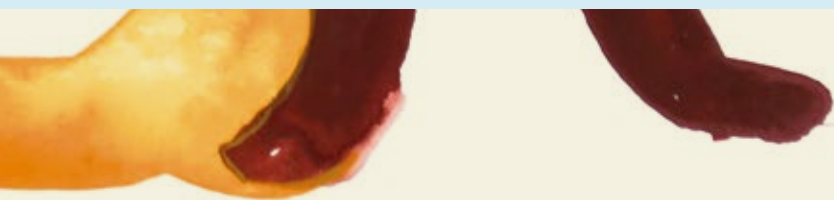




Between Things

Ben Coode-Adams
Celia Pym
Clare Iles
Freddie Robins

Paris Essex
Sharon Leahy-Clark
Stafford Schmool
Will Cruickshank







Between Things *Space to dream*

There will be a sense of a journey, building a well-reasoned narrative discourse, unfolding as the visitor progresses through the gallery.

Ben Coode-Adams: outline proposal for *Between Things*
The Minorities 2017

Coming into the Minorities to see *Between Things* one is presented, – confronted is not too strong a word – by a barrier, a wooden screen of patched and bolted panels, framed by thick blond planks, and painted in a brooding glossy burgundy, reminiscent of old blood and thick gore. It supports and obscures layer on layer of artworks, part views of work by different artists and in a range of materials from hard angular wood, via closely patterned drawings to wrapped, felted, crocheted and knitted yarn. This now crowded room is elegant, with its fine fireplace, painted dado and panelling, and dark polished floor. It acts as an anti-chamber, a portal to the main gallery beyond; it offers long views and glimpses – of fearsome faces, horned beasts and abstract sculpture – a colourful chaos that quickly adjusts and settles to reveal a carefully orchestrated whole.

Clean grey floor, pooled with shine from the windows, white painted walls – as close to a white cube gallery as is possible in a Tudor building with a ceiling of dark beams, contained behind a Georgian façade. A gallery since the 1970s this room has contained, presented, supported many hundreds of artworks, in every medium; decades of displays and events.

It is not usual to comment on the gallery, the container, before the exhibition – but this is not a usual exhibition. *Between Things* refers as much to the nature of the display, the whole experience, as to the conversation between the individual artists' work. It underlines the liminal nature of the project, and overtly underlines the continuum that exists, often unacknowledged, between exhibition, installation art, and sculpture.

Now a series of huge planks, irregular in their tree-formed shapes dominate the gallery, bolted to and held by the building's wooden frame. They rest on the boarded floor; the lift of their long curves playing against the sharp edges of geometric pillars. Blood-dark screens, white panels and plinths further divide the room, presenting the artworks throughout the whole of its volume.

For all its freshness and surprise, *Between Things* can be read against an historical past. One can cite Peggy Guggenheim's gallery *Art of This Century* opened in 1942, in a pair of adjoining loft spaces in New York City. *Art of This Century* was renowned for its unique interior design, with concave walls and protruding, razor-thin wooden frames in the middle of the gallery space, which gave the hanging canvases a free-floating effect. Guggenheim, along with the gallery's architect Frederick Kiesler, believed that each painting should literally “stand on its own and not be bound to the wall”.¹

“This was not a place for calm contemplation, but a gallery calculated to shock and amaze – suitably,

since among the works on view that night were many masterpieces of Surrealist art.”²

Two exhibitions in London in the 1950s also brought a new view of exhibition design and the relationship between the artworks and the galleries that housed them. Both sought to create total environments – *Parallel of Life and Art*, an installation at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 1952 was designed and conceived by members of the Independent Group, Alison and Peter Smithson, Eduardo Paolozzi, and Nigel Henderson and showed paintings and prints hung at angles to the walls and from the ceilings “The exhibition... created a total environment with a host of black and white images taken from a range of art and non-art sources. ...the show was polemical and controversial, the images shared an overall crudeness, vulgarity and rawness. This was not beautiful art, but processed images juxtaposed randomly.”³

In 1956 *This is Tomorrow* at the Whitechapel Gallery was designed by Richard Hamilton, John McHale, and John Voelcker, all artists who worked independently, saw the final display as one environment. *This is Tomorrow* is viewed as a ground breaking exhibition, partly because it aimed to create an environment inside the art gallery... “A lesson in spectatorship which cuts across the learned responses of conventional perception” wrote Laurence Alloway in the introduction of the original catalogue.

