

# TRANSLATING THE BODY

## Six creative practitioners, one body

curated by Sue Vickerman

### Introduction

These six diverse sets of images by six art practitioners stem from their life-drawing/ life-sculpting sessions with the same model, Sue Vickerman. As an older woman working with artists whose age-range is 63-79, Sue's aim in curating this exhibition is to trigger discussion about the invisibility of the older woman, through photographic representations of the ageing female body. The exhibition also demonstrates the model's differing relationships with each artist when the photographic shoots took place and illustrates how the particularity of the relationship between artist and model impacts on the resulting artworks, raising questions about whether male and female photographers have differing approaches shaped by their gender.

Sue also aims to prompt broader thinking about the relationships between model and photographer in the making of mainstream media photographs of the female body in which youth and beauty prevail. The photographs in this exhibition subvert those dominant paradigms in many ways, not least in being of a female body approaching its sixtieth year of age.

### Participating artists

Mike Kilyon  
Ann Evans  
Ashwin Vyas  
Lois Brothwell  
Phil Moody's archive, curated by Sue Vickerman  
Judith Glynn

### Artist profiles

#### Mike Kilyon

As a photographer Mike has exhibited his photographs and installations in Yorkshire, while being managing editor at Naked Eye Publishing (celebrating poetry and literature in translation). Mike began working with life-model Sue Vickerman in 2012 on 'The Life Room' project, making video shorts of the life-rooms in which she was employed. Mike went on to co-develop with Sue a wide-ranging multimedia project under their respective pseudonyms of 'Suki' and her photographer friend 'Bel'. Mike played a design role across the resulting online and print media, notably the website [sukithelifemodel.co.uk](http://sukithelifemodel.co.uk) which ultimately resulted in Suki's "autobiographical" trilogy of illustrated books plus two collections of poetry.

During a year in Shanghai (2014-15) Mike saw artists using the tool of the camera in new ways, and was impressed by photo-imagery printed onto silk. The notion of layering translucent images and the possibilities of movement immediately struck him. He went on to explore silk, light and movement using photographs taken in Yorkshire-based artist Pat Wakefield's Life Room (see video: <https://bit.ly/LifeRoom8>) in which Pat was experimenting with projecting computer-drawn photographs of Sue back onto Sue's body. The installation he is preparing for the TRANSLATING THE BODY exhibition will be the culmination of his explorations towards the (re)creation of the body in 3-D, starting with those photographs.

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### **Ann Evans**

Ann's series of monochrome prints seeks to alter our perception of the body, so often portrayed in a detached, idealised way. Here, skin ripples and folds, glittering like water. Bone stretches flesh, suggesting the clint-and- gryke etch of limestone pavement. Limbs offered 'in extremis' become conduits to the land, to fell, gryke or ghyll... Connections emerge, are acknowledged and revealed. Inhabited, eroding flesh reveals its nature, speaks of our place in the biosphere. Earth of Body. Body of Earth.

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### **Ashwin Vyas**

Ashwin's work is representational, partly inspired by his historic villa in Bingley in which the shoots took place. In his black and white photography of the female body Ashwin likes telling stories, usually on the dark side, but which are left open for the viewer to interpret. Working with Sue Vickerman he says he likes to highlight her extraordinary flexibility and the way she can fold her body into interesting geometric shapes.

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### **Lois Brothwell**

Lois Brothwell became familiar with Suki's body through life-drawing. She believes working from the model requires not only well-honed technical skills but also the intuition to capture the model's spirit. She describes photography as providing the artist with a fabulous shortcut for refreshing the mind about how the face and body react to given circumstances. In Lois's shoots she instructed Sue to strike particular poses she could then work from; for example, riding a galloping horse. The images are the product of playfulness and fun between female friends.

