

Manchester  
International  
Festival  
2021 1–18 July  
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## Press Release

### **FORENSIC ARCHITECTURE'S MAJOR EXHIBITION AND NEW INVESTIGATION AT WHITWORTH MARKS THE AGENCY'S 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Since its establishment in 2011, Forensic Architecture has developed ground-breaking investigative techniques and deployed them in over seventy bold and impactful investigations, presented in landmark legal cases in national and international courtrooms, has exposed state violence and corruption on every continent, and has defined new possibilities for aesthetic practices through exhibitions at the world's leading galleries.

In July, Forensic Architecture will present a major exhibition at the Whitworth, the University of Manchester, as part of this year's Manchester International Festival. *Cloud Studies* (2 July – 17 October) draws together some of the agency's previous investigations around the world to expose how states and corporations weaponise the air we breathe to suppress civilian protest, to maintain and defend violent border regimes, and empower extractive industry.

The display includes investigations from Palestine, Beirut, London, Indonesia, and the US-Mexico border. The exhibition will also feature archival material including maps, 3D printed models and contextual interpretive material related to the methodologies used by Forensic Architecture in these investigations.

A highlight of the exhibition is the first phase of a major new investigation on environmental racism in Louisiana in an area known as 'Cancer Alley'. In a region densely populated with petrochemical production facilities, majority-Black communities, the descendants of people historically enslaved on those same lands, today breathe the most toxic air in the United States. FA will present a two-channel film mapping a three-hundred-year-long continuum of environmental racism that powers an extractive economy, and fuels climate change.

In line with the Whitworth's sustainability agenda, and Forensic Architecture's commitment to recognizing the cultural sector's complicity in the petrochemical industry's logics of supply and demand, the exhibition will be vinyl-free.

Forensic Architecture said:

*"This investigation exposes how the petrochemical industry continues a racialized spatial and environmental logic first established by colonialism and slavery. If environmental racism is a monument to slavery, ecological reparations are the only thing that can take it down."*

*"This investigation supports the multigenerational work of Black Louisianans who have sought to recover our history and protect our future from systemic erasure."*

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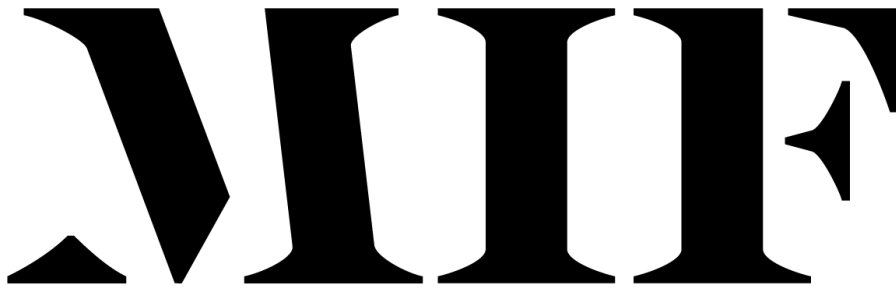
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*"In support of the multigenerational effort to recover the erasure of the past and secure the future against the violent forces that occupy the air and ground, this investigation studies the spatial and environmental logics of corporate-colonialism to reconstruct the earth, manage life, and produce death."*

Plantation country became the petrochemical corridor.

Manchester International Festival Artistic Director & Chief Executive, **John McGrath** said:  
*"We are delighted to work with the Whitworth to present this exhibition to coincide with 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Forensic Architecture. This is an important body of work, and these investigations by FA will make audiences think about politics and our everyday environment in a new way."*

Alistair Hudson, Director of the Whitworth, The University of Manchester, said:  
*"This is the first major exhibition at the Whitworth after a year of closure due to the Pandemic. I couldn't think of a more fitting way to begin the next chapter in our history, heralding in a new programme that promotes the idea of art as a tool for social transformation and offering new ideas for a post-covid world. With MIF we are very happy to celebrate 10 years of Forensic Architecture, a collective who have pioneered a way of working that has expanded beyond the frame of art, and the traditions of representation and documentary; to actively and practically support justice for communities around the world. To present this body of work that connects environmental, economic and racial violence now is highly pertinent to our current situation and especially given Manchester's historical complicity in global industrialisation and capitalism since its birth in the 19th century."*

### Listings Information

Date: 2 July – 17 October 2021  
Opening Times: Wednesday to Sunday 10am - 5pm  
The Whitworth  
The University of Manchester  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M15 6ER  
Free

### ENDS

For more information, images and interview requests please contact:

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Download high resolution images [here](#)

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Forensic Architecture

Forensic Architecture (FA) is a research agency investigating human rights violations including violence committed by states, police forces, militaries, and corporations.

