PROTECHT

THE CATALOGUE

Showing at The Bank Space Gallery from the 12 - 27 March 2015, PROTECHT is an exhibition curated by students of Curating the Contemporary MA course, taught in partnership with the Whitechapel Gallery and the CASS Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design.

The show brings together national and international artists who in very different ways present the screen as our ever-present shelter for facing the world. Throughout a wide range of mediums comprising photography, sculpture, video, and installation, the show investigates our relationship with the screen and the impact it has on our everyday life, questioning both the extent and consequences of this reliance.

The exhibition aims to create dialogues around the different themes touched by our investigation of the Screen, both opening and broadening a non-linear discourse among the exhibited works. From its very inception, our curatorial approach has aimed to mirror the variety of this prolific encounter. This complementary catalogue presents one of many possible readings of the exhibition, tracing a critical line throughout the crisscrossing of the different themes explored.

Visitors should feel free to put down the screen and follow their own path.

TOUCH

Touchscreen allows us to control our screen with simple gestures. This immediacy has become a natural way to interact with our devices. Image-based interactive interface directly connects what we see with our tactile input, without the mediation of any key. The physical interaction with the screen has increasingly improved and reinforced our relationship and reliance upon technologies.

The sense of touch can be considered as that which confirms the validity of our vision. We are naturally drawn to touch the things that surround us. Within a gallery space, touching is usually forbidden and suppressed in favour of the absolute supremacy of sight. We expect not to touch objects on display as that has been instilled in us from an early age.

Touchscreen #1 is a two metre high plate of shinny copper set within a wooden frame. This imposing installation presents to us hand marks upon its surface. The title invites the viewer to engage with and touch the plate. By getting closer to the work, we hear the intimidating drone of the barrier of electricity which protects the screen.

In touching its surface, the plate responds to the viewer through a vibration generated by the energy voltage. With this work, Peter Hoiß engages our sense of touch whilst investigating our fear of contact.

Although we generally associate the sense of touch with our hands, it is not located on a specific area, instead it is found all over our skin as well as spread through the whole body. In *How Can You Go Through Something You Can't See*, the artist uses his face to touch and rub a pane of glass. The pressure caused by the repetitive friction of the skin with the glass causes the face to look deformed. Usually clean and immaculate, shop and gallery windows are seen as a transparent barrier which separates private from public space. Although clear, the glass creates a boundary between the inside and outside which is almost impenetrable. By licking and dragging the screen, Wegerer dirties the window whilst challenging the rules of common behaviour. The isolation, revealing and repetition of these almost obsessive movements convey the urgency of liberation from social and physical constraint. Moreover, this work deals with themes of vulnerability relating to public and media exposure.

Roland Wegerer

http://www.rolandwegerer.weebly.com

“Touching the glass is a taboo.”

How To Go Through Something You Can’t See
Video installation
21:34 min (loop)
2007

Peter Hoiß

http://www.peterhoiss.com

“Touchscreen is a multi-part work that deals with fear of contact. The title encourages the spectator to touch the work. But at the same time exists an acoustic barrier, the haunting mains hum (50Hz) and the vibration associated as a reference to electricity.”

touchscreen # 1
installation, mixed media, copper plate, cable, high voltage plug, wooden frame, sound, vibration
204.7 x 104.7 x 10.5 cm
2014

In Conversation

Peter Hoiß and Matilde Biagi

Matilde Biagi: *One of the most relevant and peculiar aspects of your work touchscreen#1 is to be touchable; it encourages contact between the viewer and the artwork. This concern with physical contact is communicated in the name of the artwork itself, as well as in the visible traces left on the surface by previous viewers. Consequently, of related interest to this work is the reaction that is triggered by the act of touching artwork. You mentioned in your statement the "fear of contact as a threat of/with art".*
How much was this artwork intended as a provocation? How much did you want to challenge the idea of "untouchable" art?

Peter Hoiß: It is more the circumstance that some people see art as an extraordinary matter and things that are extraordinary sometimes cause fear. It is the fear of getting in touch with art that I treat with in touchscreens primary. There is an ambivalence between the title and the potential of getting hurt.
My intention is to create an artwork that you can get in contact with. One that affects and, vice versa, can be touched. The fear should be interpreted more metaphorically.

Biagi: *Do you think that audiences nowadays still need to be encouraged to touch and interact directly with works of art?*

Hoiß: Although I provoke in touchscreens to get in direct contact with the work it is more the opposite. In daily life you have to be very interactive (e.g. cash machine, ticket machine, *iPad*, smart phone, and so on), so people are used to it. Nowadays it seems to

be very important to touch things to make a personal experience. The more important important issues when looking at art should be of an emotional nature, rather than a physical one.

Biagi: *Your idea of "fear of contact" brings me to a second thought: to remark on and give tangible representation to the idea of fear of touching artwork, you used electricity in the form of a 50Hz vibration.*
Describe the process that brought you to this decision? Do you think it was/is a success with the audience? And if you should re-do touchscreen#1 now, in which other ways, other than the use of electricity, would you experiment with the translation of "fear of contact" as an idea into an artwork?

Hoiß: There are some aspects that led me to use electricity.
First of all electricity is still used for the prevention of reaching things, such as electric fences.
Another aspect is the omnipresence of this physical phenomenon in our daily life. Electricity is necessary for a lot of commodities that we depend on to function. People use electricity naturally, without any fear, but it can be potentially threatening. In *touchscreen#1* the choice of material is very important. Beside the 50 Hz vibration there is also the copper plate, which is conductible. It is used as a common material in most electrical devices. Furthermore, there is the high voltage plug that is connected to the artwork.
To answer your question about whether or not the use of electricity was successful with the audience, I would say - yes. People approached the work carefully before they finally touched it. Sometimes they were surprised by the vibration and they took their hands back very quickly.
If I had to re-do *touchscreen#1*, I would do it exactly the same way. Still, there are plenty of ways to work with the idea of fear of

contact, but then it would be something completely different with a different title...

Biagi: *It is clear from some of your installations, not only touchscreens, but also Panorama, that you like engaging with the audience directly, asking them to interact with your installations. We have discussed touching, as it is prompted by touchscreens. In Panorama, the viewer is enticed to approach and look directly through a part of the screen.*
How important is direct interaction to the "completion" and success of your artworks, from your point of view? And how much is it part of your creative process? Is it something that you have in mind from the start or is it something that naturally comes up while creating a new work?

Hoiß: It is always a process. In the beginning there is a basic idea that I begin to develop. While doing this, some things work while other things don't, therefore very often the interactive idea develops during the production phase, therefore very often the artwork will be developed while producing.
The intention behind every artwork I make is to reach the viewer. The interaction is often in one direction; therefore it is more an "action" that people have to do. They have to move toward the piece of art, to touch it, to step to a certain point to get the experience. I would say that the interaction is inherent/intrinsic in the artwork itself

Biagi: *Looking at touchscreen#1 made me realise that in addition to being concerned with touch, it also relates to ideas of memory. By touching the surfaces of your work, people leave behind a trace of themselves; it could be a palm print, or a fingerprint.*
How much was this intentional and reflected in your choice of

material? Or was this something that happened unintentionally and wasn't part of your idea?

Hoiß: I am happy you asked that. Since I have a photographic background, there is always an aspect in my works that deals with methods of photography.
Memories or moments that happened in the past are preserved in photographs. Similar to the photon that causes a chemical reaction in an analog film process or that causes a reaction in the chip of a digital camera, the viewer causes a reaction on the copper. A picture is made by touching, by physical contact.

Biagi: *Looking at your portfolio, it is clear that you work with different media: photography, installation and video.*
If you had to choose one, which medium are you are most confident working with, or which medium allows you to most effectively develop and "reproduce" your ideas in the reality?

Hoiß: The choice of medium depends on the topic I am working with. Each medium has different qualities and it is more ore less convenient. In videos, for example, you can utilise time to mimic the conditions of real experience. Photography references the past while enabling the viewer to observe a single moment for a long time. With an installation, it is more possible to manipulate perceptions of space.

SIMULATION

The advanced state of new technology and media highly influences our idea of and approach to reality. This mediation has generated a parallel virtual world where images and other simulative identities reproduce and replace the original objects. In his essay *Simulation* (1983) Jean Baudrillard investigates the consequence of this virtual imitation on our notion and experience of the real world. Deceiving our senses as well as our experience of reality, the simulacra imitate so exactly an original content that we can no longer discern what is real from what is just a perfect copy. Eventually, this development of media is not merely copying but also replacing reality, which consequently entails a loss of meaning as well as a lack of correspondence between the sign and the real object. According to Baudrillard, this generates a superimposition and diffuse permeation of the virtual into the real. We live in a constant state of simulation and mediation, whilst the world has become objectified through images.

Plain Sight investigates the nature of the image as a surface. This video shows how the penetrability of the surface allows for the overlapping and layering of many images and layers within the same artificial landscape. By presenting fragmented images skimming on the video's surface, this work causes uncertainty and confusion for the viewer as they may become disoriented as to when they are looking at the real world and when they are

experiencing a virtual reality. Challenging our vision, Theo Tagholm questions to what extent the realisation of the simulation changes the way we look at the work.

