

PRESS RELEASE

17/10/22

**JERWOOD/FVU AWARDS TRAVELS TO YORKSHIRE IN A NEW PARTNERSHIP
WITH LEEDS ART GALLERY.**



JERWOOD/FVU AWARDS 2022 RECIPIENTS ARE SOOJIN CHANG & MICHAEL.

Leeds Art Gallery, Leeds, 18 November 2022 – 22 January 2023

For images please view and download via this shared Google drive folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vj8UMCM3ws1I6MKkSHa3CMRCLFthbpVm?usp=sharing>

Jerwood/FVU Awards 2022 travels to Leeds Art Gallery in November from Jerwood Space in London. The Leeds iteration of the **Jerwood/FVU Awards 2022** marks the final edition of the **Jerwood/FVU Awards** in its present form after ten years of commissioning early-career artists. We are thrilled to bring the 2022 recipients **Soojin Chang** and **Michael**. to Leeds and share these ambitious works with new audiences.

The exhibition in Leeds introduces new elements to both artists' presentations and builds on their shows at Jerwood Space earlier this year. Michael. will be co-curating an exhibition of artworks from Leeds Art Gallery's collection, responding to themes in his work *cleave to the BLACK*, including the question 'What would it be like to live on a land that loves you back?' Artist and collaborator **Ashley Holmes** has produced a new sound work that will play in the space.

Soojin Chang's Jerwood/FVU Awards 2022 commissioned film *BXBY* (2022) will be exhibited off-site at Project Space in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds (hosted by the **Centre for Audio Visual Experimentation (CAVE)**). At Leeds Art Gallery, Soojin Chang will premiere *Sacrifice to the Seaworm* (2022), a new multi-part film installation featuring a reading, a purification rite, and a burial mound.

For their **Jerwood/FVU Awards 2022** commissioned films, **Soojin Chang** and **Michael.** have taken an exciting and challenging approach to ideas of difference and inclusion. In Soojin Chang's case, *BXBY* is a radical, semi-fictional work which explores the fusion of interspecies life. Michael.'s installation *cleave to the BLACK* depicts through a moving-image triptych, the continuing legacy of Black male experience. Short filmed interviews with the artists can be viewed here ([Michael.](#) and [Soojin](#)).

The film *BXBY* features explicit content of a deer being culled and cervical self-experimentation. Therefore, Leeds Art Gallery has reached the decision to show this work offsite as our high number of family visitors would be precluded from viewing the film. Our partnership with University of Leeds has allowed us to work together to create a dedicated screening space for *BXBY* with an associated engagement programme for student and general audiences. Leeds Art Gallery has an ongoing collaborative relationship with CAVE, having shown Georgina Starr's 2003 film *Big V* in 2019, a co-commission between Leeds Art Gallery and the Contemporary Art Society.

Soojin Chang - *Sacrifice to the Seaworm* remaps an interior landscape to the processing of pain and violence through the vehicle of sacrificial practices. Formed collaboratively with Tenzin Mingyur Paldron (writer) and Jade O'Belle (artist), the exhibition features Paldron's work on self-immolation and suffering, which follows a historic letter and parable shared by peace activist and Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh and the actions of 170 Tibetans. The title of the show refers both to the sea gods who launch the first birthing in *BXBY* and to the burial mound at the centre of this new installation. Created with specimens borrowed from the Natural Sciences Collections at Leeds Museums & Galleries, the offering imagines a meeting of death practices to facilitate our multispecies fate, which is very much at stake.

Soojin Chang – *BXBY* is a year-long performance project that merges forms of semi-fictional documentary and ritual practice, following Chang as a hybrid, shape-shifting being trying to learn to reproduce. Drawing from chimeric figures within creation stories of the British Isles and the diasporic cultures of Chang and her collaborators (Choulay Mech, Jade O'Belle, Anika Ahuja, and Aditya Surya Taruna a.k.a Kasimyn), Chang positions her own hybrid body – part animal, part woman, part alien –

as a site of technological interaction and as a locus of ongoing experiment. Sampling diverse scientific methods such as IVF, biohacking, and voluntary self-touch, *BXBY* addresses the legacy of colonial science to open out into wider affirmation of queer, interspecies kinship and reliance. From this position, *BXBY* aims to spur a purposeful discussion on notions of sacrifice, animality, objecthood and in/visibility; looking in particular to animist techniques of embodying and remembering.

Content note: BXBY contains graphic reproductive content, direct reference to terminated pregnancy and imagery of the culling and dissection of a deer.