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### **Phil Moody**

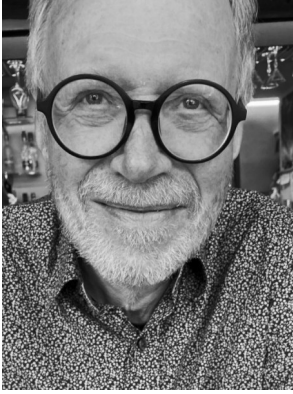
As a model Sue does not ordinarily have the final say over the images made of her by artists who employ her. These exhibits in her name are the result of her having turned the photographer-model relationship on its head by taking control of a photographer's work. She asked an acquaintance, artist Phil Moody, to take a comprehensive range of photographs of her body. As such, the photo shoots – one in Phil's studio and one outdoors in woodland – were entirely Sue's initiative. Sue was mindful that poses and shots are inevitably shaped by both parties, resulting as they do from the photographer-model dynamic. The nature of that dynamic, i.e. the particularity of the relationship, has an impact. Sue consciously chose Phil Moody as a photographic artist with whom she had a cordial and friendly but not close relationship. Phil had often sketched Sue in life-drawing contexts and was in that sense familiar with her body. With Phil's permission, Sue then took over sole responsibility for the resulting photographs. All selection, adjustments, modifications and crops of those used in this exhibition are Sue's.

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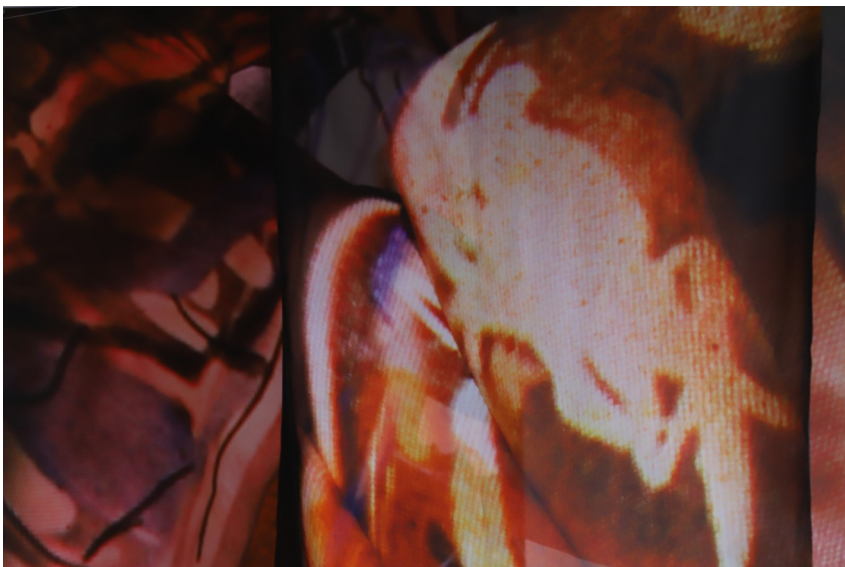
### **Judith Glynn**

Judith writes of herself: 'I originally trained as a doctor, and started sculpting in response to changes in my life. I draw on my training in anatomy to depict human life and interactions, working in wire and other materials to produce figurative and abstract sculptures. All proceeds I make from this work go Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF, Doctors Without Borders) to support their work in Ukraine, Afghanistan and elsewhere.'

