

BUILDING FOR AN ARTISTIC FUTURE



Main picture: The MFA programme will be a particularly strong setting for work in the moving image. Left: Fine Art student in the Ruskin's High Street studios

Transcript of interviews at the Ruskin School of Art

Hanneke Grootenboer, Head of the Ruskin School of Art

I started this year as the Head of School and I am thoroughly enjoying it – what I say to everyone is that actually I'm hanging out with the cool people. This is a very exciting year for the Ruskin because we are having a new building built – that is to say our old building at the Bullingdon Road is now in the process of being destroyed – it will be really completely flattened, everything removed and then a new building will be built, really from scratch.

Rebecca Ajulu-Bushell, 3rd-year student, Fine Art

People here make such vastly different work and it's very interesting to see how 20 people in a year can go off in completely different directions. There are those people who do films, who do installations, who do sculpture – and they need a bit more space, a little bit more resources – saws, etc!

Corin Sworn, MFA Course Leader

There are 7.1 sound editing facilities, there are amazing facilities for producing things like 3D printing, or using a laser cutter, then there are more traditional forms of printing, like screen printing, and then there are casting resin workshops, a wood workshop, metal workshop, so it allows people to make it theirs.

Hanneke Grootenboer

Another exciting thing this year is that we are launching our new MFA programme that was designed by the course leaders, Elizabeth Price and Corin Sworn.

Corin Sworn

It's the questions that they bring to us as much as the way that we can field those questions that makes the master's

programme. In the process of making it, it's been really interesting listening to different professors at the school talk about the things they've enjoyed most in education themselves, things that they would like to produce, and their hopes.

Rebecca Ajulu-Bushell

Everybody is quite close here, and because the year groups are small and we're all in close proximity and because your tutors are more of a sounding board and almost like a critical friend, it really pushes your work forwards. I remember doing my first film and that was my move into that medium, and at the same time as I was producing this piece of work Elizabeth Price had just won the Turner Prize for a film that she had produced, and it's bizarre having that kind of close access to people of that magnitude, but it makes everything that you're doing a little bit more important.

Hanneke Grootenboer

Students often come here with some kind of a project, namely their own art, and they want to develop that. What we are trying to do here is help them develop that project as an independent thinker, as an independent artist. Artistic practice is partly based – or rooted – in research, and that is why the place within Oxford is so very important. We are one of the very best art schools in the country; we're top rank. Depending on which league table you look at, we're either the first or second, so I think we have no problems there with what we want to keep things this way. And seeing the building first go down and then go up, and now seeing the MFA programme slowly, from being designed on paper, slowly forming into a body of students is very exciting indeed.