

Uma Breakdown

<http://www.umabreakdown.com>



Statement

Hi I'm Uma, I'm a disabled artist/writer/researcher/game-designer interested in animals, horror films, queer feminist literature, ecology and play. My specific research interests include the work of Hélène Cixous, Jean Genet, and the enacted politics of art that supports audience agency. My art is made through images and writing, and things which are combinations and/or extensions of these; like games, performances, publications, and installations.

Everything I make is about some combination of love, grief, hallucination, and an excess of joy. With Bella Paloma I make video games about the divine and occult providence of transfemme existence.

I believe strongly that art should be a welcoming, exciting invitation for speculation and collaboration.

Ancient History:

Prior to beginning my art career in 2015 I worked extensively in care work and inclusive art education. I also ran the 3D pathway on the BTec Art and Design programme at Havering College from 2006-2008, and sculpture pathway on Kensington and Chelsea College's Foundation course from 2009-10.

I founded and ran an award winning pupil-led art programme at The Bridge, a North London SEN primary school from 2009-2016. While in this role I trained in Play Work with Hackney Play Association, and continually researched and developed approaches to peer led learning. Within the school this included delivering staff training and setting up a research group on peer led approaches. Outside of the school I was a founding member of the London branch of The Public School (the peer led learning platform based in L.A.'s Telic Art Exchange), a member of the Radical Education forum and The Disability Research Centre (Goldsmiths), and an early guest lecturer at both School of The Damned and Open School East.

From 2011-2017 I was a core member of the Deleuzian performance collective / acid techno group / drone metal band "A.A.S.". We made work for contexts including Primary in Nottingham, Flux Factory NY, Supernormal Festival, Hackney Wicked, and The Royal Geographical Society London.

Between 2010-2015 I ran a curation and publishing platform called "Sender Broken". Working with artists and writers such as Evan Calder Williams, Pil and Galia Kollektiv, Yuri Patterson, and Linda Stupart I organised exhibitions at galleries including 5 Years, Aid&Abet, and Standpoint. I also carried boxes of publications and editions to more zine fairs than I wish to remember.

Select recent and upcoming exhibitions

2024

Earth A.D. 3

QUAD, Derby. (Forthcoming touring solo exhibition and digital artwork 2022-2024)

Doppelgänger Rooms

Periphery Space, Gorey, County Wexford. (Forthcoming collaborative project w/ artist Olivia Normile)

DIY OR DIE

Container, Bristol. (forthcoming digital artwork w/ Bella Paloma)

Taking up Space

The Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle. (Forthcoming group exhibition)

Areas Of Effect: Planar Systems, Critical Roles, and Gaming Imaginaries

Arebyte, London. (Group exhibition)

Peasants Revolt Now!

Prayer Room, Birmingham. (Group exhibition)

Shape Open

London. (Group Exhibition)

2023

Earth A.D. 2

FACT, Liverpool. (Touring solo exhibition and digital artwork 2022-2024)

The Well of Sickness Shimmering

Overkill Festival, Amsterdam. (Digital artwork w/ Bella Paloma)

Take Care

Travelling Gallery, Edinburgh/throughout Scotland. (Group exhibition)

Joy of Destruction

Backlit, Nottingham. (Group exhibition)

Elan Vitale

Container, Bristol. (Digital artwork)

Out of Scale

Transmedialle, Berlin. (Group exhibition)

2022

Allied Editions

Frieze, London. (Art fair)

Hinterlands

Baltic, Gateshead. (Group exhibition)

Earth A.D.

Wysing, Cambridge. (Touring solo exhibition and digital artwork 2022-2024)

How to Practise Grieving in Eight Movements

Klosterruine, Berlin. (Group exhibition)

Surface of Scum

MAYK, Bristol. (Digital artwork w/ Bella Paloma)

2021

Animal Agency

17th Athens Digital Art Festival, Athens. (Digital exhibition)

Take The Moonlight by The Tail

Arebyte, London. (Digital artwork)

Lich Way Party Train

Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge. (Digital artwork)

Rhizodome

Gwenba.com. (Digital group exhibition)

Unfolding Shrines

Shape Arts, London. (Augmented Reality group exhibition)

Post-Doom

Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart. (Digital artwork)

2020

Animal Agency

FACT, Liverpool. (Digital artwork)

All Flesh is Grass

Kim? Contemporary Art Centre, Riga. (Group collaborative exhibition and role playing game)

2019

Polymorph Other

Queens Hall Arts Centre, Hexham. (Group exhibition)

2018

Broken Diorama

Dublin Digital Radio. (Radio play)

Paperworks

SERF, Leeds. (Performance)

Sex and Other States

South Kiosk, London. (Performance and group exhibition)

Polymorph Other

IMT Gallery, London. (Group exhibition)

Its Origins are Indeterminate

The Whitechapel Gallery, London. (Performance)

The Inhuman Ecstasy of Toxic Waste

Wormworm.org (digital commission)

2017

Creature of Havoc

SERF, Leeds. (Solo project)

