

# BLEACHED. THE ART OF CORAL SCIENCE

An exhibition proposal from Vulgar Earth Artists Collective  
and the University of Southampton



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# VULGAR EARTH ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

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## ABOUT US

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Vulgar Earth is a not for profit artists collective, promoting awareness and discussion of contemporary Social, Political and Environmental issues.

Through producing engaging, emotive and stimulating art exhibitions and events, we take a thought-provoking and emotionally charged look at the beauty and vulgarity of human relationships with the natural world and our current disassociation from it. Each member is an independent artist who adds their voice and vision to a collective message for change.

In bringing together these images, forms and ideas that are the emotional responses of our artists, a small immersive world is created; a world where emotion, language and intellect focus the viewer and attempt to isolate the distractions of modernity and challenge our feelings of detachment.

Our intention is to create this focus, to stir these emotions, and to use them to further discussions on the direction of humanity and the individual's place within it in order to help steer the development of our society in a more civilised, sustainable, fair and rewarding direction.

## PAST EXHIBITIONS

Since its conception in 2017 Vulgar Earth Artists Collective has hosted two major exhibitions in Hereford and Brecon. Both exhibitions have featured a range of work, from painting and sculpture to video and immersive art and have included events, talks and performances. To see galleries from each exhibition please visit our website.

### VULGAR EARTH AT THE ANDREW LAMONT GALLERY

14th April - 20th May 2018

Theatr Brycheiniog, Brecon, UK.

### VULGAR EARTH AT THE CANWOOD GALLERY

1st July - 13th August 2017

Canwood Gallery, Hereford, UK.

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## OUR PHILOSOPHY

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When our love for nature is abundant, but a desire to 'save' it is stifled by a conditioning that distracts us with endless consumption and social introspection, a re-evaluation of our priorities and of our perspective on life is required.

Within our communities, despite a superficial awareness of the need for recycling and sustainable resources, there is a lack of understanding of the greater implications of these subjects, the worst offenders, and how deep our damage to the planet has gone.

Through technology our capacity for communication has increased, but our feeling of connection has become more distant. These technologies are intrinsically reshaping our society, while we are mostly oblivious to the creep of these changes. Endless marketing and agenda driven media provide a distorted view of reality, and individuals feel a greater disconnection from social structure and value.

Our commitment to capital, to guide the direction of our progress and priorities, has lead us to desperate inequality, wanton waste of human and material resources, and destruction of the natural world on an industrial scale in the name of profit. A policy that makes absolute financial sense can easily be shown as utter madness from an alternative perspective.

When we see our impact on the world in isolated sound bites we feel a fleeting outrage, yet fail to absorb the scale of our effect. As a tool for communication, art has the advantage of not relying solely on the limitations of language and intellect, but can impart a lasting emotional realisation of a truth that may be hidden from waking consciousness.

“A state of Life that  
calls for another  
way of living”

