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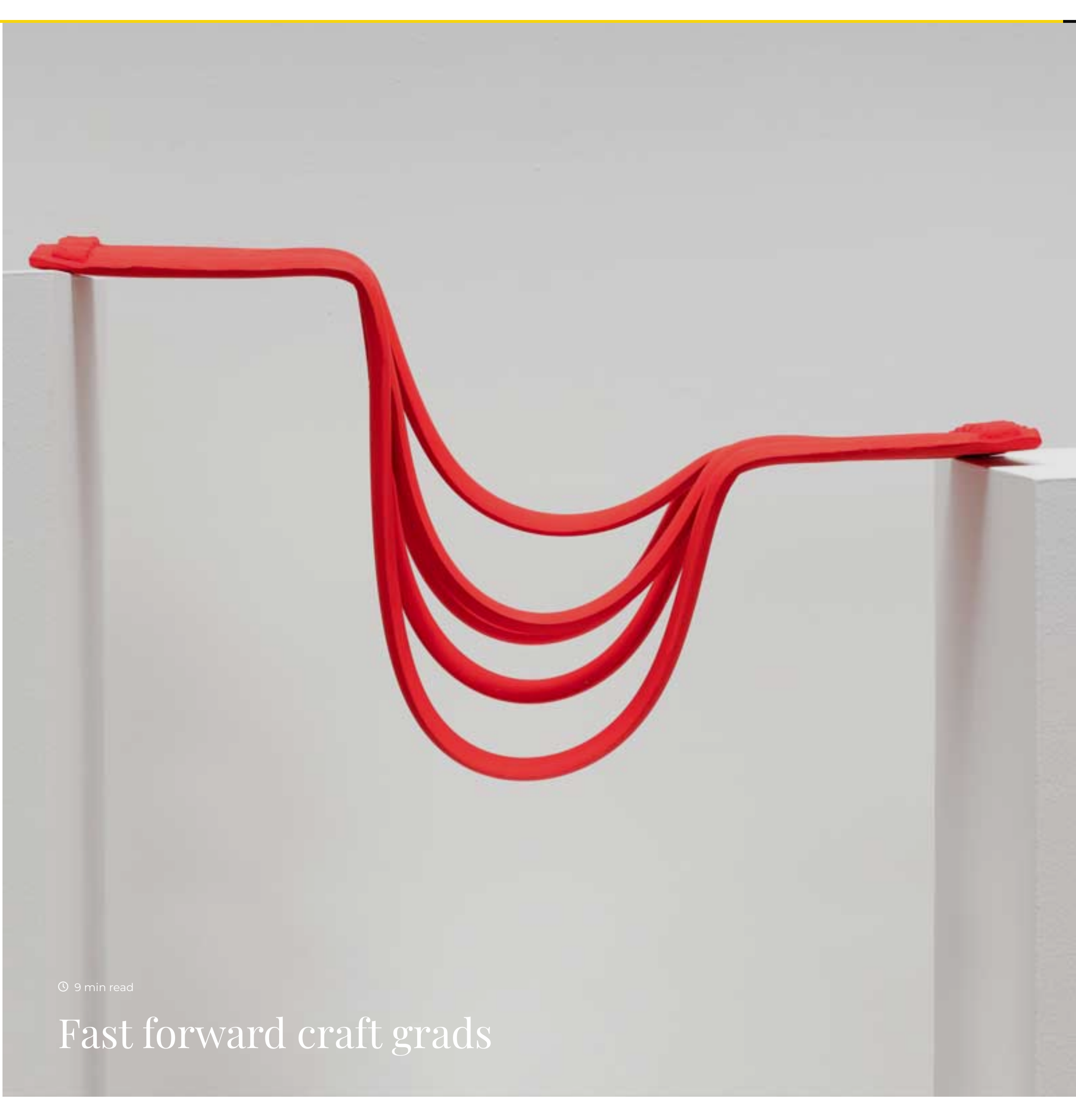
THE BATH magazine

WHAT'S ON THE BIG RETHINK CITY LIFE CULTURE EDUCATION FOOD & DRINK HOMES & GARDENS LOCKDOWN DIARIES FASHION & BEAUTY



9 min read

Fast forward craft grads

Having your creative work selected by the national body for the crafts, The Crafts Council, is a real achievement. Five graduates from Bath Spa University and the University of the West of England in Bristol, were recently honoured in this way. Emma Clegg takes a look at their creative work.

The lockdown last year meant that graduate degree shows of art and craft students could not be physically seen by the public, or by potential future clients and employers. So the Crafts Council in Islington, London, came up with a project to boost the profile of craft and design graduates from 2020, by selecting exceptional makers from across the country and having an exhibition in their London gallery. The idea was to showcase individual pieces by 44 makers, selected for their creative flair, thoughtful design and skilled execution.

