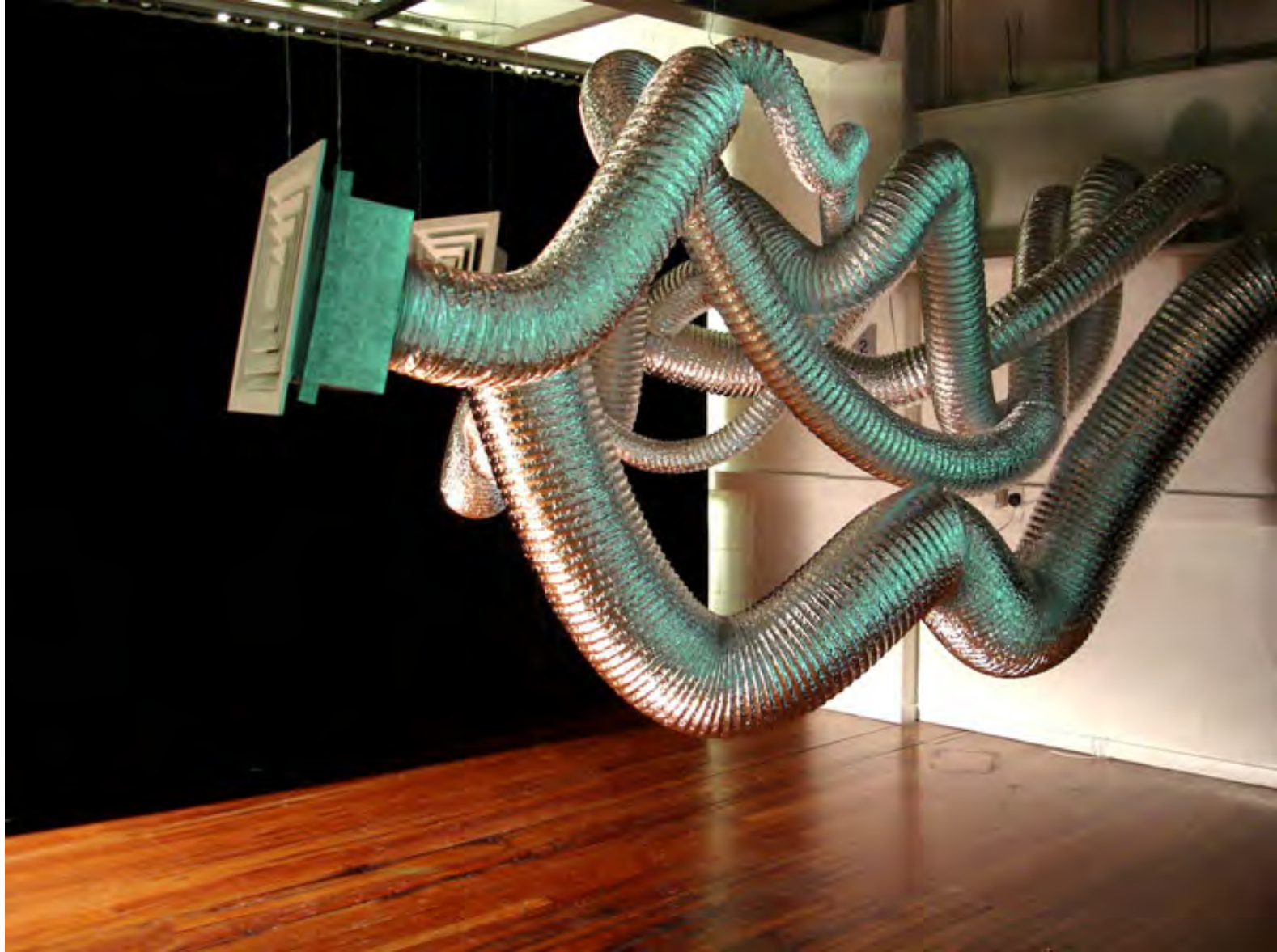
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The Jungfrau - 3D pays tribute to *Die Jungfrau* (1912 -1913) an important painting by the Austrian painter Gustav Klimt, where a group of women are visualized in motion; yawning, stretching and sleeping in silent ecstasy. The eroticism of Klimt's eclectic work and the struggle for its acceptance in Twentieth century society captivated the artist and inspired an exploration of the painting beyond its two-dimensional surface; into a conceptual and spatial one.

In **The Jungfrau - 3D**, the viewer becomes part of a multi-dimensional journey; composed of spiralling and twisting aluminum duct-work and metal diffusers. An audio soundtrack of women's voices resonates through the sumptuous forms and infuses the installation with human attributes. These intimate, organic, sounds were created by two women who were invited to vocally interpret a print of Klimt's painting, *Die Jungfrau*. By endeavouring to transform the painting into an atmospheric experience, the viewer becomes a participant of the narrative and re-associates from the usual interpretation of these industrial forms.

