



## **FAT BABY**

**\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

### **Graduating artists announce the birth of their degree show, FAT BABY**

**FAT BABY** – MA Fine Art Degree Show  
School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies – University of Leeds  
3 to 8 September 2024, 10am-4pm  
Private View: Thursday 5 September, 5pm

MA Fine Art students from the University of Leeds are pleased to announce the birth of their Degree Show, **FAT BABY**.

Open to the public from 3 to 8 September, this free exhibition showcases all forms of plastic arts, including film and video art; painting, performance and sculpture; printmaking, drawing and installation.

Ranging through all mediums of contemporary practice, the show celebrates the work of five artists from the UK and China – Astrid Butt, Em Eve, George Storm Fletcher, Ruolin Wu and Yiwen Wang.

Independently organised and curated by the graduating students, **FAT BABY** features a group show in the downstairs Project Space, with individual solo shows across the studios on the first and second floors of the building.

Featured work includes Astrid Butt's new film *A Horse with no eyes* – [made on residency at Yorkshire Sculpture Park](#) – and George Storm Fletcher's *The Second Rule of Assertiveness*, which was [commissioned by Leeds Art Gallery](#) as part of the Arts Council touring exhibition, *Found Cities, Lost Objects* (curated by Lubaina Himid).

[George Storm Fletcher](#) is a performance artist and Menace. Originally from Ely, in the fens of East Anglia, they have lived and worked in Leeds for six years, graduating with a BA Fine Art from the University of Leeds in 2022.

In recent years, George's work has manifested as a series of text-based architectural interventions, with an immediate, DIY aesthetic. Fletcher uses found objects, physical and immaterial, appropriating them for new compositions. Their distinctive lettering offers a new 'voice' for objects, reclaiming and reappropriating commonplace imagery to make a statement on the 'now.' Grounded in a sense of Britain's shifting identity and blurred nostalgia, their work plays with informal expressions and slang, memory and storytelling, through a playful and empathic lens.

George's work has been exhibited widely at venues such as Leeds Art Gallery, Sunny Bank Mills and the [RA Summer Show in London in 2022](#). For their MA Fine Art Degree Show presentation, George has created a series of works surrounding the scene of 'accidents'.

George said:

"As a group of students, we exhibited our work together through a two-part interim show earlier this year to give a taste of how our practices have developed over the MA course. *What's in Your Fridge* in the Project Space at the University of Leeds and *What's in your Freezer* at Patrick Studios (Mabgate) gave us the opportunity to take stock and present a range of painting, text-based work, audio-visual experimentation and live art fun.

"This September, we will come together for one last time to exhibit collectively and individually.

"The work that I am showing in **FAT BABY** culminates the past two years of my study in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies but also the last six years, as I also completed my undergraduate BA here.

"I have made all new works, using the vast space of the school's Green Studio to make large scale pieces, both text-based work and new sculptural ideas.

"I am also premiering a new series called *Britain's 4<sup>th</sup> Most Bashed Bridge*, which is a set of photogravure etchings that I have been working on with artist Ellen Burroughs – I think these are going to really resonate with the car crash atmosphere of the world right now.

"Of course, I have made a new series of lightboxes but these are built from materials new to me and I am excited to see how they 'read' in a degree show context.

"I have tried to be brave in the works that I am showing, not relying on old ideas but using the time and space I have allowed to be more daring in my making."

[Astrid Butt](#) is a feminist film and performance artist, living and working in Leeds. Astrid graduated with a BA Fine Art from the University of Leeds in 2022, and was the winner of the [FUAM Graduate Art Prize](#) in the same year for her horror film *Bird Diaries* (2022).

Butt's films utilise the grotesque and the surreal, burrowing into uniquely female anxieties, with a particular focus on generational trauma and the terrors of the body. The recipient of the [Yorkshire Graduate Award](#) (2023), her work provides 'an unflinching perspective into the cruelty of womanhood, cracking open the ribs of femininity and unspooling a voice that is equally filled with intense power and intense grief'.

Astrid said:

"My space within **FAT BABY** is dark and cavernous, but equally warm and intriguing. A red carpet will lead you into Purple Studio, a blacked-out room illuminated solely by the film screening on the far right wall. The images you will see in this room, of women transformed into animals, of bodies beaten and warped into submission, will transport you into a dreamlike landscape of the surreal and the grotesque.

"After discovering my love for creating short films during my BA Fine Art Degree here at the University of Leeds, I was determined to create something that could supersede my previous work – *Bird Diaries* – in terms of quality and ambition.

“I have spent the past two years of my Masters degree writing various scripts, experimenting with editing software and branching into performance art.

“After earning the Yorkshire Graduate Award and spending two weeks at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, I have created my longest and most ambitious work to date. *A Horse with No Eyes* is a 30-minute short film, exploring a nightmarish cursed land that transform its female inhabitants into animals against their will.