Selections were made by a panel of six industry experts: Shai Akram, Janice Blackburn OBE, Uli Gamper, Natalie Melton, Daniel Olatunji, and Ayesha Patel. The pieces, made by graduates during the final stages of their MA and BA courses, included furniture, homewares, jewellery, apparel and one-off art pieces.

Unfortunately the exhibition couldn't go ahead as scheduled because of lockdown, but we were determined to celebrate the fact that the selection included five local graduates. So we spoke to them about their work and how they felt about their time at university.

Ella-Rose Budd, Bath Spa University
The work of Ella-Rose Budd focuses on the architectural, investigating the way in which people interact and become immersed in a space within a building built for a specific purpose. Hands-on making and process is important to her, especially the relationship between making a complex surface design and its application to the object, structure or space.

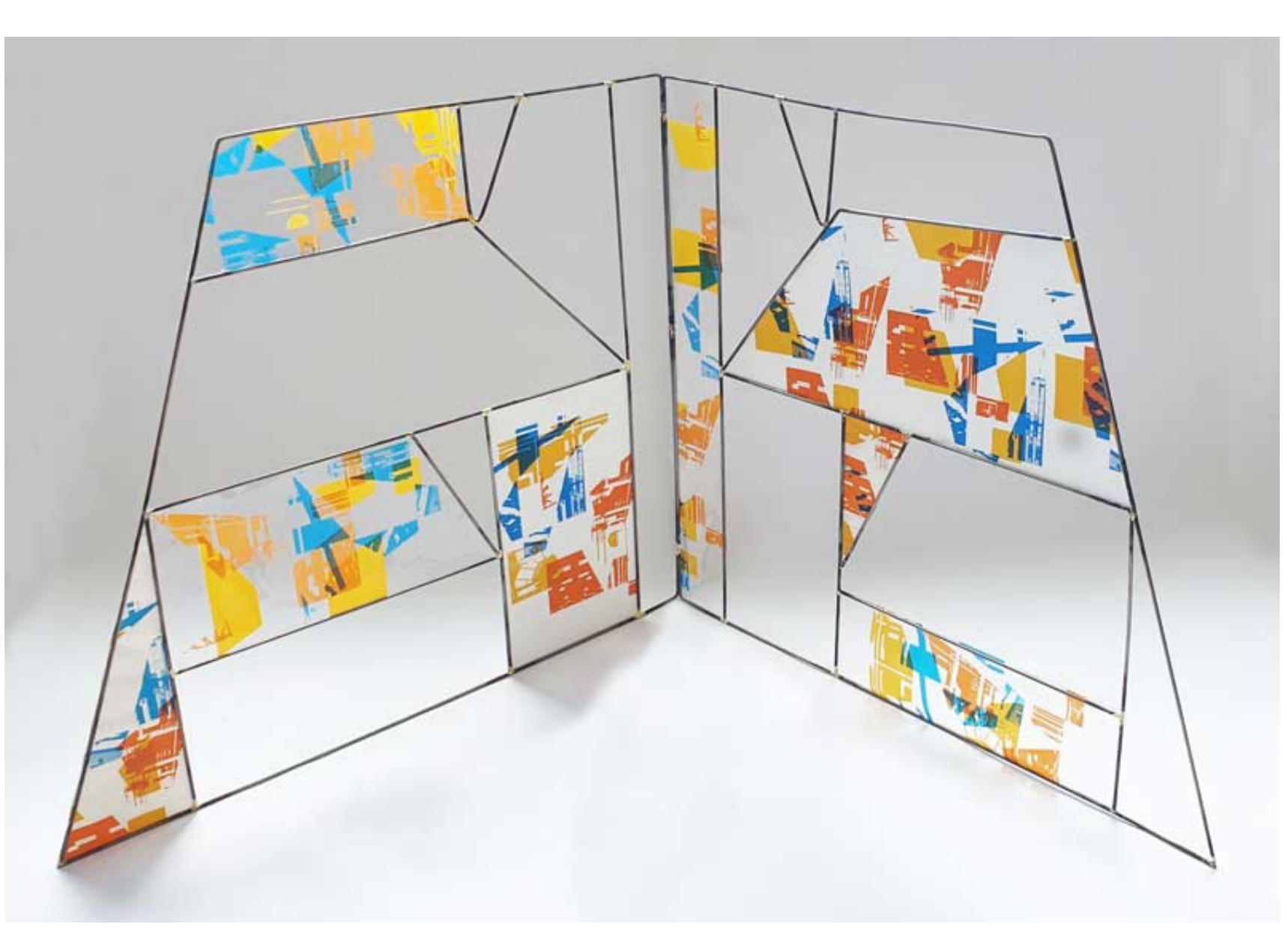
"The surface has always been the main focus and my starting point," says Ella, "And while I have always felt surface is important, the layering in my current work shifts that point of focus and invites the viewer to question the whole object as a representation of an architectural space within the architectural space being represented. Inviting a viewer to participate in the work by questioning the object/surface/structure/space is a primary intention."

