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PRESS RELEASE

Reflections: Lakeside Open Competition Exhibition Celebrates Contemporary Drawing from Across the UK

Saturday 1 – Sunday 30 August 2026

Lakeside Arts, Djanogly Gallery, University of Nottingham

Free Admission

PRESS PREVIEW: Friday 31 July, 11am-1pm

Images available [here](#).

Lakeside Arts is delighted to present *Reflections: UK Drawing Today*, a group exhibition showcasing five artists selected through a national open call for drawing. The exhibition, opening on Saturday 1 August at the University of Nottingham's arts centre, highlights the diversity, imagination and continued relevance of drawing as a contemporary artistic practice.

The competition was inspired by Lakeside's spring 2026 exhibitions led by artists Penny McCarthy and Fleur Patrick, which explored how drawing can be used to understand the past, engage with art history and interpret the world around us. Following the success of these exhibitions, Lakeside Arts invited submissions from artists across the UK working in drawing and drawing-related practices.

All works were judged anonymously by artists Penny McCarthy, Fleur Patrick, and Sophie, representing the university's student curating group Crop-Up. From a wide-ranging field of entries, five artists were selected for exhibition, each demonstrating a distinct and compelling approach to drawing today: Louisa Chambers, Nic Gear, Hondartza Fraga, Andy Black and Gary Simmonds.

Penny McCarthy said "Drawing is a way of thinking through looking. It records moments of attention, memory, and imagination, inviting us to reflect on the world and our place within it. The diversity of submissions was inspiring, and these five artists' works reveal the richness, vitality, and expressive power of the medium."

Working from the experiences of everyday suburban life, Louisa Chambers depicts spaces at the edges of urban environments. Combining observation and memory, her images balance reality and imagination, creating scenes that feel simultaneously familiar and fantastical.

Nic Gear's practice is rooted in walking and direct engagement with the landscape. Using found materials cast in plaster alongside handmade oak gall ink, his drawings reference maps,

pathways and contour lines while developing a unique visual language of movement, place and experience.

Hondartza Fraga's drawings explore the concept of scale, often responding to subjects that are difficult to comprehend fully because they are either too vast or too small. Drawing inspiration from sources such as X-rays, the sea and outer space, the work invites audiences to consider the limits of perception and understanding.

Andy Black works from a personal archive of around 200 shapes drawn from life and carefully recorded in sketchbooks. These collected observations become the building blocks for new drawings that construct imaginative and invented spaces.

Beginning with an underlying drawn grid, Gary Simmonds creates a framework for visual exploration. Through the fluidity of watercolour, colour, light and time unfold gradually across the surface, producing rhythmic compositions that evoke moments of changing light.

Together, the exhibition demonstrates the breadth of contemporary drawing practice. While each artist approaches drawing differently, all share an interest in using the medium as a tool for investigation, reflection and discovery.

Alongside the exhibition, Lakeside Arts will host a programme of free drawing workshops throughout the summer, including SEND sessions, providing opportunities for visitors of all ages and abilities to experiment with drawing.

For more information about the exhibition and workshops, please visit the Lakeside Arts website or speak to a member of staff.

Ashley Gallant, Head of Visual Arts at Lakeside Arts said “We are thrilled to be bringing this exhibition to Nottingham. Reflections demonstrate the broad approaches to drawing in the UK today. From artists drawing the edges of their gardens to the edges of the universe.”

