

**Name: Zoe Simons-Walker**

**Venue: Abel of Hertford**

**Contact details:** [www.zoe-sw.com](http://www.zoe-sw.com)

**Meet & Greet:** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April, 10.00am – 2.00pm

**Who are you and what do you do?**

My name is Zoe Simons- Walker, a 22-year-old artist based in Welwyn Garden City. I recently graduated from the University of Westminster with a BA in Fine Art. I am a Multidisciplinary Artist that focuses mainly on constructing sculpture. I enjoy the challenge of manipulating unusual materials and creating something bizarre. My practise primarily explores identity, mostly focusing on Working Class culture with an injection of banter. The study of Anthropology and Sociology fuel my practise.

**How has your practise changed over time?**

I would say that my practise has always gravitated towards issues within identity and the human body. I started my artistic journey thinking about the female body and issues that women deal with both physically and socially. I found that issues within society and the issues that develop between different types of people interested me more than the physicalities of the body.

**Name three artists who have influenced your work**

Mark Wood's "Return to Old Certainties" exhibition was predominant inspiration to my exhibited pieces. His exhibition explored the boundaries between luxurious objects of desire and items from the cabinet of curiosities. Wood's sculptures echo the perfection of a society increasingly obsessed with glamour. I was fascinated with this theme of human temptation concerning luxuries. As a response I used fundamental items and contrasted them with items of desire, showing clear status comparisons.

Anya Gallaccio is influential to my work because she uses materials that parallel the circle of life. Like me she uses natural materials that have an expiry whether that be decaying or melting, all her sculptures and installations involve both the process of making and the process of deteriorating. The exciting thing about this is that no one can predict when that end is, every visitor will experience a different moment of that material's 'life' cycle.

Lastly, I find inspiration from the books 'Status Anxiety' by Philosopher Alain De Botton and 'Watching the English' by Social Anthropologist Kate Fox. Both of which explore the anxieties caused by the need for acceptance in society.