> The surface has always been the main focus and my starting point

"Since graduating I have spent the last months adapting to creating art from home. I have also tried to find ways into the creative circles within Bristol and Bath which have included exhibiting in Bath at 44AD art space last summer as part of their Edition 6 exhibition, as well volunteering at the Centre of Gravity, a creative collective in Bristol. I also spent time preparing for my Printmaking Masters in the by photographing spaces from which I have designed computer-based print ideas for developing into screens when I have access to a studio.

"My experience at Bath Spa University was amazing, particularly the access to great workshops and tutors. The BA in Contemporary Arts Practice led me to find my creative passion for screen print to a level where I hope that I can create artwork which brings pleasure to others."

ellarosebudd.com



The Structure by Ella Rose Budd, metal structure holding screen-prints on acetate, newsprint and south bank smooth paper

Jane Yarnall, Bath Spa University
Jane Yarnall's work is inspired by exploring the movement from simplicity to complexity. From a simple strand of clay, her pieces explore the transition to a more complex form through a process of combination and repositioning. Her sculptural work is often influenced by scientific imagery and protein strands and this feeds into her wider practice.

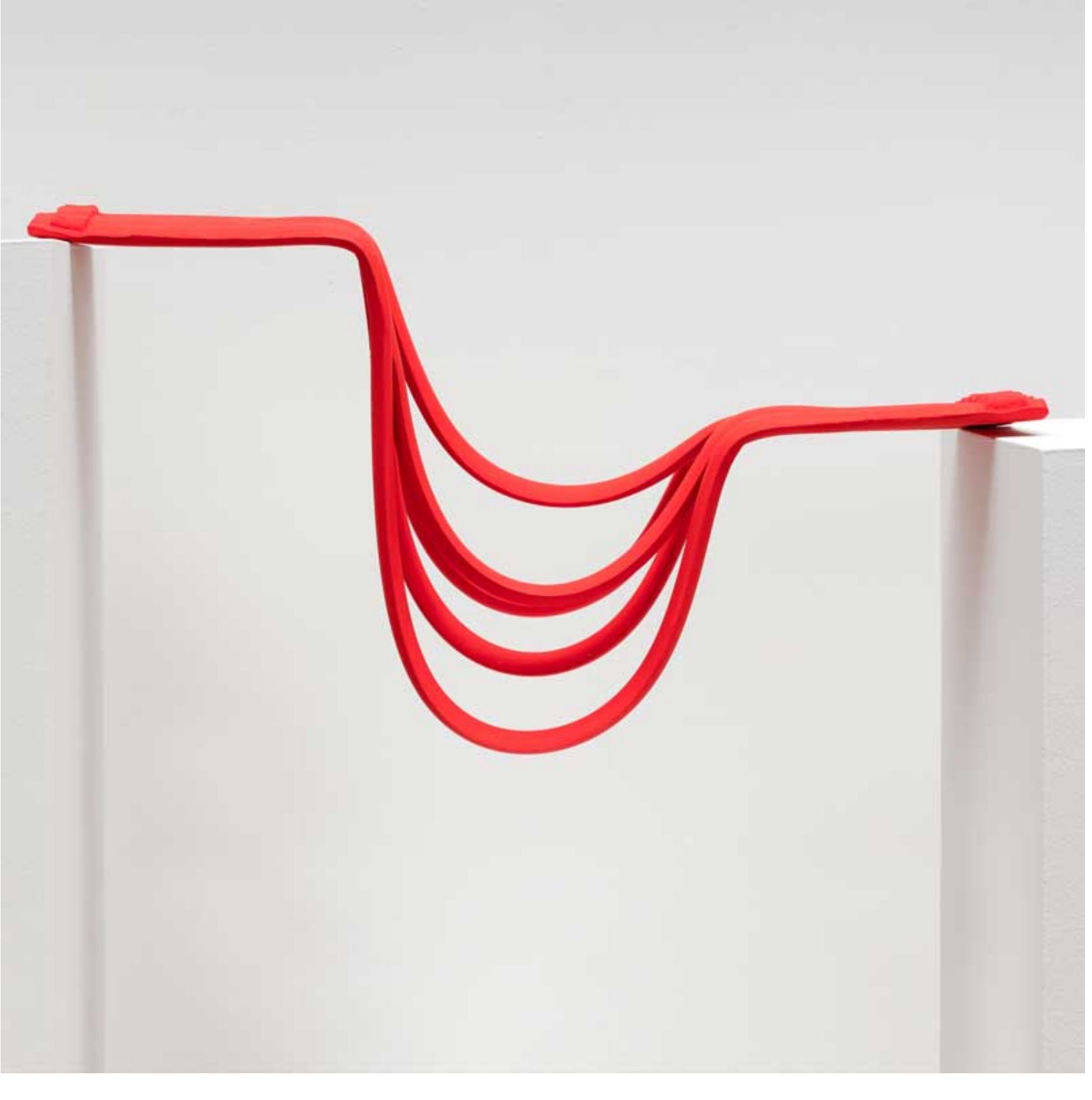
"The pieces are created using a wall extruder and bespoke die-plates, which I design and laser cut," Jane explains. "For the draped shelf, I used a convex shaped die to extrude long strands of clay. The colour palette is kept simple so as not to detract from the form, with a velvet engobe applied prior to firing the pieces to stoneware temperatures.

