



**Swords into Ploughshares  
Knives into Jewels**

# Swords into Ploughshares

## Page - 2

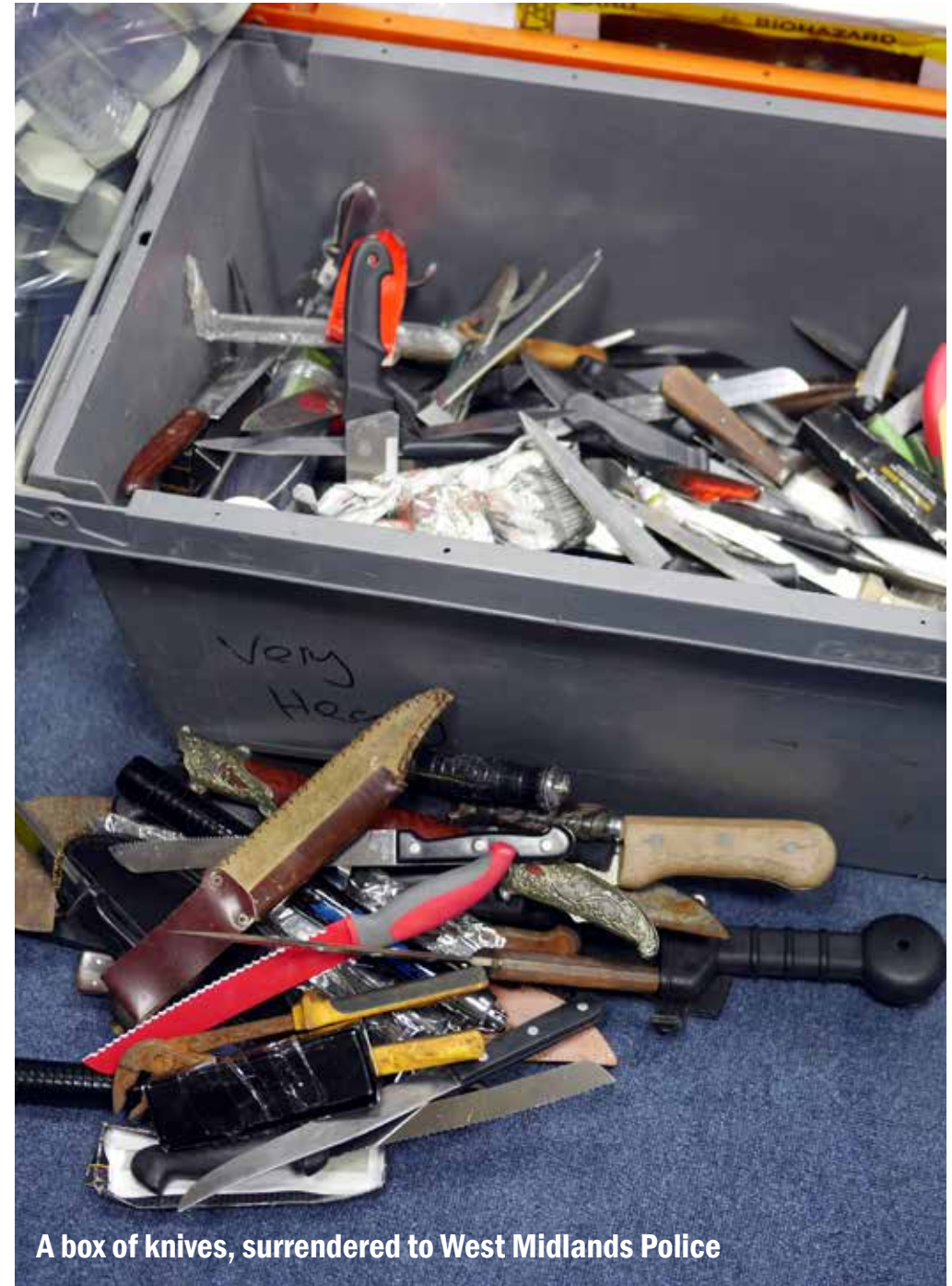
### **Swords into Ploughshares: Knives into Jewels**

A touring exhibition curated by Professor Norman Cherry & Dauvit Alexander

#### **Introduction**

In this multi-disciplinary project the curators highlight and examine the phenomenon of knife crime currently being experienced across Britain. The project's unique approach to this issue combines visual and performing arts, medicine, and a related programme of social intervention through which it aims to make a transformational and positive impact on knife crime and its effects on some of our most vulnerable communities

