

Extended Gallery Guide

Mediated Realities

New Adelphi Exhibition Gallery

1st September 2025 – 30th January 2026

ART
COLLECTION
UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

Currently many people encounter the subjects of war, disaster, protest, climate change and global politics through images: packaged, streamed, filtered and endlessly replayed across digital media platforms. In this hyper-connected modern world, how do we navigate what is real and what isn't during times of crises? What truths are revealed or concealed, when experience is mediated to us through our screens? How do artists, past and present, explore these themes?

Mediated Realities brings together powerful works from the University of Salford Art Collection and by staff from the School of Arts, Media and Creative Technology, which challenge our perceptions of how history and memory have and continue to be presented (or distorted) in the modern era. Exhibiting artists use the internet, television, digital technology, photojournalism and other creative practices as tools to explore tensions between documentation and distortion, and between bearing witness and broadcasting spectacle.

Works by **Richard Hamilton** and **Joe Tilson** reflect how media imagery can become historic record or iconography by taking elements from mainstream media to use within their print practices. **Mishka Henner** and **Caitlin Griffiths** explore global issues online, from internet-sourced satellite imagery to social experiments on dating apps. **Sun Xun** and **Thomson & Craighead** both consider what might be gained or lost in interpretation, for example through use of language. Photographer **Wu Yue** captures the early days of the Covid pandemic at its source, looking for moments of connection and meaning in Wuhan in 2020.

Together these works don't just show us times of crisis – they question how we come to know it – and then make sense of it ourselves. Are we passive observers or active participants in shaping how these times are understood and remembered?

Mediated Realities is curated by Team Assistant Sam Parker, at the end of a two-year Graduate Associate traineeship with the Art Collection Team. Sam graduated with a BA Hons in Fine Art in 2023.

Share your thoughts:

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#MEDIATEDREALITIES

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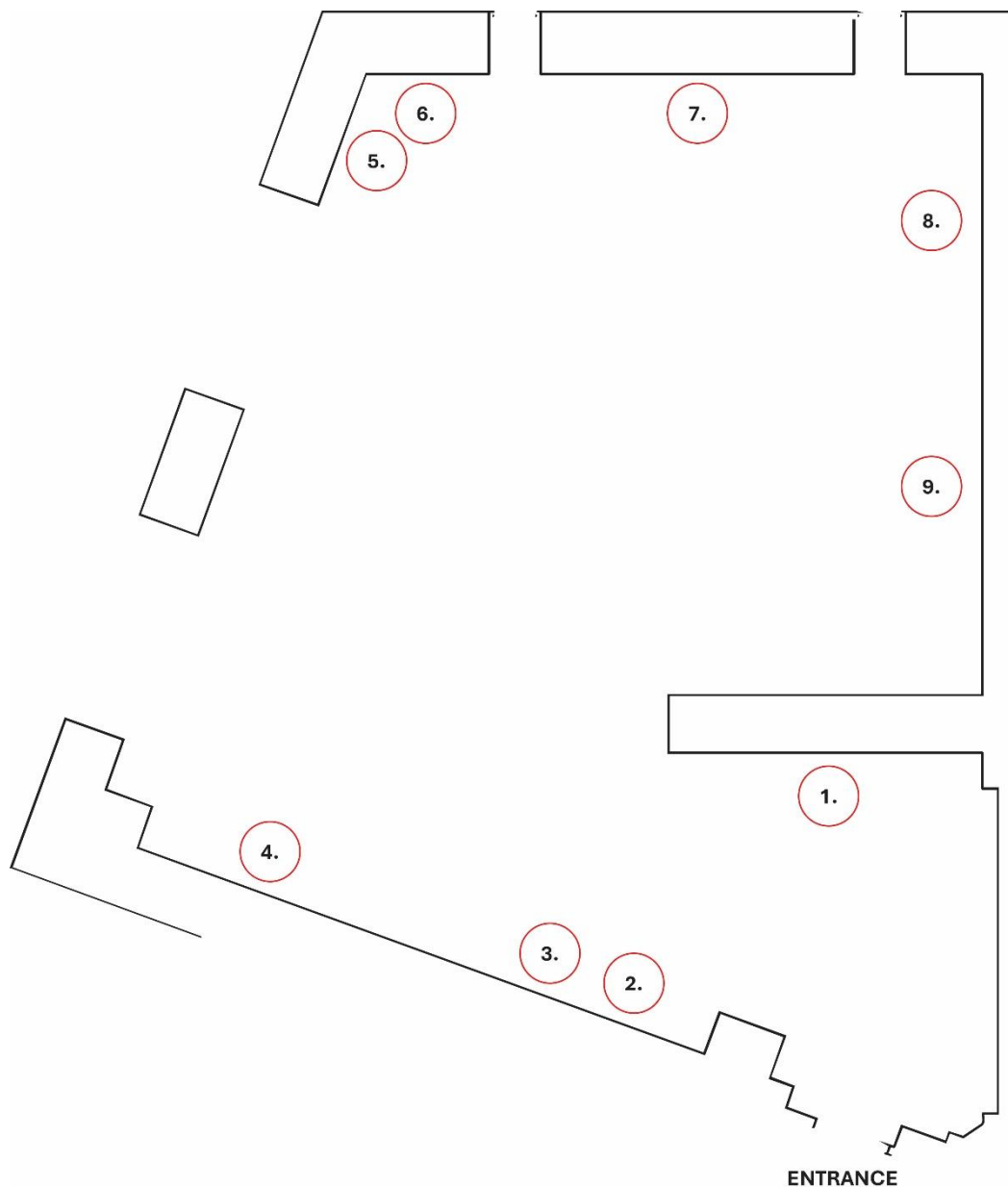
NEWADELPHI
EXHIBITION GALLERY

