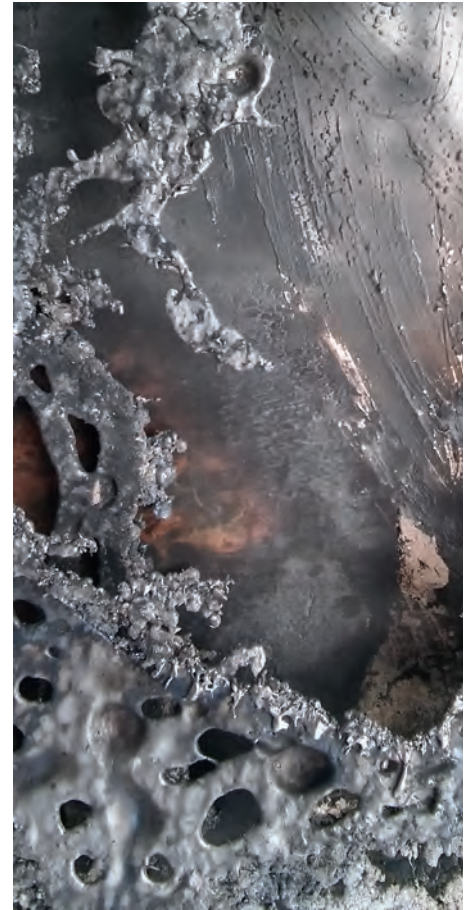


Creativity & Curiosity

A collaboration between artists and astronomers





Creativity & Curiosity

A collaboration between artists and astronomers

Imperial College
London

UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

DE MONTFORT
UNIVERSITY
LEICESTER



Acuity Arts

Front cover: Gillian McFarland, Ione Parkin RWA, Alison Lochhead

Opposite: Gillian McFarland, *Distortions Sequence*, glass and nitrates

Gillian McFarland, Ione Parkin and Alison Lochhead have developed a body of artwork in connection with astronomers, cosmologists and planetary geologists. They have been exploring the rich imagery of space, engaging in creative dialogue with researchers and gaining new insights into the dynamic forces of the universe.

The artist-led project has been supported by funding from the Royal Astronomical Society and the Arts Council England and involves astronomers from the University of Leicester, the Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge, Imperial College, London and further afield. The project was launched at the Cambridge Science Festival March 2017 with an exhibition, talks, panel discussions and workshops.

Interactive conversations have ranged across a variety of areas of research and this rich intake of inspiration from the scientific community has helped drive new processes within the artists' studio practices:

Gillian McFarland has been working with experimental glass-blowing techniques producing multiple 'space globes' that echo ideas of expansion, rotation, extreme heat and contraction of raw materials using silica, nitrates and UV-sensitive uranium glass. Her punctured paper works explore orbit tracking across otherwise untouched space.

Ione Parkin's large-scale paintings express her fascination about the early formation of the universe; massive clouds of cosmic dust and gas; vast webs of colour and shimmering light; luminous visions of immensity; cycles of destruction and creation. Her textured mixed-media works on paper are inspired by planetary surfaces.

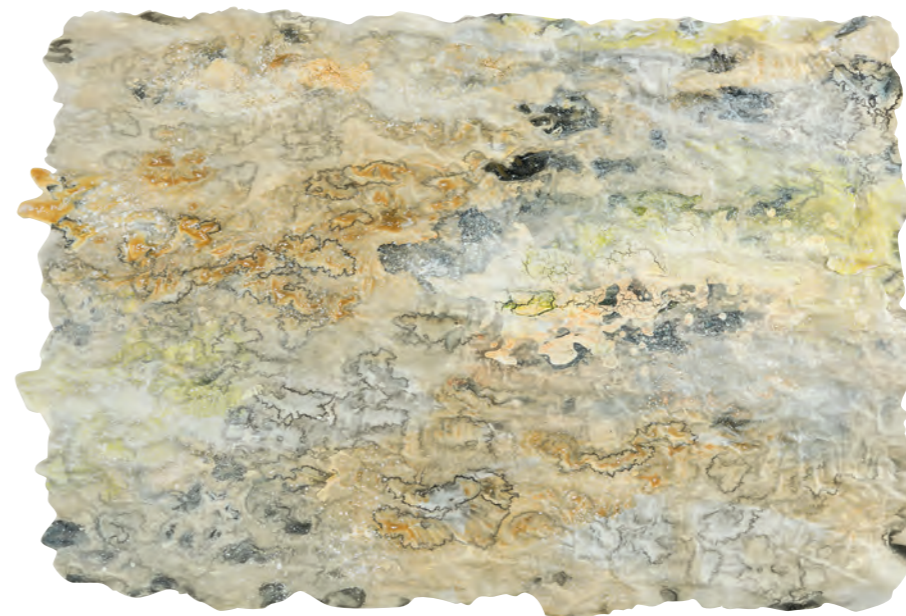
Alison Lochhead is a sculptor inspired by the impact of heat, explosion and disintegration, working with molten iron and observing the transformation of materials such as rock, clay and minerals. She is interested in how raw materials fuse, melt or retain their integrity when subjected to the extreme heat of the foundry furnace.