At the core of the project is an invitation by joint lead artists and project curators Cherry and Alexander to more than 30 international jewellery and metals artists, to create new bodies of work by refashioning, repurposing, adapting or otherwise transforming knives which have been surrendered to UK police. In conjunction with the exhibition there will be a programme of multiple interventions in areas of social deprivation where young people are likely to be at risk of involvement in knife crime. The concept of the project stems from the curators' concern about the effect of knife crime on our communities and how this might be mitigated by art-in-action. After witnessing the "IMAGINE - Give Peace a Chance" anti-gun crime project in the USA, they realised that a similar but more locally-nuanced approach could be successful in the UK. IMAGINE was created by Providence-based metals artist Boris Bally who invited a group of fellow practitioners to repur-



**A box of knives, surrendered to West Midlands Police**

pose surrendered firearms for a touring exhibition which, over the past five years, has attracted a great deal of positive reaction. It was supported by national galleries and museums and the police chiefs across Rhode Island State.

The new artworks in Knives into Jewels will form a touring exhibition of jewellery, small sculptures and “objects of vertu”. The artists have been selected for their ability to comment on and react to social and personal situations through their work. The exhibition is already confirmed for a number of venues across the UK.

## **The Project**

The curators developed the idea of Knives into Jewels to create positive outcomes through an artistic engagement with a negative subject, focusing on social change and community. The exhibiting artists have been selected for their excellence of practice and ability to comment on and react to social and personal situations through their work.

This exhibition challenges and educates the public about the subject of knives and has the capacity to persuade young people into more positive creative actions rather than knife crime. This is an exhibition of strong and exciting three dimensional content.

Jewellery and Object as a subject is an ideal vehicle to engage with the many issues around knife crime in the UK. This is not conventional “jewellery as product” as seen on the High Street, but “jewellery as art object”. Jewellery of this sort can take many forms but, in principle, may be described as small, portable, personal works of art or objects which have the capacity to be worn and/or displayed in small spaces, and which often tell a story or make a political or social point. Political and social significance is a major indicator in this project.

The related social intervention programme will involve as partners Birmingham City University’s School of Jewellery, Round Midnight Theatre in Education, the StreetDoctors organisation, established social mentors,

local schools and young people. This innovative approach was first piloted in conjunction with the West Midlands PCC and Broadway Academy in Birmingham in late 2018 and early 2019. The evaluation of that project shows improved rates of attendance, responsible behaviours and greater interest in learning, along with reduced detentions. Each young person took part in the dramatic performance, reflected on the impact of knife crime in their community, on their family and themselves and, from these initial thoughts, designed and made individual items of personal jewellery which were presented at a public event hosted by the participants themselves.

Every venue hosting the touring exhibition is asked to engage flexibly with its own local communities appropriate to their local circumstances. Round Midnight and StreetDoctors are available to work nationally while Cherry and Alexander, who are nationally and internationally well-networked, will make local connections with interested regional jewelers and artists who wish to support the project.

# Swords into Ploughshares

## Page - 4

### The Exhibition

Knives Into Jewels has invited an international constituency of artists, some established and some emerging, to examine the subject individually and to respond through personal creative reactions. Many of them found similar phenomena in their own societies, others view the British experience as very different. Some of the artists expressed interest in participating because they already work with steel and/or other non-precious materials, some because they relish the opportunity to do so. All of them committed to the project because they believe in the power of their art to change lives and wish to be involved because they have a genuine interest in the subject.

The programmes of social intervention will involve some of the featured artists. This will be done in selected schools or youth groups in the locality of each host venue and will be introduced through an interactive drama production created and delivered by the Round Midnight Theatre in Education organisation. Round Midnight has received several prestigious awards for its recent Virtual Reality programmes and will build on its expertise developing these to offer elements of VR in this project. Local social mentors will apply their skills throughout the duration of the programme and StreetDoctors will provide first aid teaching and awareness for young people. This preparatory experience will lead to a series of practical studio and workshop sessions for the young participants. The outcomes of these sessions will normally be personal jewellery and objects which are directly related to the original drama.



Norman Cherry - Knife/Whistle - Knife, copper, steel.



Davit Alexander - Empire State Human: A Post-industrial codpiece  
Found knife blades, corroded spring washers, gemstones, silver.

## Exhibition content

There are more than 30 exhibiting artists who have created a range of work from jewellery to small sculptures, requiring a variety of displays. There will also be a high quality fully illustrated online catalogue featuring academic essays which will be available on a print-on-demand basis. The exhibition will require around 100-150 square metres.