- Davide Allison



Installation view



Installation view & details

Fragrant, 2006

Installation with free standing wooden toilet cubicle, toilet, cistern, toilet roll holder, toilet paper, air freshener and video

Installation dimensions: B 36 X H 84 X D 49 inches

Video running time: 2 minutes loop

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69007618>

Video extract: <https://vimeo.com/69012677>

Complete video: <https://vimeo.com/69011622>

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Fragrant, explores the private actions of performing bodily functions in a public space. The installation consists of: a free-standing wooden cubicle, a ceramic toilet with cistern, toilet-roll holder, toilet paper and air-freshener. A video is projected into the cubical and onto the back of the toilet door. When the public enter the pristine white toilet, they are confronted by a video revealing the intimate act of expelling air from a very private part of the body. As public and private spaces merge, the viewer comes to terms with these culturally sensitive acts which have often been seen as unmentionable and inconsequential. The pleasing fragrance, which is experienced in the cubical, disorients the spectator and becomes a metaphor for the concealing of such intimate acts and of the usual foul odours associated with public toilets.

- Davide Allsion



Installation view



Installation view & details



Installation detail



DVD stills

Stained, 2006

Site-specific installation with blown glass and audio/video

Audio/video running time: 6 minutes loop

Installation dimensions: variable

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69003849>

Audio/video extract: <https://vimeo.com/69005472>

Complete audio/video: <https://vimeo.com/69004158>

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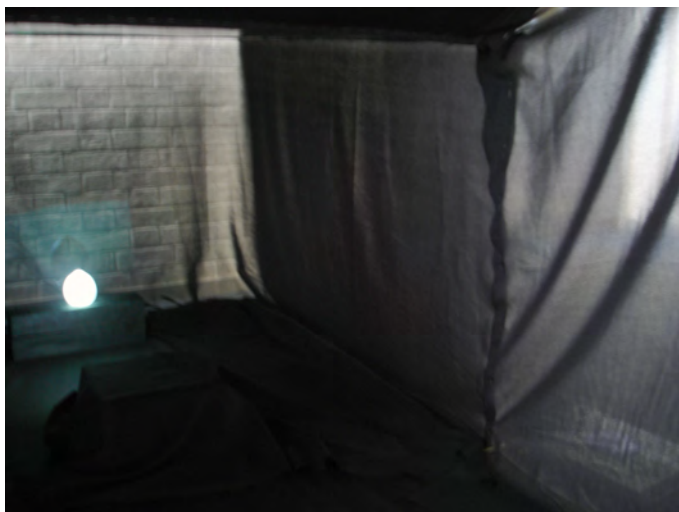
Asthma is a chronic disease that affects the respiratory system causing shortness of breath. The site-specific installation, **Stained**, draws attention to this ailment and consists of a video projected onto a hand-blown glass sphere that has been placed within a neglected area under a staircase. The viewer must crawl on his knees in order to access the work and while doing so is absorbed into an intimate, dark, and claustrophobic space. Through this action, the participant soon identifies with the unpredictability and isolation that is often experienced by an asthmatic.

One of the most important skills for a glassblower is the ability to accurately blow into molten glass and give it shape. When compared to regular glassblowing, the challenge faced by an asthmatic blowing glass is difficult to imagine. In **Stained**, an asthmatic's breath has been captured within the sphere; leaving a human imprint on the glass. This 'staining' has become a testament to the power of the breath and a glassblower's ability to transcend difficulties in order to create.

- Davide Allison

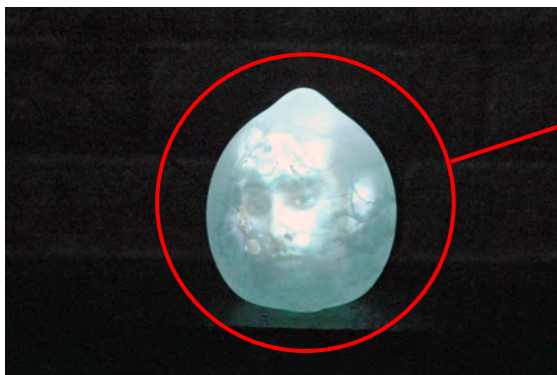


Installation detail (interior)

