

Monday, 01.12.2025; 4:15 - 5:45 pm CET

Alan Rice, University of Lancashire, Preston, UK

"Imagining Inside the Invisible: Black Women Artists Visioning African Atlantic Worlds in the Wake of Traumatic Histories"

Abstract:

This lecture will draw on Professor Rice's three decades of experience of working as an academic and curator in the field of the Black Atlantic, including at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, Lancaster Maritime Museum, and as advisor to the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool. It will examine the work of African Atlantic artists from the 1950s to the 2020s, including Althea McNish, Lubaina Himid, Ellen Gallagher, Jade de Montserrat and Lela Harris; and it will assess the way their work interrogates the history of slavery and its aftermath in multiple different ways that create unique works of guerrilla memorialisation and interventions that have challenged hegemonic ideas in museums and wider society. Professor Rice will outline how this multiplicity of new works have altered the landscape of the field in many radical ways that have had profound consequences for our understanding of the histories of slavery and consequential racism in contemporary Western Society.

Alan Rice is Professor in English and American Studies at the University of Lancashire in Preston, UK, and co-director of the Institute for Black Atlantic Research (IBAR). His books include *Radical Narratives of the Black Atlantic* (2003), *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (2010), and (co-written) *Inside the Invisible: Memorialising Slavery and Freedom in the Life and Works of Lubaina Himid* (2019). He was a member of the *Slave Trade Arts Memorial Project* in Lancaster from 2000-2007, co-curated *Trade and Empire: Remembering Slavery* at the Whitworth Gallery in 2007, and has been involved in a variety of documentaries and dramas with the BBC and other arts and media companies including being consultant to Studio Canal for their 2022 release *The Railway Children Return*. In 2021 he curated the exhibition *Lubaina Himid: Memorial to Zong* and in 2023 co-curated *Facing the Past: Black Lancastrians*. Working with local Black History groups, he has rolled out his *Lancaster Slave Trade Tour* and organised commemorations, supported by the Embassy of the United States, for the Battle of Bamber Bridge where African American soldiers in WW2 fought Jim Crow racism on British shores. In 2025 he was Fulbright Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan.

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