Between Things is also a show that disrupts conventional perception, in a very physical way. The screens offer partial views of objects that invite the viewer to seek them out; the play of scale from the monumental to the very small demands a constant readjustment from long to close sight; the placing of objects both large and small above and below the normal viewing height requires the viewer to notice, to look up.

It is a show of complex layers: jointed into the building, curator Ben Coode-Adams’ construction encloses the work; individual artworks continue the theme - fragments of furniture are layered and inserted to form a dense frieze or a wall-hung form (Clare Iles); soft threads wrap hard wooden struts (Will Cruickshank) cosy knitting covers carved wooden limbs (Freddie Robins); rounds of crochet worked by two makers encircle one on another (Paris Essex); bold darned

patches and stitching overlay felt, machine knitting and woven fabrics (Celia Pym); stretched fabric hides fragments of revered design, like curtains over icons (Stafford Schmool). In the framed works too, pattern on pattern, line on line build complex images (Ben Coode-Adams, Sharon Leahy-Clark); colour is layered on layer – primary paint colours, secondary tones in multi-coloured threads, in watercolour and ink on paper, on silk, build a complex palette that yet is in balance – overwhelmingly warm – oranges yellows, mostly reds, bloom in the memory.

Discussing the planning of *Between Things*, Kaavous Clayton, talked of the long-standing influence on him of the work of Italian architect Carlo Scarpa. Watching the video *Carlo Scarpa A profile made* in 1996,⁵ I was struck by phrases that resound through my thoughts about *Between Things*: –

‘A whole comprised of fragments...’
‘Places for each and every object...’
‘Seamless connection between exhibition, objects and the building...’
‘Design at right-angles to the room...’
‘Objects are revealed and blocked off...’

I sat in the gallery and watched Kaavous and Ben make some of the hundreds, perhaps thousands of small and careful shifts and changes, – the moving of an object into light, the nudging of a piece into closer relationship with a neighbour, – that ensure the integrity and flow of the whole construction, of the journey through the two rooms.

In 2006 I was one of many volunteers who contributed to Wildwork’s production of *Souterrain*, a retelling of the story of warrior poet Orpheus, his marriage to his beloved Eurydice and his attempts to reclaim her from the underworld. Produced in partnership with Firstsite and the Mercury Theatre, the promenade performance involved both professional and non-professional actors, musicians, singers and visual artists. It was developed at the Minorities, and staged in the former Keddies’ building and in the Minorities Garden.

As I walk round the exhibition *Between Things* I am reminded of that other collaborative and complex artwork, not least for the narrative that emerges from the works by these seven artists selected by Coode-Adams to show with him, for the way their

work chimes with his and with each other’s, and choreographed by him and Clayton into what for me reads as a journey into an otherworld, a dream: -

At the beginning and end of *Between Things* we are confronted by the empty knitted skins by Freddie Robins. The first is hung uncomfortably from a rail; the last laid on a raised and disjointed platform. This then for me was ultimately a journey to the underworld, inhabited by strange beasts, soft-surfaced urns, and images of gods, bringing with them the echoes of myths from many cultures and eras – Homer’s Greece, Cretan labyrinths, Polynesian islands, South America; the fantastical stuff of dreams paired with all-too-human knitted corpses, played against climbing friezes of dismembered chair legs (Iles) and shrouded relics, 20th century design (Schmool).

The first large scale work (*see centre spread*) to confront the visitor is by Robins, a once *Perfect Skin* now darned and mended by Pym, hanging limply, doubled at the waist, head thrown back, mouth gaping. When we have explored our way through to the final large scale work, we see a flayed skin laid out on a bier of rough wood. Throughout the show, Paris Essex’s monumental Easter Island-like heads leer from the walls; strange figures inhabit the picture frames and stories of both Coode-Adams’ and Leahy-Clark’s work, while the impact of Schmool’s animal heads, formed of handle bars and saddles, is doubled and deepened by sharp shadows. The placing of the delicate vase-like forms of Cruickshank above normal sightlines and contrasted with the oversize planks and ominously coloured panels unsettle with their fragility. Through the show the layering – of media, of partially seen objects, of meaning, – all increase a sense of unease.