SALFORD SCHOOL OF
ARTS, MEDIA &
CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY



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1) Richard Hamilton
Kent State (1970)
 Screenprint

2) Joe Tilson
Clip-o-matic Che (Vallegrande, Bolivia, October 10th) (1969)
 Silkscreen with collage on paper, acetate and metalized polyester

3) G. Tucker
Monty (Unknown)
 Print

4) Caitlin Griffiths
Love in Red & Blue (2018)
 Digital video - 1h20m

5) Sun Xun
A War About Chinese Words (2005)
 Hand-drawn animation - 2m12s

6) Thomson & Craighead
The War On Terror (2016)
 Print, Typewriter

7) Yue Wu
a transparent separation (Covid Series) (2020)
 35mm Photographs

8) Thomson & Craighead
Corruption (2014)
 Photographic Lightbox Print

9) Mishka Henner
Wasson Oil and Gas Field, Yoakum County, Texas (2013-14)
 Archival pigment print mounted to aluminium

1) Richard Hamilton

Kent State (1970)

Screenprint

The image in this print was taken from televised news coverage of the Kent State University tragedy, broadcast on television by the BBC. Four unarmed students were killed and nine wounded by the Ohio National Guard, during a rally opposing the Vietnam War and expansion of military activities. The events triggered national outrage and contributed to a 4 million strong national student strike.

Artist Richard Hamilton (1922-2011) maintained a broad, cross-medium practice, often with an interest in consumer culture and mass media. For this print, Hamilton spent every night for a week in May of 1970 watching television with his camera pointed at the screen. He captured several images of the tragedy, including this one of an injured student. Initially reluctant to utilize this disturbing image in his work, he chose to use it as a stark reminder of the terrible event.

The print required thirteen screens and fifteen layers to create. At first glance it may almost appear abstract, before the figure is seen or known about. It may ask us to look closer and consider what we consume and remember.

Hamilton was born in London and educated at the Royal Academy and the Slade School of Art. He was a member of the Independent Group formed in the 1950s, whose work contributed to the emergence of Pop Art in Britain. He exhibited widely throughout his career and has work held in a number of collections, including the Tate.

2) Joe Tilson

Clip-o-matic Che (Vallegrande, Bolivia, October 10th) (1969)

Silkscreen with collage on paper, acetate and metalized polyester

“*Vallegrande, Bolivia, October 10th*” is a brightly coloured, pop art screen print with collage on acetate. The work depicts a post-mortem photograph of Argentinian-born Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara (1928-1967). Guevara was variously a guerilla leader, diplomat, politician, author, military theorist, physician, and Marxist thinker who played a major role in the Cuban Revolution. He worked to overthrow capitalism, imperialism and inequality, and since his capture and execution became a symbol of rebellion and counterculture.

