

Outside the Box

Camille Walala plays with perspective in new installation for Plymouth museum



Pre-installation sketch of Putting Things In Perspective by Camille Walala

On 15 July, artist Camille Walala unveils a new public artwork created for the summer programme at The Box, Plymouth's new museum and gallery. Commissioned by curators Alter-Projects, Camille's installation is set to be one of the highlights of the Box's 'Making It' exhibition – an exploration of the work that goes into the creation of art from raw materials and celebrates the region's history of craftsmanship. Titled 'Putting Things In Perspective', the new installation is part of a series of events and interventions to celebrate Plymouth's newly created public square, Tavistock Place, where the Box is located.

"Being commissioned by the Box to create a public artwork was an incredible opportunity to push my work in a new direction. After the intensity of the last year, I find myself more attracted to softer lines, drawn by hand. I want them to be slightly imperfect. This year has been a good lesson of letting go. In the last few months I have really enjoyed spending time painting and experimenting with colours. Taking the time to find the right tone of each colour was really joyful and satisfying."

– Camille Walala, artist

Fabricated in Walala’s East London studio with creative producer Julia Jomaa alongside long standing collaborator and technician Simon Sawyer, and transported to Plymouth for assembly over three days, the installation is formed from marine plywood, with a three-part weatherproofing treatment applied to protect it from the sea air. Standing 2m tall, 6m long and 2.5m wide, the freestanding sculptural work plays with plane and perspective, existing somewhere between 2D and 3D in the manner of a trompe-l’œil.

The sculpture is an energetic dance of contrasting forms, vivid colours, soft lines and organic patterns. Devised through a process of collage – adding and taking away shapes until the perfect balance is reached – Putting Things In Perspective represents a change in Walala’s thinking and approach. Although still recognisable as a Walala piece, the signature symmetries of her past work have acquired a softer edge and a more nuanced colour palette.

“Camille’s bold and distinctive style will have real impact in the space and will provide visitors to the Box and everyone who passes through the square with a striking and uplifting work of art to engage with and enjoy.”

– Judith Robinson, Arts Programmes Manager, The Box



Portrait of Camille Walala in her studio by Dunja Opalko (2020)

The sculpture's creative references span from the cubist paintings of Fernand Léger, whose boldly simplified treatment of modern subjects has caused him to be regarded as a forerunner of Pop, to the monumental sculptures of Roy Lichtenstein, notable for his use of strong black lines and 3D designs. In Walala's hand-rendered black-and-white patterns are traces of the allusive and figurative architecture and impulsive lines of Jean Dubuffet's L'Hourloupe cycle of abstract and sinuous drawings and paintings.

The final form of the sculpture was the result of an ongoing process of experimentation, with Walala and her studio team combining and recombining different forms and colours until a sense of balance was achieved. The impact of the pandemic on Walala's practice meant that she was able to spend more time than usual evolving the artwork, taking the time to mindfully blend tones, shapes and patterns. Although still vibrant, the final colour palette is softer and more subtle in tone than much of her previous work, with more browns, yellows and other earth tones than seasoned Walala fans might expect. Similarly, the straight graphic lines and perfect geometries have been superseded by softer contours and uneven, organic patterns – very much a fresh perspective for the artist.

For 56 days, visitors to The Box and Tavistock Place will be able to share in that joy first-hand – an explosion of energy and dynamism, with a note of reflection woven in.

"Walala Studio was the perfect collaborator. Her use of colour and general style of work will bring great joy and playfulness to the area at a time when many of us are still struggling with the emotional aftermath of a year spent in isolation."

– Anne-Laure Pingreoun, founder of Alter-Projects

Putting Things In Perspective will remain in place until 5 September. On 28 July, the Box's public art officer will share insights on the artist and her artwork with informal talks at 11am and 2.30pm. These are free with no need to book.

Notes to editors

For more information about Camille Walala and Putting Things in Perspective, images and interviews, please contact Chris Hayes at walala@zetteler.co.uk



Camille Walala

Known for her ambitious, large-scale and explosively colourful interventions in public spaces, Camille Walala uses the man-made landscape as a platform for disseminating positivity. Her work encompasses full-facade murals, immersive 3D installations, street art, interiors and set design – characterised by a fusion of bold colours and playful geometric patterns.

Since her 'Dream Come True Building' burst onto the Shoreditch streetscape in 2015 and thrust her into the spotlight, Camille and her creative producer, Julia Jomaa, have been engaged in an increasingly bold roster of international projects. These have included collaborations with leading global brands – such as LEGO, for which she created the HOUSE OF DOTS; the creative direction of the ground-breaking Mauritian hotel SALT of Palmar; and a slew of major installations for events such as NYC's WantedDesign and London Design Festival – including Walala Lounge, as complete suite of semi-permanent street furniture that transformed South Molton Street, Mayfair, into a corridor of colour. Camille finds inspiration in community and collaboration, and the power of colour and pattern to transform atmospheres, elevate moods and spark positivity.

camillewalala.com

[@camillewalala](https://www.instagram.com/camillewalala)

The Box

The city of Plymouth has undergone transformational change with the £40+ million construction of the Box, a major new museum, art gallery and archive that has transformed the former City Museum and Art Gallery, Central Library and St Luke's church buildings to create new galleries and exhibition space, a striking elevated archive, learning and research facilities, a new public square, a shop, a kitchen and bar and the Little Box cafe.

At the heart of The Box's ethos is the conservation, heritage and preservation of Plymouth's rich history and heritage. The venue brings together six outstanding national collections in a new and sustainable home, including objects from Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, archives from the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office and film and photographs from the South West Film and Television Archive and the South West Image Bank.

Led by Plymouth City Council, the Box is a partnership with the University of Plymouth, the South West Film and Television Archive, the South West Image Bank and the National Museum of the Royal Navy. Major funders include Plymouth City Council, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England.



theboxplymouth.com

Alter-Projects

Alter-Projects is a new generation multidisciplinary company specialised in curating unique experiences that connect brands, districts, property developers and institutions with designers, artists and retail experts to create immersive installations, holistic strategies and programs.

Founded by Anne-Laure Pingreoun, Alter-Projects work with exceptionally creative talents to find new ways of developing disruptive and unconventional content. We are strategists, curators and producers with a passion for storytelling, design and innovation. We have flair and audacity in helping our clients find new ways to create relevant and unique experiences within their context whilst drawing from talent from near and far.

Since its inception six years ago, Alter-Projects has worked with clients including A/D/O by MINI | Art Basel | Camille Walala Studio | Cartier | Extraperlo | Fotografiska | Grosvenor Estate | Hilton | London Design Biennale | London Design Festival | LVMH | Manhattan Loft Corp | MINI Living | NYCxDesign | Somerset House | Stanhope | The UK Gov.

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