But finally when I arrive at the more open space on the raised dais in spite of that final laid-out body, butterfly-spread, filleted, I am surprised – I can look back with calm – at a surety of placing, a sense of space and reassuring design as light flows beneath white screens, and around slim supports. I have reached a dead end and have to retrace my steps. This then is an ancient and myth-laden narrative of journey *and* return.

The associations between the seven artists’ works so closely parallels Ben’s own work, the whole can be read as one of his images made manifest, brought out of the frame and into three dimensions. This is exhibition as

work of art – installation art redolent with meaning, well-crafted sculpture; artist as curator; curator as artist... exhibition, installation *and* sculpture.

Linda Theophilus
2017

1 www.theartstory.org/gallery-art-of-this-century.htm accessed 23.4.2017

2 www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/3663807/How-curved-walls-and-a-female-Casanova-brought-modern-art-to-America. accessed 23.4.2017

3 independentgroup.org.uk/contributors/smithson/ accessed 23.4.2017

4 www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/this-is-tomorrow/ accessed 23.4.2017

5 www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KxXgkEWK1U accessed 22.4.2017



1



2



3

Ben Coode-Adams

1 *Lily white boys* 2015 watercolour on paper 97 x 66cm

2 *The Curator* 2017 watercolour on paper 50 x 38cm

3 *Purple Prince* 2017 watercolour on paper 93 x 60cm

Between things

Kaavous Clayton and Ben Coode-Adams
in conversation

The exhibition '*Between Things*' ran from April 15th – June 10th 2017 at the Minorities Art Gallery, Colchester, Essex. Below is a discussion between Kaavous Clayton the director of the gallery and an artist in his own right and Ben Coode-Adams an artist who grew up eight miles away on a blackcurrant farm, went away and came back.

-

KC When I asked if you'd like to have an exhibition at The Minorities, you said yes, but said you would like to show alongside other people. Can you tell me why?

BCA For me putting together an exhibition is like putting together a delicious feast, which is hard to do alone and with only one dish. So it was natural for me to want to work with other artists.

In selecting the artists with you I was looking for a rich texture that reflected our discussions and my interests. A shared history defines my preoccupations. Freddie Robins, Tiphaine de Lussy, Carolyn Clewer and Stafford Schmool I have known for thirty years. Celia Pym was Freddie's student and then collaborator, friend and colleague at the Royal College of Art. Will Cruickshank, Clare Iles and Sharon Leahy-Clark I have met or encountered through the artist-led gallery scene centred on Sluice Art Fair where the Blackwater Polytechnic has exhibited. The Polytechnic is a vehicle for showing work from this corner of Essex developed around the barn where Freddie Robins and I live and work. The walls, boards

and plinths were made for Blackwater Polytechnic presentations by faculty members David Howe, Nicol Wilson and Simon Emery.

In my previous exhibitions, I have always used a strong physical structure to reflect my interest in the built environment. I have worked predominantly in the public realm, producing public art. I like to see the art fight a little to make its nature clear. I aim to slow down the viewer so one's eyes can settle into the language of the exhibition. The eyes have to work hard. It's good exercise.

KC The exhibition has created a new environment that invites plenty of exploring, and I don't think that's just because of the number of works – over a hundred – the support structures are integral and have provided opportunities for display that aren't usually to be found in a 'white cube' gallery. The art works are placed, hung, draped and laid, and viewed behind, through, across, beyond and between other works and constructions.

Some of the connections that have appeared during the installation have been surprising to me – relationships between works that I hadn't expected that have come about because of the way the work has been displayed. This seems to happen when works are overlaid, or can be seen through or beyond or between other works, they tend to overlap and merge – the colours of Paris Essex's *Crazy Blankets* meld into Clare Iles *Colour Compositions*; your own paintings pick up details from Clare's sculptures, Freddie's knits or Sharon's drawings;

the threads of Will's works feel as if they could have drifted across and settled onto other pieces; Stafford's Bull Heads become the head of a strange beast whose burden is art.