# VULGAR EARTH ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

## MEET THE ARTISTS



**Simon Meiklejohn**  
Sculptor



**Glenn Morris**  
Sculptor



**Jakie Yeomans**  
Earth Artist



**Kim Colebrook**  
Ceramic Artist



**David England**  
Sculptor and Artist



**Jo Chalkblack**  
Social Practice Artist



**Karen Lois Meiklejohn**  
Textile Artist



**Lena Doughty**  
Animator



**Maisie Noble**  
Illustration and Visual  
Media Artist



**Tina Walton**  
Eco Artist



**Dr Kevin Blockley**  
Sculptor



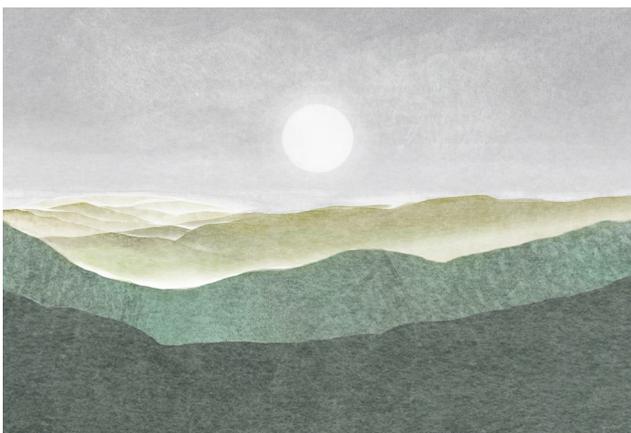
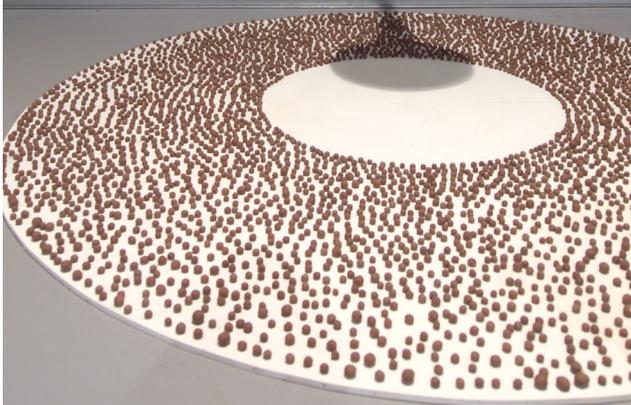
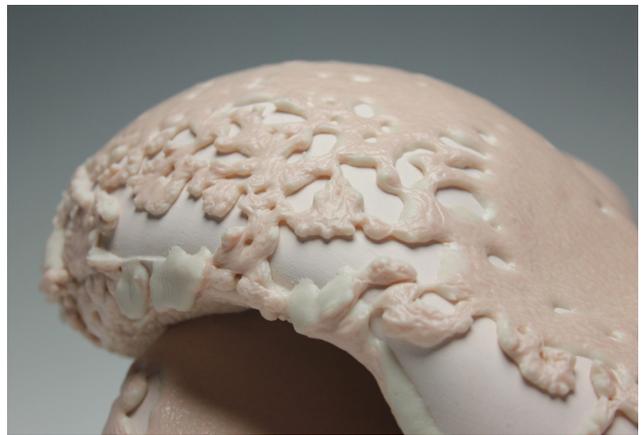
**Sam Lucas**  
Ceramic Artist

For full artist's profiles including biographies and portfolios please visit:

[www.vulgarearth.com](http://www.vulgarearth.com)

# VULGAR EARTH ARTISTS COLLECTIVE

## A SMALL SAMPLE OF OUR WORK



# THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

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## THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE ART