Waste: A Symposium

Birkbeck College, London. (video installation)

Janusware: Cycle 2

Res. London. (Group exhibition)

Janusware: Cycle 1

Res. London. (Solo exhibition and performance)

Heretics #12

Rádio Quântica (Radio play)

2016

Green Fuzz

Xero, Kline & Coma, London. (Two person exhibition w/ Alfie Strong)

(It's All) Tropical Presents Blind Date

The Royal Standard, Liverpool. (Performance w/ Alfie Strong)

The Dying Midwest of Thulsa Doom

Chisenhale Studios, London. (Performance)

Education

Northumbria- Sunderland Consortium/ PhD

September 2016- March 2020, Newcastle

AHRC funded PhD based in the art department of Northumbria University, title "Becoming Ahuman: making it desirable to abandon certainty, including certainty of the self and play in this chaotic situation".

Royal College of Art/ MA

September 2006- July 2008, London

Sculpture school. Funded by RCA fees and maintenance bursary, and award from The Coates Foundation.

University of East London / First Class BA (hons)

September 2006 - July 2008, London

Fine Art department.

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**Select memberships,
residencies, fellowships:**

2024

2024 International Digital Fellow

Quad, Derby.

Trustee

Broken Grey Wires, Liverpool

2023

Shortlisted for The Arts Foundation Award: Digital Art

The Arts Foundation, Manchester.

2022

Unseen Futures Fellow

Abandon Normal Devices, Manchester.

Digital Residency with Alice Rekab

Arcade-Campfa, Cardiff.

Access Steering Group Member

Wysing Arts Centre

2021

Digital Solitude Assembly

Arc Bucharest.

Access Advisory Group Member

FACT, Liverpool

Net//Work

British Council / Wysing Art Centre, Cambridge.

Post-Doom

Akademie Solitude, Stuttgart.

2020

Shortlisted for Adam Reynolds Award

Shape Arts, London

Fact Together

FACT, Liverpool.

2017

Crip Theory

Wysing Art Centre, Cambridge.

2016

Work/Leisure

Abingdon Studios, Blackpool.

Recent publications

2004

"The Dolls and The Egg"

Collaborative text with Belladonna Paloma in "Almanac Journal of Trans Poetics".

2023

"Trans Death Magic"

Exhibition text for Slug Town, Newcastle.

"Middlesbrough Art Week 2023"

Review in "Corridor8".

"The Graveyard of Extension"

in "Deleuzine Vol. 2".

"Uma Breakdown and Johanna Hedva talk LA Noir"

Two part podcast series at "Unseen Futures Kinopio", Abandon Normal Devices, Manchester.

"Two Plus Two Makes Four: The Auxiliary, Middlesbrough"

Review in "Corridor8".

"The Speculative Dismemberment of Agent Leon Kennedy"

In "A Wet and Heavy Noise". Market Gallery, Glasgow.

2022

"Waste Work"

In "TEXTUR Issue 4". Textur, Berlin.

2021

"Appropriate Technology"

In artist Holly White's publication "Leaving Biosphere 2". CCA, Glasgow.

2020

"Oh_The_Guilt_Puss_3"

In "Chain/Mail Issue 1: North East". Corridor8

"As Plain as its Meaningless Name"

In "On Care". Ma Bibliothèque, London.

"Dungeons & Disaster"

In "Online Resources". NewBridge Project, Newcastle.

2019

"Widening Circles"

In "The Graveside Orations of Carl Einstein". Ma Bibliothèque, London

"Horse Bites Fence"

Co-editor w/ Elena Colman and Rebecca Bligh of this Arts Council England funded publication concerning art, disability, and radical solidarity.

2018

"Gauge Fanfic"

In "The Bodies that Remain". Punctum Books, Santa Barbara.

"Axpansion"

In "PaperWork Issue 3: lilwimi lipsing". Paperwork, London

"Farmer 9"

In "Alembic". Res., London.

2017

"Interview"

In "Lossy Ecology". Flat Time House, London.

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**Recent teaching, workshops,
conference papers, artist
talks.**

2024

“Tartarus in Bloom”.

Public talk with Dr Amy Hale and Belladonna Paloma, at Quad, Derby.

“Undertale Delete”.

Guest lecture at SODA, Manchester Metropolitan University.

“Relics”.

Public talk with Joseph Buckley, Dr Karen Di Franco and Dr Alice Rekab, at FACT Liverpool.

“Artist Advisor”.

Syllabus Artist development programme, venues across the UK.

2023

“A Knife Made of Refuse”.

Public talk at The Center for Discursive Inquiry at CalArts, Santa Clarita.

“Forest of Doom 2”

Workshop for “2023 Youth Festival”, Wysing Arts Centre.

“Uma Breakdown and Johanna Hedva”.

Public talk at FACT, Liverpool.

“Secret passages and arcane puzzles for the contemporary studio”.

Workshop for “Into The Wild” artist development programme at Chisenhale Gallery, London.

“My Coffin is a Spaceship”

Public talk with Evelyn Wh-ell for “Art/Work Association”, at Auto-Italia South East, London.

