



A Bag of Dresses as an Act of Love, August 2022, three woven sculptures, 1.5m x 1m, willow, ropes, ribbons, yarns, clay, shells.

Jenny Steele - Portfolio of Work



*A Bag of Dresses as an Act of Love*, August 2022, three woven sculptures, 1.5m x 1 m, willow, ropes, ribbons, yarns, clay, shells.  
Above left: Red/Blue Above right: Summer

A trio of woven sculptures constructed using basket weaving and passementerie techniques with a mixture of textiles used for interiors, clothing and in coastal areas, that references one of the artists first memories when she lived on a coastal peninsula.

After a life changing event, a family friend brought round a bag of pre-loved and handmade dresses that were elaborate in pattern and construction. The fringing, ribbons and shapes begun to represent more than just beauty and aesthetics; they carefully crafted act of love. The sculptures appear as a hybrid between sculpture, clothing, dress, utilitarian object and sea creature.



*Here I came to the very edge where nothing at all needs saying*, installation at Otto Eberhardt Water Wharf, Arnis Residency Exhibition, Arnis, Germany October 2022



*Here I came to the very edge, where nothing at all needs saying...* Arnis Residency, Arnis, Germany, October 2022

Klar Zur Wende Ree, Otto Eberhardt Water Wharf

Here I came to the very edge, where nothing at all needs saying.. 2022, was an installation at the culmination of the Arnis Residency in Arnis, Germany, between September-October 2022.

In the group exhibition, Klar Zur Wende Ree, curated by Christian Lübbert, works from the residency artists Diogo Gama, Carl Gent, Gülşah Mursaloğlu and Jenny Steele were presented in the Otto Eberhardt Water Wharf.

Jenny created a series of woven works using techniques of passementerie (an endangered craft used to create trimmings for upholstery) with local plant life from the peninsula, predominantly rushes from the water's edge. In combination with these plants, Jenny has used everyday textiles used in the coastal boating community, nautical ropes and webbing which tether the boats to the land. The textiles were installed upon a series of wooden stands from the local boat builder that are used to dry storage boats on land during the winter for protection. A series of plant tassels were also strung along a boat stored inside the wharf. The work and its title, which comes from the poem, *It Is Born*, by Pablo Neruda, reflect on the impact on our wellbeing of being at the edge of, and within the water. Our ongoing experience of the sea is multi-sensory and spiritual; it holds timeless pull, memory and untold stories.



*The Joy of Union*, an 86m long printed artwork for full interior of MET (Mobile Event Tent) a new, movable, arts & cultural events space designed by Research Design with In Certain Places for The City of Preston. Launching in May 2022, research responded to textiles from cultural celebrations in the city.



*The Joy of Union,*

MET (Mobile Event Tent), Preston, 2022. In Certain Places/ Preston Partnership

Jenny Steele was commissioned to create an artwork for the full interior of MET, Preston's new arts and cultural space, designed by architect Charlie McKeith and In Certain Places for the City of Preston with Preston Partnership.

In response to working with a range of cultural groups in the city, and archives to research textiles used in celebrations in Preston over the years, Jenny created an artwork using painting, drawing and lino printing, which was printed onto long lasting Alupanel. The resulting artwork is a colourful, joyful artwork that wraps around the whole interior of the building like a ribbon. The works celebrates 'the joy of union', the feeling people have when coming together to celebrate in unison. Jenny also contributed to the colour and design of the tiered and individual seating.



*'In Certain Places commissioned Jenny to work in partnership with the design team for the MET (Mobile Event Tent). Jenny brought an excellent level of integrity and engagement to her highly valued contribution to the design of the MET.'*

*The in-depth research and community engagement underpinned the designs going beyond the expectations of the brief. The artists work that decorates and wraps all the internal walls has created a magical place that has been very well received by the public and all the cultural groups that contributed to the project. Professional rigour underpins all Jenny's practice as an artist, making it a pleasure to work with her.'*

Charles Quick  
Professor Public Art Practice  
Co Curator In Certain Places  
University of Central Lancashire



*TEXTILE CITY* Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, July- September 2022

*TEXTILE CITY* is an interactive artwork for children commissioned by the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, which formed the base of their free summer programme for young people and their carer's.





