

Eileen Simpson and Ben White (Open Music Archive)

Once Heard Before

27 August 2019 – 5 January 2020

#onceheardbefore

For this commission, artists **Eileen Simpson and Ben White** (both b.1977, UK) collaborated with a group of young musicians and Spotlight Youth Centre in East London to produce a call and response that activates past, present and future sounds.

Taking inspiration from popular music and referencing the history of sample culture, a new film and sound work *Once Heard Before* (2019) features young beat-makers and emcees, who mutate hit records from the 1950s and 1960s into new sounds. The project is the latest in a series of works commissioned by Whitechapel Gallery to be created by artists in collaboration with local young people.

Working at the intersection of art, music and digital technologies, Eileen Simpson and Ben White explore authorship, ownership and distribution in art. Founders of the Open Music Archive, they source, digitise and distribute out-of-copyright sound recordings to spark collaborative projects and free exchanges.

Also showing in the galleries is their film *Everything I Have Is Yours* (2019), featuring octogenarian musicians from Manchester. Shot in a space between a recording studio and live venue, the camera tracks the assembled musicians as they play samples that have been hacked from 1950s and 1960s UK charts. The copyright-controlled elements of the original records are separated out through an algorithmic process, to enable collective use and sharing. *Everything I Have Is Yours* was Commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella, the Contemporary Art Society, University of Salford Art Collection and Castlefield Gallery through 'Equal Shares' 2019.

This project builds on the on-going work of Open Music Archive, a self-organised artists project dedicated to the assembling of publically owned resources and exploring the performative potential of the archive.

#### Notes to Editors

- The exhibition is curated by Sofia Victorino, Director of Education and Public Programmes with Helen Davison, Curator: Family Programme.
- Programmed by our Education team since 2009, Galleries 5 & 6 at Whitechapel Gallery are dedicated to showing three new exhibitions per year that provide opportunities for young local people to collaborate with artists
- [www.openmusicarchive.org](http://www.openmusicarchive.org)

#### Press Release

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#### Whitechapel Gallery

77–82 Whitechapel High Street  
London E1 7QX

T +44 (0)20 7522 7888

F +44 (0)20 7539 3340

[whitechapelgallery.org](http://whitechapelgallery.org)

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**Visitor Information**

Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm; Thursdays, 11am – 9pm

Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX

T + 44 (0) 20 7522 7888 | E [info@whitechapelgallery.org](mailto:info@whitechapelgallery.org) | W [whitechapelgallery.org](http://whitechapelgallery.org)

**Press Information**

For more information, interviews and images, contact:

**Lucy Hawes**

T +44 (0)20 7522 7871 | E [lucyhawes@whitechapelgallery.org](mailto:lucyhawes@whitechapelgallery.org)