

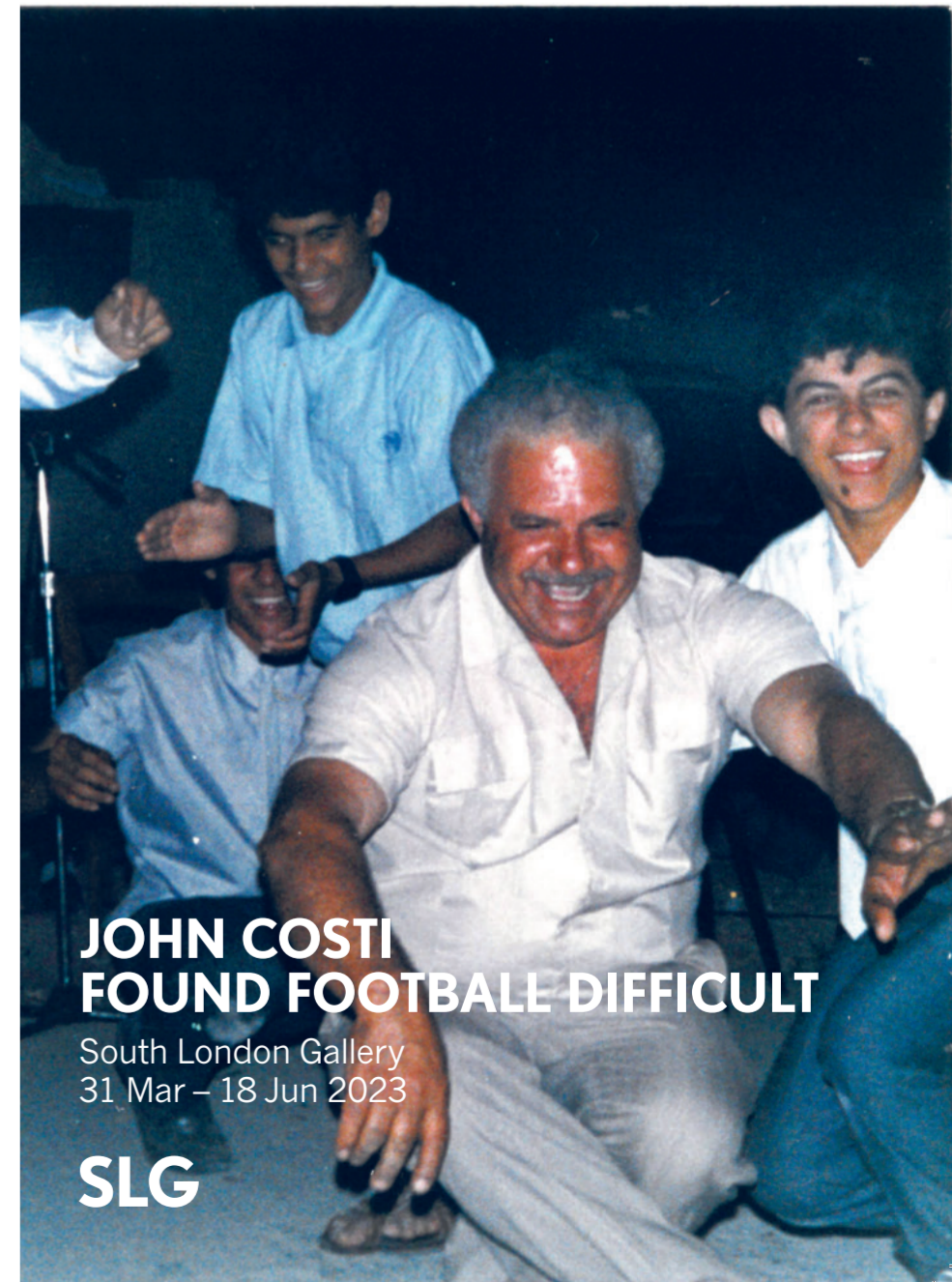


INTRODUCTION

The SLG's 12th Postgraduate Artist in Residence John Costi's work is rooted in healing and transformation. Through conversation, play and assemblage, he aims to create art that brings people together and forms social connections. The new work made during Costi's six-month residency explores life and loss through sculpture, sound, scent, and personal archive. Costi creates improvised combinations of found objects, part of his practice which he calls 'Culture-Mating'. He draws on cultural and personal references from his Cypriot heritage, memories of growing up in north London, and time spent in prison. The title of the exhibition, *Found Football Difficult*, is a quote taken from one of the artist's school reports. Collaged wallpaper, nature versus nurture, I don't believe that people are born bad; it's learned behaviour, something usually picked up from an older, and luck. Visitors can interact with the work by playing a game from Costi's childhood or learning a traditional Cypriot dance.