Tilson (1928-2023) was one of the leading figures in the Pop art movement in the 1960s. The movement challenged the traditions of fine art by focusing on imagery from mass media and popular culture: sourced from the news, magazines, television, advertising and more. Works such as the *Transparencies* series intentionally juxtapose and layer these found images, often away from their original context, to make space for new connections and interpretations.

Tilson was born in London and studied at St Martin's School of Art, the Royal College of Art, and the British School at Rome. Throughout his career he taught and exhibited widely, including showing work at the 32nd Venice Biennale in 1964. His work is held in numerous collections, including the Tate and MoMA New York.

3) G. Tucker

Monty (Unknown)
Print

Like many British collections, we hold a small number of works with limited information or records to accompany them. Identifying the works, their artists, and why they were acquired is an ongoing task. This print, titled *Monty* and simply signed 'G.Tucker' is one such work. We believe the image to be a screenprint of *Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery*: nicknamed *Monty*, he was a senior British Army Officer who served in both World War 1 and World War 2. The artist has obscured the image with a large pixelation effect – which might prompt us to think about topics of recognition, memory, loss, identity or even the impact of digital media. What does this work make you think about? If you have any more information about Monty or G.Tucker – please let us know.

4) Caitlin Griffiths

Love in Red and Blue (2018)
Digital video – 1h20m

In response to the 2016 Brexit decision and first US election of Trump, artist Caitlin Griffiths set out to see if she could bridge conflict on a personal level. Using a popular online dating app, she set out to find someone with opposing political beliefs, and together they embarked on a journey to build genuine affection and a relationship.

The video accelerates a relationship through three scenarios: a first date, a romantic dinner and a wedding ceremony. Drawing on psychologist Arthur Aron's experiment called '*36 questions to fall in love to*' the pair answer a series of questions designed to create closeness. Griffiths always appears on the left of the screen wearing red, is a Labour Party member. Nate Phillips appears on the right wearing blue and is a Conservative voter.

Griffith's work draws together the personal and the political, encouraging us to think more closely about the information we consume, opinions we form, and relationships we sustain. In an increasingly divisive world, how do we come to know, respect, or even love those who hold very different views and values to us?

Griffiths is an artist based in Manchester, and Lecturer in Photography in our School of Arts, Media and Creative Technology. She works across video, text, performance and photography, making work rooted in ideas of identity, exchange and interaction. She has variously worked with scientists, psychologists, actors and clairvoyants to examine notions of mental narratives and personal voice.

5) Sun Xun

A War About Chinese Words (2005)

Hand-drawn animation – 2m12s

A War About Chinese Words is one of Sun Xun's earliest works. A hand-drawn animation, the artist created a story using Chinese characters, in which simple lines and strokes morph between letters, figures and animals – moving and fighting together across the screen. Sun is acclaimed for his ability to combine traditional craft techniques and mediums, including painting, woodcut, ink and charcoal drawing, with digital technologies and stop-motion animation. Much of his work utilizes folk and vernacular imagery to consider China's history; and this animation gestures towards the conflicts at play when trying to address these contradictory historical narratives. Words are put to battle, stories fight for the opportunity to be seen, read, or heard.

Sun was born in 1980 in Fuxin, Liaoning Province, China, just after the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which provides significant context to his work. The revolution was a time of great political, economic and social upheaval, originally planned to preserve Chinese socialism, but ultimately led to widespread violence, destruction and persecution. With news and propaganda monopolised by the state, the artist is particularly interested in the way historical events are perceived and remembered by 'ordinary' citizens compared to official reports.

Sun studied at the China Academy of Fine Arts and has received numerous international awards and exhibitions, including solo shows at The Hayward Gallery, London and the Drawing Center in New York. He lives and works in Beijing.