Michael.- *cleave to the BLACK* - echoes the art-historical tradition of the painted triptych in a three-screen video projection that offers a panoramic perspective on the legacies of the past that continue to leave an indelible mark on contemporary Black male experience. Alluding to episodes from the Bible and stories from African folklore and cosmology, the piece brings a subtle overtone of parable and myth to its carefully composed and quietly haunting scenes. Moving through a series of gradually unfolding transitions, the piece celebrates slowness as a precondition of recovery and care and also as a lens through which the movements of the Black body attain a distinctive state of poise and grace. Made in close dialogue with a group of Black men from different London communities, *cleave to the BLACK* is a work of authentic, personal expression and evocative, atmospheric poetry.

The **Jerwood/FVU Awards** is a prestigious commissioning scheme that has supported early-career moving-image artists since 2012. The awards have established an esteemed role in the contemporary visual arts, by awarding £25,000 for artists to develop new artworks at a pivotal moment in their practice. Selection of the awards this year was made by a panel of experts, including award-winning visual artists **Heta Patel** and **Rehana Zaman**.

Lilli Geissendorfer, Director of Jerwood Arts said: *“The awards support exceptional artistic voices to create new works using moving-image, often exploring challenging and timely subjects. We are excited to work with our new partners at Leeds Art Gallery to share them with audiences in Yorkshire, deepening our engagement with artist filmmakers across the UK.”*

Steven Bode, Director of FVU said: *“The Jerwood/FVU Awards have always aspired to be bold – in the platform they create for new, emerging talents and in the licence they give for artists to respond to contemporary subjects and themes. This year’s commissions by Soojin Chang and Michael. are no exception: works that are powerfully of the moment, and which draw upon the past to urge us to think ahead and imagine a different future.”*

Jane Bhojroo, Principal Keeper at Leeds Art Gallery added: *“We are thrilled to be part of a new three-way partnership with the prestigious Jerwood/FVU Awards. We look forward to showcasing Soojin Chang and Michael., two incredibly innovative and ground-breaking artists.”*

More info on the Jerwood/FVU Awards: <https://www.jerwoodfvuawards.com/>

Dr Sam Belinfante, Assistant Professor of Fine Art and director of CAVE: *“CAVE was set up at the University of Leeds to facilitate complex, interdisciplinary conversations amongst ambitious audio-visual installations. The chance to collaborate with FVU and Leeds Art Gallery allows us to push further the possibilities of this kind of deep technical and theoretical play. We’re excited to stage such a boundary defying film work by Soojin Chang, a fascinating artist working at the intersection of video, performance and installation.”*

- ENDS -

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Listing information

Leeds Art Gallery: Michael.s cleave to the BLACK and Soojin Chang’s Sacrifice to the Seaworm

Date: 18 November 2022 – 22 January 2023

Admission: Free

Address: Leeds Art Gallery, The Headrow, Leeds, LS13AA

Opening Times: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 5pm, Sunday, 11am – 3pm

Project Space, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds: Soojin Chang’s BXBY [Jerwood/FVU Awards 2022 commission]

Date: 18 November - 03 December 2022

Admission: Free

Address: Project Space, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University Road, University of Leeds, LS2 9JT

Opening Times: Wednesday – Sunday, 12 noon – 6pm

For press enquiries please contact Gina Churchill-Straffon, Audience Development Officer or Lizzy Wilson, Head of Audience Development on marketing.museums@leeds.gov.uk

For images please view and download via Dropbox:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vj8UMCM3ws1I6MKkSHa3CMRCLFthbpVm?usp=sharing>

For further information on the Jerwood/FVU Awards: www.jerwoodfvuawards.com, www.jerwoodarts.org, www.fvu.co.uk

For social media: #JerwoodFVUawards @JerwoodArts @FilmVidUmbrella @LeedsArtGallery @fahacs

Artist's Biographies:

Michael. (*pronouns he/him*) is a Black British artist-filmmaker and community worker, born and based in London, UK. His work explores the poetics of blackness and being. Michael. was formerly known as Michael McLeod and has since dropped his surname due to its historic colonial context.

Soojin Chang (*pronouns she/they interchangeable*) is a Korean-American performance artist, filmmaker, ritual practitioner, and researcher. Chang's practice negotiates contemporary ethics, colonial inheritance, and interspecies reliance through animist methodology. Current and recent interventions include: *Dog Eggs* at Asia Culture Centre, Gwangju (2022); *a heifer would be needed for the sacrifice* at Tramway for Take Me Somewhere (2021); *State of Possession* at ICA London and CCA Glasgow (2019); *Death Ritual* at Sa Sa Art Projects, Phnom Penh (2019); and *Hair Eggs* at MoMA PS1 (2018).