Did anything surprise you at all?

BCA I was surprised how well everything went together, the structures and the art works; given that we had no real design, just some barely articulated thoughts. But it is easy to underestimate one's own professionalism and unspoken visual intelligence. We have both been doing this a long time. It would be bad if we weren't good at it.

I was surprised at the quantity of textiles in the show. At the back of my mind I knew that a good many of the artists we wanted to show work with textiles. It seems to reflect the quantity of textiles in our lives, from clothes to bedding to car interiors. Maybe one of the things that signifies a modern art gallery is the lack of textiles and that is one of the reasons the show looks so different.

The show is a literal embodiment of the title '*Between Things*'. What made you think that would be such a good and apposite title?

KC I think the first time the title came to mind was in reference to us working together on the exhibition – us being the 'things' that the exhibition was going to develop between. It was such a broad term that it felt like it could apply in other ways as well, and that certainly feels like it's happened – quite literally you can see between things within the exhibition to view other things.

The addition of the supporting structures – the walls, panels, planks and other materials, also helped the

title come into its own as they allowed views between things. They have also helped create an environment that is so removed from the structure of the building that it feels like entering another world. I think (and hope) that this has served the art works well.

If art makes something novel, or provides a new view of the world, then it should be natural that it makes us feel as if we are somewhere new. Maybe this feeling is what makes people feel uncomfortable about art, because they are resistant to change and find new ideas or new viewpoints challenging to the status quo that they have become very familiar and comfortable with.

BCA For me the reverse is true. I am constantly questing for newness and am frustrated by the 'status quo', particularly in art. Ubiquitous post-modern contemporary art is such a drag. But mainly I am frustrated in my own work, which I find can be so round and round, and on and on. I keep making it because I'm holding out for the rare flashes of new. Showing my work in an installation environment like *Between Things* gives me those explosions of reinvigorating unfamiliarity.

During the installation process, I was very worried at times that the artists would be offended by the proximity and overlapping of their work with each other. Luckily it was all OK and the artists were all happy with the hang, but that was quite a risk which I think really pays off. Perhaps most importantly you gave me confidence and permission to do things I would not have otherwise done.

KC That's reciprocated – a shared responsibility can mean that boundaries can be pushed further than normal, as the blame can be shared!

You've said that you have wanted to have an exhibition at The Minorities for over 20 years. Now that has happened, is there anything you'd change if you were to do it again?

BCA I think the show is brilliant, an essay in everything that interests me as an artist and person, so I derive a huge amount of pleasure in looking at it. I am pleased to have the opportunity to collaborate on this exhibition at exactly the right time for me.

The body of paintings I am showing in *Between Things* have all been made in the last three years, since I became ill with ME/CFS (I am better now...). I feel I am only now after 30 years of working as an artist reaching full tilt, brushing the bottom of 'good'.

We've been skirting this question by talking about the genesis of the exhibition. But what the hell does it mean?

KC For me the fictions that art creates come out of reality – reality at the moment is extremely unsettled. For me the works represent the unknown futures that are just around the corner.

The faces, the threads that are slightly unraveled, the symbolism of mystic and mysterious forces, the chaotic collisions that resolve themselves into patterns, the formal objects that punctuate the show like constants, they can all be read as some sort of story of contemporary life. And within all that there is thankfully beauty and hope.

BCA My interpretation of the exhibition comes from when I was ill, which was an extreme time. I tried every alternative therapy going. A shaman come round the house to cleanse it. I underwent Angel therapy. We Feng Shui'd our bedroom. And I meditated really a huge amount.

I came to understand my paintings as spirit journeys and to feel the power of objects in a much more tangible way. I experienced a 'flipping' where you can live your life all normal and regular and then you can suddenly see the water spirits that live in the pond near our house. It may be illusory but that flipping is enriching for me. It gives everything potential meaning. What this exhibition does for me is visualise that flipping. Everything becomes more meaningful, more vivid by being in this matrix of handmade beauty.