> My aim is to create a sense of movement through the piece and I am constantly intrigued by the changing shadows and impact that is created from this simple shape.

"My experience studying at Bath Spa University was just fantastic. I loved being at the Sion Hill site, which was an intimate community with a stunning art and design library collection, so I didn't want to relocate to Locksbrook Road for my final year. But then I was so glad I did! The workshops and access to equipment and technicians from all disciplines is perfectly set up there and it was a joy to get inspiration from the creative activities and people around you.

Lockdown has had a strange impact on me and initially I found it hard to re-engage with making. In some ways it has provided more opportunities for reflection and development of my work, but I have really missed the stimulus and feedback from other makers.

janeyarnallceramics.com



Draped Shelf by Jane Yarnold, stoneware with a velvet engobe, £195

Joëlle Paulson, the University of the West of England
"I have been a lover and maker of lace for over 30 years. More recently, my work has been about exploring new ways to use lace in design. I want to show that lace can be so much more than a doily on a dusty chest of drawers. I wish to help preserve the importance of a craft that was greatly valued during a large part of its history but has now lost its currency. My speciality is a lesser-known type of shuttle lace which I think deserves to be celebrated. I get satisfaction from creating designs that transform a solely decorative fabric into tangible, practical objects so that more people can enjoy lace in their lives.

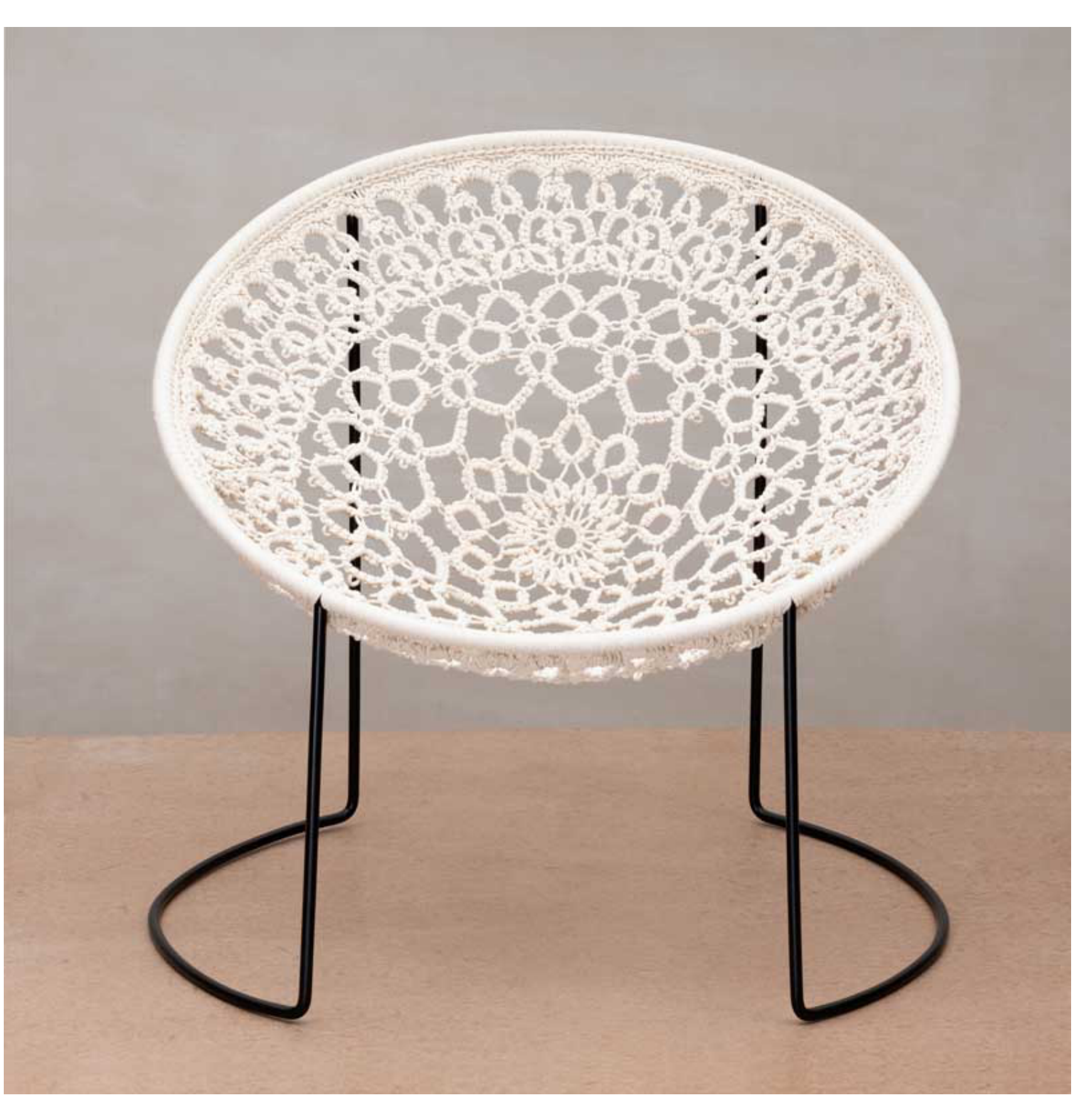
"I set myself the challenge of making a chair out of lace as I wanted to modify people's perceptions of what is normally a delicate and fragile fabric and remould it into an object that is three-dimensional, strong, useful and beautiful. Even at this large scale, the lace of my chair, like its traditional inspiration, retains its 'lacey' qualities and casts intricate shadows in its environment.