Notes to Editors:

About FVU: Film and Video Umbrella commissions, curates and produces artists' moving-image works, and presents them in collaboration with galleries and other cultural partners across the UK. Since the late 1980s, FVU has been at the forefront of the vibrant and expanding area of moving-image practice, promoting innovation through its support of some of the most exciting figures on the contemporary scene. During this time, the organisation has commissioned and produced more than 200 different artists' projects, ranging from ambitious multi-screen installations to short film and video pieces, as well as online commissions. fvu.co.uk

About Jerwood Arts: Jerwood Arts is the leading independent funder dedicated to supporting UK artists, curators and producers to develop and thrive. We enable transformative opportunities for individuals across art forms, supporting imaginative awards, bursaries, fellowships, projects, programmes and commissions. We are committed to supporting artistic freedom of expression and being as inclusive as possible across all our work. We present new work and bring people from across the arts together through our exhibitions and events at Jerwood Space, London, as well as across the UK and online. jerwoodarts.org

About Leeds Art Gallery: Founded in 1888, Leeds Art Gallery has strong collections of 19th and 20th century British painting and sculpture, widely considered to be one of the best outside national collections. With half a million visitors every year, it is one of the city's most visited attractions and is free to visitors. Alongside an extensive painting and sculpture collection, the gallery holds a significant collection of moving-image work by artists: Suzanne Lacy, Hilary Lloyd, Bruce McLean, Rosalind Nashashibi, Martine Syms, and Mark Wallinger amongst others. To accompany the collection Leeds Art Gallery presents a dynamic and diverse programme comprising exhibitions, commissions, acquisitions and projects by artists whose work is globally significant and locally relevant. In recent years, Leeds Art Gallery has launched British Art Show 8, established Yorkshire Sculpture International and has co-commissioned major new moving-image works by Shezad Dawood and Georgina Starr <https://museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk/leeds-art-gallery>.

About The Centre for Audio Visual Experimentation (CAVE): CAVE was initiated by [Dr Sam Belinfante](#) in 2016, in collaboration with staff and students from across the Faculty of Art, Humanities and Cultures at the University of Leeds. Even though CAVE finds its natural home in Project Space in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, the Centre initiates and supports projects across Yorkshire and nationally, through collaborations with a range of practitioners and institutions. It is the ambition of CAVE to become the foremost centre for investigations into the 'audio-visual' within contemporary art theory and practice. CAVE has worked with a wide range of leading academics and practitioners, including composer/performers David Toop and Juliet Fraser as well as the Turner Prize winning artist Susan Philipsz. CAVE, as an acronym, playfully conjures the memory of ancient spaces, environments that have been both carved into the rock and have manifested entirely by chance. Like the enigmatic sites that lay before it, the formation of CAVE is as much the product of existing research structures as it is the carving out of new spaces and methodologies. Vitally however, these enigmatic sites are often cited as both the birthplace of art and of 'the human'. The radical work of CAVE will necessarily incorporate an archeology of media and its interconnected modes of thought. <https://ahc.leeds.ac.uk/fine-art-research-innovation/doc/centre-audiovisual-experimentation-cave>

About the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies: The School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies is one of the largest and most exciting centres in the UK for aspiring cultural practitioners — artists, theorists, curators, historians of art — to hone their creative and critical skills and broaden their intellectual horizons. We are an internationally recognised leader in research and research-led teaching in the history of art, art gallery and museum studies, cultural and media studies, and fine art. ahc.leeds.ac.uk/fine-art

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About the University of Leeds: The University of Leeds is one of the largest higher education institutions in the UK, with more than 39,000 students from more than 137 different countries. We are renowned globally for the quality of our teaching and research. We are a values-driven university, and we harness our expertise in research and education to help shape a better future for humanity, working through collaboration to tackle inequalities, achieve societal impact and drive change. The University is a member of the Russell Group of research-intensive universities, and is a major partner in the Alan Turing, Rosalind Franklin and Royce Institutes www.leeds.ac.uk

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Artists selected for the Jerwood/FVU Awards to date:

[2020: *Hindsight*. Commissions: Guy Oliver and Reman Sadani](#)

[2019: *Going, Gone*. Commissions: Webb-Ellis and Richard Whitby](#)

[2018: *Unintended Consequences*. Commissions: Maeve Brennan and Imran Perretta](#)

[2017: *Neither One Thing or Another*. Commissions: Patrick Hough and Lawrence Lek](#)

[2016: *Borrowed Time*. Commissions: Karen Kramer and Alice May Williams](#)

[2014-15: *What Will They See of Me?*. Commissions: Lucy Clout and Marianna Simnett. Shortlist: Kate Cooper and Anne Haaning](#)

[2012-13: *Tomorrow Never Knows*. Commissions: Ed Atkins and Naheed Raza., Shortlist: Emma Hart and Corin Sworn](#)