### *TEXTILE CITY*

Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, July- September 2022. The interactive artwork is influenced by the architecture of Deansgate, both recent and post industrial, textile designs from MOSI's archive, and Froebel's Gifts, the first set of designed toys for open ended play in the first kindergarten. Visitors can play, build and weave their way through an ever changing skyline of foam covered shapes of Manchester, as well as learn to weave with recycled fabric and paper, with the weaving chimney towers and paper weaving activities.

Jenny created three new textile patterns in response to her research to form the work. A geometric repeat inspired by Manchester's ever growing glass sided tower blocks, a floral and spotted pattern informed by details of post industrial architecture within MOSI's current complex of buildings, and a stripe with shapes influenced by a design by Jean Elizabeth Gregson within their archive. Jean Gregson was a female textile designer who studied at Manchester School of Art during the inter war period.

Textile City also comprises of three wooden chimney towers, which acts as tall bobbins, which visitors can weave the walls of with recycled cotton from Manchester.



*Jenny was enthusiastic, creative and very communicative. She had an excellent understanding of our family audience in terms of how colourful, playful and robust the installation needed to be. It was wonderful to see families playing together and building their own skylines, which was testing their engineering skills and engaging their imagination.*

Gina Cooke, Learning Events Producer  
Museum of Science and Industry Manchester



Cove Park Crafts and Design Residency, Argyll & Bute, 2021

A collection of woven baskets or 'creels' made during a residency at Cove Park residency programme, Scotland in September 2021, following an initial residency in June 2021. Each residency followed a period of research into the local coastal landscape and architecture, including two Argyll coast lighthouses, where Jenny's maternal family lived between the 1950-70's.

Each piece uses local plant life, such as ferns, wheatgrass, flowers and seaweed, with yarns, ribbons and marine ropes. The ephemeral works are suggestive of baskets used to collect seaweed and shellfish from the shore, which Jenny's grandmother collected at her various homes on the Argyll coast.

Next page: *A Creel for Anchor (mainland)*, September 2021. Anchor rope, seaweed, indigo dyed cotton, cotton, ropes. 90cm x 80cm.

*'A Creel for the end of the summer/new beginnings'*, September 2021. Willow, yarn, foliage, bamboo tape, ribbon, cornflowers, cotton, rope. 80cm x 40cm.





*Summer Crown*, June 2021, ferns, buttercups, rhododendrons, branches, cotton, approx 80cm x 1m. Cove Park Residency, Argyll & Bute.



*Our Library of Light*

Commission for The Human Library Programme, at Crosby Public Library, Liverpool, launched June 2019.

Our Library of Light was a commission by Jenny Steele for Crosby Library, where over 10 months, Jenny worked to develop a wall-based work which responds to and celebrates the library's groundbreaking and forward thinking design. The project included meetings and conversations with library users, collaborative poetry and printmaking workshops and research in the archives to source imagery and plans for the building, designed by Ronald Mason in 1968. The result was a new wallpaper for the Local History, Archives and Reference library on the first floor.

Alongside the wallpaper, selections from the Crosby Library Poetry group's members were displayed semi permanently on the interior walls of the library, reflecting on their personal



Our Library of Light, Commission for The Human Library Programme, at Crosby Public Library, Liverpool, launched June 2019.



*The Maiden Voyage* Installation, Georges Dock Plaza, Liverpool, September 2019, was a site-specific installation that developed out of a research-led project, taking inspiration from the spread of 'Art Deco' modernist architecture across the transatlantic from the United Kingdom to New York during the 1930s, both through the transportation of people and the design and promotional advertising of 1930s transatlantic ocean liners themselves and presented at Georges Dock Plaza, next to the Grade II Georges Dock Building, Pier Head, Liverpool.

To read more about The Maiden Voyage project, visit the project [blog](#)

A publication 'A City Goes To Sea', with writings by Sara Jaspan and Jenny Steele was published in September 2019. More information [here](#).





