

EXPLORE IN PRAISE OF BEAUTY

Please leave in the gallery for others to enjoy.

AN INVITATION TO EXPLORE FROM ART IN MOTION

With *In Praise of Beauty* artist Adébayo Bolaji invites us to consider what beauty means to us. He asks us if there is such a thing as universal beauty, or is the idea of beauty a personal experience?

Our relationship to and understanding of beauty are not fixed or static terms, but dynamic and ever-changing ideas. Through his work Bolaji invites us to look deeper, to notice how we experience the work, to question our thoughts and feelings, to have a conversation and to openly share our reflections in response.

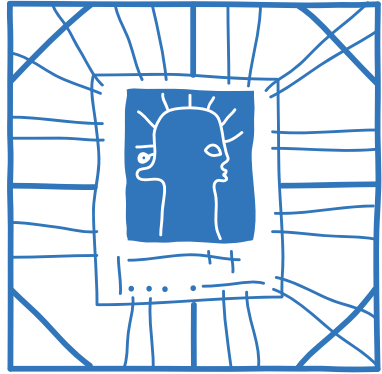
At Art in Motion we encourage a similar sense of curiosity. We accept that everyone has a unique way of experiencing the world and that our perceptions affect us differently. Engaging in art generates opportunities for creative exploration and enables us to consider different ways of seeing. Art in Motion strives to create a shared learning environment where all responses and opinions are valid and encouraged.

We work with artists without any formal art training and their approach is often more intuitive. They are not afraid to dive straight in and let the work evolve through the process of making. This way of working can bring energy and life to an artwork, which is also evident in Bolaji's practice, which explores, questions and celebrates the many forms of beauty surrounding us.

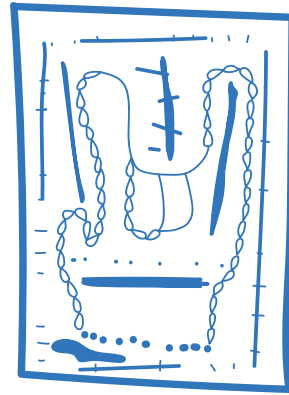
Bolaji reminds us that our notion of beauty is fundamental to how we engage with the world and how the thoughts and values we place on things, people and experiences shape our lives. As with Art in Motion, there is an understanding that different interpretations and ways of looking are all valid, and through these insights we can all arrive at a more personal experience of art.

Art in Motion is a Bristol-based organisation with a track record of creating opportunities for learning-disabled and neurodiverse artists. Led by artist and director Colin Higginson (the author of this invite), Art in Motion has been hosting its weekly art school at Arnolfini since September 2021.

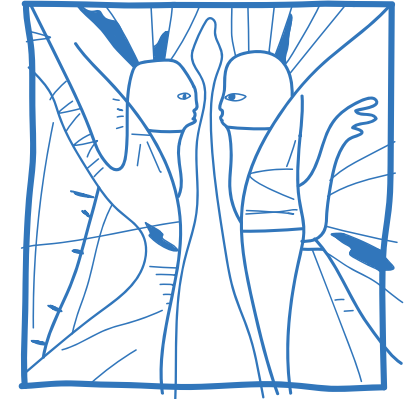
Art in Motion invites you to engage with Bolaji's artwork and to share your responses with others, enjoying different ways in which to experience the work.



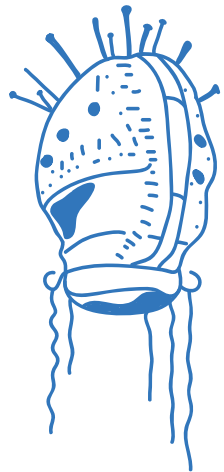
Beginning with **Because of Love**, as you walk around the gallery think about where you find beauty each day.



