

# David Blandy

## How to Fly/ How to Live

John Hansard Gallery  
1 May – 30 June 2020

#JHGBlandy

John Hansard Gallery, part of the University of Southampton, is delighted to present two new digital commissions by artist David Blandy.

Each video will be viewable for a month on John Hansard Gallery's new website, launching on 1 May 2020.

Blandy's new works, *How to Fly* and *How to Live*, use the familiar format of YouTube tutorials as a jumping off point to explore ideas around patterns in nature and existence. These 'how-to' videos follow the typical online video tutorial format, in which a variety of subjects from make-up application to knitting techniques to automobile repair can be covered, and subvert it by showing the viewer how to make the film that they are watching. In a time where, due to social-distancing, video tutorials are more popular than ever, Blandy's step-by-step guides are tutorials that particularly resonate.

*How to Fly* demonstrates how to adapt spiritual text found on the Internet and juxtapose it with animal forms found in *Grand Theft Auto 5* to create a transcendent virtual moment. The film will build up to a virtual flight of a heron over a sublime landscape, where the viewer is asked: How many of us can exert the kind of patience the heron does in waiting, watching, being ready for our reward?

*How to Live* uses video editing software to create a journey through images and video around life force, exploring photosynthesis, the geological forces around the creation of oil and coal and thinking about the future of human life without fossil fuels.

The new works build on conversations that Blandy and the Gallery had prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. When the landscape of the art world changed virtually overnight, John Hansard Gallery approached David Blandy about adapting their ideas into two new online commissions. The Gallery's new website, which is launching in late April, will feature a 'Video Wall' to host online exhibitions and Blandy's videos will be the first hosted online exhibition.

John Hansard Gallery's programme is aligned with the University of Southampton's new Summer Term and move to online teaching methods. Beginning on 20 April, the term will see the introduction of digital learning, for both students and staff, in keeping with current social-distancing guidance.

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#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **David Blandy**

David Blandy has established his terrain through a series of investigations into the cultural forces that inform and influence him, ranging from his love of hip hop and soul, to computer games and manga. His works slip between performance and video, reality and construct, using references sampled from the wide, disparate sources that provide his (and our own) individualist sense of self. His collaborative practice with Larry Achiampong is jointly represented by Copperfield & Seventeen. [www.davidblandy.co.uk](http://www.davidblandy.co.uk)

##### **John Hansard Gallery**

John Hansard Gallery is a locally engaged and internationally recognised contemporary art gallery in Southampton. Being part of the University of Southampton, the Gallery aims to change the world for the better through great art. To realise this the Gallery creates innovative and critically acclaimed contemporary art exhibitions, events, engagement and research projects that excite, challenge, represent and reach the widest possible public audience.

From 1979 the Gallery was located on the University's Highfield Campus. In 2018 the Gallery relocated to a new purpose-built arts complex in Southampton's city centre, significantly increasing the space available for exhibitions, events and integrated programming. Learning and engagement are at the heart of the Gallery and underpin all its activities. The innovative education and public programme is accompanied by special community-focused projects, including activities for all ages and levels of experience. John Hansard Gallery is supported using public funding as a National Portfolio Organisation by Arts Council England. [www.jhg.art](http://www.jhg.art)

## **University of Southampton**

The University of Southampton is one of the UK's leading teaching and research institutions, with a global reputation for research and scholarship across a wide range of subjects. The University combines academic excellence with an innovative and entrepreneurial approach to research, supporting a culture that engages and challenges students and staff in their pursuit of learning.

[www.southampton.ac.uk](http://www.southampton.ac.uk)

### **Arts at University of Southampton: Inspiring arts and culture for everyone**

Arts at University of Southampton offers a wealth of inspiring cultural experiences and opportunities, showcasing emerging talent and renowned international artists. From visual arts, music and literature, to theatre and film, there's something for everyone.

The University of Southampton has rich heritage and long-standing commitment to arts and culture as an essential part of university life. The University is proud of its unique relationship with three Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. The Nuffield Theatre opened at its Highfield Campus in 1964 and was joined by the University's concert hall Turner Sims and John Hansard Gallery in the 1970s. The relocation of the John Hansard Gallery to its new purpose-built home in the heart of the city's Cultural Quarter increases the University of Southampton's presence in that area, close to its Mayflower Halls and administrative offices in Guildhall Square. The opening of Studio 144 symbolises an extraordinary moment for Southampton and the University will be working closely with John Hansard Gallery, City Eye and NST Nuffield Southampton Theatres to deepen public engagement, to share its research and present inspiring and accessible cultural opportunities for all.

[www.southampton.ac.uk/arts](http://www.southampton.ac.uk/arts)

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