

Ellie Barrett

Messy Drama

Salt dough, Acrylic paint, Yacht

Varnish

2019

"Messy Drama uses comedy and playfulness to demonstrate that art making can be accessible to everyone because it is part of our shared experience of the world. I draw connections between art making and the social world which shows that art is not separate from everyday life but is very much impacted by the world around it. The different objects in the installation represent the overlap between the art world and our



public realm. By putting all these things together, I look at the ways art, objects and bodies are treated in similar ways. Beer cans, hot dogs, body parts, art works and clothing all made from the same material draws parallels between the effects of production and investigates how we are all both consumed and consumers. Motifs from traditional sculpture, such as the marble plinths that the objects sit on, mocks the elitism which still surrounds contemporary art, and invites the viewer in on the joke."

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Where in the North are you based ?

I'm based in Lancaster, and I've lived all over the North West.

What does living in the North mean to you ?

To me, living in the North is a vital part of my identity. Northern culture: the humour is funnier, the attitude is friendlier than the South. People care about each other more openly. I've chosen Lancaster as a base for GRAFT, an arts organisation I've co-founded which supports young artists with opportunities and experiences to boost them at the start of their careers. GRAFT embodies Northern principles: we believe that contemporary art is for everyone, and we programme exhibitions and events which are accessible to all.

What inspires you ?

The world we share is a big inspiration in my work: the things we come into contact with everyday which impact our behaviour and our relationship to one another. I'm interested in the ways we interact with materials and objects, and the ways in which they can be politically and socially active.