

## **Call for Expression of Interest - Art in Manufacturing**

**The National Festival of Making and Super Slow Way are inviting Expressions of Interest for one new Art in Manufacturing commission. The commission outcome will be shown as 'work in progress' at the British Textile Biennial in October 2019 and in final form at the National Festival of Making in June 2020.**

### **The Opportunity**

Commission for one artist practitioner to undertake a residency as part of Art in Manufacturing Season Four.

We are offering one unique residency with manufacturer John Spencer (manufacturer) + Ian Mankin (manufacturers own brand) in collaboration with Queen Street Mill. During the residency the artist will make a new work to present as part of the British Textile Biennial programme (October 2019) and the National Festival of Making in June (2020).



**Art in Manufacturing Commissions - Images:** *The Optical Mechanical* -Liz Wilson, 2019; *Chromatogram* - Lazerian Studio, 2017; *Traysway* - Ruth Jones, 2017; *The Cardboard Cinema* - Hannah Fox, 2018.  
Photography - Lee Smilie; GS Visuals; Richard Tynon.

## **Industry Partners Linked to Commission**

**John Spencer** is a family owned weaving business making a wide range of fabrics in a diverse selection of yarns and raw materials. The company manufactures fabrics to customers own designs and specifications, sourcing raw materials from all over the world. We are proud that we create and weave our fabrics in our own mill and all our Products are created and woven in the John Spencer mill and can genuinely be labelled as “Made in Britain”. The company is committed to preserving traditional crafts and skills in the unique industrial landscape in which we live.

[www.johnspencer.com](http://www.johnspencer.com)

**Ian Mankin** are British weavers of designer furnishing fabrics - founded in 1983 the brand is renowned for new and stylish interpretations of natural and organic fabrics and became the first cotton weaving mill in the UK to receive certified Global Organic Textile Standard status from the Soil Association for the production of a range of organic fabrics. As a brand conceived, created and produced in Britain, they are passionate about British produce and preserving traditional crafts and skills. Ian Mankin has one of the last surviving cotton mills in Britain - John Spencer - and is dedicated to protecting the unique industrial landscape of which it forms a part.

<https://www.ianmankin.co.uk>

Grade 1 listed, **Queen Street Mill** is the last surviving 19th century steam powered weaving mill in the world. Visitors relive the days when cotton was king and watch weaving technicians demonstrate how to turn cotton into cloth on the heritage looms.

[www.visitlancashire.com/things-to-do/queen-street-mill-textile-museum-p7837](http://www.visitlancashire.com/things-to-do/queen-street-mill-textile-museum-p7837)

## **About The Art in Manufacturing**

Art in Manufacturing is the National Festival of Making's headline commissioning programme and a co-commission between the National Festival of Making and Super Slow Way - an arts programme in Penine Lancashire and one of Arts Council England's 'Creative People & Places schemes'.

The commissioning programme pairs artists and makers with manufacturers and domestic artisans and gives artists access to specialist machinery, expertise, materials and heritage craft techniques to create new work that forms an integral part of the National Festival of Making programme, presented in the public realm and in Blackburn's most historic and most contemporary venues during the festival week-end. Art in Manufacturing, now going into its fourth season has previously included residences with manufacturers working in food, textile, paper, plastic, cardboard, ceramics, wallpaper, textile, metal.

Previously commissioned artists include Liz Wilson, Anna Ray, Daksha Patel, James Bloomfield, Dawinder Bansal, Lazerian, Liz West, Martyn Ware, Michelle Wren, Jamie Holman, Hannah Fox, Nicola Ellis and Ruth Jones. They have made astonishing work in collaboration with manufacturers and their communities across sculpture, film, dance, sound, print and installation that have been featured in the media including in DesignBoom, BBC Breakfast News, Corridor 8, The Big Issue and The Guardian.

Deliberately set in the making and manufacturing heartland of Lancashire, Art in Manufacturing provides artists an incomparable platform to make new work in and alongside industry. Artists co create with

factory workforces who share skills, craftsmanship and personal histories that often directly inform artistic outcomes that interlace traditional techniques and materials with challenging and contemporary ideas.

**In Season Four, this unique commission will invite the selected artists to draw inspiration from two evocative spaces and to show work in two stages, as follows -**

- The artist will have residency experiences at both Queen Street Mill and John Spencer, a sixth generation family weaving business making a range of fabrics in a diverse selection of yarn and raw materials
- Invited to spend time in both locations, there is opportunity to study the history of weaving in Lancashire, its associated communities and making practices; the impact and connection to the global making and textile industries; contemporary making practices, products and position in the contemporary making landscape - economically, culturally, environmentally and socially
- The commissioners invite a contemporary artistic response to the initial subject area

**Work will be presented in stages on two unique platforms -**

- **Stage One** invites a work in progress showcase to be sited at Queen Street Mill as part of the first British Textile Biennial - dates of the showcase are 3rd October to 3rd November
- This presentation of work could include a work in progress exhibition, film or digital work - we can discuss installation work with the artist however space at Queen Street Mill is limited
- We also encourage an interactive element of this work with potential for the artist to be on site during British Textile Biennial, hold workshops, talks or interactive engagement sessions that could inform and shape work with participants
- After this period, it is expected that the artist will continue their residency with John Spencer and Queen Street Mill through 2020 with dates to be agreed
- Work will be presented in its final form and alongside other Season Four commissioned artists at the National Festival of Making in June 2020

The shape of this work, venue and audience will be developed with the support of the Curator and Producing team.

