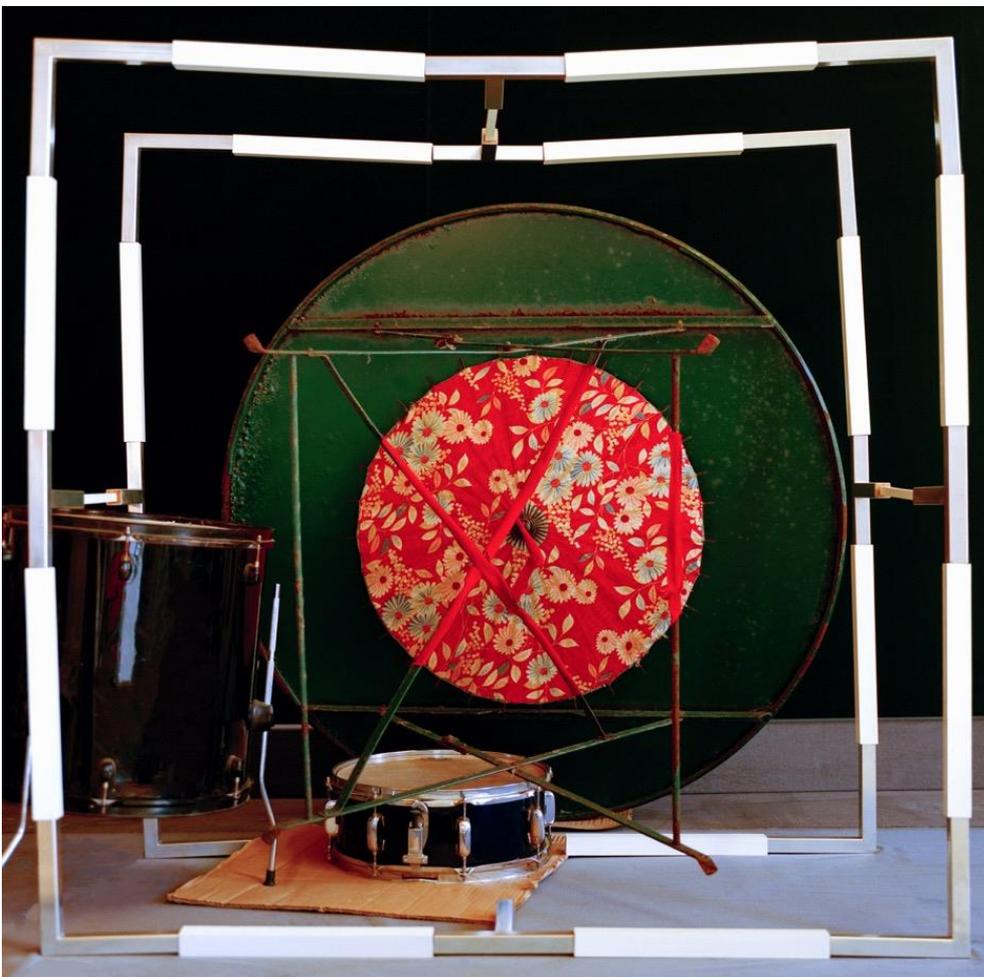




PRESS RELEASE

Van Gogh House presents their first annual commission and exhibition: *Life and its most trivial particulars* by Brian Griffiths and Frank Kent

4 September – 18 December 2021, Van Gogh House, Stockwell, London



8 Ovals (2021) by Brian Griffiths and Frank Kent

Van Gogh House presents *Life and its most trivial particulars* by artists **Brian Griffiths** and **Frank Kent**, opening 4 September – 18 December 2021. The exhibition is the first in a new annual commissioning programme at Van Gogh House, marking 50 years since 87 Hackford Road was found to be the London residence of the renowned Dutch artist.

In the form of a photographic installation across all eight rooms of the restored 3-storey Georgian terraced house, *Life and its most trivial particulars* responds to the accumulated histories and constructed realities of the building, from the early 19th century to the present day. Transposing still life and landscape, everyday materials and objects, sculptors Griffiths and Kent present their carefully staged and situated photographs as sideways moments of focus and narrative.

Drawing on themes from Van Gogh's life and work, *Life and its most trivial particulars* builds associated fictions and connections that reflect Griffiths' and Kent's own imaginings of the artist, his myth and legacy. The works are informed by a wide range of references from Van Gogh's early works such as *Potato Field* (1883), the artist's evolving colour palette, Bob Law's sculpture *Vincent's Chair* (1984) and the writings of Charles Dickens; to the sight of a church roof in Gainsborough, a Japanese parasol, and everyday found objects collected from car boot sales and Griffiths' and Kent's studios. Within the composition of each photograph is an open cube, a framing device that presses objects into action and flattens three-dimensional space. The objects are arranged with an improvised formality, the resulting images depicting spaces that appear both imagined and ordered, and often with a comedic edge.

Livia Wang, Creative Director at Van Gogh House said, "The carefully considered relationships between object, stage and frame in *Life and its most trivial particulars* truly resonate with our approach to the house. Griffiths and Kent's playful process of collaboration creates compositions with their own atmosphere, story and natural humour, an alternate rewriting of the infamous collaboration between Van Gogh and Gauguin."