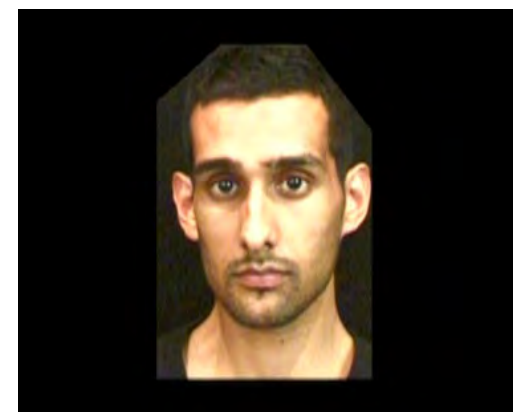
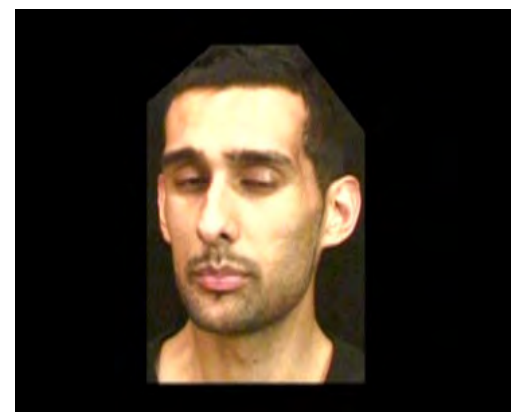
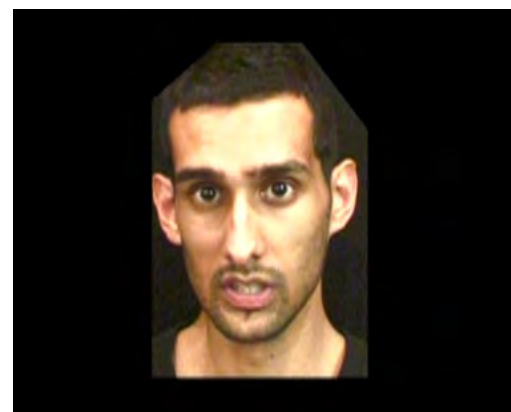
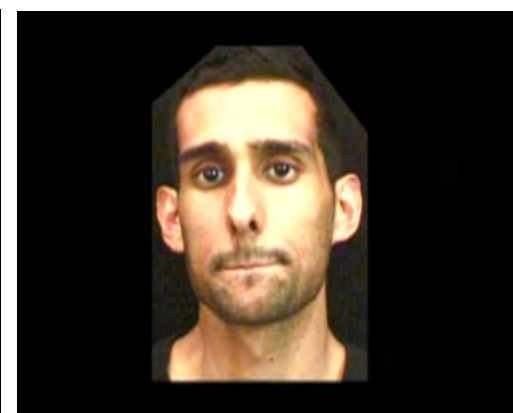
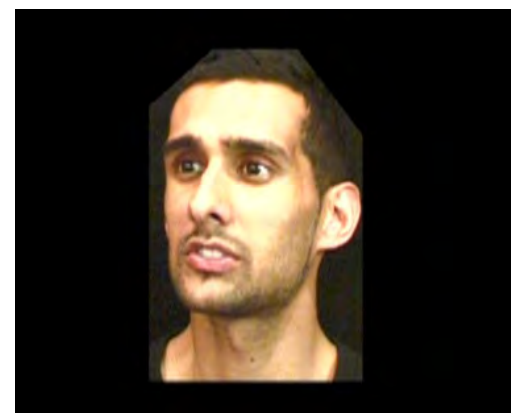
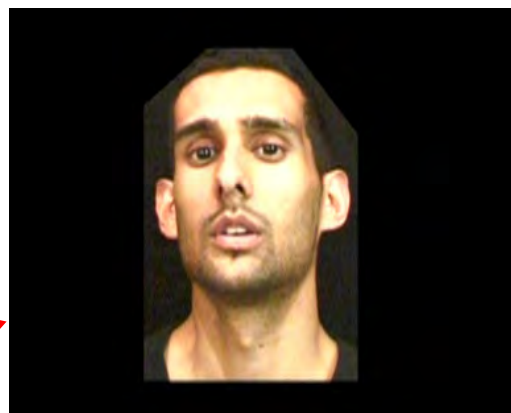


Installation details (interior)

(exterior)



Installation detail (interior)



DVD stills

Silver Lining, 2006

Iron metal and aluminium foil

Dimensions: B 16 X H 64.5 inches

Video recording:

<https://vimeo.com/68999702>

In **Silver Lining**, a found industrial object has been anthropomorphized to reflect the plight of an asthmatic. Asthma is the inflammation of the bronchial airways that provokes the constriction of the airway tubes. This condition of restricted breathing has been illustrated through the use of aluminium foil that coats the interior of a cylindrical iron pipe. The title, **Silver Lining**, alludes to a poetic sentiment; that even the most difficult of circumstances can show signs of hope.

- *Davide Allison*



View



Details



Limbo, 2006

Site-specific installation with video

2 channel video running time: 1 minute loop

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68998196>

Video extract: <https://vimeo.com/68998910>

Complete video: <https://vimeo.com/68998475>

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The site-specific installation, **Limbo**, includes two channel videos; installed adjacent to each other and separated by a partition. The videos can be viewed simultaneously only when the viewer is standing aligned with the divider. Channel 01 shows an individual breathing under normal conditions; while in Channel 02 we observe a fish swimming in water. During the second half of Channel 01, the fish is seen out of the water struggling for survival; while simultaneously in Channel 02, we witness a person becoming breathless under water. These occurrences focus on the vulnerability of man and nature and their interdependence on fundamentally different elements in order to sustain life.