*Why Be Exotic In Private?* Rogue Project Space, Manchester, June 2019, The Foundry Gallery, Chelsea, London Nov 2018- Feb 2019

The exhibition related to the performative nature of seaside holidaying and the stage set like atmosphere which this pleasure architecture creates. Informed by research into South Beach Miami's 1930's 'Seaside Moderne' architecture which was inspired by the long sweeping streamlined curves and details of ocean liners and the International Modernist style. Creating a 'mise-en-scene', the installation acted as a total artwork constructed from screen printed stage set panels, painted walls, site-specific prints and a collection of research ephemera. Above image: Rogue Project Space, June 2019



*Installation view of 'Why be exotic in private?'*, screen printed wallpaper and paint on marine plywood, digitally printed vinyl on sash windows and painted walls. Sculptures bottom left to right (clockwise) - The Cardozo, Senor Frogs, The Palm and The McAlpin. Above image: The Foundry Gallery, London, Dec 2018 - March 2019.



*The Sea Front* is a bespoke carpet commission in the main entrance stair, and upper corridors of Art B&B, an independent boutique art hotel and venue in Blackpool, UK, instigated by Leftcoast, and launched in 2019. Art B&B is a community business which re-invests profits in arts and community projects in Blackpool.

The Sea Front responds to in-depth research undertaken by Jenny Steele into the pleasure architecture constructed along Blackpool seafront over the last 150 years, that provided spaces of rest and relaxation for visitors to the town. Jenny has selected motifs from the exterior and interior of the following pleasure architecture: Blackpool Casino and Pleasure Beach – iconic red wheel; The Winter Gardens Foyer – exterior half-moon windows; and The Tower Ballroom stage steps. These celebratory symbols of Blackpool's architecture have been created into a semi-abstract repeat pattern for the Art B&B interior by North of England based carpet manufacturer, Gaskell & McKay, who Jenny worked closely with to interpret the design into a unique Axminster Carpet.



*This Building for Hope*

An exhibition of site-specific artwork and interventions within the interior, exterior of The Midland Hotel and Morecambe promenade, October 2017.

*This Building for Hope* responded to research into 1930s Seaside Moderne architecture in North West England and Scotland, and 1930s modernist seafront architecture in Miami Beach, USA.

The exhibition was accompanied by a symposium 'Miami to Morecambe: Transatlantic Seaside Moderne' with presentations by Dr David Jarratt (UCLan), Dr Martin Zebracki (Uni of Leeds) and Jenny Steele, with the event and discussion chaired by Elaine Speight (In Certain Places, UCLan).

On the occasion of the exhibition and symposium, a limited edition publication, *Transatlantic Seaside Moderne*, which documented the research and artwork of Jenny Steele, with writing by Linda Pittwood.



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## Artist Statement

Jenny Steele is a Scottish artist based in Manchester, UK. Jenny's practice seeks to revive the optimistic and restorative qualities of coastal, architectural and rural environments through site-specific artwork, textiles, sculpture, printmaking, and public events.

From 2014-2019, Jenny explored examples of inter war coastal 'seaside moderne' architecture within the UK, USA & Africa. This period of design on the coast emphasised social wellbeing and positive health. She has created several outdoor and interior sited works responding to this research using a range of printed and stitched methods, from banners, stitched textiles, to digital and screen-printed wallpaper works. Jenny is also interested in the borders of working between art and design, focusing on the period of early modernism where boundaries were fluid between crafts, architecture, design and fine art.

Since 2020, Jenny has trained in weaving techniques - loom and basket weaving, and Passementerie. Recent work uses these craft-based processes in combination with textiles, plant life and recycled haberdashery to create

sculptures and textiles. During residencies at Cove Park in 2021 and Arnis, Germany, 2022, Jenny created a series of sculptural woven works using plant life, grasses, flowers and seaweed.

Recent commissions include TEXTILE CITY, Museum of Science and Industry (2022), The Joy of Union, MET, Preston City (2022), Our Library of Light, At The Library, Crosby (2019) and The Seafront, Art B&B (2019). Recent residencies include: Cove Park, Scotland (2021) and The Fountainhead Residency, Miami, USA (2017)

Recent solo exhibitions and projects include; The Maiden Voyage, George's Dock Plaza, Liverpool, 2019, Why be exotic in private?, The Foundry Gallery, London (2018-19) and Rogue Project Space, Manchester (2019), This Building for Hope, The Midland, Morecambe (2017), Too Much is Never Enough, The Breakwater, Miami, USA (2017), and An Architecture of Joy, Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool (2016).