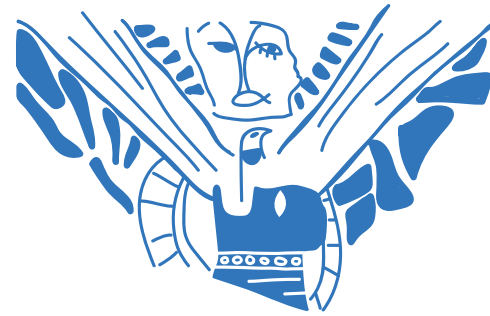
The hand gesture in **I Love You 001** is one of many ways to say 'I love you'. How else can you tell someone you love them? Can you share this through a picture or with words?



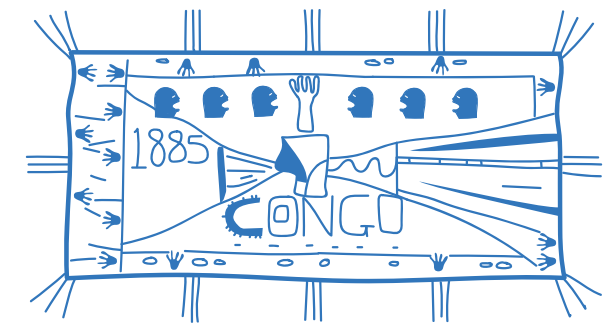
The title of one of the works is **To See Ourselves**. What do you see when you look in the mirror? Can you try drawing yourself without looking down at the paper?



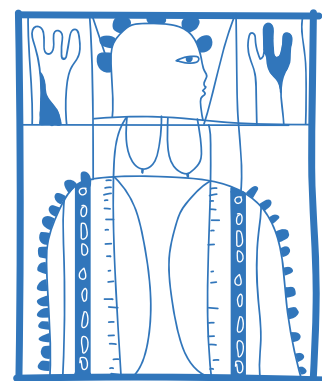
The **Head of Medusa** is decorated with textiles, beads and coloured threads. What materials do you consider beautiful?



The shapes and lines in **No Beauty Without Struggle** create a feeling of upward movement that feels inspiring and uplifting. What inspires you?



The work **Congo** contains hands cut-out of different coloured fabrics. How do different colours, patterns and textures make you feel?



Dayo means the moment that joy arrives in Yoruba. As you move around the gallery (and about your day) when does joy arrive for you?

These prompts have been created by Art in Motion and Arnolfini to help you explore the exhibition in your own way.

'I WANT TO SHARE MY WORLD'

Adébayo Bolaji's practice spans painting, drawing, sculpture, writing, film and more recently the use of social media to share images with the world. Playing with traditional boundaries between artist and artwork, Bolaji draws upon colour, words, voice and gesture (influenced by his theatrical background) to immerse us in his world.

'I love words' - Writing offers Bolaji another medium through which to explore and process ideas, such as 'what is beauty?' On his website you can explore poetry and other forms of writing including 'His story in his own words' which shares his experience of growing up 'black, African and living in the west', taking readers on his journey from law student, to actor, theatre director and then artist.

'A way of saying we are here' - Bolaji's use of colour is strongly influenced by Nigerian culture in which bright and vibrant

colours are a way to say 'we are here'. His use of colour is also informed by a love of cinema and the carefully considered worlds created by directors such as Spike Lee. In his 2018 exhibition *Rituals of Colour* Bolaji asked audiences to think about how colour affects our 'behaviour, patterns and rituals', an idea he has developed in *In Praise of Beauty*.

'Every day I draw' - For Bolaji drawing happens outside the studio, exploring ideas that later find a way into his work. Often found doodling as a child, Bolaji's first introduction to making art as an adult came through drawing, filling notebook upon notebook with 'words and images, images and more doodles, scribbles and words'. This instinctive way of working has informed his practice, creating a sense of curiosity that runs throughout.

www.adebayobolaji.com



Explore In Praise of Beauty can be downloaded on our website or listened to as an audio guide using the QR code.

Please return this guide after you have explored the exhibition.

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