These autobiographical references also explore broader, relevant conversations around men's mental health, how we process anger and systems of oppression. Read this conversation between John Costi and SLG Projects Curator, Rachael Harlow to find out more.

Rachael Harlow: Your work is immersive, involving many different senses - sight, smell, sound of birds whistling when you first walk into the SLG Fire Station Mating'. He draws on cultural and personal references from his Cypriot heritage, memories of growing up in north London, and time spent in prison. The title of the exhibition, *Found Football Difficult*, is a quote taken from one of the artist's school reports. Collaged wallpaper, nature versus nurture, I don't believe that people are born bad; it's learned behaviour, something usually picked up from an older, and luck. Visitors can interact with the work by playing a game from Costi's childhood or learning a traditional Cypriot dance.



JOHN COSTI FOUND FOOTBALL DIFFICULT

South London Gallery
31 Mar – 18 Jun 2023

SLG

Cover: John Costi, *Takis*, 2023
Overleaf: John Costi, *TF5808*, 2023

EVENTS

Performance: Taking It Back
Wed 14 Jun 2023, 7–9pm, Clore Studio, £6 / £4 concessions

An evening of spoken word and music curated and hosted by John Costi. Using the idea of rebirth as a starting point, Costi brings together storytelling and community in a relaxed social space.

Photography is allowed in the exhibition, please share your images on social media.

[@SLG_artupdates](#)
[@southlondongallery](#)

Large print and easy read guides are available

JOHN COSTI

John Costi (b.1987) is an artist whose work draws on his Cypriot and Irish heritage, and experience of growing up in London. He creates sculptures, installations, paintings and performance. He is interested in dismantling hierarchies of art experience, turning passive audiences into active participants. Costi graduated from Central St Martins MA Fine Art in 2022.

SLG

South London Gallery
Main Building: 65–67 Peckham Road, London SE5 8UH
Fire Station: 82 Peckham Road, London SE15 5LQ



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It started with a whistle we used in the area I grew up in. All over London, people claimed this whistle as their own. We would argue about it and bicker back and forth. It's also a metaphor for the loss of innocence, interwoven family members' homes and ate! Being half-Irish and half-Cypriot, there were a lot of us, and we'd have mad Irish christenings and or Hearless Crew playing in the backgound. Maybe it's the weird London was different then. I want that moment to return, the smell of SET, sweat, skunk and JOOP! I like to think of the physical elements like sculpture, print, and scent as sons on an album on Holloway Road that has spurred this creative output.

Clothes, food, photos and homemaking were what the creative people did in my family. We are very family-oriented, and everyone always seemed to be doing up their yard (house). The home is in a constant state of flux, kind of like the furniture shop that always has a sale on. It changes and remains the same.

RH: You've talked about your mother and grandmother being curators of the home. It feels like family could be a vehicle to shift

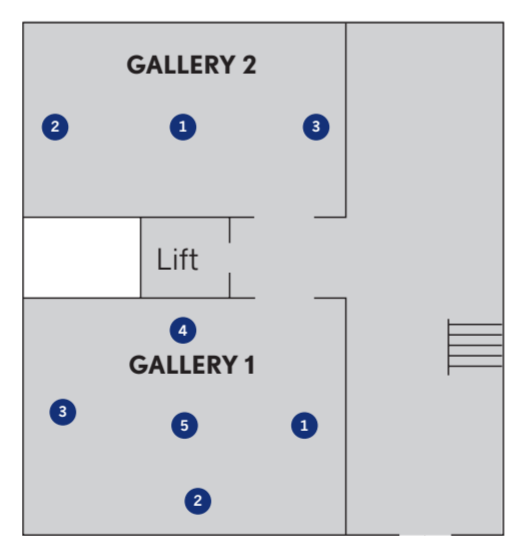
JC: Growing up we didn't go to galleries or museums: we went to family members' homes and ate! Being half-Irish and half-Cypriot, there were a lot of us, and we'd have mad Irish christenings and or Hearless Crew playing in the backgound. Maybe it's the weird London was different then. I want that moment to return, the smell of SET, sweat, skunk and JOOP! I like to think of the physical elements like sculpture, print, and scent as sons on an album on Holloway Road that has spurred this creative output.