In the series *The Substitute* we discover a young couple kissing in a passionate embrace in various settings during day light hours. The underground settings of the shots give the series of photographs a voyeuristic connotation. Looking closely at the pictures, we realise that the image of the woman doesn't correspond to a real body, instead it is a photographic copy of the artist's figure, placed in the real world. By replicating her own body with an objectified image, the artist creates a convincing image of herself which allows for the distortion of our real experience. The self-referentiality within the image, which portrays a photograph within a photograph, questions the misleading nature of the medium of photography as well as the integrity of the three-dimensional object represented on its surfaces. Questioning issues of artificiality and idealisation of body images by the media, Dawn Woolley investigates the impact of the mediation of altered images on our social interactions.

Theo Tagholm

http://www.theotagholm.com

“Hiding in plain sight, the photograph skims across the skin of reality.”

Plain Sight
Video
1:28 min (loop)
2014

Dawn Woolley

http://www.dawnwoolley.com

"In The Substitute Series I create a photographic copy of myself and place it in the real world instead of me. Referring to psychoanalysis, phenomenology and feminism, I examine my own experience of becoming an image."

The Substitute Series (Stairwell)
Print on photographic paper
100 x 100 cm
2007/2008

The Substitute Series (Promenade Plantee)
Print on photographic paper
100 x 100 cm
2007/2008

The Substitute Series (Jay Tunnel)
Print on photographic paper
100 x 100 cm
2007/2008

In Conversation

Dawn Woolley and Fabiola Flamini

Fabiola Flamini: *The technique of photography plays a particular role in your entire work. The image is fake and real at the same time. Why is the relation between flat images (two-dimensional) and three-dimensional images so important in your work?*

Dawn Woolley: I am interested in the particular relationship that photographs have to truth - they appear very believable and real - to the extent that, while looking at them, we can forget that we are observing a two-dimensional image.
For example in my work *The Substitute* series, my aim is to show that the male figure seems satisfied by the woman he embraces - he appears unaware that she is only a two-dimensional image.
When we look at images of people shown in magazines and advertising posters, we see them as a three-dimensional person rather than as images. We might think that the person actually looks exactly like the image. But of course many (most) images are edited and manipulated to enhance the person – so they become idealised. If we forget that we are looking at an image we forget that people don't really look that perfect.
In the end I personally think that it creates unrealistic expectations, both in relation to our own bodies and in what we tend to expect from other people's bodies. So like the men in *The Substitute* we will have to choose images because the real people will never be able to match our expectations.

Flamini: *Looking throughout your work, it is obvious that women play the role of the protagonist. Is there a reason why that woman is always you? Is it an on-going process of working also on your personality? Why is the voyeuristic aspect really important for you? - And - what do you want to communicate to the audience? What do you want people to see and feel looking at your work?*

Woolley: I use myself in all the images because I feel responsible for the way I am treating the female body in my work. I reduce it to two-dimensions; I turn her into an object rather than presenting her as a subject. So the images could seem to portray women in a negative way, reinforcing a message about the sexual objectification of women in visual culture, rather than criticising it. By using myself I think I disrupt the power relationship between subject/object and voyeur/exhibitionist. I am an active producer and the first viewer of the work, as well as an object in the image. I think that makes the critical message of the work more clear - I show myself as an object and an image, but I am also in control of it because I created it.
The images tend to appear voyeuristic because they seem to depict sexual scenes. I think most representations of the female body in our visual culture are sexualised - so I create images that play on the way desire is used in advertising. I hope that the illusion of the cut-out is believable enough to make the viewer feel like a voyeur, only to extinguish their desire when they realise they are looking at a two-dimensional object and not a real person. I hope the experience is dissatisfying in a way - because the consumption of idealised images is also dissatisfying. Having said that, I also want the experience of looking at the images to be pleasurable. It is enjoyable to 'see through' an illusion and work out what is really happening. Maybe this is why *tromp l'oeil* images are so popular. My work can be quite humorous too - I do want to point out some

of the things that concern me - but I think it is more effective to engage the viewer in a pleasurable, humorous way rather than in a shocking way.

Flamini: *Reality and illusion. Personally I find it interesting that your two-dimensional fake - real silhouette seems to be part of the context, but when you get closer to the entire images, it is very clear that the body is a two-dimensional image. When you notice it, the silhouette that previously seemed to be part of the scene, now becomes extraneous. How do you explain this? Are you trying to say that women create a kind of facade that is related to what the society wants women to be?*

Woolley: Yes, I think so. We all try to fit into social norms to some extent. We turn ourselves into images! As I mentioned earlier - I want the viewer to be taken in by the image at first, and then realise the mistake - that the female is only an image because it reminds people how believable and seductive photography can be.

Flamini: *Talking about your performances - how important is the audience for you? – And - What do you want to communicate to the audience?*

Woolley: In the performance pieces I create installations of cut out photographs and then I pose in them as a *tableau vivant*. As moving, living human beings we can never live up to the best photographs of ourselves - we just don't look like that all the time. So throughout the duration of performances I attempt to hold the pose for as long as possible, but it is impossible so I begin to shake and sag - I fail to uphold the image. I guess this is another way of saying that we cannot live up to the expectations created

by idealised images.
In the live performances the audience is important - they really add tension to the performance. I try to hold the pose for as long as possible, but the presence of an audience also makes me more nervous so my failure is even faster and more pronounced! I have been told that the audience also experience the tension of the performance. They empathise with the discomfort I experience as I grow tired and my muscles (and sometimes knees) start to ache.

Flamini: *When I watched the video of your performance Short lived pleasures, I thought about the figure of Paul McCarthy or Carolee Schneemann and their performances in which they also used raw meat. Obviously they used it giving it different meanings. Why did you decide to use raw meat? What is the meaning of this element in your work?*

Woolley: Meat is a material that is full of connotations. Our sexual language is full of meat metaphors. Places where people go to pick up women (or men) are often referred to as meat markets or a common complaint is 'to be treated like a piece of meat'. They suggest that we are reduced to just bodies - pieces of flesh for the enjoyment or consumption of others.
When I use meat in my performances I create a relationship between my body and a piece of meat evoking ideas of sexual objectification, and the types of meat that I choose are also symbolic - in some performances I have used a skinned rabbit, because they have obvious sexual connotations, or an ox's tongue because it has been reduced from an organ of expression to a piece of meat - much like women who are sexually objectified. In the performance you mention, I used an ox's tongue and heart. I wanted to give myself some active agency at the end of this performance so I stabbed the heart to draw it to an end!

Flamini: *Could you tell me more about your works: Homo Bulla, Melken and Naaien?*

Woolley: This was the first time that I created a performance. I wanted to push my work into new directions so I proposed that I would create a series of tableau vivants using the symbolism of Dutch still life and genre painting from the 17th century. I was interested in the objects in the paintings and how their symbolic meaning built up a character - either for a person depicted in a genre painting or an implied but unseen owner of still life objects. The objects frequently suggested greed, promiscuity, slovenliness and all sorts of other damning characteristics. I thought about the way we might 'interpret' objects now. The scenes I created worked on two different levels. If you could decode the symbolic meaning of the objects you would see me as promiscuous etc. but if you couldn't you would probably see me in a more ambiguous way. The sexual message was held below the surface of the image - and I wondered if the use of symbolism could counter the overt sexualisation of our visual culture. The titles come from Dutch symbolism - *homo bulla* means life is a bubble - suggesting that pleasures are short but their consequences are not! *Melken* is a slang sexual term as is *Naaien*. The first pertains to sexual promiscuous 'types' such as milkmaids and the second means 'to sew' a slang term for copulation.

Flamini: *Regarding The Substitute series, which is going to be exhibited at The Bank Space Gallery for the Protecht exhibition. Could you tell me more about it? Is there any reason for the choice of setting? I noticed that the landscape is always very different between each picture.*

Woolley: Some of the images are set in green surroundings and seem quite romantic, but as the series progresses the locations become less pleasant and more threatening. Many of them take place in stairwells, walkways and underpasses - spaces that we travel through but tend not to linger in. I wanted the experience of coming across the sexual scenarios to be uncomfortable, so the viewer feels that they are seeing something they shouldn't and probably don't want to see. I think this adds to the voyeuristic nature of the work, but it also reinforces the relationship between two-dimensional and three-dimensional spaces in the images. The scenes are sometimes framed to contain different flat planes of space and the concrete surfaces are hard and flat - not soft and rounded like the landscape ones.

Flamini: *In this work, your silhouette is the only two-dimensional image. In other works such as Encounters 1 - 6, both the subjects are two-dimensional. Is this an occasional choice or not?*

Woolley: In Encounters I wanted to play with two-dimensional and three-dimensional spaces even further. The male character is flattened to two-dimensions, but the female character was already 2D so she was essentially flattened twice. Paradoxically, because I installed the cut out figures in real space they both became three-dimensional again. This work was an experiment into how far I could push the play of dimensions and what would happen if I introduced a fourth dimension of time by capturing them as moving images.