FA's team includes architects, software developers, filmmakers, investigative journalists, artists, scientists and lawyers, and is led by Eyal Weizman, Professor of Spatial and Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London.

### About Manchester International Festival

Manchester International Festival (MIF) is an artist-led festival of original, new work and special events reflecting the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture. MIF21 takes place from 1 - 18 July 2021.

Staged every two years in Manchester, MIF has commissioned, produced and presented world premieres by artists including Marina Abramović, Damon Albarn, Laurie Anderson, Björk, Boris Charmatz, Jeremy Deller, Idris Elba and Kwame Kwei-Armah, Elbow, Philip Glass and Phelim McDermott, David Lynch, Wayne McGregor, Steve McQueen, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Yoko Ono, Thomas Ostermeier, Maxine Peake, Punchdrunk, Skepta, The xx, Robert Wilson and Zaha Hadid Architects.

These and other world-renowned artists from different art forms and backgrounds create dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking new work, staged in venues across Greater Manchester – from theatres, galleries and concert halls to railway depots, churches and car parks. MIF works closely with venues, festivals and other cultural organisations globally, whose financial and creative input helps to make many of these projects possible and ensures that work made at MIF goes on to be seen around the world.

MIF supports a year-round Creative Engagement programme, bringing opportunities for people from all backgrounds, ages and from all corners of the city to get involved during the Festival and year-round, as volunteers, as participants in shows, through skills development and a host of creative activities, such as Festival in My House.

MIF will also run The Factory, the new landmark cultural space currently being built in the heart of Manchester and designed by the internationally-renowned architect Ellen van Loon of Rem Koolhaas' OMA. The Factory will commission, present and produce one of Europe's most ambitious and adventurous year-round creative programmes, featuring bold new work from the world's greatest artists and offering a space to create, invent and play.

Attracting up to 850,000 visitors annually, The Factory will add up to £1.1 billion to the economy over a decade and create up to 1,500 direct and indirect jobs. Its pioneering programme of skills, training and engagement will benefit local people and the next generation of creative talent from across the city, whilst apprenticeships and trainee schemes are already underway during the construction phase.

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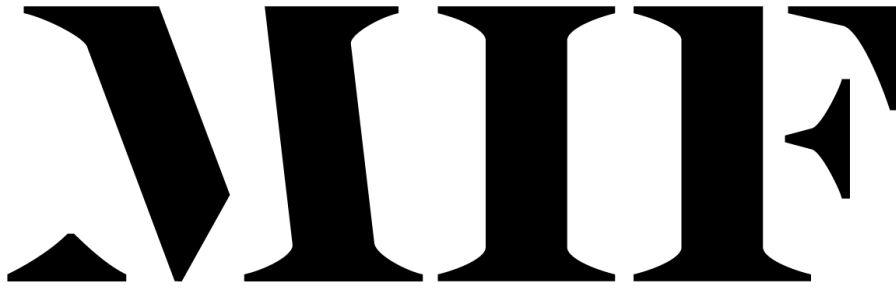
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MIF's Artistic Director and Chief Executive is John McGrath.

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### About the Whitworth

About The Whitworth The Whitworth is proudly part of the University of Manchester and serves as a bridge between the University and the people of the city; a place to meet, play and learn in public. Its mission is to use art for social change; founded in 1889 as The Whitworth Institute and Park in memory of the industrialist Sir Joseph Whitworth for "the perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester".

The Whitworth re-opened to the public in 2015 after a major £17 million redevelopment by architects MUMA. It has welcomed almost two million visitors since re-opening, and more than doubled its previous annual records. The redevelopment doubled the public space and created state-of-the-art new facilities to house the collection of over 55,000 works of art and included expanded gallery spaces, a study centre, learning studio, and a collections centre.

The gallery was awarded Art Fund Museum of Year 2015, nominated for the prestigious Stirling Prize and named Best Emerging Cultural Destination in Europe. The gallery has historically been at the centre of civic and cultural life and this is also its future.

For more information, please visit [www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)

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