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### Meet The Scientists



**PROF. JOERG WIEDENMANN**  
Marine Biologist



**DR CECILIA D'ANGELO**  
Molecular Biologist

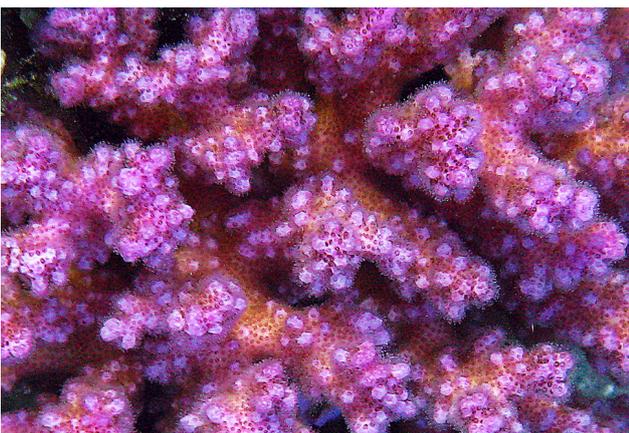
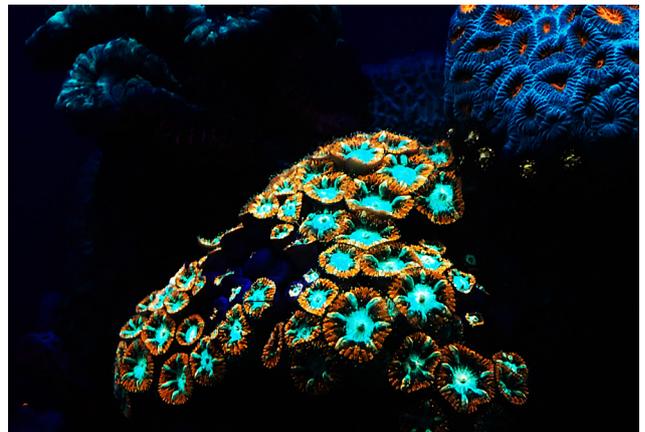
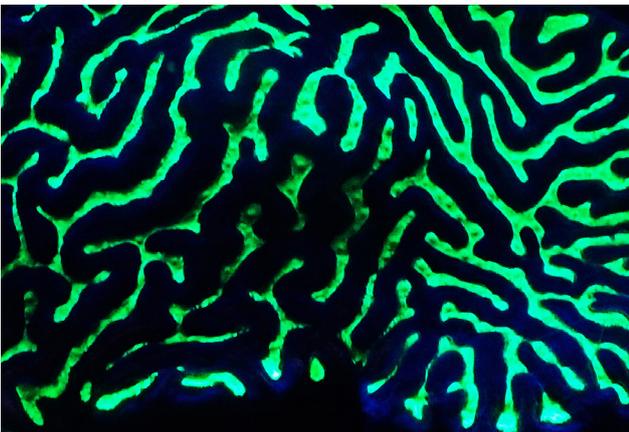
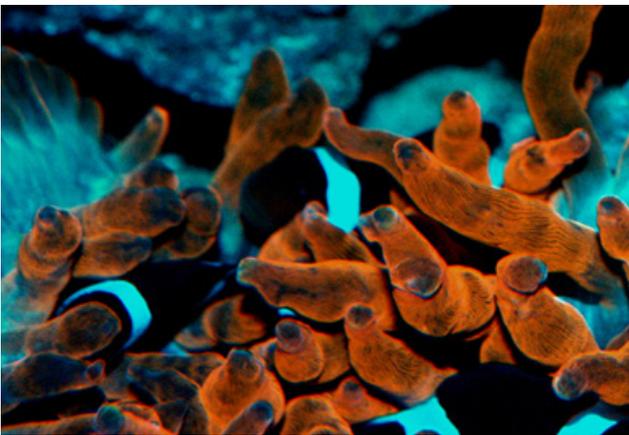
Our research at the Coral Reef Laboratory at the University of Southampton that has inspired the present art collaboration explains mechanisms that lead to coral bleaching and the role of coral colours in this process.

Our work explains how disturbing natural levels of nutrients in the water column can reduce the capacity of corals to resist coral bleaching caused by elevated summer temperatures. We conclude that the necessary global action against climate change required to save coral reefs needs to be underpinned by maintaining the best possible water quality.

Glowing proteins produced by the corals are responsible for many of the stunning colours of reefs. We have introduced some of them as versatile imaging tools in medical research. Our research suggests that in the reef environment, these pigments optimise the light climate inside the coral host for the benefit of the symbiont algae. An increased production of these pigments can signal stressful environmental conditions that lead to coral bleaching.

# THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

## A SMALL SAMPLE OF OUR WORK



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## ABOUT THE COLLABORATION

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The proposed exhibition is an exciting exploration of “coral reefs” and the threats to the survival of these iconic ecosystems through a collaboration of art and science.

The members of Vulgar Earth and some invited artists will explore the key scientific messages in creative, challenging and innovative ways to engage, inform and to stimulate debate and action with a diverse audience.

Vulgar Earth will work together with the scientists from The University of Southampton to communicate three key messages in a fresh, engaging and forward thinking manner.

### Key Messages

- 1. Water quality, specifically nutrient availability, and coral bleaching are linked.**
- 2. Maintaining the best possible reef water quality needs to underpin the global action against climate change to save coral reefs.**
- 3. An increased production of colourful coral pigments can indicate stressful environmental conditions that lead to coral bleaching.**

# **BLEACHED. THE ART OF CORAL SCIENCE**

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## **A PLEA FROM THE CORAL**

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We need your help to spread this important information and create systemic cultural change to help protect our beautiful reefs and the environments and ecosystems that they support.

We are looking for a venue or venues to host this exhibition. Ideally, as we create sculpture, immersive works and 2D and video work, this space would be a minimum of 2000 square ft and have access to indoor and protected areas. The ability to hang

work from walls and ceilings and lighting facilities is also desirable. We are technically experienced and can generate risk assessment and public liability documentation.

We are also looking for grants, funding and sponsors who can help us to create our best work through their contributions.

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**Vulgar Earth and The University of Southampton would like to send their thanks for taking the time to read this proposal.**