VOYEURISM

The screen has become our personal window onto the world. By making the process of interaction with external reality rather private and selective, it allows us to take a more active role in what we view. Through the screen everything is within our grasp, ever more simultaneous and immediate. The use of internet and social media allows us to stay connected to everyone and everything, always. Ironically, this situation of high connection has made it possible to eliminate the actual physical interaction between people, leading to isolation and an uncommunicative attitude toward others. Within a world of flat images, we handle and caress screens rather than touch objects, we text instead of talk, we browse instead of ask. And we watch. Spying on each other. Our society is dominated by a voracious appetite for digital voyeurism. Either involving sexual or nonsexual personal moments, this voyeuristic attitude is driven by curiosity, a longing for emotional connection, as well as the thrill and excitement of watching other people's lives.

Void X drags the viewer inside a labyrinthine sliding vision of web camera recordings. The background music conveys a sinister atmosphere and a sense of something menacing is going to happen, causing us to feel uncomfortable whilst we watch as strangers' intimate moments play out before our eyes. This sequence of unframed domestic scenes, lacking action and

narrative, rises the question in the viewer: “Why am I watching?”. And furthermore: “Why do they want me to watch?”.
We are lead to a strange self-identification with these people blurting out their intimacy on the screen. By disclosing fragmented sequences of loneliness, Alexander Isaenko reflects on our own solitude and being a voyeur.

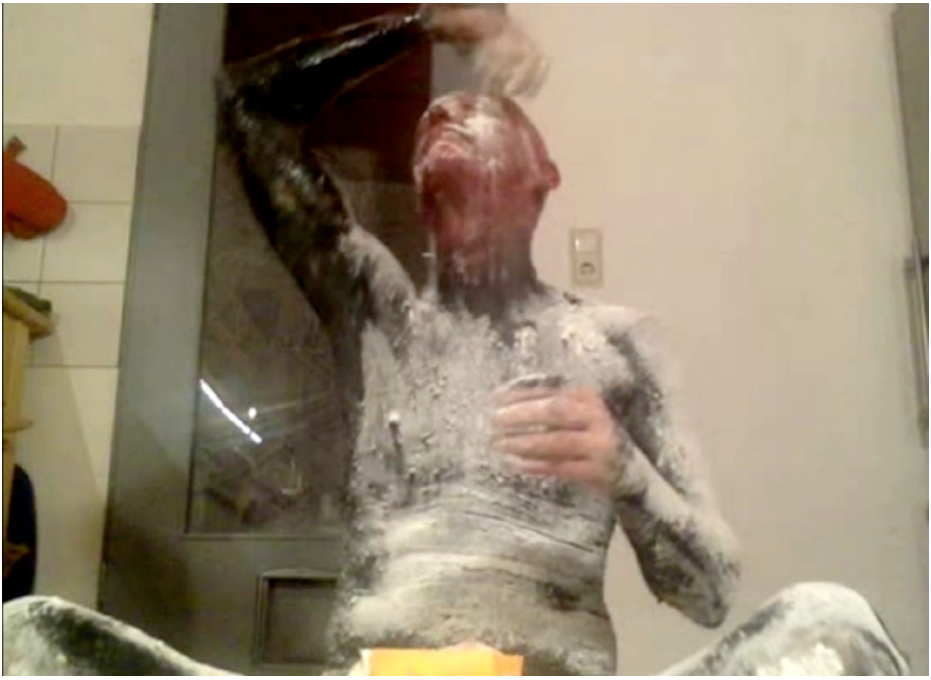
Sam Treadaway’s installation investigates voyeurism in relationship with secrecy and control. *Heist-24* consists of six parallel panels of security mirrors leaning against the gallery wall. The alternating strips of clear glass and mirror challenge and alter our view. By facing the work, the vision of the sculpture itself breaks into its very act of showing and reflecting. The viewer looks at their own reflection surrounded by the gallery space whilst glimpsing through the transparency of the screen. By presenting mirroring screens which allow one-viewing only, Treadaway invites us to reflect upon the relationship between the viewer and viewed as well as the concealing strategies of power and control.

With a series of ten nude portraits, Nara Walker discloses her own intimacy to the viewer. The blurring of the image and the sensual oil paint concealing parts of the body fascinate and arouse our curiosity, allowing freedom to our imagination. Seductive and intense, *Voyeur* is inviting the viewer access to a personal space and to engage with the image’s physicality. Looking at this immersive body abstraction, we glimpse ourselves reflected onto the shining Perspex surface. Often characterised by a visceral vibrancy, Walker’s works question to what extent the use of the screen and interactive spaces influence the way we engage within society in sharing our personal experiences.

Alexander Isaenko

http://www.isaenko.net

“In the virtual corridors of houses and flats, beside kips and crumpled beds, empty seats and chairs created the fictitious space of users and their communications. Is every next show becoming the own reflection looking?”

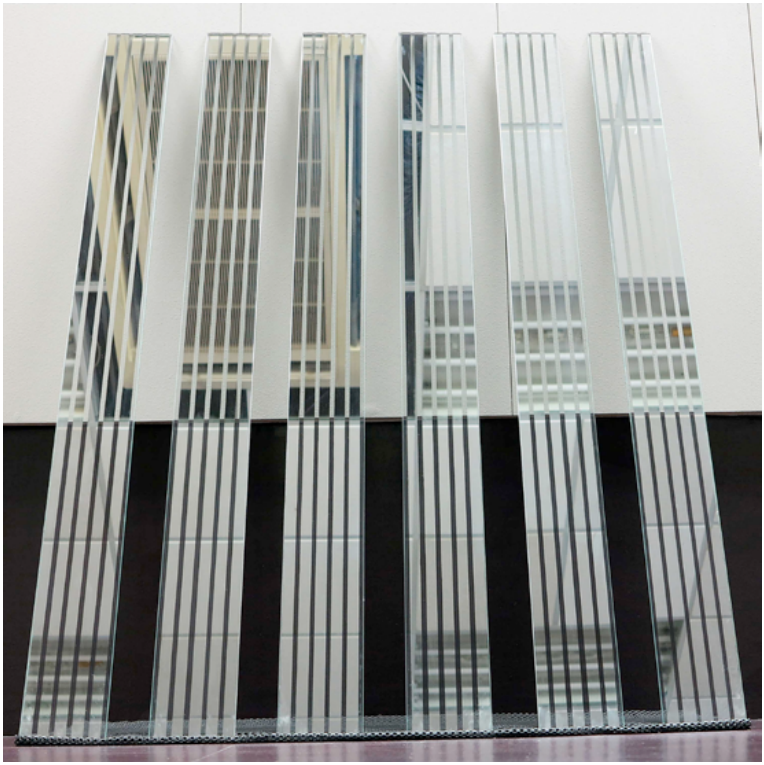


Void-X
Video
9:43 min (loop)
2014

Sam Treadaway

http://www.samtreadaway.com

“The use of security mirror has inherent connotations of voyeurism, secrecy and control. Heist-24 reflects upon issues of identity, security, concealment and power, both on and off-line, inviting the viewer to peel back the omnipresent black mirror and to step inside.”



Heist-24
101.5 x 86.5 x 0.5 cm
One-way security glass, black rubber
2015

Nara Walker

http://www.naraisart.com

“As an artist I am creating a new space. The space I aim to create with this body of work is a space which is personal to each viewer. Not only reflecting the voyeurs own image in the perspex but also society as onlookers.”

The Meeting of Two Legs, Part 2
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
40 x 30 cm
2013/2015

Push up and Open
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

1

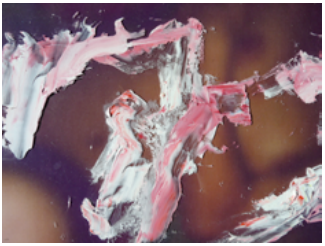
2

3

4

5

6



7

8

1. Light Through the Window
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

2. Pink to Wet. Wet to Pink
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

3. In View. For You
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

4. Lure and Allure
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

5. Mound
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

6. Purple Curtains
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

7. With Each Breast
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

8. Tinted Pink to Black
Oil paint, perspex and photographic print
30 x 40 cm
2013/2015

In Conversation

Nara Walker and Alice Montanini

Nara Walker is an Australian born contemporary artist currently living in the UK. She explores the physicality of the body within art. Her work is experimental with materials including oil paint, photography, video performance, acrylic perspex, canvas and wood supports.

Following a conversation with Nara Walker at her home, I found out more about her way of working and the process of making her art.

Montanini: *Your practice mainly focuses on the representation of the body's gestures and movements. Usually naked, your abstract figures express their sensuality through explosive and chaotic strokes. There is a strong sensual energy in your works. Do you relate intimacy and erotism with the inhibited nature of convulsive movements?*

Walker: The movements I try to capture in my work relate the intimacy between myself as the artist and my artist's mark. Creating materiality through the use of fleshy oil paint. The way that the paint is built up is intimate and responds to eroticism for me. So my work is looking at the eroticism and intimacy through an artist's perspective, but then relating that to the body, since my process focusses on creating with the body, then putting that forward to the viewer to see in an erotic way with the use of images of the nude and erotic gestures.

Montanini: *So it can be said that eroticism for you is more about the actual act itself - well expressed through your aggressive strokes - rather than the slow moment of seduction.*

Walker: Yes, definitely. For me it is about the process. In the Voyeur series and most of my work seduction has already been made through the process between myself and the work. I am pushing my intimacy in front of the viewer. When I paint I don't hold things back, I get lost in the act of making, therefore capturing the process as intimacy.