6) Thomson & Craighead

The War On Terror (2016)

Print, Typewriter

Carefully typewritten work *the war on terror* transforms the initial phrase into a sequence of anagrams: "the rot narrower" "tarot hewn error", "rare tower thorn"; becoming a self-reflexive, poetic lament. The phrase, a shortened version of the 'Global War on Terrorism' refers to the US and global military campaigns following the September 11 attacks in 2001. It was coined by President George W Bush and often repeated to justify their broadening campaigns. Reworking the phrase, hidden messages or meanings seem to appear; they could point to the absurdity of war, the pursuit of truth, or the power of language.

The typed process was loosely inspired by the 'Oulipo' group, a network of French writers who sought out new structures, patterns and approaches to writing – revealing new connections to narrative, story and form. The artists described making the work as slow, physical, noisy process, quite different to the quicker digital work – making a small and delicate work with a contrastingly heavy subject matter.

7) Yue Wu

a transparent separation (Covid Series) (2020)

35mm Photographs

"No one knew how Covid-19 would shape our life and when would it end. The pandemic hit the city of Wuhan first in the beginning of 2020. We watched painful news every day, and it was like a nightmare that you could never wake up from. We all experience the pain at some level, however, what Wuhan went through was completely different story. As documentary filmmaker, I couldn't help to think that beyond the great pain, how people in Wuhan heal their wounds and reconnect themselves to the new path. I entered Wuhan on Qingming festival, a Chinese traditional Tomb Sweeping Day, in April 4th, 2020, four days before its city reopened to the world. These pictures were made during the breaks of my documentary filmmaking. These moments were "little talks between Wuhan and me". People in Wuhan showed me they were still eager to find life in the isolated world."

Wu is a documentary filmmaker and photographer, with a background in journalism and based between China and the USA. Her work has been published by the New York Times, The Guardian, the Washington Post, Reuters, and other international media. This series was commissioned for the Collection in 2020. Five years on from the global pandemic, they offer us a moment to reflect on the impacts during and after that time, on our sense of place, purpose, community and connection.

8) Thomson & Craighead

Corruption (2014)

Photographic Lightbox print

The *Corruption* light boxes each display frames taken from corrupt video files found online - a file intended to put a virus onto the downloader's computer but which appears pixilated, painterly and abstract when opened in a video player. In seeking out these glitches, malfunctions and distortions, the artists represent them as aesthetic propositions, reminding us that the act of looking itself distorts our perception of reality. Lenticular printing techniques enables the artists to show multiple images that appear to 'animate' as the viewer moves in space, offering each person a different and changing perspective. These works might ask us - what is lost or gained in the act of transmission?

Jonathan Thomson (b.1969) and Alison Craighead (b.1971) work across video, sound, sculpture, installation and online space, making artworks that explore the changing socio-political structures of the Information Age. They examine how the digital world is ever more connected to the physical world, having 'become a geographical layer in our collective sensorium'. They studied at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee, and now live and work in Scotland and London. They have worked collaboratively since 1993 and exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, including at e-flux, New York, the Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh and IMT Gallery, London.

9) Mishka Henner

Wasson Oil and Gas Field. Yoakum County, Texas (2013-14)

Archival pigment print mounted to aluminium

Henner's *Oil Field* series of large-scale photographic prints are composed of hundreds of high-resolution satellite images, digitally combined to present intricate detail. The prints are reminiscent of vast Abstract Expressionist canvases, and represent American landscapes deeply altered and scarred by industries meeting extraordinary levels of consumer demand for oil. Originally sourced online, these satellite images represent a systematic intent to maximise production, resulting in natural landscapes transformed into something almost unrecognisable.

"These oil fields reflect a circuitry pumping through the heart of American culture. The tentacles of the oil and gas industry span the vast territory of the American landscape like the veins and arteries of a body. The oil flows like blood....Only in the silence and vacuum of space - seven hundred miles above all the noise - does the network of America truly reveal itself."

Henner was born in Brussels, Belgium and lives and works in Greater Manchester. He has exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, and from 2023-2024 was artist in residence at the University of Salford's Energy House 2.0 research facility, in partnership with the Art Collection, Open Eye Gallery, and Castlefield Gallery.

Credits: Exhibition graphic design by Aroobah Khan @directed.by.aroobah

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