The artists are expressing a lateral, not literal, response to the scientific research – a physical, tactile experience rather than an explanation. Parallels of process have emerged between the artists and scientists – an excitement about uncertainty, ambiguity and anomaly – a desire not just to observe but to look beyond.

Ione Parkin RWA
September 2017

Opposite: Ione Parkin RWA, *Explosion*, oil on canvas, 102x102cm





Ione Parkin RWA,
Sulphur Realm,
mixed media on paper,
84x110cm

Ione Parkin RWA,
Heavy Metals,
mixed media on paper,
84x110cm

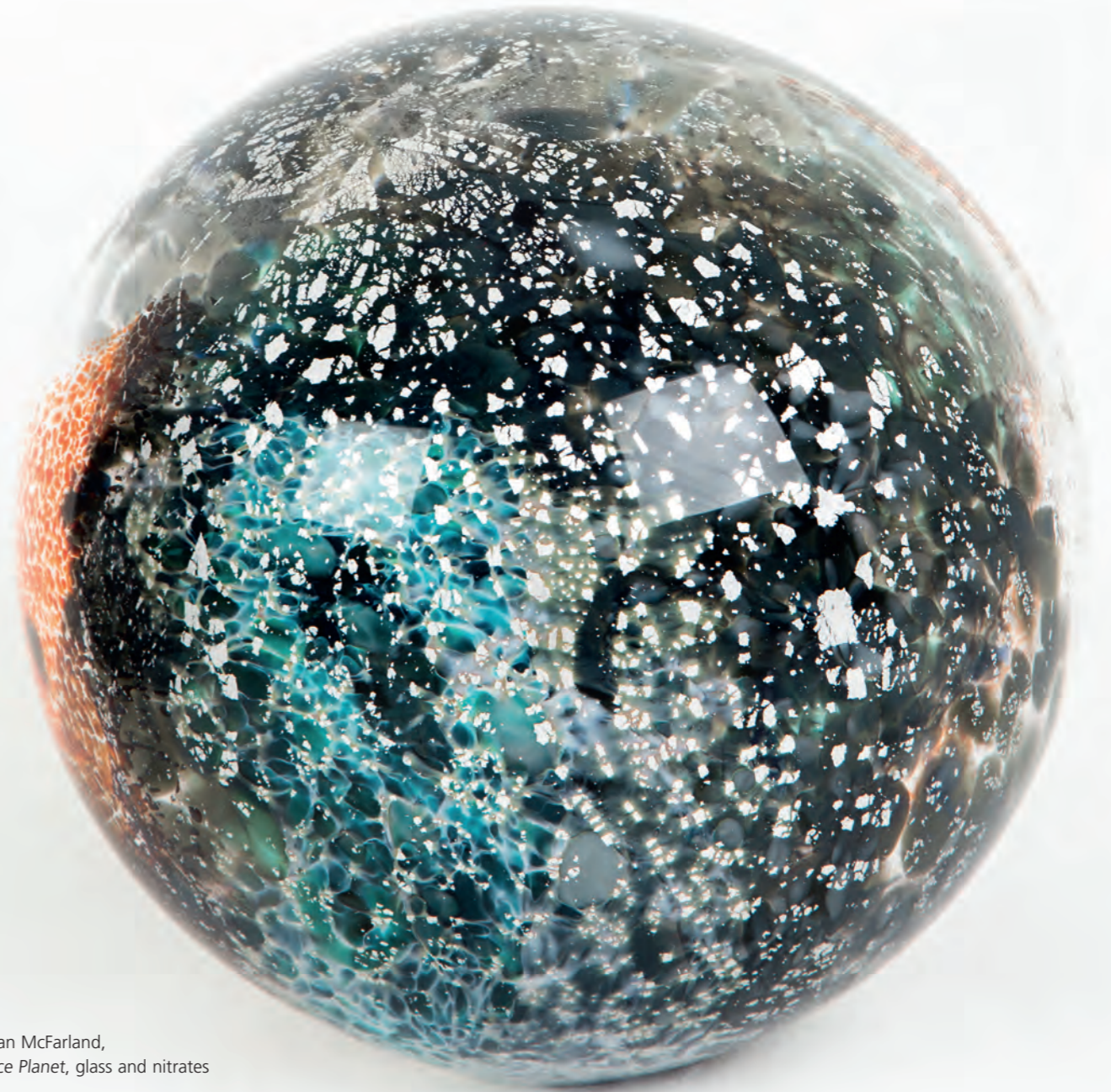


Opposite: Ione Parkin RWA, *Dark Matrix*, oil on canvas, 125x125cm



Above: Gillian McFarland, detail of *Distortions Sequence*, glass and nitrates

Opposite: Lone Parkin RWA, *Dark Fusion*, oil on canvas, 76x76cm



Gillian McFarland,
Space Planet, glass and nitrates

Opposite: Gillian McFarland, *Pencil and Pin Impacts* series



Alison Lochhead
detail I,
iron/clay/metal/glass
& iron oxides



Alison Lochhead
detail II,
clay, glass, iron
& magnesium
oxides



Opposite: Alison Lochhead, detail III, glass, carbon, magnesium oxide



Alison Lochhead, iron pour process at Norton Farm, Wales, 2017

Acknowledgements:

Martin Barstow
Pro-Vice-Chancellor,
Strategic Science Projects
Director, Leicester Institute of Space & Earth
Observation
Professor of Astrophysics & Space Science
University of Leicester

Sue Bowler
Editor, Astronomy & Geophysics Magazine
for the RAS
School of Earth and Environment
University of Leeds

John Bridges
Professor of Planetary Science
Space Research Centre
Leicester Institute for Space and Earth
Observation
University of Leicester

Robin Catchpole
Institute of Astronomy
Cambridge

Carolyn Crawford
Public Astronomer
Institute of Astronomy
Cambridge

Denis Erkal
Post Doc at the Institute of Astronomy