We have spun a massive spiritual battery that enriches people just from them entering the space. In a generally post-spiritual age this is how we come face to face with the transcendental. You don't have to understand it, you just have to bathe in its glory. END



1



1



2

Celia Pym

- 1 *Tracksuit* 2016
tracksuit, wool and acrylic yarn [detail]
- 2 *Tracksuit* 2016
tracksuit, wool and acrylic yarn 65 x 150 x 20cm [installation view]
- 3 *Darned Fingertips* 2016
Japanese gardening gloves and wool 20 x 30cm



1



2

Clare Iles

- 1 *Colour Compositions 2017*
found wood, screws, paint [installation view]
- 2 *Legs Eleven 2017*
found wood, screws, paint





1



2

Freddie Robins

- 1 *Get me out of here* 2012
machine knitted wool, linen thread 40 x 80cm
- 2 *...dances Like* 2017
machine and hand-knitted wool, wadding, cherry wood
104 x 70 x 30cm
- 3 *Skin - a good thing to live in* 2002
machine knitted wool 180 x 200cm



3



1



2

Paris Essex

- 1 *Night Craze* 2016
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 200 x 150cm
[foreground] [detail]
- Zig Zag Bunny* 2015
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 180 x 160cm
[rear] [detail]
- 2 [left to right]
Mr Baboon 2016
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 160 x 140cm
Black Magic 2017
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 210 x 160cm
Night Craze 2016
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 200 x 150cm
Zig Zag Bunny 2015
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 180 x 160cm
Medicine Man 2016
knitted and crocheted wool and mixed fibres 180 x 160cm

Between Things

An exhibition for a busy world

Between Things is Ben Coode-Adams’ response to an invitation by Kaavous Clayton for a one-person exhibition at the Minorities Art Gallery, Colchester. Developed collaboratively the show presents a group of eight artists who explore similar concerns and who live, work in, or are connected to Essex.

In his development of the exhibition, Coode-Adams positioned it as a response to the monumental, often overpowering work of large-scale, usually male, sculptors and outsized installations. His intention was to make a show that is “obviously hand made, has colour, has pattern, has figuration, is small...”¹

Scale is fundamental to *Between Things* – the choice of space, the design of the installation, the dialogue between works – all combine to present an intimate viewing experience for the visitor. The construction of the exhibition’s physical framework is the first of Coode-Adams’ works – the materials originating from his farm, repurposed elm that reveals its source, recycled panels from his collaborative initiative: the Blackwater Polytechnic. This framework – the exhibition’s meta-structure – is expanded through the newly commissioned work by Claire Iles and Will Cruickshank. Iles expands her practice of “Drawing Sculpture”³ to make the pervasive *Colour Compositions* that flow throughout the installation and Cruickshank provides punctuation points of a different scale in his series of experimental concrete works *Untitled Bust* and *Untitled Vase with Concrete Plinth*.

The installation design is a response to both the

dominant architecture and the history of this converted Georgian Townhouse, – the Minorities – which has long held a cherished position in the East of England’s cultural landscape presenting a contemporary visual arts programme for over 60 years. This context has always provided both an opportunity and a challenge for artists to present their work beyond the confines (and the safety) of the traditional white cube gallery space. *Between Things* embraces this, presenting a highly articulated response and new proposition into this charged context.

In our ever-expanding digital age, we live in a world of infinite information, where what we are able to engage with and discover is almost limitless. This exhibition celebrates our physical world giving us time and space to have real experiences away from the virtual. Each exhibition view is tightly constructed – a selection of artworks in conversation – it encourages us to spend time, to dwell, yet also acknowledges that we are time poor.

In the entrance space to the exhibition we encounter an installation that acts initially as a barrier stopping us in our tracks. At first glance we can see a work by each artist – the extraordinary textile work of Paris Essex, *Bunny Stripe*, a synthesis of crochet, knit, wool and synthetic; Ben Coode-Adams’ lively *Balloon Burlesque* watercolour; Will Cruickshank’s delicately proportioned *Untitled bottle; The Imperfect (flesh coloured)* a poignant collaboration between Freddie Robins and Celia Pym; Pym’s *Darned Fingertips*; Sharon Leahy-Clark’s intricate silk painting *Maverick*;

Clare Iles constructivist *Two Tables and Stool* and Stafford Schmool’s witty *Team Pro Bull (coat hook)*. We are provided with a taste of everything, a snapshot, giving us permission and allowing us a quick encounter but tempting us to explore further for we want more...