"To make lace at a much larger scale, I used the very modern technology of 3D-printing to produce my own tools, a marriage of old craft and high-tech. As ecological issues are also important to me, I worked with mild steel bar for the frame (and had to learn to bend metal and weld!) as it is an endlessly recyclable product and with cotton for its natural tactile qualities and links with the traditional craft of lacemaking.

> I see myself as bridging traditional with modern and want to continue to explore new ways to use lace in contemporary design.

"I thoroughly enjoyed studying for a Masters in Design at UWE. Having worked by myself for many years I valued the chance to work in a creative environment. It was stimulating and inspiring to see other people's creative processes and have their input into my own ideas. I loved the hands-on course offered by UWE and the opportunity to try new techniques, materials and tools as well as the academic aspects of research and writing. During my degree I explored metalwork, woodwork, printing, ceramics, laser-cutting, and 3D printing in my bid to create new objects, many incorporating lace."

joellepaulsondesign.com



SoLace Chair by Joëlle Paulson, constructed from handmade shuttle lace with a black, powder-coated mild-steel frame. £2975

Katie Moore, Bath Spa University
Katie Moore is an artist and designer with a background in illustration. She describes her work as embodying an aesthetic which is colourful and playful, from objects to installation and video.

"I use the framework of the theatre to bring together the most important aspects of my practice. In order to curate my workspace, I take on the role of theatre director. My stage designs are an extension of my surroundings and studio while also channelling the techniques of British artist, David Hockney. I share his main creative influence of the theatre and I draw inspiration from his various stage sets from the 1970s onwards.

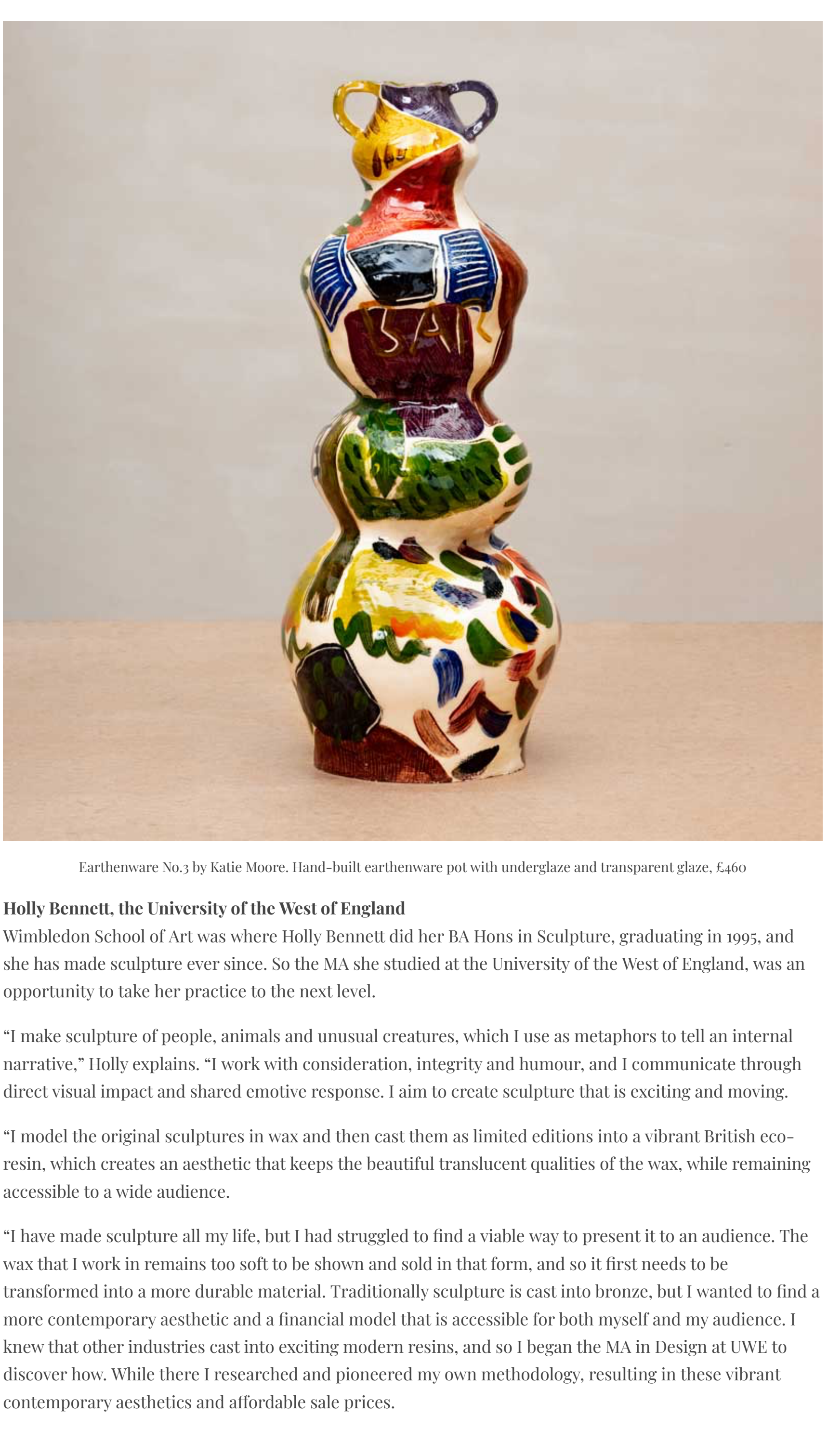
"My clay objects are my props and I direct them within my theatre. I refer to the process of making with clay as the theatre 'interval', a time where I am able to think, reflect and pause from the colourful stage.

