



SARANJIT BIRDI

Artist Statement

“Wow, you remind me of a crazy Indian... that’s probably the most racist thing I have ever said (giggle)”, remarked an American tutor as she critiqued my MFA work, a fusion of dance and foot-drawing. Was it a reference to me being of Indian origin or a comment on the unfamiliar?

Drawing is a primary media in my arts practice. Developed over two decades, I use drawing in a range of forms including:

- Portraiture, life drawing, street sketching
- Drawing and performance
- Disability rehabilitation workshops
- Public engagement
- Architecture

With a background in architecture and dance, I set up my arts practice in 2000 initially creating community-engaged public sculpture and dance-on-film works, often incorporating poetry.

In 1997, whilst life drawing, I discovered an unusual ability to draw accurately with various parts of my body. I believe this merged skills as a dancer and architectural draughtsmanship. I went on to use these drawing skills in delivering rehabilitation workshops for brain-injury survivors. Subsequently, with Arts Council support, I led a collaborative project with University of Birmingham schools of Bioscience and Psychology engaging my drawing practice with staff and students studying biosciences and cognition. This culminated in exhibition *‘cogn: the Root of I’* (2015). I now give a joint art-science annual lecture at the University.

I currently teach

- ‘Painting to Music’-Midlands Art Centre Birmingham
- ‘Learn to Draw’ sessions in my community
- Inclusive watercolour painting for abled and impaired at Sense, Birmingham
- Mind-body fitness and wellbeing classes, Birmingham Leisure

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