

Related Events

Tannery Tour: Harriet Bowman

Wednesday 8 August 2018, 6–7.30pm
Free, booking essential

Join artist Harriet Bowman to explore Bristol's Thomas Ware & Sons tannery. Learn about the processes and production of traditional leather tanneries.

This tour includes a 10 minute walk from Spike Island to the tannery.

Making Luck Workshop: Harriet Bowman

Saturday 1 September 2018
Sessions take place at 2–3pm and 3.30–4.30pm
Free, booking essential

Join artist Harriet Bowman to make clay horseshoe sculptures while discussing ideas and folk stories about luck (good and bad). Each horseshoe will later be fired and added to the exhibition.

Book for events online at www.spikeisland.org.uk, call 0117 929 2266 or visit reception.

Spike Island

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Visitor Information

Gallery open Tuesday to Sunday, 12–5pm
(during exhibitions only).

Admission to the gallery is free.

Café open Monday to Friday, 8.30am–5pm
Saturday and Sunday, 10am–5pm.

Spike Island aims to be a fully accessible building.

Artist Edition: Harriet Bowman *Horseshoe*

2018
Vulcan black stoneware clay (fired)
Edition of 10
£70 inc. VAT
Size variable (from 100 x 98mm to 140 x 130mm)
Harriet Bowman's talismans are handmade ceramic horseshoes which offer luck to all. These objects hold something more than their physical form; when kept or passed on, a horseshoe is said to bring good fortune.

Please enquire at reception for further information and to purchase or visit our online shop at www.spikeisland.org.uk/shop



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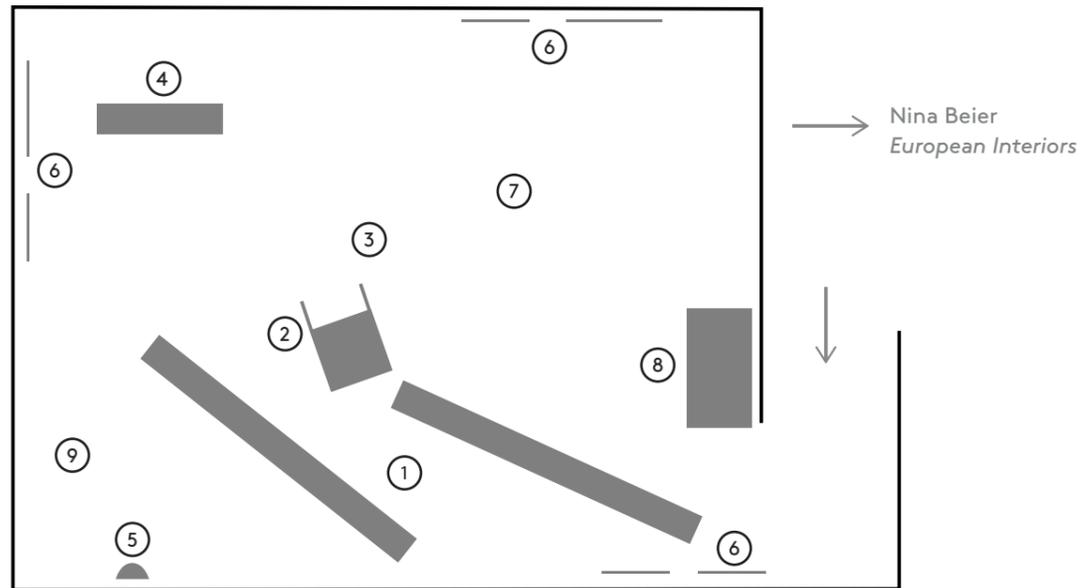
Harriet Bowman's *All Round-er (sad sale)* is supported by The Gane Trust, Thomas Ware & Sons Ltd. and Artisans.