"I met a lovely group of fellow MA students during my Ceramics course at Bath Spa University. The facilities at Locksbrook campus are really great with a friendly team of technicians to support your project needs. I had two incredibly knowledgeable and very helpful tutors and I couldn't have asked for better support.

> I refer to the process of making with clay as the theatre 'interval', a time where I am able to think, reflect and pause from the colourful stage.

"After I graduated, I did a two-month artist residency in Denmark. The residency, KunstKollektivet 8b, is located in Unnerud, a small village about an hour's drive from Copenhagen. During my stay at 8b, I continued to work in close dialogue with David Hockney, his process and writing – whilst also drawing inspiration from the autumnal landscape of Unnerud. Staying at the house were five other young artists, each with a different specialism, from ceramics to weaving and print-making."

katiem.cargo.site



Earthenware No.3 by Katie Moore. Hand-built earthenware pot with underglaze and transparent glaze, £460

Holly Bennett, the University of the West of England
Wimbledon School of Art was where Holly Bennett did her BA Hons in Sculpture, graduating in 1995, and she has made sculpture ever since. So the MA she studied at the University of the West of England, was an opportunity to take her practice to the next level.

"I make sculpture of people, animals and unusual creatures, which I use as metaphors to tell an internal narrative," Holly explains. "I work with consideration, integrity and humour, and I communicate through direct visual impact and shared emotive response. I aim to create sculpture that is exciting and moving.

