

SITE GALLERY

Press Release
30 Aug 2018

SITE GALLERY ANNOUNCES OPENING PROGRAMME FOLLOWING £1.7MILLION DEVELOPMENT AND NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

- Site Gallery in Sheffield will reopen to the public on 29 September 2018
- New larger gallery space designed by DRDH architects
- Sharna Jackson appointed as Artistic Director of Site Gallery

Press trip: 26 September 2018

Public opening: 29 September 2018

Today (16 July 2018) Site Gallery, Sheffield's leading international contemporary art space, announced full details of its reopening programme following a £1.7million development by architects DRDH. At the heart of the city's historic Cultural Industries Quarter the new Site Gallery will be three times bigger in scale offering a blank canvas for artistic experiment and public engagement. The team are joined by Sharna Jackson, who takes the role of Artistic Director at the regional art centre.

Specialising in moving image, new media and performance, Site Gallery supports artistic development, investing in artists at critical stages of their careers. The development by DRDH has extended the current building, offering a **262sqm versatile gallery space** behind a new 38m long Danish brick façade that offers the gallery a major new public face to the city. Alongside a new education and events space, a bookshop and community run café, this will allow the Site Gallery to become a significant hub of Sheffield's creative economy, with new office spaces available for rent to creative industries on the upper floors.

The **inaugural exhibition *Liquid Crystal Display*** (29 Sept 2018 – 27 Jan 2019) curated and conceived by former Artistic Director Laura Sillars with Curator Angelica Sule, proposes that we are living in a world of images supported and circulated by crystal mineral technologies. Bringing together the work of 15 leading contemporary artists, the exhibition will take shape around an ambitious new commission by artist Anna Barham titled *Crystals, Fabrics, Field*. Based on the fundamental geometric form of naturally growing crystals, the sculpture operates as a cabinet of curiosities from which to present works by other artists. A selection of rarely seen quartz from John Ruskin's crystal collection will be displayed within the sculpture, along with minerals from the local area. Visitors will move through the sculpture encountering artworks that examine and observe liquid crystal phenomena through a microscope (1880's photography pioneer Mungo Ponton and contemporary artist Waad AlBawardi); that reveal the mystical properties of crystal objects (Eva Rothschild and Karen David); that link technology and the natural world (Liliane Lijn and Jennifer West); that explore the extraordinary physical forms of crystals (Melvin Moti and Kiki Smith) and which investigate the link between crystals, capital and contemporary culture (The Otolith Group, Ann Lislegaard, Suzanne Treister, Jonathan Kemp, Ryan Jordan and Martin Kemp).

Sharna Jackson who became Artistic Director of Site Gallery in July 2018 will work alongside Executive Director, Judith Harry in Co-Directorship of Site Gallery, continuing its internationally significant exhibitions and community engagement programme. Sharna's work to date has focused on socially-engaged digital initiatives within arts, culture and publishing. She curates the Playground exhibition as part of The Children's Media Conference and has held roles at Tate, Hopster, Design Museum and The Broad amongst others.

On her appointment, Sharna Jackson said: 'I am thrilled to have accepted the role as Artistic Director at Site Gallery. I have had a close relationship with the gallery over many years and admire the work Laura and Judith have done. The new building offers an exciting opportunity to revive what Site Gallery does and I can't wait to get started.'

Discussing the development Executive Director Judith Harry said: ‘We are hugely proud of the new Site Gallery. DRDH have created a welcoming gallery and museum quality exhibition space that will enable us to offer so much more to our artists. The opening programme and *Liquid Crystal Display* exhibition will really be the start of new era as we head towards the gallery’s 40th anniversary in 2019.’

Site Gallery will reopen its doors with an opening festival weekend, showcasing and celebrating art and artists, spotlighting the new gallery spaces, encouraging participation and community spirit. Activity will include an opening celebration, with an alternative ceremonial performance by multidisciplinary artist Nwando Ebizie, on Friday 28 September. On Saturday 29 September, the square across from Site Gallery will be transformed into a new civic space for the city in collaboration with Wayward (<http://www.wayward.co.uk/>). Sheffield artists including Alex McLean, Eelyn Lee, Ashley Holmes and Rian Treanor will work alongside the Society of Explorers art collective of 14 – 19 year olds, to programme performative, playful and interactive work inside the gallery walls. On Sunday, a morning of magic, technology and performance will close the weekend’s festivities.

Site Gallery’s development has been funded by Arts Council England, Sheffield City Council, Sheffield City Region, Infrastructure Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Foyle Foundation, Wolfson Foundation, Sheffield Town Trust, JG Graves Foundation, Freshgate Foundation, Sheffield Church Burgesses Trust.

ENDS

For more information, images or interviews please contact Gloria Roberts at Sutton, gloria@suttonpr.com | 0207 183 3577

Following the conversation online with #BuildingSite and #SiteGallery

Website: www.sitegallery.org

Facebook: facebook.com/sitegallerysheffield

Twitter: twitter.com/site_gallery

Instagram: instagram.com/sitegallery

Listings

Site Gallery

1 - 5 Brown Street,

Sheffield

S1 2BS

Opening hours

Monday – Wednesday: 11 - 6

Thursday: 11 – 8

Friday – Saturday: 11 - 6

Sunday: 11 – 4

Entry price: Free

Notes to editors

Sharna Jackson bio:

Sharna Jackson is the Artistic Director at Site Gallery in Sheffield, England. She has over a decade of experience developing and delivering socially-engaged digital initiatives within culture, publishing and entertainment. At the core of her portfolio and across her roles, is a specific drive to encourage and increase new, diverse and disengaged audiences’ participation in the arts and culture: locally, nationally, and globally. She has held roles at Tate, Hopster, Azoomee, Design Museum and The Broad.

Sharna is a trustee at Sheffield Doc Fest, New Writing North a reading and writing development agency in Newcastle; Upswing, an aerial arts company. She is on the programme committee for the US-based Museums and the Web conference, held annually. She is a member of BAFTA’s Children’s and Learning and New Talent committees and the Children’s Media Conference advisory board.

About Site Gallery

Led by Co-Directors Judith Harry and Sharna Jackson, Site Gallery is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation with revenue funding from Sheffield City Council. Over the last few years it has presented solo projects by artists including established artists such as Mike Kelley (USA), Jeremy Deller (UK),

Sophie Calle (Fr) and UK first with Eva and Franco Mattes (It) and Pilvi Takala (FN). The Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded Society of Explorers runs throughout the year supporting young people in the city to make unique connections with artists and gain new skills and learning. In 2015, Site Gallery presented its new commissioned work in over 40 cities in 20 countries including Sydney, Beijing, Thessaloniki and Basel. www.sitegallery.org

About DRDH

DRDH enjoy making buildings, in places, for people. They have a particular interest in public architecture and their critically acclaimed buildings have been widely published and have won numerous awards. Their project for a concert hall and city library for the North Norwegian City of Bodø was a finalist in the inaugural RIBA international prize and was awarded the Norwegian State Architecture Prize in 2015. In 2016, Daniel Rosbottom and David Howarth, the founding directors, were shortlisted for the Swiss Architecture Prize, the World's most prestigious award for architects under 50. Current work is focused in Belgium and includes the Bijloke concert hall in Ghent, the Bourla Theatre, a National monument in Antwerp and a new entrance for St Martin's Cathedral in Ypres. In 2018 the DRDH were selected for the Mayor of London's Architecture Panel for Public Buildings. The Site Gallery is the practice's second major commission in Sheffield. The first, and office for design agency The Workshop, was awarded Best Building in the 2012 Sheffield Design Awards. www.drdochitects.co.uk