“Put Your Controller on the Floor”

Guest lecture delivered at Reality Check Festival, Enschede

“Associate Lecturer in Fine Art”

Newcastle University, Newcastle.

“Hellbound Hearts or, “I was rooting for Mephistopheles, and contemptuous of Faust”

Guest lecture and seminar, Yale University, Newhaven..

“Esprit de corps / Corpse Explosion”

Guest lecture delivered at Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, Oxford.

“Art as a Road Trip

Workshop delivered at Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, Oxford.

2022

“Art as a Monster that Always Comes Back”

Guest lecture delivered at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge.

“An Anthology of Dead Ends”

Guest lecture delivered at University of Huddersfield.

“Uma Breakdown in Conversation with Angela YT Chan and Dr. Tom Dillon”

live online event for Wysing Arts Centre.

“Worldbuilding and Wellbeing”

Panel member for “Peer to Peer UK/HK”, Blindspot Gallery, Hong Kong, and QUAD, Derby.

“Forest of Doom”

Workshop delivered at “2022 Youth Festival”, Wysing Arts Centre.

“Art as a Road Trip”

Workshop delivered at “Jerwood Art FACT Fellowship”, FACT, Liverpool.

“Theft and System”

Workshop delivered at University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield.

“Practice Based Art PhD Methodologies”

Workshop delivered at Reading University, Reading.

2022

"Art as Waking up to a Nightmare"

Workshop delivered at "Horror Programme", University of The Underground, Berlin.

"Art as a Road Trip"

Workshop delivered at "AMPlify", Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge.

"Open Screen Panel Discussion"

Panellist for "Arebyte Open Screen", Arebyte Gallery London.

"Art as a Road Trip"

Workshop delivered at "FACT Together", FACT Liverpool.

"They Played us Like a Damn Fiddle"

Workshop delivered at "TROUBLE IN OUTER HEAVEN: PORTABLE OPS PLUS", Southwark Park Galleries.

"Dungeon Mechanics"

Workshop delivered at "Feminist Painting School", Baltic, Gateshead.

"Broken Vibes"

Artist talk delivered at "Merged Futures 3", Northampton University.

2020

"Lead Maker"

International Centre for Life, Newcastle.

2019

"Biofilm Mansion Theory, or Making as Collaboration with Disorder"

Conference paper delivered at "Interdisciplinary Conversations Around Making", Newcastle University.

"Coming Soon, From Your Cemetary: Horror / Play / Instability / Desire"

Guest lecture delivered at Reading University.

"There is no reason for you to live: 'No World Dreamers, Sticky Zeitgeist episode 2: Aperitif' as trans* Écriture Féminine"

Conference paper delivered at "Beyond the Console: Gender and Narrative Games", London South Bank University, London.

"Research Assistant to Prof. Patricia McCormack"

Three month AHRC funded placement.

2018

"Smeared into The Environment: Queer Horror and The Ahuman"

Conference paper delivered at "Horror, Cult, Exploitation II", Northumbria University.

"Alembic II: Chrominance"

Panellist for publication launch, Res. Gallery, London.

"Wild Pop: A Symposium"

Artist talk at Newcastle University.

"Smeared into The Environment: Queer Horror and The Ahuman"

Conference paper delivered at "Don't Look: Representations of Horror in the 21st Century Symposium", University of Edinburgh.

"Biofilm Assemblages and Ahuman Horror"

Conference paper delivered at "Current Research in Speculative Fiction", University of Liverpool.

"The Revolutionary Praxis of Urban Galls"

Conference paper delivered at "Open Graves Open Minds & Supernatural Cities present: The Urban Weird" University of Hertfordshire.

2017

"Appropriation"

Taught semester long module on BA Fine Art programme, Northumbria University.

"Dog-Tech 1"

Conference paper delivered at "CDT Conference", Baltic Gateshead.

Select awards and funding

2022

North East Artist Fund

North East CVAN

Trailblazer Fund

Bristol + Bath Creative R+D

2021

Develop Your Creative Practice Bursary

Arts Council England

2nd prize for "Animal Agency"

Athens Digital Art Festival Audience Award,

2020

ArtsAdmin Bursary

Select press and interviews

2023

"Uma Breakdown: Earth A.D. 2"

Corridor8

"Save Room"

Container

"An Interview with Uma Breakdown"

Art in Liverpool

2021

"Free Your Mind. Death Will Come, Uma Breakdown in
Conversation with Johanna Hedva"

akademie-solitude.de

"Unfolding Shrines is some of the most ambitious augmented
reality art we have seen in the last year"

The Art Newspaper

"The best virtual things to do at home in April"

TimeOut

2020

"In Conversation: Uma Breakdown and Lesley Taker"

Fact.co.uk

2019

"Art, The Anthropocene, and the Grim Dark Future of
Warhammer 40k"

Roman Road Journal

2016

"(It's All) Tropical present Blind Date"

Corridor8

"Review: Blind Date: (it's all) Tropical at The Royal Standard"

Art in Liverpool