

## Introducing: Intoart

The perception-changing art collective begins a new chapter in Peckham Levels



In 2001, printmakers **Sam Jones** and **Ella Ritchie** set out on an eight-week project to improve arts education, overturn prejudice and develop opportunities for artists with learning disabilities. Seventeen years later, their project has grown to become South London's most influential inclusive art collective – and has just moved into a state-of-the-art studio space at the newly launched creative hotspot **Peckham Levels**.

**Intoart** supports its artists in furthering their practices with the provision of facilities including art and design studios, an exhibition and event programme, and a mentoring scheme. Its vision is for people with learning disabilities to be visible, equal and established artists.

The collective's recent successes include the inclusion of works by **Mawuena Kattah** in the Arts Council's national loan collection and **Ntiense Eno Amooquaye** being awarded the Artists' International Development Fund to research and develop new work at the Texture Museum in Belgium.



(Left) Big Enormous Pot with Four Handles 2016 by Mawuena Kattah.

(Right) Watering Can Jug with Leaves 2016 by Mawuena Kattah.

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*'Assumptions prevail that people with learning disabilities are the recipients of a service and are participants rather than contemporary cultural producers in their own right. There is a huge amount of work still to be done to raise expectations and challenge preconceptions. We believe that with increased ambition, the artwork made by artists from Intoart is a strong counter to those prejudices.'*

– **Ella Ritchie**, co-founder, Intoart

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Kattah, a member of the collective since 2007, uses textiles, ceramics and painting to create immersive installations that draw on family studio photography to explore her experience of collectivity and kinship. Her work has been shown at group exhibitions at galleries including **Whitechapel Gallery** and **Studio Voltaire**, and following a placement in the **Victoria and Albert Museum** ceramics studio, a solo exhibition at **Tenderbooks**.

Ntiense Eno Amooquaye's practice combines print, text, image and live performance. Since joining the Intoart collective in 2007, she has exhibited and performed in the UK and internationally, including at the **Texture Museum**, Belgium, the **Whitechapel Gallery**, and a solo exhibition at the **Southbank Centre's Poetry Library**.

In January this year, Intoart moved into a new studio space in **Peckham Levels**, the creative hub in the heart of south London that houses a diverse collection of creative businesses, community initiatives, and is rapidly becoming one of the key cultural hotspots of the area. Five times the size of the collective's former space, the new HQ houses an art and design studio, an office and an archive comprising more than **2,000** artworks.

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Intoart, Peckham Levels. Photo by Josef Konczak.

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With the new premises come expanded possibilities. In 2018, Intoart will support **21 artists** and have scope for more, meaning more projects, more exhibitions and more artwork. The increased space will also facilitate more diverse art practices as well as larger-scale and more ambitious works.

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In order to support its artists in reaching their full creative potential, Intoart provides a variety of facilities and programmes:

#### **The Art Studio**

A space for making, learning and sharing ideas. The studio programme runs every day of the week and provides space for people with learning disabilities to engage with Intoart for the first time as well as for long-standing artists to develop evolving and ambitious bodies of artwork.

#### **The Design Studio**

A space for a wealth of disciplines, including illustration, product and graphic design, print, textiles, ceramics and fashion, the Intoart Design Studio creates limited-edition prints and handcrafted products. Collections have been showcased at a number of prestigious events and institutions, including London Illustration Fair and the Victoria and Albert museum.

#### **Solo Artists**

A dedicated programme supporting the progression of artists beyond the studio to design, develop and realise their own artistic programmes.

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(Above) Intoart, Peckham Levels. Photo by Josef Konczak.

(Below) Ceramic Group by Clifton Wright.

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## Exhibitions & Events

Intoart's public programme aims to make an impact on policy and practice across the fields of contemporary art, learning disability and education. Intoart exhibitions have been hosted at institutions including the Whitechapel Gallery, V&A Museum, the Southbank Centre, Tate, Peckham Platform and the Texture Museum in Belgium.

## Archive

Established in 2013, the Intoart Archive includes over 2,000 artworks and research relating to Intoart's studio, exhibitions and events. The archive acts as a tool to activate further learning, thinking and making and is a valuable resource for curators when developing exhibitions.

## Mentoring

Practice Makes is a pioneering artist-mentoring programme that pairs Intoart artists with young people with learning disabilities who are soon to leave school. Artist mentors work in schools, art colleges, galleries and the Intoart studio to share their skills and experience with mentees. Projects are long-running and involve a significant amount of contact time in order to develop strong mentor mentee relationships and high-quality public exhibitions.

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Intoart, Peckham Levels. Photo by Josef Konczak.

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS

### About Intoart

Intoart is an art and design studio in South London working inclusively with people with learning disabilities. It is Supported by Arts Council England, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Joseph Ettedgui Charitable Foundation.

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Peckham Levels staircase.

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