

Artist in Residence: Amira Hasoon

Amira Hasoon was in Residence from March 7 to April 17, from Oxford, United Kingdom. You can follow her work on Instagram @amira.hasoon, and amirahasoon.com. We asked her a few questions about her time here:

What has most surprised you about this place or about yourself while here?

What surprised me most about A&H is its incredible quality which makes it impossible to feel physically stressed - there is a magic here. It has taught me that being actively conscious, and openly aware of both my environment, and surroundings will positively reflect in my work and practice.

What other residencies or other artist opportunities have you been to?

In July 2020 I decided to start taking my art seriously. I initially worked as a studio intern for three months for artist Katharina Forster in Berlin, April 2021. This led me to research further opportunities, and residencies which led me to The Factory on Willow in Manchester, NH (August-November 2022), and then to A&H!

What's your favorite thing about your A&H residency?

The dedicated studio space. Having a large working space allowed me to expand my practice - both literally and metaphorically. Another thing is the umpteen times I've wandered around the site, I've always spotted something new, that's also my favourite thing! A&H is a wondrous Aladdin's cave! And the library in André Smith's apartment too!

What have you created while here? Have you been inspired to try something new? Do you think you'll continue it?

I initially arrived to this residency with an intention of creating something I had already pre-planned. However, coming to learn more about the founder, André Smith, and the Bok Fellows through experiencing the space, and talking to the people at A&H - I have learned that this place is for experimenting, and that trial and error is fully supported here!

I developed a new series during my residency which I have

coined as 'Nature Transitory'. I had such an intense, visceral feeling to respond to nature throughout my time here - though initially resisted this as I have always had this need to show my worth by showcasing 'skill.'

However, I began to explore this idea of making art that doesn't have to show worth, or have to exist anywhere, and started producing works that I knew would not last. I intentionally used garbage bags as my canvas, and made paintbrushes from debris found within the gardens, and pigment using mud, and water from the lily pond - just intuitively connecting, and responding to the space, without the pressure of creating a final piece.

Developing this awareness of trusting in my intuition, and my environment, and the understanding that how I draw line and make mark will always be internal.

So, yes, I definitely hope that this new found awareness is something that not only will be a great reminder of my experience here, but something I will continue.

What do you miss from home that we don't have here?

Sarcasm. Haha! Also, one thing I will miss from here - I love the little critters; I will miss chasing lizards out of both the apartment, and studio every other day!



Upcoming Artist in Residence: Isobel Francisco

Isobel Francisco is our second international artist, from Manila, Philippines. She will be on campus from May 2 to June 12. Her works currently involve figurative tensions and narratives of anguish, loss, and the constant examination of what constitutes humanity. You can view more of her works at stainedpaper.me and on her Facebook @isobel francisco.