Griffiths and Kent met at the Royal Academy Schools where Griffiths is a lecturer and Kent was a student, and soon after they began a collaborative artistic practice, culminating in *AIR SIGNS*, an ongoing series of photographic sculptural installations, first presented at Karsten Schubert in London in 2019.

Van Gogh House presents an ongoing programme of interchanging exhibitions and invited artist residencies, undertaken in August by **Roy Claire Potter** and **Lilian Nejatpour**. In parallel, a poster work for the front window of the house presents a new commission each month by artists **Allison Katz** (July), **Jordan Baseman** (August), **Ye Funa** (September) and **Katrina Palmer** (October).

Saskia Olde Wolbers was the first contemporary artist to present work at Van Gogh House with a solo exhibition *Unreliable Biographers* (2019), and *Yes, these Eyes are the Windows*, a sound installation commissioned by Artangel in 2011, followed by a video work of the same name in 2015. Throughout the building there is a growing list of permanent interventions; a cherrywood banister spindle by **Oliver Dorman**; natural dye hand-made curtains by **Rachel Jones-Jones**; and *Pigment Timeline*, a wall work of every pigment Van Gogh used during his lifetime by **Jo Volley**.

Van Gogh House has been owned and managed by the Wang family since 2012. A 7-year restoration project completed in 2019 led by Creative Director Livia Wang has established a new centre for the production and presentation of contemporary art, and a working domestic space sensitive to the history and heritage of the building. The family also run San Mei Gallery in south London, an independent space for contemporary art, committed to research-led, educational and collaborative exchanges.

ENDS

For interview requests, images and further information, please contact Janette Scott Arts PR on janette@janettescottartspr.com or +44(0)7966 486156.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Life and its most trivial particulars by Brian Griffiths and Frank Kent, 4 September – 18 December 2021, Van Gogh House, 87 Hackford Road, London SW9 0RE. Open Wednesday – Sunday, 12:00 – 6:00pm. Tickets £5.00 full price, £3.00 concessions (16-25, Students, OAP, Unemployed, Disabled), £2.50 Art Fund members, free for under 16s, Museums Association and ICOM members. Booking opens in August. Free admission during Open House Weekend, Saturday 4 – Sunday 5 September 2021. For further information www.vangoghhouse.co.uk

Window poster commissions 2021 - 2022: Allison Katz (July), **Jordan Baseman** (August), **Ye Funa** (September) and **Katrina Palmer** (October), **Will Harris** (November), **Rosa Johan Uddoh** (December) and **Gray Wielebinski** (January). Previous commissions by: **Brigid Lowe** (April), **Madeleine Pledge** (May) and **Lesley Sharpe** (June).

Exhibition talks and events

Life and its most trivial particulars is accompanied by a series of workshops, tours and discussions. Details announced soon.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Brian Griffiths (b. 1968) lives and works in Colchester and London. Solo exhibitions include *Self-Conscious*, Cricklewood Library, Brent Biennial (2020); *AIR SIGNS* (with Frank Kent), Karsten Schubert, London, (2020); *Taking Sides* (with Frank Kent), Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo (2019); *No No to Knock-Knocks*, Blain|Southern, London (2018); and *BILL MURRAY: a story of distance, size and sincerity*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2015). Selected group exhibitions include; *Image Drum*, Royal Academy of Arts, London (2019); *Voyage*, Bergamin & Gomide, São Paulo (2017); *Nuit Américaine*, Office Baroque, Brussels (2014); and *Folk Devil*, David Zwirner, New York (2013).
<https://www.galerialuisastrina.com.br/en/artists/briangriffiths/>

Frank Kent (b. 1982) lives and works in London. He studied at Royal Academy Schools and Nottingham Trent University. Previous shows and commissions include: *AIR SIGNS* (with Brian Griffiths), Karsten Schubert, London, (2020); *New Works* at Fold Gallery, London (2017); green backrests for lecture theatre at Royal Academy Schools, London (2015); *Site & Situ*, a three-month residency at Surface Gallery, Nottingham (2011); and *Visual Delusions*, Bend In The River, Gainsborough (2011). <https://www.frankkent.co.uk/>

ABOUT VAN GOGH HOUSE

Van Gogh House in south London opened in 2019 as a centre for contemporary art, presenting an ongoing programme of exhibitions, residencies, outreach and education projects, talks and events. It holds an archive of over 200 artefacts found during the 7-year conservation of the building. Established as a site of creative production pairing contemporary art and design with a sensitivity to materials, Van Gogh House is dedicated to celebrating stories drawn from historic interiors alongside preserving Van Gogh's remarkable legacy.

Otherwise known as 87 Hackford Road, the end of terrace house is a privately owned Grade II listed Georgian residential building in Stockwell. It gains its name from its most famous tenant, the painter Vincent Van Gogh, who lived there aged 20 for a year from 1873-74 whilst he worked as an art dealer in Covent Garden. In 1971, local postman and painter Paul Chalcroft undertook extensive research and discovered that the house had been Van Gogh's London home. It was semi-derelict when the Wang family acquired it in 2012, with the ambition of transforming it into a cultural venue. Art and heritage specialist, and Creative Director of Van Gogh House, Livia Wang, led on its restoration to a working domestic space and centre for the production and presentation of contemporary art and design. www.vangoghhouse.co.uk