# Swords into Ploughshares

Page - 6

## List of Exhibiting Artists

The following artists have created work for this exhibition.

Dauvit Alexander	UK
Boris Bally	USA
Petra Bishai	UK
Stephen Bottomley	UK
Tim Carson	UK
Norman Cherry	UK
Jens Clausen	Germany/Estonia
Rachael Colley	UK
Eimear Conyard	Republic of Ireland
Robert Coogan	USA
Rosie Deegan	UK
Jeff Durber	UK
Daniel Freyne	UK
Cristina Filipe	Portugal
Anna Gordon	UK
Hermann Hermson	Germany
Kadri Maelk	Estonia
Jorge Manilla	Norway/Mexico
Paul McClure	Canada
Nanna Melland	Norway
Eliana Negroni	Italy
Rohan Nicol	Australia
Ted Noten	Netherlands
Coilin O'Dubhail	Republic of Ireland
Komelia Okim	Korea/USA
Peter Parkinson	UK

## List of Exhibiting Artists (cont'd.)

Jo Pond	UK
Annelisse Pfeifer	UK
Liz Shaw	Australia
Rebecca Skeels	UK
Risto Tali	Estonia
Taavi Teevet	Estonia
Fred Truus	Estonia



**Dauvit Alexander - Berserker: Empty Vessel - fine silver, sterling silver, 18ct gold, plastic, brass, knife.**



## The Organisers

*Professor Norman Cherry* is a practicing jeweller and curator, was formerly Head of the Birmingham School of Jewellery, and Pro Vice Chancellor for Arts and Humanities at the University of Lincoln. He has an international reputation as a jewellery artist, curator of exhibitions, and writer and has a number of works in public collections such as The British Museum, Dundee Museums, Birmingham Museum and Art Galleries, the National Museums of Scotland and The Mint Museum, North Carolina, USA. Norman has previously curated touring exhibitions of new narrative jewellery such as “Transplantation” and “The Other Mountain”, both of which showed the work of international jewellers from Germany, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Korea and China to international audiences. He regularly undertakes international curation, masterclasses, and other consultancies. He is a Visiting Professor at Nanjing Arts University, Tsing Hua University, Special Consultant Professor at Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts, University of Shanghai, China.

*Dauvit Alexander* is a senior lecturer at the BCU School of Jewellery. He is also very experienced in delivering social interaction projects: [www.justified-sinner.com](http://www.justified-sinner.com) In his jewellery he uses unconventional combinations of materials such as corroded steel and iron with precious metals and gemstones. He aims to make pieces which are aesthetically pleasing, technically interesting and, if possible, humorous and even unsettling. Dauvit has an international reputation for his jewellery, which is primarily aimed at men as he believes that jewellery for men is circumscribed by what celebrities wear. He views his practice as an ongoing process, constantly learning, improving and expanding, pushing both what is considered possible and what is considered acceptable in jewellery.



Ted Noten - Stiletto - Vintage handbag parts, silver, stiletto

## Partners, supporters, and advisers for the project

Sami Cornick and Phil Hyde, Round Midnight theatre company. RM is a multi-award-winning theatre in education organization with particular expertise in the use of VR delivery;  
StreetDoctors, a national organisation of volunteer medical teaching students from several UK universities. Local partner: Birmingham University;  
Boris Bally, creator of I.M.A.G.I.N.E: Peace Now! project against gun crime in the USA;  
Broadway Academy, Perry Barr, Birmingham;  
Birmingham City University;  
Craftspace;  
Preet Kaur Gill MP.

## Ethical Statement

The pilot knife crime project In The Cut took place with the agreement and support of West Midlands Police Lead for Gangs and Knife Crime, Detective Superintendent Ian Parnell, Steve Middleditch, WMP Strategic Facilities Manager, both of whom were satisfied with the removal, transport and use of these knives in relation to the Police's risk assessment policy. The knives were sourced from WMP Smethwick Police Station; their selection and removal by Norman Cherry and Dauvit Alexander was supervised by Michael Hall, WMP lead for this project at Smethwick. All participants are satisfied that any knives in this particular surrender bin have been confiscated as a result of police actions on the streets or at properties visited during normal duties. Any knives which have been involved or thought to have been involved in crime are held completely separately.