Exhibition Guide

Harriet Bowman *All Round-er (sad sale)*

21 July to 23 September 2018

Spike Island



- ① *(Car) display unit* (2018)
Steel, display items (mixed media)
- ② *and the atoms began to freely pass to the larger body* (2018)
Car seat, steel tubing, wet moulded leather hide
- ③ *all rounder sad sale* (2018)
Magazine print and blotting paper
- ④ *Midnight Gemini* (2018)
Milliput, clay, FIMO and varnish
- ⑤ *Workers Bell* (2018)
Factory bell
- ⑥ *Cheap Luck* (500 keyrings) (2018)
Hand-embossed leather, metal rings
- ⑦ *Horseshoes* (2018)
Vulcan black stoneware clay (fired), various locations
- ⑧ *Stacked leather moulds (obstruction)* (2018)
Moulded leather hats
- ⑨ Accessories: glossed car mats, leather flats
Various locations

Harriet Bowman (b. 1990, based in Bristol) works with sculpture and writing. For her solo exhibition, *All Round-er (sad sale)*, Bowman presents a new body of ceramic, leather, metal and sound works based on an ongoing narrative. This text – a key part of the artist’s process similar to making preliminary sketches – follows a fictional character called Fled who explores Bowman’s own curiosities for cars, horsepower and the language of advertising. Her writing generates symbolic objects that act as physical footnotes to the text. In the exhibition these objects are revealed in a theatrical diorama.

The character of Fled becomes fascinated with the definition and muscular qualities of a horse he passes in his Audi A2 car on his daily commute:

‘...as Fled lingered behind the animal, he started to really look at the horse in comparison to his own body... Fled often thought about his own body in comparison to his Audi, but never to a horse...’

Bowman’s sculptures draw out visceral characteristics from her narrative through material, colour, position and texture. Her moulded and stacked leather sculptures are tanned in the sun and recall car interiors. In her work *and the atoms began to freely pass to the larger body*, thick leather has been shaped by the artist through a traditional wet moulding technique. Bowman is inspired by Flann O’Brien’s novel *The Third Policeman*, where he describes the idea of a cyclist and his bicycle merging personalities and interchanging atoms after a long period of time riding together: *‘Would it astonish you to hear that he is nearly half a bicycle?’*

Alongside these moulded works is a clay sculpture, *Midnight Gemini* which references the physical structure of a horse. This piece has been sanded back daily, over many months, reflecting the labour intensive nature of maintaining a show horse or a classic car – its shine comparable to a well buffed automobile.

On the artists’ daily commute to her Spike Island studio she passes a car showroom where wheel chocks are used to prop up new, polished automobiles. In *(Car) Display Unit*, chocks become museological plinths, presented at four

times their usual scale, they act as a support to ceramic horseshoes, leather flats and glossed car mats.

All rounder sad sale is a text booklet which adopts the language style used in automobile and equestrian advertising, such as ‘runs very smooth’ and ‘beautiful head turner’. Bowman highlights how these terms often communicate a tenderness or attachment felt by the advertiser towards their horse or automobile.

Wayfaring (the act of going from one place to another, usually on foot) is another common influence on Bowman’s approach to making work. Walking for significant periods of time between places led to the artist’s discovery of a local tannery, Thomas Ware & Sons. This became the site of Bowman’s primary research for this exhibition, influencing her use of leatherwork and also a sound piece inspired by the workers’ bell. The bell has rung at the same time each day since 1840, signalling six parts of the workers’ day.

Dispersed throughout the exhibition are Bowman’s talismans – handmade ceramic horseshoes – which offer luck to all. These objects hold something more than their physical form; when kept or passed on, a horseshoe is said to bring good fortune. *Cheap Luck* (500 keyrings), a work inspired by Bowman’s teenage years working in a saddlery, are mass produced and hand-embossed with a brass stamp designed by the artist, and hung in the exhibition from hand-shaped steel bars. Keyrings are available for visitors to take home, extending the offer of good luck (suggested donation £4).