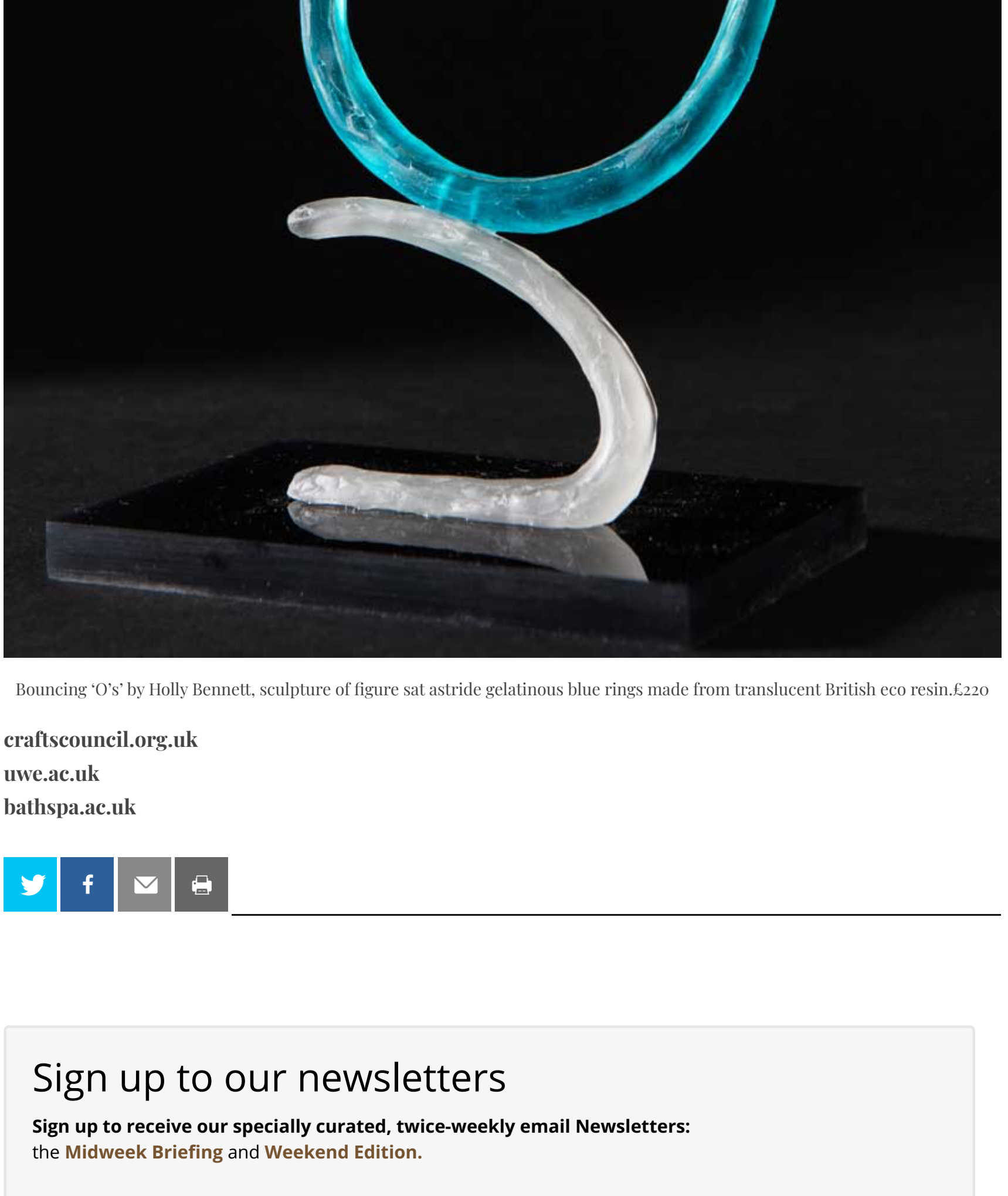
"I model the original sculptures in wax and then cast them as limited editions into a vibrant British eco-resin, which creates an aesthetic that keeps the beautiful translucent qualities of the wax, while remaining accessible to a wide audience.

"I have made sculpture all my life, but I had struggled to find a viable way to present it to an audience. The wax that I work in remains too soft to be shown and sold in that form, and so it first needs to be transformed into a more durable material. Traditionally sculpture is cast into bronze, but I wanted to find a more contemporary aesthetic and a financial model that is accessible for both myself and my audience. I knew that other industries cast into exciting modern resins, and so I began the MA in Design at UWE to discover how. While there I researched and pioneered my own methodology, resulting in these vibrant contemporary aesthetics and affordable sale prices.

> I knew that other industries cast into exciting modern resins, and so I began the MA in Design at UWE to discover how.

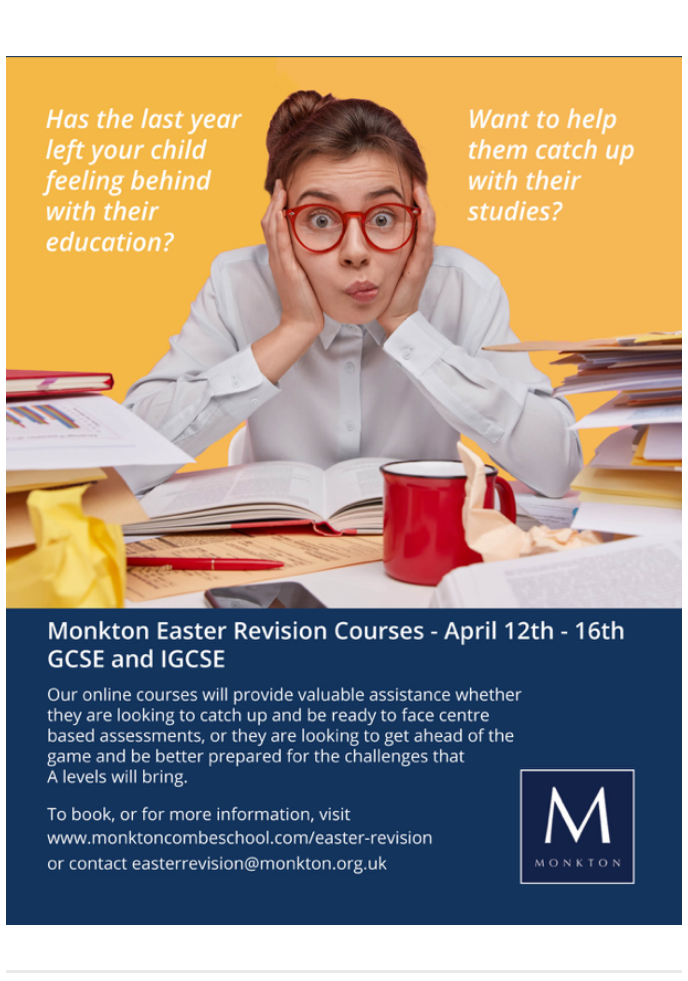
"Studying at UWE gave me access to their wonderful Technical Fabrication Instructors, and exposed me to a huge range of creative people and ideas. I was also supported by the brilliant Enterprise Team, and I won four awards from them and Santander, which helped me to turn my vocation into a business."