- Davide Allison

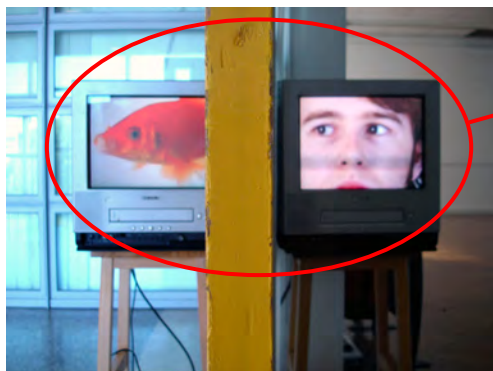


Installation view

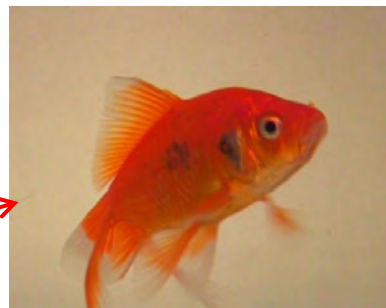


Installation details

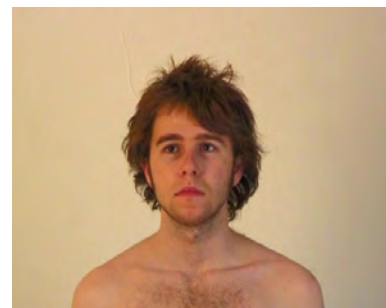
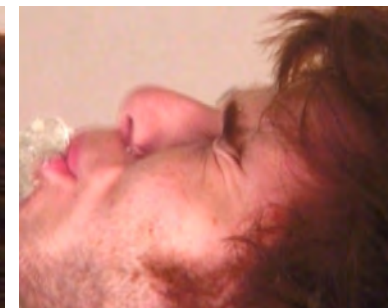
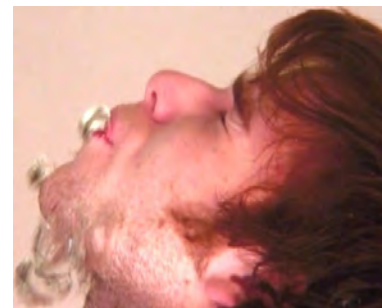




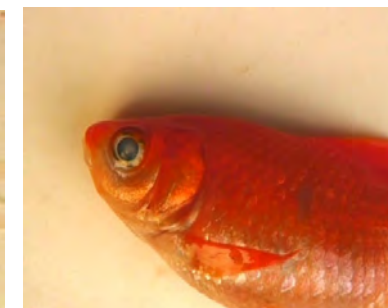
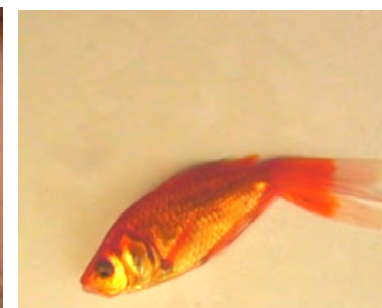
Installation view



DVD stills Channel 1



DVD stills Channel 2



“First attempt to understand breathing space”, 2006

Site-specific installation with metal air vents

Single air vent dimensions: L 17 X B 17 X H 7 inches

Installation dimensions: variable

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68997549>

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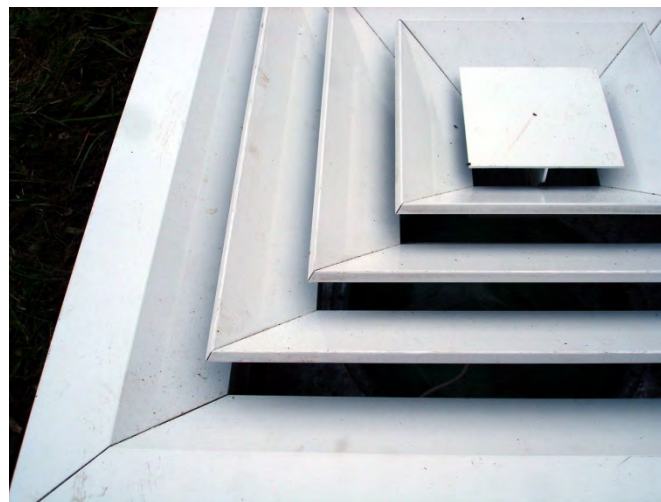
Extensive emissions of “greenhouse gases” have accumulated within our atmosphere and have significantly *affected* the temperature of our planet. This “greenhouse effect” occurs naturally; but other man-made factors have contributed to the escalation of this occurrence. Greenhouse gases, which include: water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone, have increased to levels that threaten our very existence.

The site-specific installation, **“First attempt to understand breathing space”**, draws reference to the “greenhouse effect” by ironically juxtaposing the natural with the industrial. Air-conditioning manufacturers endlessly sell the myth of clean and cool air which is produced through a man-made, artificial, process. The squandering of air-conditioning in our domestic and commercial environments is burdening our energy resources and causing higher levels of air pollution. The embedding of these air-vents into the earth reflects on our ability to sustain ourselves through industrial means. By dislocating the air-vent from the ceiling and placing it into the ground, its function has been altered to give the illusion that the Earth must also be able to breathe.