Montanini: *Your pieces are characterised by a visceral and rich vibrancy. Your creative gesture is embodied into the texture of the colourful strokes. Which tools do you usually paint with?*

Walker: Mostly I paint with pallet knives. I also paint with my hands a lot, because I feel that I can push the mark further and that it is a gesture left by my own body, which is representing the absent body. It is like a finger print. I use paint brushes as well. With the *Voyeur* series I mostly used pallet knives and my fingers.

Montanini: *Do you feel that painting with your hands is a more natural and immediate way to express yourself?*

Walker: Yes, definitely. When I am painting I usually start off making some marks with my hands and then I build on top of that with a pallet knife or a paint brush. I also use plastic and other material to create marks and gestures.

Montanini: *Do you start and finish paintings in one go, or do you develop a painting paint in sessions?*

Walker: It depends. With the *Voyeur* series the paint is all added in one day, because it is the immediate wet on wet that I want, which is responding to the mark made before without being premeditated. I haven't thought about it, it just happens. It is a reaction in a moment in time, captured. Instead of being something that I begin, then think about over time and come back to finish. The process of the *Voyeur* series however takes longer than a day as there are three layers of different mediums to take into consideration. Other works can take a short or long time, depending on size, medium and subject matter.

Montanini: *Do you get inspiration from other artists?*

Walker: I think in my work I am predominantly inspired by what surround me, for instance colours and specific moments that impact me. In a way, my work is an emergence of my subconscious, pushed onto a support through the medium of painting. So when I am choosing colours, for instance, I don't think that I am going to paint with red or with blue. I just choose it. It is this immediate flow that happens, a subconscious choice of painting and creating.

Montanini: *In Voyeur series red and pink are the most recurrent colours. Why this choice? Do you associate these colours with sensuality?*

Walker: Yes, I do associate them with sensuality and also flesh. I put red and white together because I was drawn to that. I mixed them together creating a flesh like combination, holding connotations of intimate and sensual parts of the body along with flesh tones from inside a person.The white can also be related to secretions and ejaculation. Through this interaction of colours the paint gives more depth to the work.

Montanini: *The presence of the viewer as voyeur is a constant in your work. This allows for different levels of self-reflection and identification within each piece. Even when you are exposing your naked body to the viewer, you are the one looking at us and exploring our intimacy.*

Walker: Yes, I agree. That's exactly what I am trying to do with my work. I am fascinated with creating works with a voyeuristic appeal. Every art piece is voyeuristic in a way, but by making them explicit and erotic, I try to capture the viewers voyeurism and make them more aware. When I create, I believe that I can only create from my point of view and I can only use my self as the subject. So having people looking at what I am creating, I want them to be the voyeur, seeing what I am doing, but at the same time I am watching their reactions and putting them on the spot for being a voyeur.

Montanini: *Let's focus again on the works exhibited at PROTECHT. Here, the abstraction of the body is created by blurring the image and painting onto its surface. You invite the viewer to look into your personal space, which, by challenging their imagination, becomes their own.*

Walker: In my work I conceal and reveal. By blurring the image of my self, I conceal and censor my self in a way. So I am inviting the viewer into a personal setting, but only giving them as much as I want and blurring the rest. I want them to finish the work with their own imagination. This allows the action of the voyeur to become the final medium to complete the work. The build-up of having a photographic print, perspex - which they have their reflection in - and then the paint - which is like flesh - creates a ground for imagination resulting in the viewer creating their own image of what is there. The photographs have been taken to illustrate that at times, I am aware of being watched, while at other times, I am lost in a personal moment. Therefore some are very intimate, it looks like I have had a photo taken by a neighbour or an online feed. It's again that voyeuristic appeal of stepping into someone's personal space and the blurring of the image makes the viewer aware of themselves as the voyeur - as someone not knowing if they are truly allowed to watch or not.

Montanini: *The co-presence of many layers within these pieces is very interesting. Your performance to the camera, the portrait, your intervention with self-censorship, the camera and the viewer. This gives the work time and space for narration, depth and complexity as well as a 3D quality.*

Walker: I like to have this 3D quality because I think it adds layers to a 2D image. My works at times are described as sculpture paintings. This allows me to portray more through the medium and create a new space through the work. It is kind of like making an art piece which has a presence similar to a body. Through this

the work holds its own within a room- creating its own space. We humans are all made up of different layers and I am trying to push that forward within my work by making more of a rounded image. With my oil paint, photographs and perspex I want your eyes to focus on different sections and interact with the work, making a full circle of watching and then interpreting and then coming back to the work again. That creates interaction as well as intimacy between the artwork and the viewer. Through the materiality of my work, I am trying to bring the viewer back to the sense of the body and its sensuality. I am sharing my own personal intimacy with someone else because I think we are missing that in todays society. What I am trying to say with these pieces is that we are all humans and we all interact with each other using intimacy. My aim is to reconnect this intimacy through art. By showing my pieces in a contemporary art venue, I am inviting the viewer to create their own intimate space within a gallery.

TRANSITION

The constant mediation of the screen in the way we interact can drive us to an ever-flattering state of our experiences where depth, materiality and sensuousness get lost. Particularly since it has become portable, our focus is no longer on what surrounds us; instead, we are mostly concentrated on our screen, generating an insulating one-to-one relationship with its flat surface. However, even flat, the screen has its own materiality. Through this medium of framing, the image materialises and is almost felt. Organising and arranging the image, the screen improves not only the images effectivity, but also its affectivity. Despite distance, the screen allows us to communicate with each other, viewing information as well as feeling emotions. Therefore, the surface of the screen can be said to be spheric. Our interaction with the screen generates an actual space where images are felt and experienced in a peculiar way. Our reception and understanding of the image, and the way we consequently interpret the world, has been strongly influenced by our use of the screen. The boundaries between two and three dimensional are become thinner and more blurred. The following artists are questioning in very different ways how we perceive and are affected by the transition of an object between these two dimensions and what this means to us in how we interact within a space.

Mirror. Screen. Dream is a video installation presenting several screen panels hanging from the ceiling and dominating the space. Within the immersive darkness of the gallery room, we find ourselves surrounded by flat moving images which dwell in the space. The video projection has been fragmented into different pieces swirling around the room, as when light breaks up into colours through a prism. The crescendo of sound in the background as well as the twisting of the images convey a dreamlike or hallucinogenic dimension, where memory is confused with reality. A sequence of faces close-ups in slow motion. Sights belonging to another time and dimension follow one another. Terror. Fright. Wonder. Vision of moments suspended in space and time. Through the use of the materiality of the screen, Sophie Bullock investigates the affecting nature of the cinematic experience and its permeability into our physical space.

A black and white screen curled upon its face stands in the gallery space. Drawn images from another world inlay its surface. Looking at this sculpture we gaze at a nocturnal martian landscape. As well as a visual reportage of the exploration of another world, *Rovers Tracks in Northward View Along West Rim of Endeavour* is a sculpture exploring the transition between the two-dimensional and three-dimensional of the image. The materiality of the steel sheet as well as the fact that it has been bent, alter the nature of the image, causing an obstruction to its reading. With his work, Jack Davis investigates the influence of the image on our believing and thinking of the world.

Jamie Jenkinson investigates through his work the viewers reception of digital representation. Challenging our understanding of digital images, he portrays ordinary events and settings through his camera phone, questioning to what extent the medium

of digital camera changes our experience of an image. Very experimental, disturbing at times, short records give resonance to our everyday through digital abstraction. *White.jpeg* is a new installation presenting an image through three different media, the video, video-still and prints.

The stereoscope is an 1800s device combining two copies of the same image to give the sensation of 3D depth. *Stereovision Tanks Disguised as Aquariums* is a series of eight stereoscopes presenting black and white images of computer screen savers. The artist took the photographs with a long-exposure and then manipulated the film in the dark room to convey in them an antique appearance. Both the screen saver and photographic exposure deal with delay and the passage of time. Christine Lucy Latimer invites the viewer to pause within their surroundings and take an in-depth look inside her timeless portraits

Sophie Bullock

http://www.sophiebullock.net

"I make large-scale video installations that exploit cinemas' capacity to transport the viewer to other levels of consciousness, and to heighten tensions and anxieties that arise from both real and imagined spaces. For me, cinema is a way of bridging the gap between being simultaneously in reality and dream, both conscious and unconscious, and both inside and outside oneself."

