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barbican

RESOLVE Collective: *them's the breaks*

The Curve, Barbican Centre

30 March – 16 July 2023

Free admission

www.barbican.org.uk/ResolveCollective | #ResolveCollective @barbicancentre

Media Partner: Dezeen



L: RESOLVE Collective, *Ships at a Distance*, 2022, SADACCA, Sheffield, Photography: Becky Payne Photography
R: RESOLVE Collective (L-R Seth Scafe-Smith, Melissa Haniff, Akil Scafe-Smith), Photography: Jana Dardouk

Barbican Art Gallery presents ***them's the breaks***, a new site-specific installation for The Curve from interdisciplinary design practice **RESOLVE Collective**. “Foraging” materials from across London and the South Coast, as well as re-using objects from previous installations, **RESOLVE** have constructed an interactive landscape in The Curve. A vast wave of reclaimed and re-purposed materials and ephemera ripples across the length of the 90-metre space and flow up the walls. Visitors are encouraged to touch and interact with the installation, breaking down barriers between the public and the art on display. **RESOLVE** have produced their original installation according to ultrasonic evaluations of the Barbican’s iconic concrete structures; radically re-thinking the fabric of the institution, the results of this analysis have informed a dynamic and collaborative response to the splintered histories of these stony surrounds.

The mutated gallery serves as forum as much as exhibition, allowing for sitting, meditating, working, conversing, and existing freely within the Barbican’s wider public space. In tandem with the installation, **RESOLVE** have co-curated a programme of thematic events, working alongside their creative collaborators to gather artists, thinkers, creatives, and organisers; facilitating critical, curious, and joyful discussion about and around society’s institutions.

Shanay Jhaveri, Head of Visual Arts, Barbican said: *“RESOLVE’s commitment to forging connections, foregrounding sustainability, pushing boundaries, and championing local communities speaks to the Barbican’s own values, and we are excited to see them take over The Curve this Spring. The collective’s work on structural and social breakdown and repair is acutely timely in this era of global disruption, and indeed closer to home, as the exhibition invites us to reflect on what restoration, renewal and regeneration look like in an established institution like the Barbican. These are ideas that we and other arts institutions are constantly grappling with, so we’re eager to hear the important conversations that RESOLVE’s installation will spark.”*

Bringing together architecture, engineering, technology, and art to address social challenges, **RESOLVE** collaborate to explore equitable visions of change, providing platforms for the production of new knowledge and ideas. Led by **Akil Scafe-Smith, Seth Scafe-Smith** and **Melissa Haniff**, **RESOLVE** forge creative ecosystems around each new project, turning their sites into a resource for local communities, thinkers, and makers. For **RESOLVE** and their collaborators, design has value beyond the aesthetic; it serves as a mechanism for political and socio-economic change.

RESOLVE said: *“We are obsessing over what grows from the cracks of this work. It’s important for us for this to feel not like the culmination of individual work but an early moment in much broader movements. It is a fragment of a wider collective endeavour to rethink the role of our society’s institutions. This means not only the physical architectures of its galleries, universities, schools, prisons, but also the innumerable, intangible social institutions that anchor our existence and continually define and prescribe to society’s discontents what is ‘possible’. Working with curator Jon Astbury and The Curve gallery presents us with a chance to make some of this thinking legible, bring others in to co-conspire with us – like Gut Level, YesMake!, George Kafka, and others – and to celebrate ideas that have preceded and will long outlast this exhibition. The hope is that this is as much the transformation of gallery space as it is the co-authorship of radical narratives through what is organised, performed, reinvigorated, and deconstructed in and outside of this space.”*

The events programme is structured in four phases, each addressing a different perspective of the themes of **them’s the breaks**. In the first phase in March, **RESOLVE** convene discussions with individuals from their wider network of collaborators, offering an opportunity for collective learning within the mutated gallery space.

The second phase, taking place in April, focuses on the theme of education, looking to forge a space that can platform new knowledges and explore new ways of learning, and in June, the third phase sees Resolve working with Sheffield-based, queer-led DIY event space Gut Level to consider how we can provide space for joy in the context of precarity, with the installation playing host to a sound archive and a summer party.

The final phase in July, the Closing Down Sale, is the culmination of an exhibition which has its roots firmly grounded in the spirit of re-distribution. Ephemera will be earmarked for reclamation over the course of the show, allowing the installation to manage its own decline. Everything must go!

Details of the full programme will be available on the [Barbican website](#).