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JC: Nothing is new, just remixed, re-jigged, re-touched. A visual mash-up, something new learnt from an old friend, retold with a new spin. Our memories say so much didn't even want to get better, I was an angry troubled kid, that hated school and everyone there. re-jigged, re-touched. A visual mash-up, something new learnt from an old friend, retold with a new spin. Our memories say so much

JC: I found the whole thing difficult, have when they were 'playing out' in childhood. There's also a towel that *Money Up* sits on with three dispersitious jumps people make to avoid walking over three drains. *Money Up*. Visitors can use a skeleton hand to shoot custom pennies at the wall, like many would have when they were 'playing out' in childhood. There's also a towel that *Money Up* sits on with three dispersitious jumps people make to avoid walking over three drains. *Money Up*. Visitors can use a skeleton hand to shoot custom pennies at the wall, like many would have when they were 'playing out' in childhood. There's also a towel that *Money Up* sits on with three dispersitious jumps people make to avoid walking over three drains.

GROUND FLOOR



ABOUT THE RESIDENCY

The SLG Postgraduate Residency is an open submission six-month residency that provides an early-career artist with a rare opportunity to produce a new body of work, which is then exhibited at the SLG. The residency is open to artists who have completed a BA, and have undertaken a period of self-directed, peer-led or postgraduate study in the year prior to the residency.

This can include alternative, peer organised and non-accredited programmes from an institution, collective or art school in the UK as well as an MA, MFA, PGDip, MRes.

The Postgraduate Residency is supported by the Paul and Louise Cooke Endowment.

LIST OF WORKS

- ENTRANCE**
You changed your tune, 2023
Audio, looped
- GALLERY 1**
1.
Big Bapou, 2023
Screen print on Correx, duct tape, bottle tops, family photos
120 × 240cm
2.
Aphrodite, 2023
Fabric on paper collage
68 × 53cm
3.
Physical Education, 2023
Skeleton arm, rubber mask, golf putter, fabric, peacock ornament, metal table pedestal, pennies, bespoke pennies, vinyl, butchers chains
Dimension variable
4.
The Big Three, 2023
Family photographs, found frames, digitally printed wallpaper, vinyl
Dimensions variable
5.
Zorba's Dance, 2023
Digitally printed towel, vinyl
Dimensions variable

- GALLERY 2**
1.
TRUE PLAYAZ, 2023
Scent diffuser, JOOP!, rota spikes, guttering, misters, lightings gels
Dimensions variable
2.
JUMPI!, 2023
Gucci loafers, audio, plastic rosary beads, hat, metal feathers, photos, paper, card frame
- Audio works**
Left
Storeo, 3 mins 8 secs
2 days, 1 min 6 secs
Bye Bye Jon Bon Jovi, 1 min 22 secs
25 days, 53 secs
Right
Speedball, 1 min 18 secs
15 days, 1 min 6 secs
Dear Mum, 2 mins 37 secs
White Flag, 2 mins 20 secs
3.
3 Bro, 2023
Digitally printed wallpaper
Dimensions variable

JC: With this show I'm trying to create the anatomy of a ghost that has haunted me for over 20 years. Trying to outrun the shadow of my past self, finally letting myself mourn him. Though the exhibition is autobiographical, the story was told, like a bad hand, universally personal. A familiar archetype, the cul-de-sac, eyed up and looked down on. A burden. It invokes that was resisting by my teens. A way of recognising the underdogs and weaponising my hang-ups. *Money Up*. Visitors can use a skeleton hand to shoot custom pennies at the wall, like many would have when they were 'playing out' in childhood. There's also a towel that *Money Up* sits on with three dispersitious jumps people make to avoid walking over three drains. *Money Up*. Visitors can use a skeleton hand to shoot custom pennies at the wall, like many would have when they were 'playing out' in childhood. There's also a towel that *Money Up* sits on with three dispersitious jumps people make to avoid walking over three drains.

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