- Davide Allison



Installation view



Installation view & details

“Being there and not here”, 2006

Site-specific installation with mixed media and performance

Gardens’ prototype dimensions: L 120 X B 120 X H 23 inches

Gardens’ actual dimensions: L 48 X B 52 X H 3 feet

Installation dimensions: variable

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/69002995>

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The installation, **“Being there and not here”**, consists of two identical gardens positioned one above the other and is accompanied by a performer and two flautists. The gardens, which are made of green grass and soil, have been constructed from platforms. The upper platform is supported by wooden pillars and when seen from above appears to float in space.

“Being there and not here”, personifies the feelings of loss and separation experienced during a relationship between two people. The performer recounts the story of two deeply connected individuals who live in identical worlds; where everything is a reflection of itself. At a point in time, their twin paradigms transform into separate entities. The installation and performance takes its starting point from this separation which is represented by the two garden platforms; where one appears to drift apart from the other and eventually vanishes. The entire space is immersed in the sounds created by the two flautists. The audience witnesses this site-specific work from a designated, aerial, vantage point.

- Davide Allison



Installation detail (prototype)



Installation details (prototype)



Installation detail (actual)

Digitally modified image



The performer



The installation has to be viewed from above



Two flautists

Digitally modified images

Helium, 2006

Site-specific installation with white balloons, thread, helium and air

Installation dimensions: variable

Video recording:

<https://vimeo.com/68995153>

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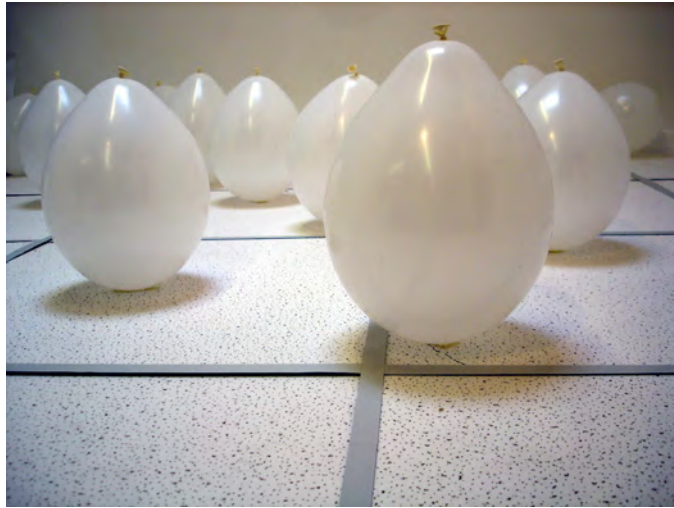
The site-specific installation, **Helium**, consists of white balloons arranged randomly throughout a designated space; where the ceiling design has been duplicated onto the floor. Our perspective and perceptions are challenged when viewing these balloons since they have been mirror-imaged on both ceiling and floor. The state of gravity on these balloons depends on the unknown fact that some of them are filled with helium while others contain just air.

The contents and location of each type of balloon is not identifiable since some balloons that contain helium are positioned on both the floor and ceiling; while others filled with air are located in the same locations. This visual perplexity challenges our observations about gravity, space and containment. The installation is also temporal; the balloons gradually deflate leaving behind a residue of rubber.

- Davide Allison



Installation detail



Installation details

On the edge #1, 2006

2 channel audio/video running time: 1 minute loop

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68992985>

Audio/video extract: <https://vimeo.com/68993696>

Complete audio/video: <https://vimeo.com/68993366>

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“The element of air is elusive and yet we associate it with the body in our attempt to define it. This vital element gives us our first breath of life; creates our existence and brings awareness. Each transitory breath is inhaled and released rhythmically through our lungs. This becomes a record of how air is processed through the inner and outer worlds of our bodies.”

The two-channel video entitled **On the edge #1** portrays the different facial expressions created when air is expelled from the human body. Even though these expressions are idiosyncratic the viewer can readily identify with the experience. The cacophony of sounds, which accompany the movements, become rhythmic when repeated. The two videos, which are projected adjacent to each other, illustrate the transient nature of air within the body; something which is often taken for granted but is actually a very dynamic process. The viewer becomes conscious of these very personal and private gestures when exposed and placed in the public domain.

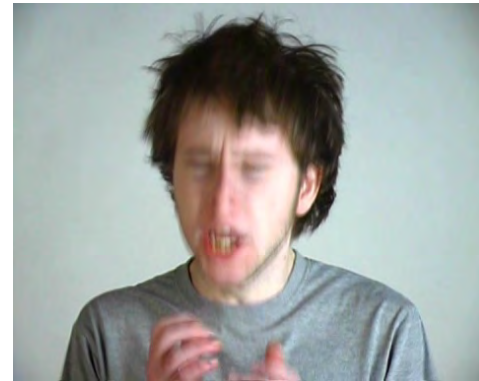
- Davide Allison



View



DVD stills Channel 1



DVD stills Channel 2

On the edge #2, 2006

Audio running time: 1 minute loop

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68989537>

Audio extract: <https://vimeo.com/68992365>

Complete audio: <https://vimeo.com/68990786>

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“The element of air is elusive and yet we associate it with the body in our attempt to define it. This vital element gives us our first breath of life; creates our existence and brings awareness. Each transitory breath is inhaled and released rhythmically through our lungs. This becomes a record of how air is processed through the inner and outer worlds of our bodies.”