Mirror.Screen.Dream
Video installation
244 x 182 x 244 cm
2012

Jack Davis

http://www.jdfa.co.uk

“As images continue to shape our understanding of the world and our place within it, my work questions the validity of the image, specifically investigating the illusion of space and sense of place that a two-dimensional image can create, confronting this notion my response was to create a two-dimensional image on a three-dimensional form.“

Rover Tracks in Northward View Along West Rim of Endeavour
Graphite, charcoal, permanent marker and paint on steel
100 x 100 x 66 cm
2015

Jamie Jenkinson

http://www.jamiejohnjamesjenkinson.com

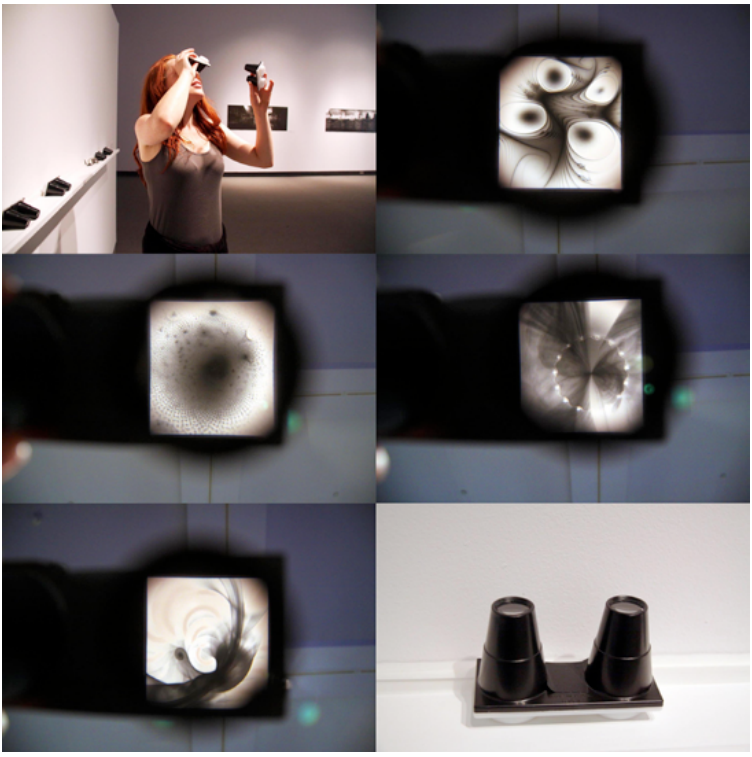
“I work with an iPhone camera to produce videos of digital phenomena, where the digitally re-presented image differs to optical perception causing a phenomenological effect due to cinematic cognition. This then questions the viewers reception of video images, and their understanding of the image itself.“

White.jpeg
iPhone 6 video, jpeg image, inkjet print on paper
2014

Christine Lucy Latimer

http://christinelucylatimer.tumblr.com

“For this installation, I used a 1950’s stereoscopic 35mm camera to shoot long exposures of contemporary computer screen savers on B & W film. Both the screen saver and the long photographic exposure represent tools left momentarily un-touched that generate and/or reflect a change.”



Stereovision Tanks Disguised as Aquariums
Series of eight available-light realist slide viewers,duotone sabattier/caffeinol hand-processed B&W stereoscopic slides
2014

In Conversation

Jamie Jenkinson and Antonio Terzini

Antonio Terzini: *Some of your videos seem to be created spontaneously. What is your inspiration behind them?*

Jamie Jenkinson: I like that spontaneity helps avoid contrivance, using location as a preconceived reference. Also videos accessibility accommodates spontaneity, which is in a way specific to digital imaging. With that in mind, I'd also like to make aware that these questions have been sent to me, so I have had time to construct my answers.

Terzini: *Your videos seem to have no particular narrative. They are not conceived to engage viewers, but rather to have an "effect" on them. Am I correct on this?*

Jenkinson: I see the reverse, where mainstream impurities such as narrative, music, and spectacle are used to engage the viewer with the image. Removing these – to some extent – the viewer's relationship to the image is at a purer level of engagement.

Terzini: *The way that some of your videos (such as "Bend Gate" or "Stair Case") are created seems to reject the viewers rather than establish a closeness to them. Seems to me that these videos are conceived to make people look away from them. Is it just my feeling?*

Jenkinson: *Flicker* works by artists such as Rose Lowder, Nicky Hamlyn and Simon Payne have been a big influence, where the medium, structure and subject are simultaneously looked at in the image over time, but this can become quite visually aggressive . If anything it is about looking more, than looking less.

Terzini: *If you had to release a "guide" to watch and understand your videos, what would be your main advices?*

Jenkinson: Stop watching TV, and don't take them too seriously.

Terzini: *The majority of your videos are created using iPhone cameras. How important is this "tool" for your practice?*

Jenkinson: I always state that the works are made on an *iPhone* 'the worlds most popular camera' so that the viewer has a relationship with the images production, both physically and technologically. Though these videos are in no way an affiliation with, or in praise of *Apple*.

Terzini: *What kind of exhibition do you usually visit? Is there any artist in particular who has inspired your production?*

Jenkinson: Anything I can really, at the moment I am loving all the Argentine art here in Buenos Aires. But the only thing I really get excited about are artist film and video screenings, of artists and curators working consciously with the medium. They tend to be quite 'underground', almost like the jazz scene of the art world.
Programmes by collective-iz are currently unrivalled in my (slightly bias) opinion, but there are several groups out there putting together amazing work.

Terzini: *Which part of yourself you are revealing in your works?*

Jenkinson: I sometimes think my work says a lot about 'me', but I don't see it as relevant or beneficial to the work. For an avid viewer my videos are a sort of abstract video diary.

Terzini: *In PROTECHT you are exhibiting a new installation that consists of a video, a video-still image and a printed image. How did you come up with this idea?*

Jenkinson: It was something I'd toyed with, but never constructed. As I am currently working in South America, I may never see the work beyond a digital record, which I actually quite like - the reverse of my current practice.

Terzini: *Which traits of innovation the new work in PROTECHT will bring to your future production?*

Jenkinson: Maybe I'll start making work that I never see other than via a video. Which is an Idea I have been working on using crates.

MEMORY

In the last few decades, technology has radically changed the way we collect and store our memories. The hierarchy of our experience is now shaped by its social exposure. The urgency of sharing to escape form the anonymity of the private and personal. With no longer need to remember anything but our password, we rely and depend on our computers, trusting their accuracy and security in saving as well as in providing information and data. The compulsive creation of digital images generates the paradox of having more pictures saved on our electronic devices than remembered experiences in our mind. Behind the smooth, flat surface of the screen our memories are kept safe and untouched, protected from dust and decay. A personal Hyperuranion of perfect, authentic memories beyond the surface. The constant, rapid improvement of technology has trapped thousands of memories in discarded media storage devices, such as floppy disks and VHS tapes. Lacking the mediation of the screen, pieces of our personal story can get lost and forgotten. Abided by its essence, memory is fragmented, vague and fragile again.

Time and memory are interwoven. We can't have a sense of time without memory for memory is our personal trace of time. Evidence of the passage of time mark Pamela Breda's video stills. *Time Interventions* presents piles of old photographs, as blurry as our childhood's memories. The stills have been extracted from a

home made video recording and printed onto photographic paper. A collection of souvenirs from the past covered in dust deposits and cracks lining their surface. Fragments of somebody's story, telling us their own story. The marks upon the surface of the paper give depth to the images, opening our gaze. A sense of unique fragility is conveyed by the imperfections as well as the vintage quality of these family holiday portraits. The viewer is invited to hold the picture and engage with its presence. The textual feel of the actual physical image allows a sense of connection with the object which is in stark contrast to the cold experience of digital imagery we are becoming accustomed to.

Daniela Breda's work investigates both the role of memory and that of our beloved ones in the shaping of our identity. The old fashioned practice of taking family portraits used to be a special moment whereby members of the same family gathered to express and immortalise their identity. New technology has almost caused the disappearance of this custom. In *Family Portrait* we see a group of people standing in a field being wrapped up using the opaque surface of cellophane. Their singular identity is concealed by the levelling-out sheet connecting them into a new organism. By involving time, this process recalls the 1900s portraits taken into studio setting and diverges from the immediacy of taking pictures with digital cameras or phones. Both following and altering people's features, the artist scribbles all over the cellophane surface, doodling as if she were tracing very specific memories of her family.

The Building is an installation consisting of discarded iron casts, acrylic glass and an *iPad* with dots of light flowing on its smooth surface. Being fascinated and inspired by the vision of disused buildings, Katrin Hanusch investigates within this work

the marks left by time and memory on the objects' surface. *The Building* is a derelict place, where crumbling walls allow the outside light to crawl through the cracks. Time seems suspended in this space, abandoned with its own memories. Working mainly with found materials, her installations create new settings carrying old, fragmented stories.

Pamela Breda

http://cargocollective.com/Pamela-Breda

“These images are video stills printed on photographic paper, so as to highlight their aesthetic features that in turn stress the amount of time passed from the original fixation of the image on the film to the present, when the image itself becomes the background for the accumulation of temporal interventions.”

Time Interventions Series
C-print from video stills
6 x 7 cm (each)
2014

Daniela Brenna

http://danielaandreabrenna.tumblr.com

“In this performance the laying of cellophane creates an unusual relationship as well as a new type of folk memory, whilst the scribble on the cellophane hints at multiple identities.”

Family Portrait
Video
5.42 min
2009/2010

Katrin Hanusch

http://www.katrin-hanusch.de

“The sensual qualities of matter are sources of joy and pain that seduce the body memory. The at once generated sense of familiarity and displacement alongside the still chaos and unsettling overlay in the works are offered as a metaphor for everyday life.”

The Building
Iron cast, tablet, video loop, zinc sheets
120 x 185 x 20 cm
2014

The Building
Iron cast, tablet, video loop, zinc sheets
120 x 185 x 20 cm
2014

In Conversation

Katrin Hanusch and Alice Montanini

Katrin Hanusch was born in Kulmbach, WestGermany in 1978. From 2001 onwards she spent most her time in the former GDR. Currently she lives and works in London, UK. In her installations, Hanusch uses fragmented and discarded material, including worn out objects of our everyday life. It is as though she collects broken remnants of decay and reconfigures them to create shelter from destruction.