As we advance into the exhibition we are offered a series of micro-environments, at first overwhelming but enticing us to spend longer, to dwell and engage. We are invited to delve deeper and make new connections with artists who are already in conversation with each other we are privileged to eavesdrop and in doing so make our own discoveries and meanings.

We are enticed by the physicality of the work, indeed the figure, the body; the people-shaped are very present here. The fantastical spectral images in both Coode-Adams’ watercolours *Radish Spirit* and *Flame Boy* and Sharon Leahy-Clark’s intricate watercolour and embroidered works *Horse Magic* and *On the other side from you*. The very material absent bodies in both Robins’ knitted *A good thing to live in* and Pym’s rescued *Tracksuit*. We are given further clues through the works’ titling, sometimes straightforward descriptor of form or colour, *Orange, Untitled joint test* sometimes poetic clue, *Lost Souls, Get me out of here* and consistently humorous, *Some Made it, Some Didn’t*.

Colour is everywhere – confident, playful and celebratory. Colours are riotous in Paris Essex’ *Night Craze* evolved through their unscripted collaboration; the intense palettes in Iles’ work *Legs Eleven* a response to the furniture’s original colour and in Cruickshank’s merging of wool and concrete *Untitled Bust* colour is both subtle and incongruous.

The exhibition moves fluidly with a lightness of touch through categorisations and definitions of art, craft and design. These do not feel useful or perhaps even necessary for our engagement, knowledge or enjoyment. The artists share a love of the material and the labour of each work is evident and celebrated. The production of each work assertively embraces the parameters of the material and its provenance. Leahy-Clark effortlessly changes medium working with embroidery on linen, watercolour on both silk and handmade paper as well as in ceramic. Naturally there is a strong sense of the sustainable here whether mended (Pym’s *Dimple* originated as a sports sock) recycled (Iles disused furniture) or repurposed

(Stafford Schmool’s bicycle seats and handle bars *BMX Bull (coat hook)* and *RonRay* part of an Eames Lounge chair playfully referencing both design and art history.)

The artists in *Between Things* have shared concerns, and it is tempting to identify this as a trend or movement. We might even look to historical precedents – the activities of the Arts and Crafts movement and the creative and socially active Victorian, William Morris.⁴ However, the vision of this exhibition does not want to re-instate the values of the past, but is forward-looking and embraces the now. It speaks to our 21st century concerns in a world with issues that can feel overwhelming – climate change, global war, hunger and poverty, mass immigration, the endless possibilities that the digital provides, the need for social action, the desire to make a difference.

For Coode-Adams as for Morris – art is crucial to our daily lives; craft and design are omnipresent in our homes and on our streets. Artists have the power to show us the world differently, support us to make a change and elevate our everyday lives. As Morris proposed: “What business have we with art at all unless all can share it?”⁵ *Between Things* proposes that we do.

Katherine Wood
2017

¹ Ben Coode-Adams email correspondence 21 February 2017.

² *Blackwater Polytechnic* was established in 2013 by Ben Coode-Adams and Freddie Robins as an informal educational establishment to bridge the gap between aesthetic quality, design and practical making in the construction industry. www.blackwaterpolytechnic.com

³ www.clareiles.co.uk

⁴ William Morris (1834-1896) was a leading artist and designer in the Arts and Crafts movement and a prolific novelist, philosopher and social activist. The late 19th Century Arts and Crafts movement in the UK advocated a truth to materials and the handmade as a response to the growing industrialisation.

⁵ William Morris Letter to Manchester Examiner, March 14, 1883.