Reflections: UK Drawing Today runs from Saturday 1 August to Sunday 30 August 2026. Entry is free, and visitors can learn more at lakesidearts.org.uk/Reflections

-- ENDS --

For more information and to arrange interviews, please contact Lakeside Arts' Marketing and Communications Managers Mária Konyelicska-Visky maria.konyelicska-visky@nottingham.ac.uk and Amy Steels amy.steels@nottingham.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Lakeside Arts, University of Nottingham

Lakeside Arts is the University of Nottingham's public arts centre presenting a programme of visual arts, manuscripts and museum exhibitions, as well as music, theatre, dance, children and families' productions. Its venues include the Djanogly Gallery, opened in 1992, that stages a year-round programme of 20th-century and contemporary art exhibitions complemented by a lively programme of public lectures and learning activities. Recent exhibitions have included: *Material Worlds* (2025), *Cosmic Titans* (2024-2025), *Saad Qureshi: Conversations Before the End of Time* (2024), *Reimag(in)ing the Victorians* (2023-2024), *Rhythm & Geometry: Constructivist Art in Britain Since 1951* (2023), *Michael Forbes: Blk this & Blk that... a state of urgency* (2022).

lakesidearts.org.uk | Facebook and Instagram: @LakesideArts

LISTING INFORMATION

Exhibition Dates: Saturday 1 – Sunday 30 August 2026

Opening Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-4pm | Sunday 12noon-4pm (Closed Mondays)

Address: Djanogly Gallery, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD

Admission: Free

IMAGES



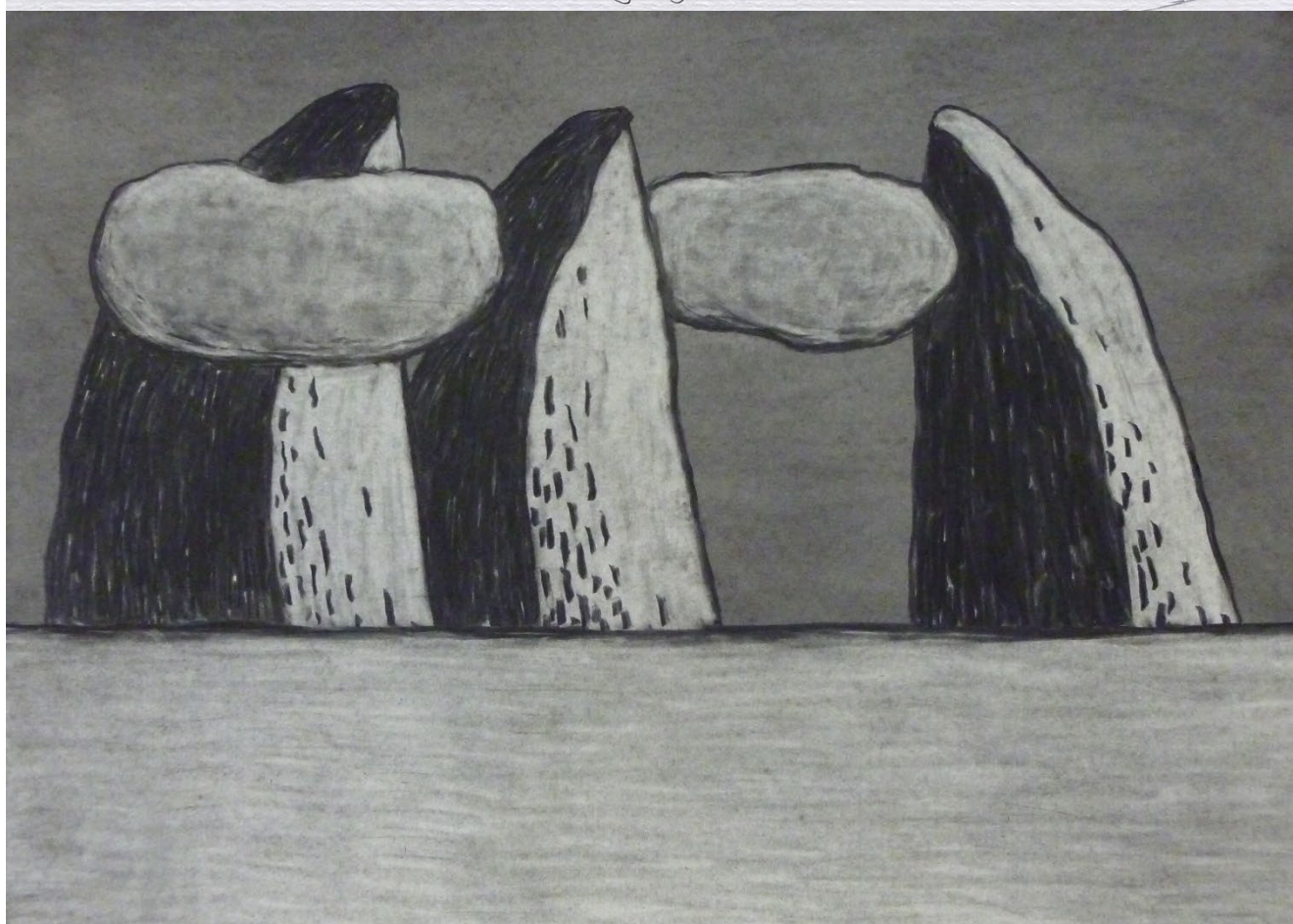
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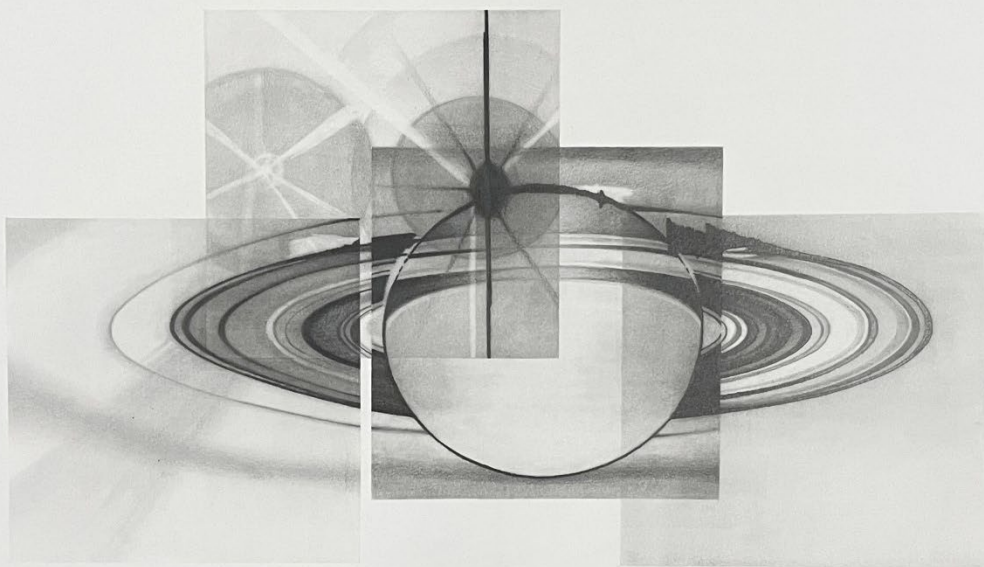
Rising [Study II]

Nic Grav 2026



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Scar
 Flights of fancy!
 2. Planning to be a poet
 Stopped
 went to
 see Benetton
 in
 21/1/20

Image credits:

Birds of Prey, 2025 by Louisa Chambers

Rising [Study II], 2026 by Nic Gear

Cliffs & Clouds, 2019 by Andy Black

In Saturn's Shadow, 2020 by Hondartza Fraga

Soar-flights of fancy, 2026 by Gary Simmonds

FREE DRAWING WORKSHOPS

Workshops start on the hour at: 10.30am, 11.30am, 1.15pm & 2.15pm. Please sign up for workshops at the gallery front desk or on 0115 846 7777.

Workshop dates:

Tuesday 4 August

Wednesday 5 August (SEND sessions)

Thursday 6 August

Friday 7 August

Tuesday 11 August

Wednesday 12 August (SEND sessions)

Thursday 13 August

Friday 14 August

Tuesday 18 August

Wednesday 19 August (SEND sessions)

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