On the edge #2, is an audio track which consists of various sounds which are created when air is expelled from the body in various ways. By placing the experience in a darkened space, the sound is disassociated from the actual visuals of the body expressions and the viewer is drawn to the nature of this transient action. Although these sounds are idiosyncratic, the viewer can readily identify with the experience and associate them with their own body. The cacophony of sounds becomes rhythmic when repeated and illustrates something which is often taken for granted but is actually a very dynamic process. The viewer becomes conscious of these very personal and private gestures when exposed and placed in the public domain.

- Davide Allison



Views



“Action of the air, intention of the artist”, 2006

8 digital prints on archival paper

Single print dimensions: L 16.5 X B 11.6 inches

Archival Paper: Cotton Rag, 308 gsm, acid-free

Printer: Epson Stylus Pro 9800

Display dimensions: L 16.7 X B 93.5 inches

Video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68987994>

In “**Action of the air, intention of the artist**”, we observe the detail and subtle idiosyncrasies of the human face. This series of facial expressions conveys the emotive state of an individual and his interaction with the air that surrounds him.

These sculptural, facial, reactions, which have been captured in these photographs, are short-lived yet tangible. The eight digital prints in this series depict various facial expressions interacting with a variety of conditions; from left to right they are: normal at rest, breathless, inhaling, exhaling, hot air, cold air, perfume and foul odour.

- *Davide Allison*



View



Digital prints

“am I?”, 2006

Installation with mirror, table, chair, steam and audio

Audio running time: 2 minutes loop

Installation dimensions: variable

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68974154>

Audio extract: <https://vimeo.com/68986667>

Complete audio: <https://vimeo.com/68975048>

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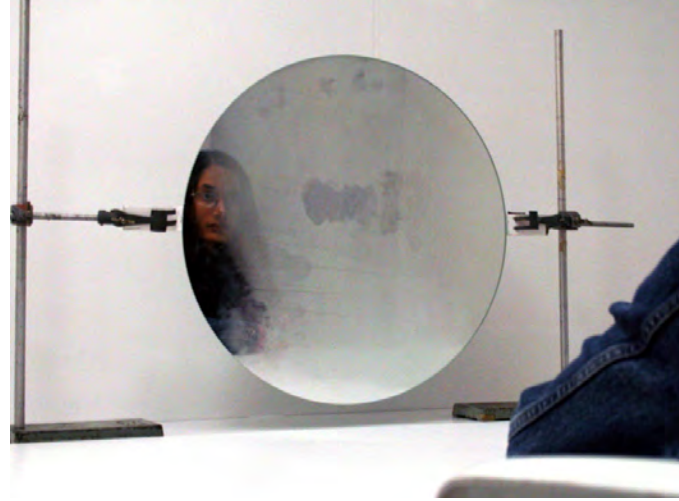
The installation, **“am I?”**, consists of: a mirror, table, chair, steam and an audio soundtrack. One person at a time walks into a pristine, white, room; takes a seat on a white chair and comes face to face with their reflection in a mirror which is placed on a table. Unexpectedly, steam is emitted from underneath the table onto the mirror through a small opening in the table. The emerging steam envelopes the mirror; blurring the participant’s image and mysteriously revealing the words “AM I?”.

This installation reflects on altered states of identity and our ability to come to terms with our sense of self through different circumstances. Sitting in front of the mirror becomes an act of introspection and self analysis. The steam on the mirror not only conceals our perceived identity but also reveals deeper meanings. This experience is temporary as the steam soon dissipates and the participant’s reflection is revealed again. How this interaction with the self has affected the participant is unknown.

- Davide Allison



Installation detail



Installation views & details

GairS...LIQUairD...SOLairD, 2006

Installation with audio/video

3 channel audio/video running time: 2 minutes loop

Audio/video recording: <https://vimeo.com/68957558>

Audio/video extract: <https://vimeo.com/68958866>

Complete audio/video: <https://vimeo.com/68958375>

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GairS...LIQUairD...SOLairD is a three channel video that explores the qualities of air through its interaction with different states of matter: solid, liquid and gas. The three videos which share a common relationship are arranged one on top of the other. In Channel 01 placed at the lower level, the video navigates across the surface of a porous sponge; whereas in Channel 02 positioned in the middle, we observe air rapidly bubbling through water. These images are juxtaposed with Channel 03 which is viewed on top and illustrates air bubbles moving through space. Upon close inspection of these contrasting interactions we observe how the element of air often remains consistent and uniform.