**Mike Kilyon's collaboration with Patricia Oxley**



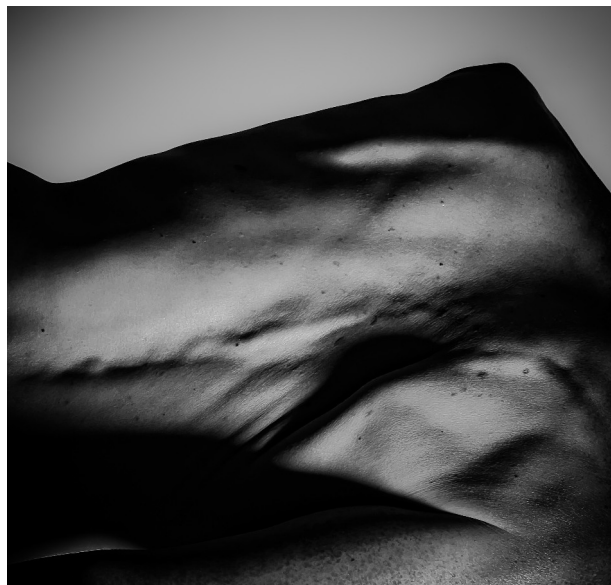
**Sample work**



**Ann Evans**



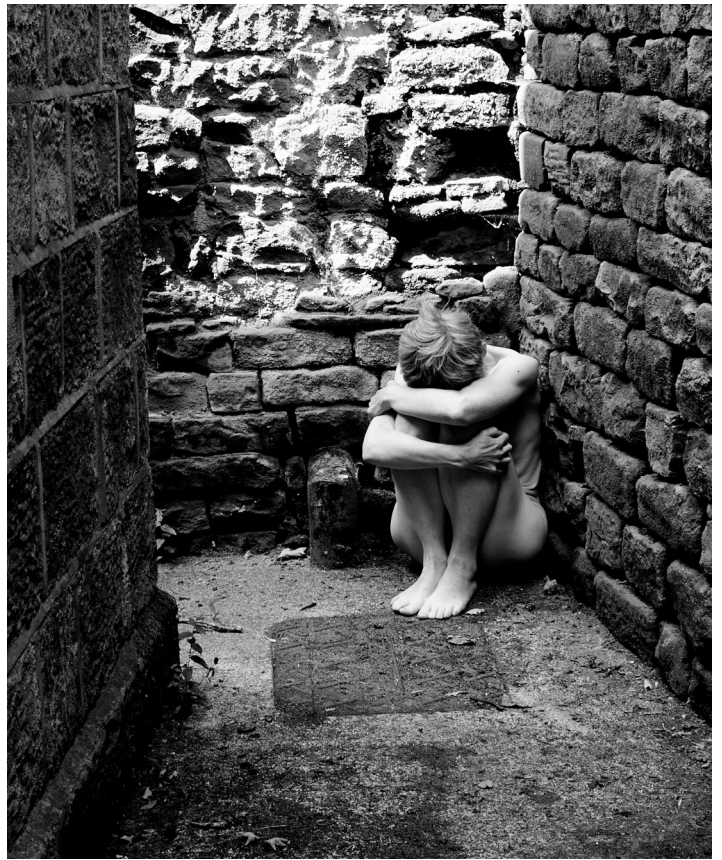
**Sample work**



Ashwin Vyas



Sample work



**Lois Brothwell**



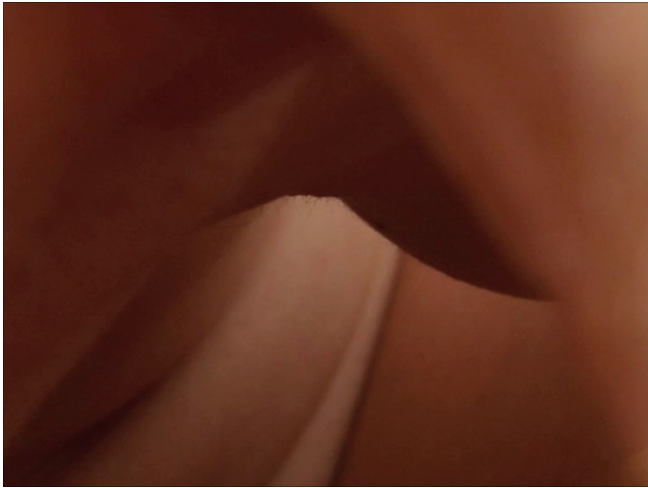
**Sample work**



**Sue Vickerman/ PHIL MOODY**



**Sample work, from Phil Moody's photographs**



**Judith Glynn**



**Sample work**

