
CONTEMPORARY

ART

ACADEMY

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PHASE 2

Artist: Valissa Butterworth

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Date: February 2026

INTRODUCTION

This Phase 2 development plan follows a formal review of Valissa's first mentoring cycle. The purpose of this next stage is to consolidate the progress made, respond to evolving priorities, and provide structured support aligned with her current ambitions—particularly around collaboration, exhibition development, and strengthening professional relationships.

Phase 1 established greater clarity, direction, and confidence within Valissa's professional positioning. Phase 2 will build on this foundation with a focused and strategic approach.

CONTEXT

During Phase 1, Valissa developed a stronger awareness of her desired outcomes and how she wishes to position herself within the contemporary art world. She reported increased clarity in her thinking, greater intentionality in her networking efforts, and improved understanding of professional practice expectations.

Mentoring sessions with Emily (applications), Dean (networking), and Liane (direct critical feedback) were particularly impactful. The structure and intensity of weekly sessions were effective but demanding, leading to the decision to move to a fortnightly rhythm for Phase 2 to allow deeper integration and implementation between sessions.

Valissa is now entering a new stage in her practice, including a potential collaboration with a sound engineer for *The Sound of Colour* project and a stronger desire to develop exhibition opportunities and professional relationships.

AMBITION

Short-Term

- Develop and structure a collaboration with a sound engineer for *The Sound of Colour*.
- Improve professional visibility through enhanced social media consistency and website development.
- Become more proactive in pursuing exhibition opportunities.
- Strengthen targeted networking and relationship-building within appropriate art contexts.

Medium-Term

- Secure and deliver exhibition opportunities aligned with her developing artistic identity.
- Position collaborative work within credible professional contexts.
- Refine written materials (artist statement, proposals, applications) to align with desired perception.
- Expand professional network beyond existing contacts.

Long-Term

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- Establish a recognisable and coherent professional identity.
 - Sustain consistent exhibition activity.
 - Build a strong network of curators, collaborators, and peers that supports long-term growth.
 - Develop a confident and strategic approach to navigating the art world.

Success Looks Like:

Success for Valissa means alignment between her artistic output and how she is perceived professionally. It includes consistent exhibition opportunities, meaningful collaborations, a growing and supportive professional network, and increased confidence in presenting and advocating for her work.

CHALLENGES

- Building and maintaining professional relationships beyond initial introductions.
- Increasing exhibition frequency while ensuring quality and alignment.
- Sustaining momentum in social media and website development.
- Balancing studio development with professional outreach.
- Managing intensity of mentoring while allowing space for implementation.

NEEDS

- Continued professional practice guidance, particularly around exhibitions and collaboration strategy.
- Structured accountability through fortnightly sessions.
- Ongoing input from selected mentors (Emily, Liane, Dean, Lee) alongside new perspectives.
- Support in refining written communication and positioning.
- Monthly critical review sessions to maintain artistic rigour alongside professional growth.

CAPACITY

Valissa has the availability to engage in fortnightly mentoring sessions, with a preference for morning UK time (10am–2pm), accommodating the time difference. She is prepared to resume in late February and demonstrates strong engagement and responsiveness to feedback. The adjusted session frequency will allow for deeper implementation between meetings.

WHAT WOULD MAKE THIS EXPERIENCE VALUABLE

Phase 2 will be most valuable if it translates clarity into visible outcomes: exhibitions, collaborations, and strengthened professional relationships. Maintaining momentum while reducing intensity will allow for sustained progress rather than short bursts of activity. Clear structure, accountability, and strategic direction—paired with critical feedback—will ensure continued development.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

MONTH 1 (MAR)

WEEK 1 – Rebecca Pelly-Fry (Curator)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
- Mentor presents summary of experience
- Explore exhibition ecosystem & opportunity
- Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session

WEEK 3 – Milly Burroughs (PR & Marketing Expert)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
 - Mentor presents summary of experience
 - Analyse mentee's PR & marketing output
 - Advise on future PR & marketing output
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- Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session

MONTH 2 (APR)

WEEK 1 – Rebecca Pelly-Fry (Curator)

- Follow-up session to Month 1 Week 4
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

WEEK 3 – Liane Lang (Artist)

- Artist crit
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 3 (MAY)

WEEK 1 – Andrew Etherington (Curator)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
- Mentor presents summary of experience
- Explore exhibition ecosystem & opportunity
- Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session

WEEK 3 – Milly Burroughs (PR & Marketing Expert)

- Follow-up session to Month 1 Week 3
- Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session

MONTH 4 (JUN)

WEEK 1 – Ella Lewis-Williams (Art Writer, PR & Communications Specialist)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
- Mentor presents summary of experience
- Analyse mentee's current PR & marketing output
- Advise on future PR & marketing output
- Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session

WEEK 3 – Dean Melbourne (Artist Advisor & Artist)

- Explore & analyse networking output
- Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session

MONTH 5 (JUL)

WEEK 1 – Andrew Etherington (Curator)

- Follow-up session to Month 3 Week 1
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

WEEK 3 – Lee Holden (Artist)

- Artist crit
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 6 (AUG)

WEEK 1 – Nat Pitt (Gallerist, Curator)

- Mentee to present prior experience, current interests and aspirations, highlighting areas needing support, development, or specific attention
 - Mentor presents summary of experience
 - Explore exhibition ecosystem & opportunity
 - Together decide on tasks/research/discussion topics for the follow-up session
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WEEK 3 – Milly Burroughs (PR & Marketing Expert)

- Follow-up session to Month 3 Week 3
- Together decide on tasks/research

MONTH 7 (SEP)**WEEK 1 – Nat Pitt (Gallerist, Curator)**

- Follow-up session to Month 6 Week 1
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

WEEK 3 – Rebekah Tolley (Curator, Artist, Academic)

- Artist crit
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

MONTH 8 (OCT)**WEEK 1 – Ella Lewis-Williams (Art Writer, PR & Communications Specialist)**

- Follow-up session to Month 4 Week 1
- Together decide on ongoing tasks/research

WEEK 3 – Dean Melbourne (Artist Advisor & Artist)

- Follow-up session to Month 4 Week 3
- Together decide on tasks/research

MONTH 9 (NOV)**WEEK 1 – Zavier Ellis (Co-founder)**

- Review

CONCLUSION

Valissa has made meaningful progress in awareness, positioning, and professional understanding during Phase 1. She is now ready to shift from foundation-building to strategic expansion, with a particular focus on collaboration and exhibition activity. A structured but less intensive Phase 2 programme will support sustained momentum, deeper professional integration, and the continued strengthening of her presence within the contemporary art landscape.

Investment Summary:

- 1-hour 1-2-1 mentoring sessions - £95 each (fees paid in monthly instalments. Monthly instalments begin two months ahead of the planned start date, or immediately if the programme begins sooner)
- Start Date: March 2026
- Session Frequency: Fortnightly
- Optional supplementary 1-2-1 mentoring sessions - £95 each
- Optional course add-ons - £95–£295

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