1

Sharon Leahy-Clark
 1 *Maverick* 2016 watercolour on silk [detail]
 2 *Some made it, some didn't* 2009 glazed clay on MDF shelves
 3 *Flock* 2011 glazed clay, wall mounted
The Gatherer 2008 hand stitch on linen 36 x 30cm



2

3





1



2

Stafford Schmool

- 1 *(Vintage) Eames Potatoes* 2000
screenprint on potato sack in plywood frame
45 x 96 x 8cm
- 2 *Team Pro Bull* (coat hook) 2017
bicycle saddle and handlebars
51 x 33 x 15cm

Will Cruickshank

1 *Untitled* 2016 weaving/carving study
6 x 44 x 6cm

2 *Untitled* 2017 vase with concrete plinth
34 x 176 x 34cm



1



2

[Ben Coode-Adams](#) was born in Essex in 1965. Coode-Adams studied Fine Art at The University of Edinburgh and Art in Architecture at the University of East London. Most of his career he has produced large scale sculptures for housing associations, local authorities and private clients. His expertise in audience development led to projects in museums funded by NESTA (National Endowment for Science Technology & the Arts), the Wellcome Trust, the Arts Council and the Manchester Museum, developing ideas about communicating complicated subtle narratives which turned into a series of performance projects about exploration, produced with Grizedale Arts, Hastings Museum and the Banff Centre in Canada.

Coode-Adams has always made drawings alongside his sculptural practice. So when in 2013 he fell ill, unable to produce sculptures, he turned to watercolours which he had exhibited periodically, in Berlin in 2004 and Mainz 2006. In 2008 he was shortlisted for the Jerwood Drawing Prize. In 2016 he was shortlisted for the Sunday Times Watercolour Prize and this year for the Royal Watercolour Society prize. This new work led to an exhibition with Wayfarers Gallery in Brooklyn, New York. In 2016 he exhibited with his wife Freddie Robins at the Sentinel Gallery, Wivenhoe and at Galerie dreiZehn in Berlin.

Typically Coode-Adams’ painting involves a quantum delving into the spirit world from which a host of spectral personages flood onto the page. Veils of beautiful colour coalesce and oscillate, spun from the lower world in which lurk truth and beauty. He brings a damp ancient magical psycho-folk wind to the page, the heady breath of the bosky mire. He mucks around with faeries, sprites and spirits, embracing the pink shiny glittery as well as the massive scary teeth, truly awesome power of death wielding elementals. It’s not nice in the woods.

www.bencoodeadams.com

[Celia Pym](#) makes darned and embroidered textiles and public textile events. She likes a heavy darn and the feel of really worn down wool, the evidence of use in holes and where they occur, working with other people’s problems and the tenderness that can come with repair. She works surfaces closely like a detective and says about darned holes: “I love the wobbly frayed edges against, confident solid filled in spots of colour.” Selected exhibitions, collaborations and prizes:

Shortlisted finalist *LOEWE Craft Prize, 2017*, COAM, Madrid; *What Do I Need to do to Make it OK?* 2015-2018 Pump House Gallery, London, and touring; 59 Sorties, 2016, with Nouveau Musee National de Monaco; Parallel Practices Residency (Crafts Council/Kings Cultural Institute), 2014-2016, with Dr Richard Wingate exploring anatomy and mending in KCL’s Dissecting Room.

Pym was born in 1978 in London. She lives and works in London.

www.celiapym.com

[Clare Iles](#) was born in Leigh-on-Sea in 1971. She studied a BA Fine art Colchester School of Art and MA Fine art Norwich School of Art and has taught on Fine art Degree and FE courses Degree at Colchester School of Art since 2004. Clare exhibited in *EASTinternational* in 2002 and has undertaken Arts Council funded research trips to Western India and Jerusalem. She lives and works in Colchester.

www.clareiles.co.uk

[Freddie Robins](#) is an artist who challenges our perception of knitting as craft. Her work is internationally renowned, her practice crossing the boundaries of art, design and craft. She lives and works in Essex and London. She studied at Middlesex Polytechnic (1984-87) and the Royal College of Art (1987-89) where she is now Senior Tutor and Reader in Textiles.