## Hiring the Exhibition

All enquiries about the exhibition tour should be directed to either:  
Norman Cherry - [norman.cherry@uwclub.net](mailto:norman.cherry@uwclub.net) or  
Dauvit Alexander - [justified.sinner@gmail.com](mailto:justified.sinner@gmail.com)

Exhibition hire is £2500, plus forward transport to the next venue.



**Elizabeth Shaw - Hand-Saw-Horse - Found objects, steel blade, silver.**

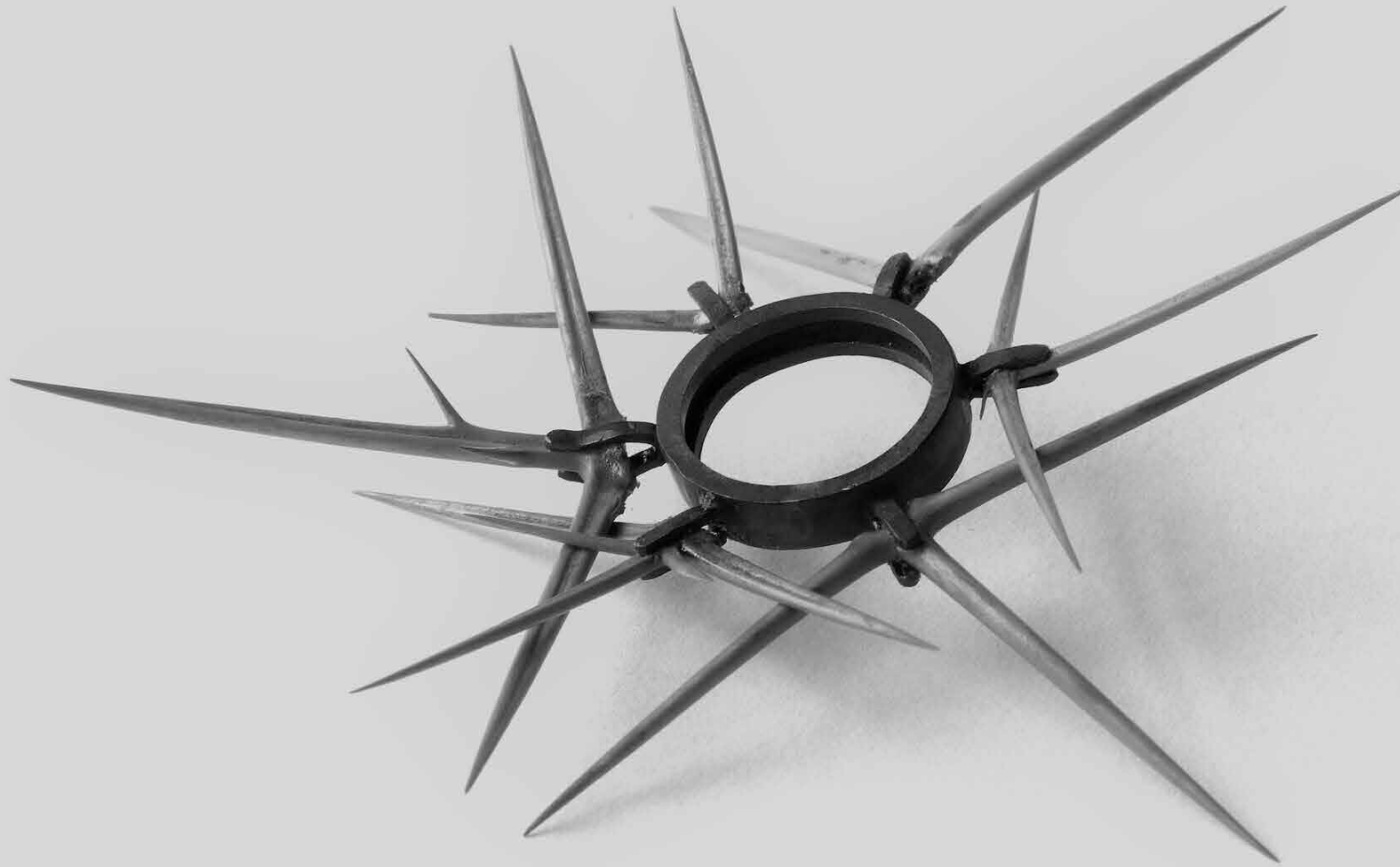


**Boris Bally - BURST**



**Herman Hensen - Broken Anger**

**Jorge Manilla - Tönearmband - Bracelet - Cactus thorns, silver, steel**





Robert Coogan



Rachael Colley - Re-made in Sheffield: Poor-trait (Melon-colley)