We are interested in hearing imaginative, ambitious, sensitive ideas for this artistic residency.

We'd like to hear from artists and makers with a practice which may reflect the following -

- An interest in making in a heritage context - craftsmanship and traditional making
- An interest in the future of making, advanced technologies and new digital works
- Artist / makers who are interested in engaging with unique, often industrial processes, products and making methods

- Artists who make work in the public realm
- Work that engages communities in a participatory context in the making of new work
- Work that engages audiences within a festival setting

**As Arts Council funded programmes, we are committed to the Creative Case For Diversity and would welcome applications from artists that reflect the diverse nature of local communities.**

**We are looking to create exceptional cross-disciplinary collaborations and residencies so responses from artists / makers working in any art form is welcome - the commission is not limited to textile artists.**

Projects have seen artists work in-situ with manufacturers for more intense periods over a number of weeks or work within an agreed residency schedule of one to two days per week over a longer timeline, for example.

Each programme of work is agreed with the curator and manufacturer dependent on the artists availability and location, and the specific industry preference.

### **About British Textile Biennial**

The British Textile Biennial throws a spotlight on the nation's creation, innovation and expression in textiles against the backdrop of the impressive infrastructure of the cotton industry in Pennine Lancashire. With its epic mills, grandiose civic architecture along the country's longest waterway, the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, the landscape tells the story of textiles. This biennial festival celebrates that story while showcasing its contemporary expression with the community that has textiles in its DNA. In 2019 British Textile Biennial will look at fabric as a means of expression; showing textiles as a vehicle for protest and cultural identity in slogan-emblazoned T-shirts, football fashion and traditional union and demo banners, and presenting performances and new works that take a dynamic look at our relationship with that most basic and ancient of human creations, cloth.

### **About the National Festival of Making**

The first National Festival of Making took place in Blackburn, Lancashire in 2017. The Festival celebrates our brilliant UK making industry, from kitchen table makers to master manufacturers, attracting 40,000 visitors to Lancashire for a wonderful explosion of making activities. The award winning event (The Hive, Best New Business Award; Lancashire Tourism Large Event of the Year; UK Festival Awards, Best Non Music Festival) is an opportunity to see, make and do for residents and visitors to Blackburn town centre as The Festival of Making takes over the streets with music, art, performance, tours, talks, markets, street food and above all, an eclectic mix of making experiences for everyone. Art in Manufacturing is part of the Festival's year round work in the region.

**Budget:**

1 commission available via this open call: Fixed fee of £6000

The commission total should include materials and installation / decommission costs but does not include for any core materials which are negotiated by the producing team 'in kind' from the manufacturer.

Some expense support is available, within your application please indicate travel and accommodation requirements. Up to a maximum of £750 is available dependent on distance travelled.

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**How to Apply -**

We aim to avoid the necessity for artists to provide extensive information - as part of the open call we request the following -

**500 word expression of interest on why you would like to take part in Art in Manufacturing**

With reference to:

- What attracts you to this commission
- Outline of your interest in working with manufacturing technologies and / or materials
- Experience and interest in engaging with communities in a participatory setting
- Experience or interest in presenting artwork within the public realm and festival setting
- Please provide links to your work online on a website, in articles or Instagram, with reference where possible to projects, commissions or elements of your practice that have the most relevance to Art in Manufacturing.

If you would prefer not to share online links please share a PDF document with visual examples of your work - PDF no more than 10mb.

Please send applications to Art in Manufacturing Curator, Elena Jackson at [elena@decopublique.co.uk](mailto:elena@decopublique.co.uk) with 'Art in Manufacturing Application' in the email title.

Questions will be answered as soon as possible and you will receive a confirmation email upon receipt of your application.

If your ideas compliment the industry partnership and festival programmes you will be invited for a short interview in Lancashire, or by Skype.

## Key Dates -

**Open Call Dates:** Wednesday 31st July to 16th August 2019

**Residency Dates:** On appointment of residency through to June 2020, exact details to be determined between the co-commissioners, manufacturing partner and artist.

**British Textile Biennial Event Dates:** 3rd October to 3rd November 2019

**National Festival of Making Event Dates:** 5th and 6th June 2020

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## Further Reading - found out more about:

Art in Manufacturing [Season Three, 2019](#)

Art in Manufacturing [Season Two, 2018](#)

Art in Manufacturing [Season One, 2017](#)

[British Textile Biennial](#) + [Super Slow Way](#)

[The National Festival of Making](#) website and [Instagram](#) @thefestivalofmaking



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