Alice Montanini: *Your work is related to and in conversation with the space you are living in. To what extent has moving to the UK influenced your artistic production?*

Katrin Hanusch: Since I moved to the UK I work within a distance to my roots in a literal sense but also in a more metaphorical way. It enables me to deal with my work and personal topics far more freely. I can reflect on German Romanticism for example without fearing that my work gets narrowed down to a certain tradition. Or I can make the reflection of a personal experience the main subject of discussion in my work, without feeling I am overly exposing myself. An additional layer of translation comes into the work process through the English language I mainly use to communicate about my works. This circumstance creates enough space to unfold difficult subjects while the distance leaves enough space to move around the subject. Both helps me to question and understand influences.

I feel very much in the right place in London. The cultural differences create the backdrop of the contemporary everyday and London's

contrasts in architecture, culture, class etc. are inspiring. Being in a place where you silmultaneously experience highly contrasting concepts/realities is great. Unfortunately a broad spectrum like that does not exist in Germany. Beside that, London's pace suits my personal pace; I work simultaneously on several pieces and I make decision faster to get to the next step in the work process. That does not mean I stopped thinking but it's more focussed on the making. In Germany it can be quite the opposite although there are great makers. I generally experience a stronger makehappen and candо attitude in Britain that my work process became more playful again.

Montanini: *In works such as Island of the Dead and White Desert there is strong, immersive contrasts between the dark surface of iron casts, concrete or steel fragments, and the white, almost clinical presence of waxed and polished plaster casts. What are you looking to convey by combining and presenting opposite and contrasting visions?*

Hanusch: Contrasts in general emphasise and they make you see two different things more clearly. Their interrelation starts a conversation about that what forms and structures the inbetween space. I use contrasts to refer to the complexity of an everyday surrounding and play with the sensitivity of our reception. Within that my works point towards something that exists outside of the image. I use contrast to stimulate a conversation about the potential of material, not only in art but in general. The use of contrasting materials, surfaces, and forms is a metaphor for a broad horizon of unpredictable everydayevents that overlay each other. Therein contrast gives things their place and value and a discarded object might acquire beauty it never had before; it switches and becomes something else.

Montanini: *I am fascinated by Monuments, a series of iron and bronze casts. These works seem to me to present emphatic connotation of suffering and humanlike characteristics. Looking at those sculptures I see demure survivors, glancing down whilst showing us their wounds. Can you tell us more about this project?*

Hanusch: I have had an interest in architecture since I was pretty young and wooden toy blocks used to please me for hours. Later I formed questions about the way buildings made me feel, how and why that is possible. Although I compare them stylistically in terms of their regional and historical matter before their cultural background, I am mainly interested in their visual language, their ideological and philosophical character and their use of material. Therein I trace the rather dark sides: concrete, glass, steel, bunkers, Baroque, Victorian architecture, Modernism, Brutalism and ruins of the recent past to name a few.
Ruins especially reveal how we value and devalue the legacies of former generation it tells of which histories we like to surround ourselves with, and which remnants of history we like to get rid off. Both course of actions are linked to beliefs and conceptions of contemporary society.
I grew up in West Germany. In my early twenties I moved to the eastern provinces where I studied and lived for more than 10 years. At that time the contrast between East and West was far more obvious than it has been in recent years. East and West were architecturally divided, but also a division existed between people's belief systems, their selfconceptions and the ways they lives their everyday lives. Being surrounded by remnants of GDR's everyday history, I was surprised by how both the East and the West dealt with the past differently— from being stuck in the last images of GDR history on the one hand, to treating the past like an unwanted child on the other, with ignorance and disinterest.

Rarely did I perceive a joint effort toward realising a vision for the future that was mutual and free of prejudice.
Some people are remnants themselves of a past time that has faded away. *The Monuments* series is about the handwriting of such moments: a wornout political and ideological system with its declined powerpostures, its disintegrating socialist architecture and its broken dreams of tomorrow. A defeated working class mentality, numb and unknown to itself, operates within society to stamp out histories and delete historical remnants from the public sphere. Though the objects vanish, the history is inscribed in people. What I perceive is the shadow of an undeclared past. Another influence of *Monuments* is a link to Yugoslavia. In the 80s my family used to go on holidays to Yugoslavia for several years. I saw socialist monuments on the way to our destination. Now these ideas of socialist power demonstrations and of a strong male stylistic idiom are literally crumbling. Despite their vigor they are endangered by fragility.

Montanini: *Your work exhibited at PROTECHT, The Building, presents raw porous piles of iron casts, enclosing and almost shielding a smooth tablet. Despite the thickness and heaviness of the casts, the way they are overlapping suggests the possibility of penetration and seeing through them. What has inspired this work?*

Hanusch: It is similar to what I just said before — it is about broken ideas, abandoned remnants of a specific moment in time. *The Building* refers to a process beyond its peak, frozen in time, background to flickering movements of light. The work makes reference to concrete prefab buildings similar to Heygate Estate in Elephant which were recently demolished as “unwanted historical material.” I‘ve been to many abandoned industrial buildings and

private houses mainly in East Germany and experienced moments of light falling through holes in the ceiling. There is a beauty to these simple moments. The overlay of decay and vibrant nature create a switching moment which perhaps sets free a movement between the opposed energies.

Montanini: *You believe that each type of material embodies memory traces in a different, specific way. What exactly do you mean?*

Hanusch: We have specific tools for specific materials. Hence, not every tool can be used for every material. It is the tool-material-relation that needs to be appropriate in terms of their efficiency. However, sometimes it is obvious how marks occur while other times we can't read traces or find none. A projection won't leave a mark on the wall whereas spilling a cup of coffee does. We remember some things — voluntary or involuntary — and forget others. I don't have answers; rather I have questions about the shift, for example, that happens at present from the physical markmaking process towards a digital one. Our senses are becoming less and less physically stimulated directly, instead the focus goes towards an inwardly experience. I believe an increasing lack of experienced physicality and increased physical restriction affects our self-awareness and experience of the world and how we memorise. I am probably pretty old school that I don't involve more new medias in my work. It simply doesn't happen a lot because I experience more satisfaction from physical work than from digital. I know what I did at the end of the day. I expected answering your question would be fairly simple but I actually struggle to explain. It has to do with intelligent hands, with imprint, with material that tells a story and contains time — and with being able to read traces or to deal with miscommunication

and broken links. Due to material specification there are limitations in a material's ability to "memorise". A rock won't capture sound but you will be able to read past weather conditions from wood grain. I am still not satisfied with that answer. *(laughing)*

Montanini: *Absence and Loss, Memory and suspended Fragility are recurrent themes touched by your still, spatial portrayals of the flow of time. It seems like you are trying to preserve or hold something back with your work.*

Hanusch: I think you are right. My works deal very much with these topics. I can't forget some things and don't want to forget others. In my works I give present space to things, structures and ideas that were ruptured, broken, discarded and left behind in a rapid transition from past to present to future. This was strongly informed by my dealing with the sudden death of my brother — an experience with a massive imprint. I believe that grieving and keeping memories are a very basic human need that helps us understand who we are, where we come from and where we want to go; it's core to the process of identification.

Montanini: *You describe Death as "the shadow without an object". Has the silent echo left by death become important space and influence within your work?*

Hanusch: Yes, absolutely. My brother's death in 1998 happened without advanced warning and is something I will process my whole life. It is the core and/or starting point to many of my works. But I aim to develop my work beyond my personal experience, to strip it down to its existential experience, accessible as the viewer's.

COMMUNICATION

Technology and social media have unarguably had a huge impact on language and communication. They have enabled us to interact and communicate in real time on a global scale simultaneously. This need for connection leads to ever-increasing, quicker and more efficient forms of communication. Therefore our language is changing accordingly. Once viewed as a private and thoughtful form of expression, writing has now become evermore public. Through restriction on length and vocabulary, social media encourages shorter and more concise sentences as well as the use of abbreviation. The immediacy of our typed communication is shortening the gap between written and spoken language. The new codes imposed by social media are becoming part of our everyday vocabulary shaping and transforming our language into a more intuitive, visual and symbolic form of expression.