Swords into Ploughshares  
Page - 14



Jo Pond



**Petra Bishai - Tongue Depressor**



**Swords into Ploughshares  
Page - 15**

Swords into Ploughshares  
Page - 16





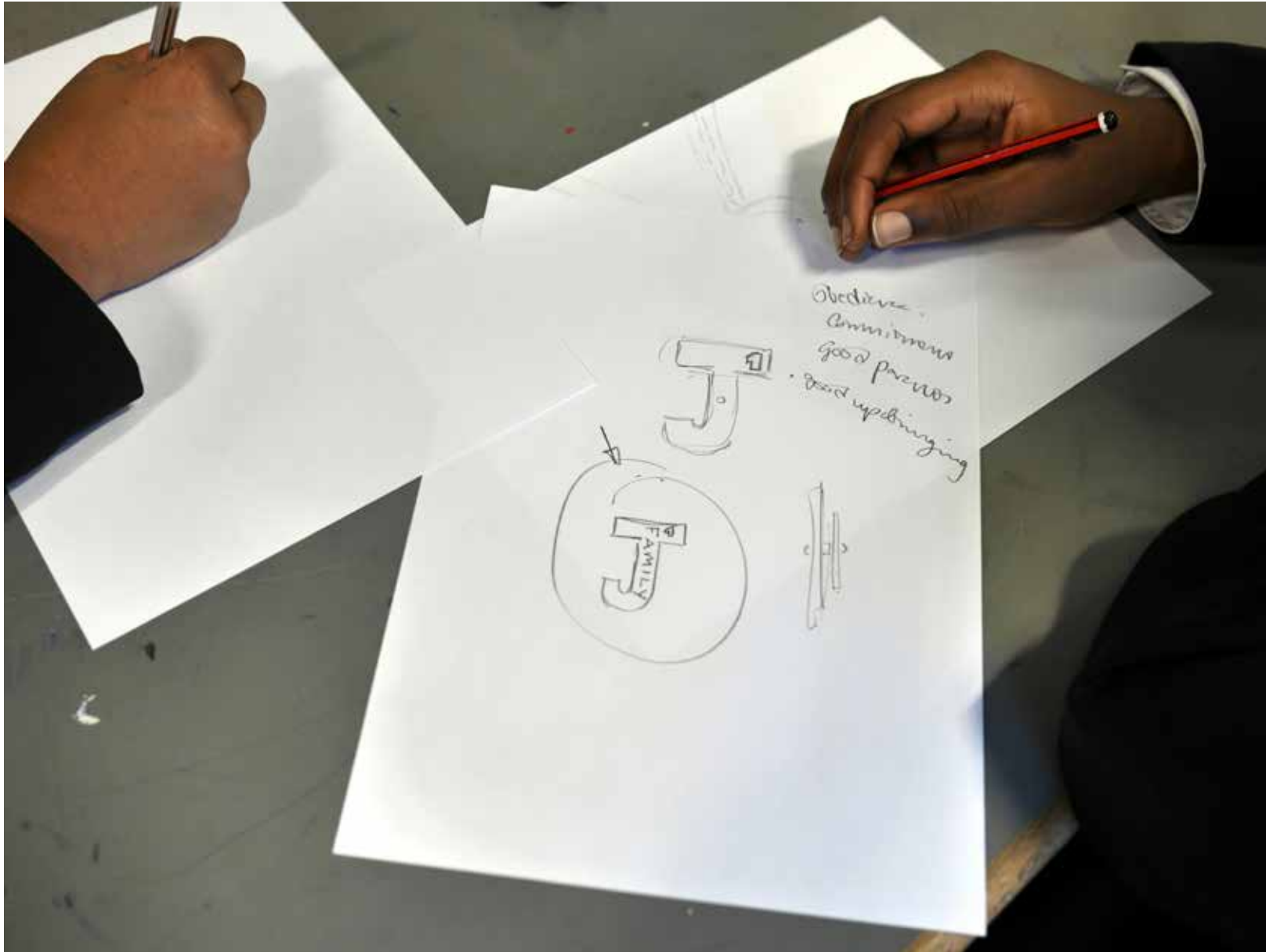


**Eliana Negroni**



# Swords into Ploughshares

Page - 18



Young People at work in Broadway Academy - part of the pilot project

Completed work from the participants in the pilot project at Broadway Academy.