Cambridge

Gary Fildes
Kielder Observatory
Northumberland

Morgan Fraser
Royal Society
SFI University Research Fellow
University College Dublin

Tom Haworth
Research Fellow
Imperial College London

Steve Holmes
Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society
Technical Programme Manager at Oculus
Research, Redmond, WA, USA

Martin Johnson
Emeritus Professor of Reproductive Sciences
Christ's College
Cambridge

The Master of Christ's College
Cambridge

Helen Mason
Solar Dynamics
School of Mathematics
Cambridge

Deyan Mihaylov
Post Doc at the Institute of Astronomy
Cambridge

Barnaby Rickett
Emeritus Professor
UC San Diego

Sarah Russell
Head of Mineral & Planetary Sciences
Natural History Museum
London

Mark Simms
Professor of Astrobiology & Space
Instrumentation,
National Space Research Centre
University of Leicester

Nial Tanvir
Professor of Astronomy
University of Leicester

Eric Tatham
Virtual Reality Technician
Leicester

Amaury Triaud
Kavli Research Centre
Institute of Astronomy
Cambridge

Roberto Trotta
Reader in Astrophysics
Imperial College London



C&C Exhibitions:

Cambridge Science Festival 2017,
Josef Hamied Centre, Christ's College,
Cambridge
Institute of Astronomy, Cambridge
(March 2017)

Road to the Stars 2017,
Santiago de Compostela
(September 2017)

**Imperial Fringe, Augmented Reality
Exhibition**,
Imperial College London
(October 2017)

C&C Augmented Reality Exhibition,
Dundee Science Centre,
(October 2017)

Blyth Gallery, Imperial College London
(November 2017)

Dundee Science Centre
(October 2018)

Glasgow Science Centre
(November 2018)

Aberdeen Science Centre
(Spring 2019)

Publications:

Astronomy & Geophysics Magazine,
December 2016,
Royal Astronomical Society London

iScience Magazine, 2017,
Imperial College London



www.creativity&curiosity.com

