

8 July - 11 September
2022

**BRENT
BIENNIAL**
BY METROLAND CULTURES



'I close my eyes and dream away'

This billboard has been commissioned for Brent Biennale 2022 by Metroland Cultures. Over the month of July, it appears in both Clapham and Willesden, which has been made possible by partnership with BuildHollywood and Studio Voltaire.

The artist is Jorrell Bonnick, a Brent-based artist whose work features mark-making in order to create landscapes and mapped spaces. Having so far produced mostly small-scale compositions on paper, this commission has allowed Bonnick to bring his work into the public realm, challenging the ways in which ableist power structures often prevent many disabled artists from taking up space.

This billboard is a bold and colourful work that contrasts strongly with the dull, brick and metallic landscape that it sits within. With no text or explicit reference points, this abstract piece invites us to spend time with it as complex patterns start converging into images and connotations.

The image is constructed from countless tiny marks, whose cumulative result is lines and blocks of colour that are densely populated against a lemon yellow background, which is also made meticulously from individual marks. Thin pastel lanes of pinks, lilac and sky blue travel across the image horizontally, forming an intricate map that could be a birds-eye view of a large ship, or a microscopic magnification of a cell.

As we follow the curvature of these horizontal bands, it soon becomes clear that the work contains a number of symmetries. We are first drawn to the most explicit mirror line running vertically through the middle of the image, which makes it seem like the billboard has been folded in half and unfolded to reveal a symmetrical artwork. But then, we realise that there are multiple folds like this running horizontally and vertically. These fold lines or mirror lines act as horizons into which shapes seem to disappear before emerging out again in exactly the same way. The result is a playful, bulging, kaleidoscopic image that gives the impression that it could go on converging and diverging to infinity if given more billboard space.

From afar, or even a couple of steps away, the careful labour of this mark-making dissolves in service of the cumulative image. But the more intricate parts of the work draw us back in. In a horizontal band running through the centre of the work, the pastel colours are punctuated by darker marks in green, brown and grey. Unlike the rest of the image, the marks change colour more frequently, creating a detailed mosaic that suggests faces and horns and antlers and pincers, until you step away again and swap this detail for the large sweeping waves of before.

This billboard by Jorrell Bonnick stays put through nighttime, and through the different climates that each daytime brings. You're invited back to consider this image again, and again.

Thank you for listening and do check out the other billboards commissioned by Brent Biennale.