She predominantly produces work for public exhibition, most recently Showtime at *COLLECT* at the Saatchi Gallery, London, *Liberties*, The Exchange, Penzance and *What do I have to do to make it OK?* at Forty Hall, Enfield. In recent years she has exhibited with the Blackwater Polytechnic through Sluice – as part of Exchange Rates: The Bushwick Expo, Theodore:Art, Brooklyn, New York, USA and exhibited in Artifex gallery, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania. In 2012 she was on the UK shortlist for the prestigious *Women to Watch* exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, USA.

Her work is held in private and public collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, Nottingham Castle Museum, Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum and KODE – kunstmuseene i Bergen, Norway.

www.freddierobins.com

[Paris Essex is Carolyn Clewer and Tiphaine de Lussy](#). Tiphaine, the Cockney Parisienne met Carolyn, the Essex girl, at the Royal College of Art back in the ’80s and since then they have joyfully collaborated on knit and fashion projects. Each Crazy Blanket is the result of a kind of Paris Essex parlour game, playing with chance, instinct, knit and crochet.

www.parisessex.com

[Sharon Leahy-Clark](#) graduated from the Royal College of Art MA Fine Art, Painting in 2001 and from Middlesex University in 1999 with a BA Hons (1st Class) Fine Art. She also has a BSC Hons in Sociology from Middlesex University. She has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally (including in Japan, Hong Kong, Berlin) and has been the recipient of several awards including the Helen Chadwick Memorial Prize.

[Stafford Schmool](#) (né Andrew Stafford b.1965) studied product design at WSCD under Oliver Hawkins and at Kingston Polytechnic where Simon Morgan and Frank Drake were special influences.

Schmool works collaboratively across design, architecture and art as consultant, creative and maker. He has built small buildings; galleries for Kate MacGarry; jewellery displays for Alice Cicolini; a Juke box with Michael Marriott; a Swiss cheese door wedge; “Isserley” a 25’ Dutch Cruiser and the Up/Down table for SONOS. Currently he is designing kitchen products, a new build detached house in Essex, and refurbishing an 1852 family home in Regents Park.

Schmool enjoys talking & teaching, and is slowly writing texts to accompany Nigel Haynes’ photographs of his “Queertools” collection.

www.andrewstafford.com

queertools.org

[Will Cruickshank](#) studied Sculpture at Manchester Metropolitan University. He has been involved in many exhibitions, projects and commission nationally and internationally.

www.willcruickshank.net

[Linda Theophilus](#) is an exhibition organiser, curator and artist. Her particular interest is exhibition design and installation, a discipline which underpins her own practice.

Formerly Linda Girling, she began her career in the arts at the Minories in 1980, where she was trained by the Director, Jeremy Theophilus, She was Acting Director from 1986 to 87.

She was Head of Exhibition at the Crafts Council from 1990-95 and has since worked freelance, returning to the Minories to work for firstsite with Katherine Wood, as both a curator and an artist. She is currently an Associate of *A Fine Line Cultural Practice* and a member of Cuckoo Farm Studios.

[Katherine Wood](#) was founding director of firstsite (1994-2012). firstsite began its life programming the Minories Art Gallery (1994-2008) before opening in its purpose built space in 2011. Katherine led a programme of contemporary work showcasing local, national and international artists, pioneered new learning and artist development strategies and extended the reach of the programme beyond the gallery walls. She has worked with Linda Theophilus on many occasions including Linda’s curation of the seminal exhibition – Peter Collingwood: Master Weaver (1998) and Bodies in Clay (1997).

Since 2012 Katherine has developed her freelance practice working on a range of projects with artists, museums and galleries across the UK. Her consultancy Woodworks delivers strategic advice and services for the visual arts sector building new connections between artists and audiences.

She is Chair of the Ragdoll Foundation, a fellow of the RSA and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Colchester School of Art & Design/University of Essex in 2012.

This catalogue was published to accompany *Between Things*, an exhibition shown at The Minorities Galleries from Saturday 15 April to Saturday 10 June 2017

The exhibition and layout was created through collaboration between Ben Coode-Adams and Kaavous Clayton, and showed work by Ben Coode-Adams, Celia Pym, Clare Iles, Freddie Robins, Paris Essex, Sharon Leahy-Clark, Stafford Schmool and Will Cruickshank.

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