hollybennettsculptor.com



Bouncing 'O's' by Holly Bennett, sculpture of figure sat astride gelatinous blue rings made from translucent British eco resin,£220

craftscouncil.org.uk
uwe.ac.uk
bathspa.ac.uk



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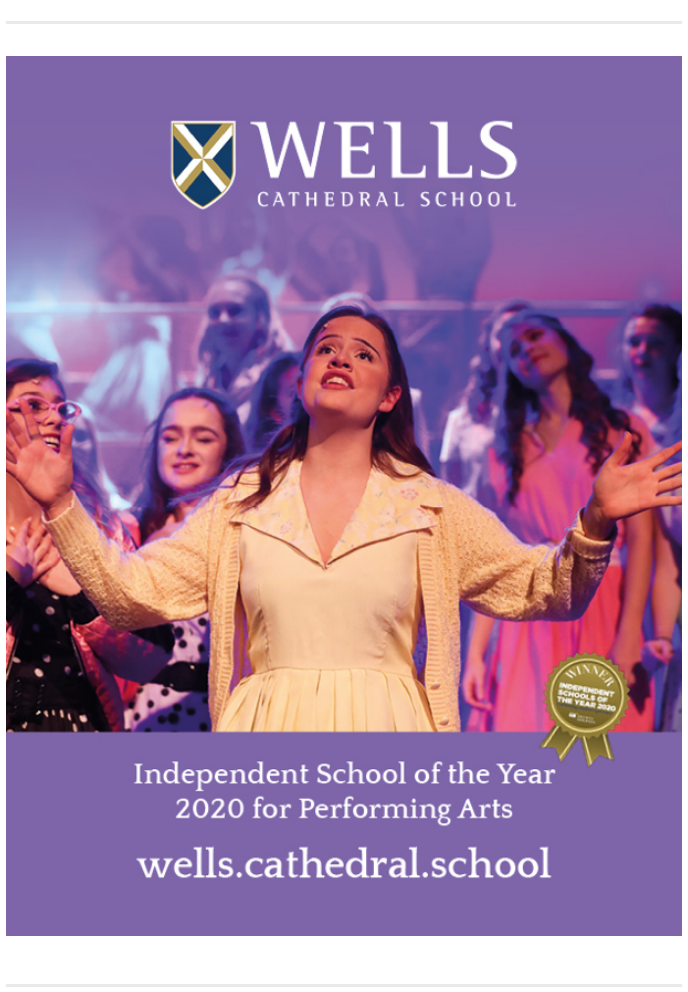

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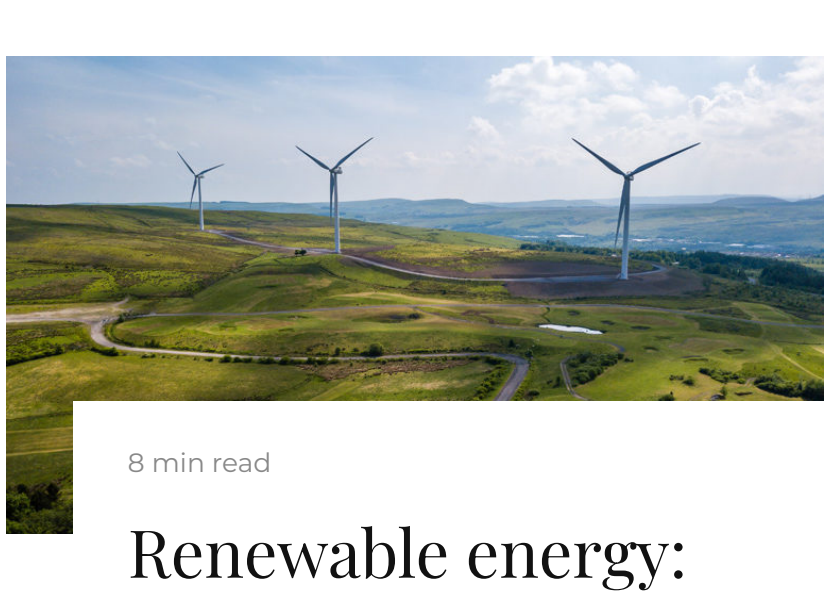

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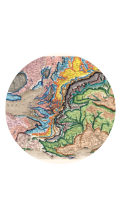

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