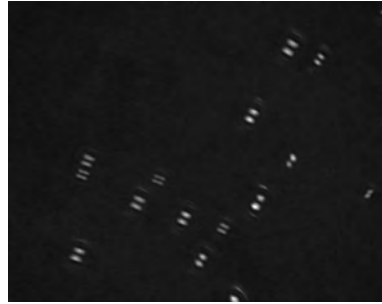
- Davide Allison



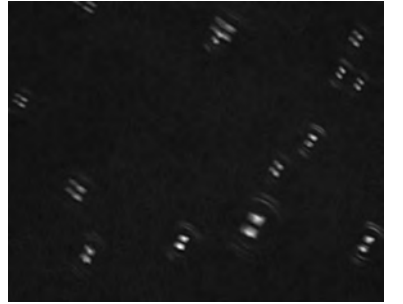
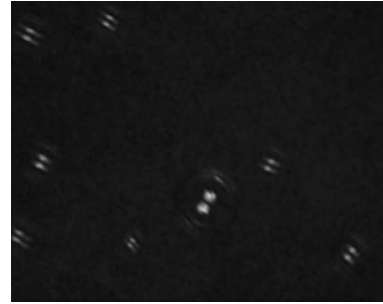
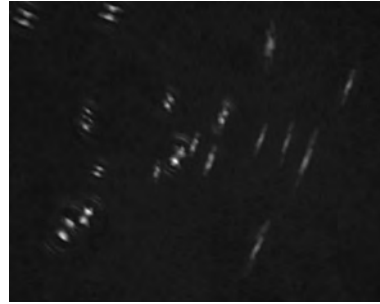
Installation view



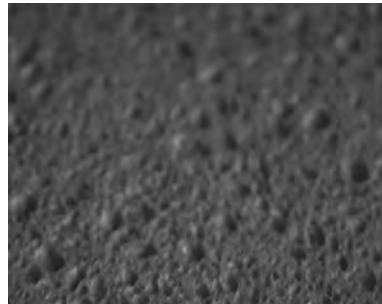
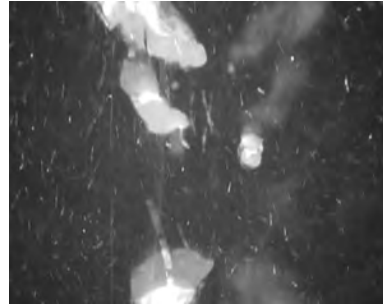
Installation view



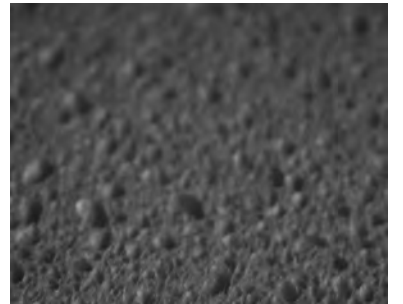
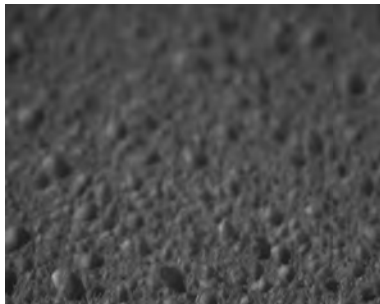
DVD stills Channel 3



DVD stills Channel 2



DVD stills Channel 1



Exhibition Views



Artworks left to right: **GairS...LIQUairD...SOLairD**, Helium, “Action of the air, intention of the artist”

Exhibition view



Artworks left to right: **Helium**, “**Action of the air, intention of the artist**”, **Silver Lining**, **On the edge #2**