Emily Lazerwitz artistic practice focuses on the creation of decorative motifs using the means of alphabetical symbols and binary code. By converging together craft, technology and language, she realises works of art linking our present day, both to the past and to a possible future. Drawing inspiration from antique and traditional hand-made craft forms such as weaving and quilting, which involves dedication, precision and, consequently, time, she uses her laptop to design ink prints of a similar nature. The slow and meticulous process of hand-typed weaving

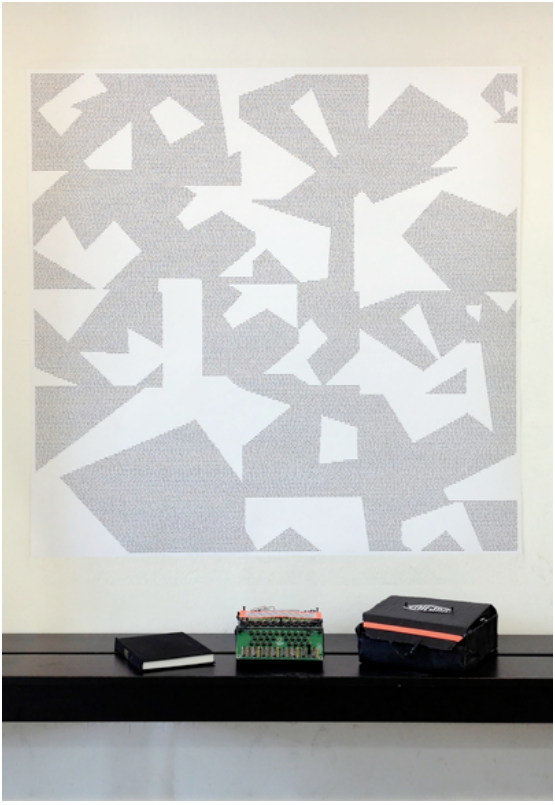
creates what the artist herself describes as “hand-made digital pieces: an oxymoron”. *Enigma* presents patterns of symbols embodying meanings that viewers are unable to decode, unless using a machine. As patient as Penelope, Lazerwitz embraces the language of new media to reveal its downside and negative outcomes through the engaging aesthetic of her designs.

Stepping into the little room hosting *String;Equals;Two* causes the viewer to feel like they have accessed another temporal dimension. Two parallel screens, each showing a person within - face the viewer. These two impassive figures partake in a robotic conversation surrounded by a white, cold background, void and empty. White setting, white clothing, blank stare. At first this conversation seems to be a meaningless string of random words, without context until we begin to realise that they are using a form of programming code as language. A proper language with its own validating dictionary. Codes which are usually used to shape and mould digital text, are here expressed aloud in flat monotone. Investigating how technology and new media codes are shaping our language, Inês Marques presents a futuristic scenario whereby our present language has been replaced with codes and abbreviations. Considering writing as the selective process of the evolution of a language, the artist shows a possible future outcome of the ever-increasing introduction of social media vocabulary into our written text.

Emily Lazerwitz

http://www.emilylazerwitz.com

“The language in the works becomes meaningless through the very translation that makes it so easily shared. To the human eye, it is simply an aesthetic object and a feat of patience, but when plugged into the computer it becomes a story: the very story that is hidden in plain sight.”



Enigma
Inkjet print on paper, enigma-e, book
2015

Inês Marques

http://www.inesfmarques.com

“When learning code is as natural as learning a second language, and typing is more common that writing, how is the way we communicate affected? Have we lost the sense of really knowing something?”

String; Equals; Two
Two videos, acetate paper, acrylic structure
2min (loop)
2015

In Conversation

Inês Marques and Inês Costa

Inês is a Portuguese multidisciplinary artist, and a friend, based in London. In 2012 she graduated in Multimedia Arts – Installation and Performance from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon. She is currently part of the MA Material Futures at Central Saint Martins. The main focus of her work is the exploration of patterns of human communication and social behavior from a critical design point of view.

As I have followed her practice for several years, I was curious to know more about the new path her work is taking.

Inês Costa: *How do you think your multidisciplinary approach to art has influenced your work practice, leading up to this recent interest in materials and technology?*

Inês Marques: It definitely helped to shape the artwork that I do now as I improved different skills throughout my practice. I started in a more physical field whilst studying jewellery for two years, progressing to installation art, where I used different media to represent my ideas. During this process I always thought about how important the choice of material and props is, in order to define a space and create an environment that relates the audience to the concept.

Costa: *In your recent work "String; Equals; Two" you talk about new learning methods, such as video teaching, replacing the traditional techniques. In which ways do you think technology is shaping teaching processes?*

Marques: Technology is changing the way we are educating young generations and the way we communicate information and knowledge about different fields. The teacher is becoming more like a mentor figure and the students are having a much more self-directed way of studying. If we look particularly at Finland, where next year exams are going to be taken digitally, we can see that they are already changing their ways of teaching in order to create a bridge that allows students to be ready for these computerised ways of assessment. They are using, as in some places in the UK, *iPads* in class to narrow the gap between the traditional methods of learning and the future computer based techniques.

Costa: *And how do you think these new technologies are shaping languages?*

Marques: Language is being shaped in different ways through these new media, and I think this is an era where the changes are happening in a quicker way. The information is starting to be taught through surfaces, changing the way we read and write. *E-books* are replacing printed physical books and tapping on surfaces is overriding the practice of writing. In my work I am trying to understand how this is going to influence our speech and our words. If language is being transformed in image, how are we going to be able to deal with that?

Costa: *You said the dictionary you created is an object that "exists throughout time". Can you clarify what speculative design is, and how do we interpret it?*

Marques: I find it hard to categorise this work in such a specific field, though I think it is applicable as speculative design is a process of creating works based on speculations of the future. Beginning with a social and critical analysis, it tries to narrow the preconceptions about the role of design, making us question how, for example, we can design something still relevant in 50 years. It is based on research from trends: political, social and economical changes, bringing awareness for actually what can happen in the future, whether it be dystopian or utopian.

Costa: *Do you think the fact that you are bilingual, being born in Portugal, plays some role in your interest in language and dialogue?*

Marques: I think it helps my interest in the heritage of languages, and what keeps these languages alive. With this project, what I realised, and found quite interesting, is that languages don't continue to be spoken unless they continue to be written. The meaning of words and their translations has always been one of my main points of interest. Looking at the cases of *skype translator* or *google translate*, I get a sense of how their databases are constructed, and that the standard dictionary is not enough any more. Their translations rely more on the digital slang running through the different social media platforms. The question here is: how do we preserve the meaning of a word though different ways of saying it?

Costa: *From, for example, "Feedback-Loop" to this more recent work, there is an obvious change in the visual language; your work moves from a more Fine Arts base to something more design related. Do you think your change of study paths was the main reason for this?*

Marques: Studying Fine Arts my work's main focus was mainly conceptual. Changing from Fine Arts to Design helped guide my focus to create an outcome that replies somehow to a problem. I try to respond to social problems that affect our society, either locally or globally, approaching them from a critical angle.

Costa: *Are there any particular artists and/or authors that have inspired your work?*

Marques: I have quite a big list of references, as most of my work is research based. They come from different media and they have a lot of impact in the way that I approach my work. Firstly, Adam Curtis, a documentary filmmaker who explores the role played by power in society. He investigates political history and sociology, and how technology and humans are related. Lev Manovich is another of my main sources, as he explores new media theories related to software and computer science. Antony Dunne and Fiona Raby and their book Speculative Everything are a good reference book for critical and speculative design. Finally, Ludwig Wittgenstein who works with the philosophy of language and the power of words and image.

Costa: *As part of PROTECHT you will be involved in a conversation with Emily Lazerwitz, as you share the same passion for language and translations. Do you see this discussion having a positive impact in the development of your work?*

Marques: I am always interested in learning of different approaches to this subject, and Emily's piece of generative art is also something that fascinates me. I think we positively enhance each others work. For example, I am recording a dialogue, the transmission of a message from a point A to a point B. The meaning is only clarified with the use of a receptor, an enigma machine, like the one used by Emily. So, her work serves to extend the meaning produced in mine, and vice versa.

DEPRIVATION

There is no question that screens play a big part in our everyday life. We have become used to being surrounded by screens and technology everywhere, from the intimate space of our home to public spaces within the city. Additionally, every step we take is always accompanied by our personal phone screen. Always at our fingertips or in our hands, we carry it everywhere, with the constant worry of losing our connection with our virtual reality. Although this reliance upon screens is quite recent, it is very hard to imagine or remember a time before technologies dominated every aspect of our lives. At least from the perspective of western society. There are places where the access to modern technology is limited or in some cases its deprivation is imposed by the dominant political party, dictating a restrictive censorship.

60+1 Portraits is a series by french artist Matthieu Delourme relating to the internet censorship situation currently present in China. Hung high above the viewer, these pieces remind us of propagandist portraits of Mao Zedong and other communist leaders. Depicting young people trying to find their place within society, this work investigates the role of social media in shaping young people's identity. The overlapping of many pictures to communicates the determination of the young Chinese generations in their constant pushing of the boundaries which are imposed by the political system. Here, a *selfie* becomes a symbol

of protest as well as self-assertiveness.

Screen Deprivation is a month long project consisting of the complete abstinence from every type of screen, from the mobile phone to traffic lights. Attempting to understand the extent of his own addiction to technology and particularly to the screen, Jack Williams investigates our relationship with technology as well as our everyday dealing with solitude. Telling of his own experiences of technological isolation, Williams invites us to question how often we put the phone down in order to remain alone with our own thoughts.