Jenny Steele, Studio Portrait, 2021

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[YouTube Channel – Jenny Steele](#)

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## CV JENNY STEELE

Born Scotland, UK 1981. Lives and works in Manchester, UK

### EDUCATION

2007 MFA, Goldsmiths, University of London

2006 Postgraduate Diploma Fine Art, Goldsmiths, University of London

2002 BA Fine Art, DOJCAD, University of Dundee (1st Class)

(2009 PG Cert Ed Learning and Teaching in Art and Design, University of the Arts London)

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PROJECTS

2019 THE MAIDEN VOYAGE, Georges Dock Plaza, Liverpool Dock, Liverpool

2018/19 WHY BE EXOTIC IN PRIVATE? The Foundry Gallery, London and Rogue Project Space, Manchester

2017 THIS BUILDING FOR HOPE, solo exhibition and externally sited work, The Midland, Morecambe

2017 TOO MUCH IS NEVER ENOUGH, The Breakwater, South Beach, Miami, USA

2017 THIS HOUSE FOR BUILDING, The Tetley, Leeds

2016 AN ARCHITECTURE OF JOY, Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool

2016 LOOKING BACK| MOVING FORWARDS, In Certain Places, Preston

2015 THE FAIR, Glasgow Open House Art Festival, various sites, Glasgow

2013 WHY BUILDINGS STAND UP WHY BUILDINGS FALL DOWN, Malgras| Naudet, Manchester

2011 REDIRECTION AND NETWORK TIMEOUT, 501 Artspace, Chongqing, China and CHRC Gallery,  
Goldsmiths, London



## COMMISSIONS

- 2022 TEXTILE CITY, Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester
- 2022 MET, Preston Partnership & In Certain Places, Preston
- 2020 MAKER'S COMMISSION, Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Preston
- 2020 ARTIST'S FILM COMMISSION, Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Preston
- 2018-19 AB&B COMMISSION, AB&B/ Leftcoast, Blackpool
- 2018-19 OUR LIBRARY OF LIGHT, The Human Library/Sefton Libraries, Crosby
- 2018 100 YEARS OF PROGRESS, Art Carbooty Test Pilot Project, Manchester
- 2017 EDITION COMMISSION, The Royal Standard, Liverpool
- 2016 GRUNDY ART GALLERY COURTYARD COMMISSION, Blackpool
- 2015 FINDING TREBLINKA, Centre for Archaeology at Staffordshire University
- 2012 FOLLOWING THE MARKET SQUARE, Harris Museum and In Certain Places, Preston

## RESIDENCIES

- 2022 ARNIS RESIDENCY, Arnis, Germany
- 2021 COVE PARK Crafts & Design, Argyllshire, Scotland
- 2017 THIS HOUSE FOR BUILDING, The Tetley, Leeds
- 2017 THE FOUNTAINHEAD, Miami, USA
- 2016-2017 AA2A ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, University of Central Lancashire
- 2016 COURTYARD COMMISSION, Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool
- 2011-12 AA2A ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, Manchester School of Art
- 2011 501 ARTSPACE, 501 Artspace & Sichuan Fine Art Institute, Chongqing, China

#### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS/PROJECTS

2022 Klar Zur Wende Ree, Otto Eberhardt Water Wharf, Arnis, Germany

2018 Manifesto, Rogue Project Space, Rogue Artist Studios, Manchester

2017 For Space, PAPER, Manchester, curated by Simon Woolham

Outcome, PR1 Gallery, University of Central Lancashire, Preston

2016 Division of Labour, Rogue Project Space, Manchester

Finding Treblinka, Wiener Library, London

Semiotic Guerrilla Warfare Part III, Dean Clough Gallery, Halifax

2015 Finding Treblinka, Treblinka Museum, Treblinka, Poland.

Curiosity, East Street Arts, Leeds 2014 Sluice Art Fair, New York (with PAPER gallery)