About RESOLVE Collective

RESOLVE have exhibited internationally, with solo shows including *LIDO* solo exhibition at De La Warr Pavilion, participating in *Where The Wild Things Are* residency with West Dean College, Wellcome Collection, and De La Warr Pavilion (2022); *Summer House* solo exhibition at Brighton CCA featuring Bobby Brown, Afrori Books, and Pacheanne Anderson (2022/23); and projects including *LOCAL* editorial season with Skin Deep magazine (2021/22); *We Wunt Be Druv / Tings Nuh Run We* installation with Wellcome Collection and Coram's Fields Youth Centre; *The Garage*, S1 Artspace residency, Sheffield (2019); *Ships at A Distance: Oronde, Almanzora, Windrush* installation at Sheffield Crucible Theatre with SADACCA and Ark Sheffield (2022); *Close From Afar* installation and public programme with NOW Gallery for LDF2020 and *Programming Im:passivity* (2020) installation for Kunstverein Braunschweig and SAVVY Contemporary Berlin. Akil Scafe-Smith and Seth Scafe-Smith were awarded with RIBA Honorary Fellowships in 2023.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Press Information

For further information, images, or to arrange interviews, please contact:

Visual Arts Press Team

visualartspress@barbican.org.uk

Lily Booth, Communications Officer

lily.booth@barbican.org.uk

Georgia Holmes, Communications Assistant

georgia.holmes@barbican.org.uk

Press images available online

A link to the image sheets can be found [here](#). Please contact the press team for images.

Barbican Press Room

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communication team's contact details are listed on our website at <https://www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room/>

Public Information

The Curve, Barbican, London
Silk Street, EC2Y 8DS
barbican.org.uk

www.barbican.org.uk/ResolveCollective

This is a free exhibition

For more information on Barbican Membership please visit:

www.barbican.org.uk/membership

The Curve opening hours:

Monday – Sunday 11am-7pm, Bank Holidays 12pm – 7pm

Exhibition

RESOLVE Collective: *them's the breaks* is at The Curve, Barbican from 30 March – 16 July 2023.

The exhibition is curated by **Jon Astbury**, Assistant Curator (Architecture & Design), Barbican.

Events

A dynamic programme of events will accompany the exhibition. Check the website for full listings as they are updated: www.barbican.org.uk/ResolveCollective

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the [Barbican](#) pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over a million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 700 [staff](#) work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery The Curve, Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, The Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, public spaces, a library, the Lakeside Terrace, [a glasshouse conservatory](#), conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, [London Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Orchestra, [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#); Associate Ensembles the [Academy of Ancient Music](#) and [Britten Sinfonia](#), Associate Producer [Serious](#), and Artistic Partner [Create](#). Our Artistic Associates include [Boy Blue](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), Deborah Warner, [Drum Works](#) and [Michael Clark](#). The [Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the [Australian Chamber Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court, and [Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra](#) are International Associate Ensemble.

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The Curve

The Curve is the Barbican's free exhibition space that wraps around the back of the Concert Hall. Launched in May 2006, Curve Art is a series of new commissions in which contemporary artists respond to the distinctive architecture of the space. Artists who have previously made new commissions for The Curve include Tomás Saraceno (Argentina); Richard Wilson (Britain); Jeppe Hein (Denmark); Marjetica Potrč (Slovenia); Shirana Shahbazi (Switzerland/Iran); Hans Schabus (Austria); Huang Yong Ping (France/China); Rafael Lozano-Hemmer (Canada/Mexico); Peter Coffin (US); Clemens von Wedemeyer (Germany); Robert Kusmirowski (Poland); Céleste Boursier-Mougenot (France); John Bock (Germany); Damián Ortega (Mexico); Cory

Arcangel(US); Junya Ishigami (Japan); Song Dong (China); rAndom International (Britain); Geoffrey Farmer (Canada); Ayşe Erkmen (Germany/Turkey); United Visual Artists (Britain); Walead Beshty (US/Britain); Roman Signer (Switzerland); Eddie Peake (Britain); Imran Qureshi (Pakistan); Bedwyr Williams (Wales); Richard Mosse (Ireland); John Akomfrah (Britain); Yto Barrada (Morocco), Francis Upritchard (New Zealand) Daria Martin (US), Trevor Paglen (US); Toyin Ojih Odutola (Nigeria/US); Shilpa Gupta (India), and most recently Soheila Sokhanvari (Britain/Iran).

Barbican Art Gallery and The Curve

Our visual arts programme embraces art, architecture, design, fashion, photography and film. Many of our exhibitions explore the interconnections between disciplines, periods and cultures, and aim to imagine the world in new ways. Designers, artists and architects are our collaborators in this process.

We invest in the artists of today and tomorrow; The Curve is one of the few galleries in London devoted to the commissioning of new work. Through our activities we aim to inspire more people to discover and love the arts. Entrance to The Curve is free. Through Young Barbican we offer £5 tickets to 14– 25-year-olds for our paid exhibitions, children under 14 attend for free.

Our exhibitions are complemented by comprehensively researched catalogues and a full range of public events. We develop engaging online content for audiences and offer special tours for schools. In partnership with renowned museums and art galleries, many of our exhibitions travel to reach both national and international audiences.

The Barbican believes in creating space for people and ideas to connect through its international arts programme, community events and learning activity. To keep its programme accessible to everyone, and to keep investing in the artists it works with, the Barbican needs to raise more than 60% of its income through ticket sales, commercial activities and fundraising every year. Donations can be made here: www.barbican.org.uk/join-support/support-us/for-individuals/make-a-donation