“Alongside this film, I will be showing other video work – including a piece relating to my previous performance work *Feeding Time*, and the debut of a monstrous all-star band performing two unsettling classic songs for your pleasure.”

[Dr Cesar Cornejo](#), Associate Professor Fine Art and MA Fine Art programme lead, said:

“We are excited to welcome this **FAT BABY** to this world.

“The students have been working hard on their projects, dealing with all sort of challenges on the way which they have masterly conquered for a smooth delivery.”

An evening private view will take place from 5pm on Thursday 5 September – open to all, visitors will have the opportunity to meet the five artists taking part and find out more about the show.

More of George Storm Fletcher’s work can be seen at an accompanying solo show at [Hyde Park Book Club](#) in Leeds (open daily until 12 September). In [HEAVEN](#), Fletcher documents an oral history of Leeds across two generations through a film and exhibition. It centres on a main road artery that runs through the student centre of Leeds – the infamous Kirkstall Road – and was created in collaboration with 2019 fine art alumni Ronnie Danaher and George’s Mum, Amanda.

The last word on **FAT BABY** goes to the artists and the thinking behind their degree show:

“We are a group of five artists, none of us are men. We have been nourished by the past year of study, and given birth to a **FAT BABY**.

“This exhibition relishes its own fleshiness, its own weight and matter. **FAT BABY** is feedback to the social structure. Born under a series of systems, fat piles up on our bodies, fat symbolizes culture, fat is ideas taught by teachers. These things should not be trimmed away. **FAT BABY** takes joy in its own conception, it is compacted and refined, unctuous and alive. This baby’s genealogy is untraceable, but it is collectively parented.

“Like lipids, the subject and materiality of our show is all encompassing, it can be found all over our world, in our drains, our bodies and hospitals; in our fridges and cupboards. Despite the exertion of birth, we will emerge, nourished and well fed.”

## FURTHER INFORMATION

**FAT BABY** runs from 3 to 8 September in the studios and shared spaces of the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds. Open daily from 10am to 4pm, the exhibition is free and all are welcome.

An evening Private View of the exhibition will take place from 5 to 8pm on Thursday 5 September. Please RSVP to [fincomms@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:fincomms@leeds.ac.uk) if you would like to attend.

For more information, please email Fiona Blair at [fincomms@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:fincomms@leeds.ac.uk)

Interviews available on request.

Follow **FAT BABY** on [Instagram](#) for an insight into the artists' practices and updates about this year's BA Fine Art Degree Show: [@bat\\_faby](#)

Visit the **FAT BABY** [website](#) to find out more about the students' progress, in addition to a programme of performances and events: [fatbaby.leeds.ac.uk](#)

Free copies of an artists book created for the show will be available at the exhibition.

## SCHOOL OF FINE ART, HISTORY OF ART AND CULTURAL STUDIES

See here for more information about the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds:

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [X](#)

## IMAGES

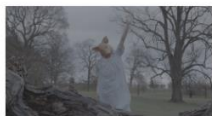
High quality images (including work submitted by artists for the **FAT BABY** exhibition and installation shots of exhibition spaces) available on request from [fincomms@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:fincomms@leeds.ac.uk)

PA Media images available [here](#).

Portfolios showing current and previous examples of work by the artists taking part can be found at [fatbaby.leeds.ac.uk](#) – sample images below.



Astrid Butt, A horse with no eyes, 2024 \_ 1.jpg



Astrid Butt, A horse with no eyes, 2024 \_ 2.png



Astrid Butt, A horse with no eyes, 2024 \_ 3.png



Astrid Butt, A horse with no eyes, 2024 \_ 4.png



Astrid Butt, A horse with no eyes, 2024 \_ 5.png



Astrid Butt, A horse with no eyes, 2024 \_ 6.png



Photo © Astrid Butt, courtesy YSP\_2.JPG



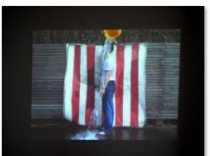
Photo © Astrid Butt, courtesy YSP\_3.JPG



Internal View of Passage, emulsion on canvas, November 2022.jpg



Second working sketch for the 2nd Rule of Assertiveness, emulsion on paper, October 2023.png



Still from DOWN (at Patrick Studios), emulsion, water, and the artist with Bruce Springsteen, April 2024.jpg



The Artist at Peterborough station, 2022, 35mm film.png



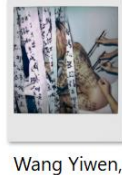
Em Eve, View of Blue Studio.jpg



Em Eve, Digested. Oil on canvas.jpg



Wang Yiwen, 2052-Liar. Live performance, polaroid 1.jpg



Wang Yiwen, 2052-Liar. Live performance and polaroid 2.jpg



Ruolin Wu, PLAN OF REVENGE PART 1.png



Ruolin Wu, PLAN OF REVENGE PART 1 .png