Industry, Barnaby Festival, Macclesfield

The Drawing Project, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester

2013 With: Rogue Project Space, Manchester

Jerwood Drawing Prize, mac Birmingham and University College of Arts Bournemouth

2012 Jerwood Drawing Prize, Jerwood Gallery, London and Jerwood Space Hastings,

Access All Areas, Holden Gallery, Manchester School of Art

#### SELECTED AWARDS & BURSARIES

2022 TimeSpaceMoney Bursary, A-N Artist Information Company

2020 COVID Support Grant, Arts Council England

2018, 2017, 2015, 2011 Project Grant/ Grants for the Arts, Arts Council England

2018 Artist Bursary for International Travel (New York & Miami), a-n.co.uk

2017 Artists International Development Fund Award (Miami), British Council & Arts Council England

2016 Critical Writing Bursary, a-n.co.uk

2007 Student Awards Agency for Scotland Postgraduate Bursary

2006 Arts and Humanities Research Council Postgraduate Bursary

2005 Scottish International Education Trust Grant

2002 Dyer Guild Award

## COLLECTIONS

Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester

Liverpool Central Library and Archive

Cunard Archive, University of Liverpool Special Collections

Donna Karan Ltd, New York

Dyer Guild Trust, Dundee

Private collections in UK, USA, China, Germany & Netherlands

## PUBLICATIONS

2019 A City Goes To Sea, texts by Sara Jaspan and Jenny Steele. Limited Edition Publication of 50.

2019 The Seaside Resort: Nostalgia and Restoration, co-authored by Jenny Steele & David Jarratt, Practicing Place: Creative and Critical Reflections on Place, Edited by Elaine Speight published by Art Editions North.

2018 Transatlantic Seaside Moderne, The Modernist - Holiday 28, The Modernist Society

2017 Transatlantic Seaside Moderne, essays by Jenny Steele and Linda Pittwood

2017 This is Proof? Forensic Evidence and Ambiguous Material Culture at Treblinka Extermination Camp, Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite, International Journal of Histor. Archaeology

2016 Treblinka: Archaeological Investigations and Artistic Responses. Caroline Sturdy Colls and Michael Branthwaite. Published by Staffordshire University.

2015 Subplots to a City. Charles Quick, Elaine Speight and Gerrie van Noord (editors). Published by In Certain Places

2014 A Line Going For A Walk - The Drawing Project. Essays by Sophie Preston and Lewis Cornish, edited by Jenny Core.

## PRESS - REVIEWS

Nov 2019 Art B&B, BBC Front Row, BBC Radio, with Laura Robertson

June 2019 Art by the Metre, The Fourdrinier, by Dr Natalie Bradbury

Mar 2019 The Democratic Art of conversation based writing' by Sara Jaspan, The Double Negative

Feb 2019 Selected Visual Arts London, World of Interiors Magazine

Dec 2018 Miami Mis En Scene, A-n.co.uk, by Richard Taylor

Dec 2018 Miami Dreaming, Printmaking Today, by Leonie Bradley

Mar 2018 A-N Bursaries 2018, A-n.co.uk, by Jack Hutchinson

Oct 2017 Jenny Steele: This Building for Hope, This Is Tomorrow, by Selina Oakes

Oct 2017 Miami to Morecambe: This Building for Hope, Corridor 8, by Jack Welsh

Sep 2017 Miami to Morecambe: This Building for Hope, Creative Tourist, by Sara Jaspan

Dec 2016 Division of Labour, Corridor 8, by Polly Checkland

Aug 2016 An Architecture of Joy, Artworld Magazine Shanghai, China, by Linda Pittwood

Aug 2016 An Architecture of Joy, Interpretation Matters, by Dany Louise

July 2016 An Architecture of Joy, Corridor 8, by Tom Emery

July 2016 'Pictures of...An Architecture of Joy', a-n.co.uk, by Jack Hutchinson

Feb 2014 Launch Pad: The Drawing Project, The Double Negative, by Emma Summer.

Feb 2014 The Drawing Project - Castlefield Gallery, Corridor 8, by Sophie Preston.

## PRESS - INTERVIEWS

July 2022 The Secrets of Lost Liners, Sky History Channel, 6-part documentary

May 2021 See Sides You Missed, Big Issue North, by Antonia Charlesworth

Nov 2019 Q&A Interview with Jenny Steele, a-n.co.uk

July 2019 Jenny Steele & Laura Yates, Our Library of Light, The Human Library Podcast

June 2019 Interview with Jenny Steele, After View Contemporary Art Magazine

Dec 2017 Interview Feature Jenny Steele, Creative Boom, by Laura Collinson

July 2017 Miami Moderne Interview, British Council Arts Back of the Envelope Blog

Dec 2016 Artist View, C20 Society Magazine, by Catherine Croft

July 2016 Interview with Jenny Steele, Alt Blackpool, by Claire Griffiths