Exhibition view



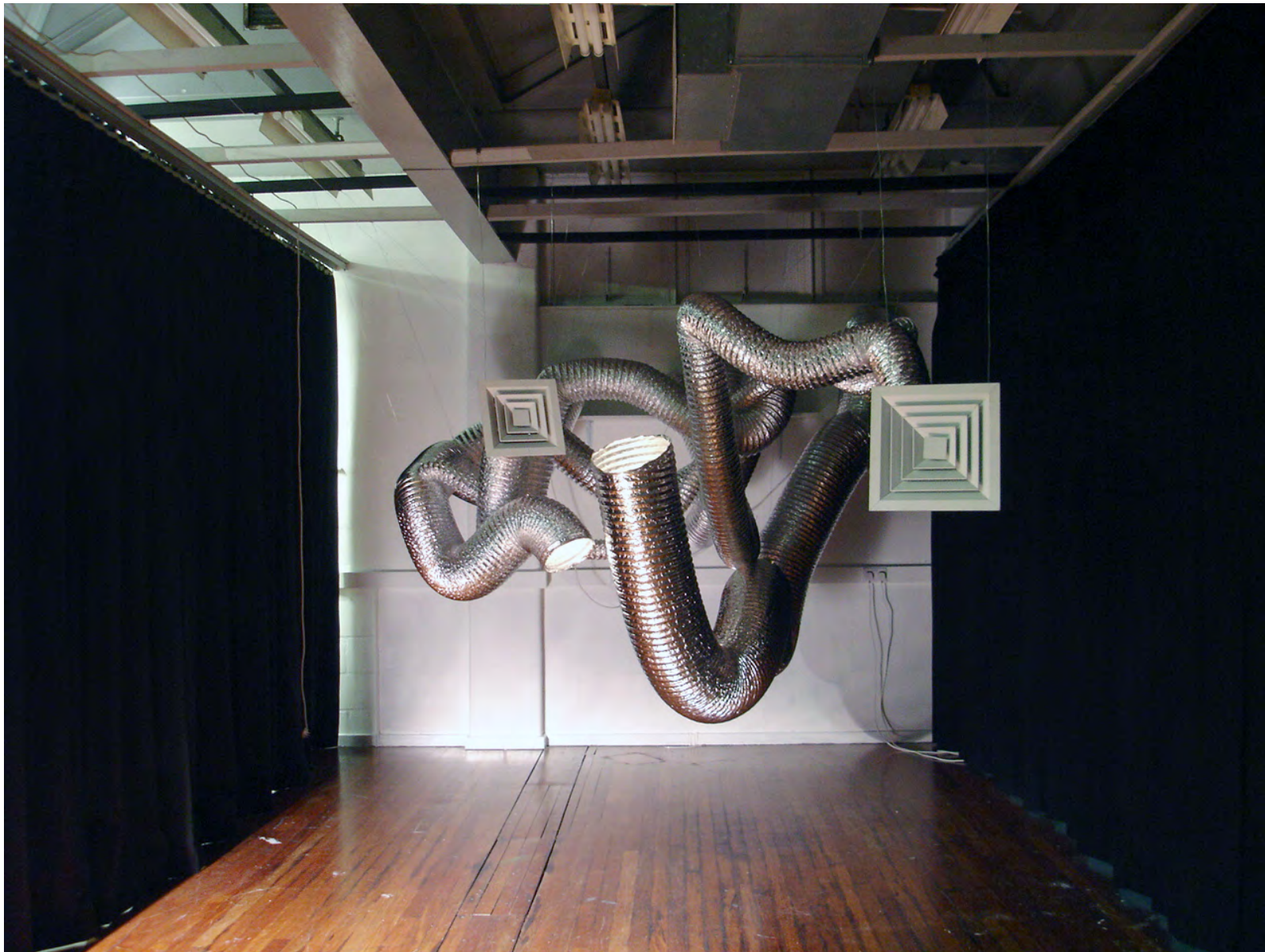
Artworks left to right: **Limbo**, **Helium**, **Being there and not here**, **Air(Travel) Set #1**, **Fragrant**

Exhibition view



Artwork: "am I?"

Exhibition view



Artwork: **The Jungfrau - 3D**

Exhibition view



Artwork: **On the edge #1**

Exhibition view



Artwork: "Four attempts to understand static and dynamic air"

Exhibition view



Artwork: **re(wind)**

Exhibition view



Artwork: **Stained**

Exhibition view



Artwork: **“First attempt to understand breathing space”**



Artwork: **“Being there and not here”**

Exhibition views

Exhibition Preview



Exhibition Preview



Exhibition Preview



Exhibition Preview

About

Baptist Coelho

The Birmingham Institute of Art and Design

Baptist Coelho received his Masters of Arts from Birmingham Institute of Art & Design - BIAD, UK (2006). He was awarded the 'Sovereign Asian Art Prize' (2016) by The Sovereign Art Foundation, Hong Kong; 'Façade Video Award' (2011) by Art Today Association, Plovdiv-Bulgaria; 'Promising Artist Award' (2007) by Art India & India Habitat Centre, Delhi-India and 'Johnson Prize Fund' (2006) by BIAD, UK. Solo Exhibitions include, Somerset House, London-UK (2016); Goethe-Zentrum, Hyderabad-India (2015); Project 88, Mumbai-India (2015); Ladakh Arts and Media Organization in Leh-India (2015); Pump House Gallery, London-UK (2012); Grand Palais, Bern-Switzerland (2009); Project 88, Mumbai-India (2009); Visual Arts Gallery, Delhi-India (2009) and BIAD, UK (2006).

He has exhibited internationally in museums, galleries and film screenings. Coelho has participated in various artist residencies; as well as conducted workshops, artist talks and panel discussions in Asia, UAE, South Africa, UK and Europe. The artist lives and works in Mumbai, India.

www.baptistcoelho.com

The Birmingham Institute of Art and Design (officially abbreviated as BIAD) was the art and design faculty of Birmingham City University in Birmingham, England. It has now been merged into the university's Faculty of Arts, Design and Media, and is based at the Birmingham City University City Centre Campus and Margaret Street for Fine Art. With over 5,500 of our 24,000 students enrolled on courses in music, theatre, writing, media, digital technology, art, design, jewellery and architecture, Birmingham City University is one of Britain's leading providers of talented professionals to the cultural and creative industries.

The vast majority of these students are part of the Faculty of Arts, Design and Media – the driving force behind the creative provision at Birmingham City University. Aspiring music, performance, art and media professionals are attracted by our combination of world-class teaching, excellent facilities and professional development opportunities. <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/arts-design-and-media>

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