Matthieu Delourme

http://www.matthieudelourme.net

“Above us, they are looking as us, arrogant, they snob and challenge us. Unlike old communist portrait framed with gold, silently, this young generation starts to emerge. Glued to their screens and selfing themselves, this new gesture could seem self-centred, but this young generation knows that the future is for them. ”

60+1 Portraits
5 prints on photographic paper
60 x 40 cm
2012

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5 prints on photographic paper
60 x 40 cm
2012

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5 prints on photographic paper
60 x 40 cm
2012

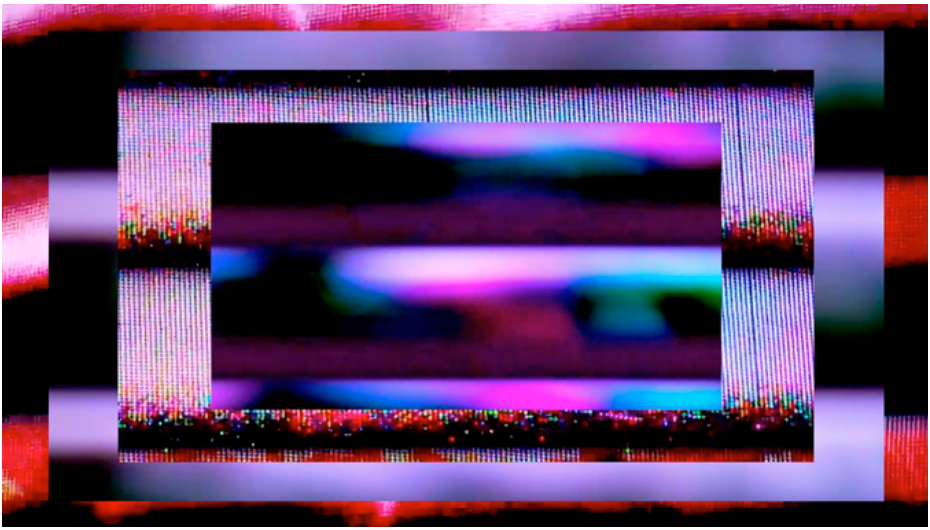
60+1 Portraits
5 prints on photographic paper
60 x 40 cm
2012

60+1 Portraits
5 prints on photographic paper
60 x 40 cm
2012

Jack Williams

http://jackwilliamsvideoart.com

“The project concerned the residual presence of audio-visual material in the psyche and how this was provoked through absence; the screen as a site of simulating human activity, and it’s role in assuaging loneliness; and being seduced by screens because of a life-long regime of being programmed to pay attention to moving images.”



Screen Deprivation
Video
18:40 min
2014

In Conversation

Jack Williams and Fabiola Flamini

Fabiola Flamini: *First of all, how terribly brave were you to realise Screen Deprivation! I watched your video 3 times and I really felt what you were saying in the video. Your emotions were so real in my mind. Many times i thought about it, about detox myself from these technological devices. But I can't. My excuse is that I am far from my home and my friends in Italy and the pc is the only way to actually see them, but deep inside me I know that it would be really scary to switch off everything and be alone with myself.*
What was the reason why you choose to do this project?

Jack Williams: I felt that screens and in particular television programmes were the prime agent of my ever-present inertia and lethargy. I spent many hours before the project slumped on my bed watching programmes or scrolling through Facebook in a sub - sentient stupor. I wanted to test the parameters of my will, but also examine whether my life would improve. I was expecting a mix of life affirmation and disconnection - and this certainly happened - but there were certain triggers and events, which meant that the life affirmation dissipated half way through the month. My habits didn't change after completion. It's an all or nothing situation when it comes to me and screens.

Flamini: *I found interesting the idea of experiencing the cinema being blinded and just listening to the words. Can you speak about your sensation while you were doing it?*

Williams: Sound and the moving image is one of my favourite

areas of study, and I am a devotee to the writings of Michel Chion, so his theories were thoroughly embedded when I went to the cinema blindfolded. The Hollywood film had a lot of protracted action sequences and bombastic sound design, and the sound was panning between speakers, which made me take note of its artifice. The foreign language film was more authentic with it's sound design, so I began to visualise what was going on, but the disconnect came with the dialogue, not being able to see the subtitles or garner any kind of proper meaning. These experiences led to what I call a 'loss of viscerality.' It is a very human desire to see a voice belonging to a body. I think that as a purely auditory sensation music is by far the most visceral form of expression. But imagine watching a music video that you have never seen before for a song that you have never heard and it is muted. There would be a massive disconnect. That is because anything audio-visual requires both sound and vision working together in order for they're to be the possibility of a truly corporeal viscerality. Even silent films used title cards to evoke speech; it is always been a need.

Flamini: *In a section of the screening you speak about something very interesting: screen as part of the architecture. Piccadilly is a good example of it. I remember coming many times for holiday in London and I also remember that I used to recognise the square not as Piccadilly Circus, but as 'Sanyo Square'. This because, I don't know if you can remember, one of the huge screens used to show the Sanyo logo all the time without changing and this become for me part of the architecture. When in 2011 it was replaced by the TDK logo, I felt that something was missing, and when I go there now I still have that sensation.*
Did you go to Piccadilly in porpoise or it was occasional? How difficult was in that occasion to avoid the screens around you?

Williams: Piccadilly Circus was a very purposeful choice. Parts of its iconography are the screens, and it is the nexus from which screens proliferate in various directions toward Oxford Street, Leicester Square etc. I approached it like a fluxus event score: 'Go to Piccadilly Circus and avoid screens'. Even with my eyes trained on the pavement they still entered my peripheral vision, and the darker it got, the more the entire location was colonised by colour.
Our eyes are particularly sensitive to light and movement, and these two things often direct our gaze. This is why building sized screens demand that our gaze meet with theirs. I call this affliction 'moving image programming'. It has as much to do with the presence of moving images throughout our lives as it does with the physiology of the eye itself. What made my resolve weaker was the fact that I had denied myself the sensoria of the cinema experience earlier in the project. Even though I regarded the screens of Piccadilly Circus as pervasive and contemptuous, without the blindfold I couldn't refuse their invitation.

Flamini: *Tell me more about the last days that you spent alone in your room? How was the sensation of being alone with yourself? Did you discover something more about you? And what did you get from the entire experience?*

Williams: This exercise was the result of the fact that in social space, and particularly London, one cannot avoid screens. With this in mind I created a controlled environment from which screens were banished. My room overlooked a busy road so I shut my curtains with safety pins, just in case I saw a screen while looking outside the window (being the height of my pedantry I was willing to consider traffic lights as screens.) I also didn't leave my room in case one of my housemates was holding a phone in the hallway,

but this was also to totally disconnect myself from humans.
This disconnection and the shut curtains reminded me of the state of depression, where you don't want to acknowledge the outside world or other people. In these states I usually binge on television shows in order to supplant my thoughts of solitude. Baudrillard argues that television imposes upon us the sensation of being in a closed off cell. In this instance I felt imprisoned, and screens would have given me access to something outside the cell of my own design.
I didn't learn anything from this total deprivation, it more augmented an earlier realisation: that I have used screens to assuage my loneliness because they can become endowed with human agency. Even though the humans on screen are actually absent it has often been enough to displace my loneliness, which is a worrying thing to know about yourself.

THE CURATORS

Matilde Biagi (Florence, 1990) is a London-based young curator, currently first year student at MA Curating the Contemporary at CASS Faculty of Art - Whitechapel Gallery. She works as Gallery Assistant at Transition Gallery and writes short reviews and articles for Garageland Magazine and CUCO - Cultura Commestibile. Her academic background is divided between Contemporary Art and foreign languages studies. She graduated at Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna in Contemporary Art History.

Inês Costa (Lisbon, 1991) is a photographer based in London. In 2012 she graduated with a BA in Multimedia Arts - Photography from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon. She has done some freelance photography work for names such as Fact Magazine PT, Ponto Alternativo, Big Issue Foundation and Tangram Theatre Company. Currently, she works as a Gallery Assistant at GX Gallery in London, alongside being part of the MA Curating the Contemporary at the London Metropolitan University and Whitechapel Gallery.

Fabiola Flamini (Rome, 1990) is an art historian. She graduated in History of Art in 2013 at La Sapienza Università degli Studi di Roma. She has a strong interest in Feminist art, kitsch objects and new technologies. She is currently attending the MA Curating the Contemporary at London Metropolitan University, in

partnership with the Whitechapel Gallery. From 2011 to 2012 she worked as gallery assistant in MLAC (Museo Laboratorio di Arte Contemporanea) in Rome. In 2013 she moved to London and she collaborated with the GX Gallery in Denmark Hill. She is currently working at the waterside contemporary gallery in Old Street.

Alice Montanini (Brescia, 1986) is a London-based young curator and creative writer. She is currently a first year masters student engaged in the Curating the Contemporary programme at The Cass. She works at The Invisible Line as Gallery assistant and curates Cromoflix newsletter. In 2012 she graduated with an MA in Philosophical Sciences at Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna. Her background in philosophy strongly influences her vision and approach to art.

Antonio Terzini (Naples, 1985) is a London-based independent curator and art historian. He graduated in Modern Literature and specialised in Art History. In 2012, he completed a Master in Conservation of Contemporary Art at Plart Museum in Naples and he is currently enrolled on the MA Curating the Contemporary at the Whitechapel Gallery and London Metropolitan University. From 2011 to 2013, he collaborated with the curatorial staff at the Plart Museum of Naples, and from 2013 to 2014 with art institutions in the UK, such as Spike Island and Bristol Museum. He is currently involved in several curatorial projects between Italy and the UK.

PROTECHT

Curated by Matilde Biagi, Inês Costa, Fabiola Flamini, Alice Montanini, Antonio Terzini.

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