

**Adam Berry**

**Guests: Bevis Martin and Charlie Youle**

**Hosts: Sharon Kivland and Jaspar Joseph-Lester**

**07.10.2009**

A charming couple. The two young presenters, collaborative artists, partners, gave an intimate picture of their struggles and successes, difficulties in the face of indifference and triumphs encountered during the early years of trying to maintain momentum, post graduation, as practicing artists within the alienation of a foreign culture and art market. The audience is transported to Nantes, France, and some of the early slides were just like holiday snaps. The light, the layout of the streets and town. The unseen made seen, the behind the scenes troubles. Sharing and insightful – it's not all roses. A young couple in beautiful summer. France. Exploring the culture, enjoying it, drinking it in. Inserting this into their art practice. Together, planning new work and installations.

The work is fresh, and refreshing to see. They manage to jettison the sense of portentousness that you sometimes get from installation. For Martin and Youle the work becomes a response to the everyday: their experiences and new surroundings. Through the artists' talk, we are guided with humour, some brilliantly realised ad-hoc photography capturing the moment, the atmosphere of place, and a real sense of some of the situations and relationships that they had formed, the no-nonsense, just get on with it attitude and the need to forge on in the face of indifference. Constantly rejected by established galleries in the area through over two years of applications, the artists are big and realistic enough, ultimately, to settle for an alternative venue. A shared room, the town's community centre. Squatters' rights and a 'swingers club' on a Wednesday evening. 'Anybody can apply for a show there, they never turn anybody down, you just have to wait your turn.' Determination – fantastic – a rich, refreshing attitude.

A slide change. An image of an exhibition, a large room, semi-darkness, dirty carpet, a torn armchair and matching 'pouffe'. An apology for the shot. 'We kept moving the chair out of the way, but they kept putting it back in the same place.' A large painting upon the wall behind: *Tears of Golden Spunk*. The no-nonsense attitude further illustrating the obviously low budget (it must be hard enough to start a new life in a different country) but they make up for this by putting in the hours.

Next show – another community centre. An arrangement of small objects upon the stage or dance floor. The building today is shared by a group of 'war gamers'. They want to know if they can use some of the objects in their next game. God. Permission is granted. The artists go with the flow and shoot some startling, and very amusing photographs. They, the 'war gamers' [grown men] have selected a plastic mock intestine and two small spheres painted to look like planets. More slides, and an explanation. The title is now *Two Small Planets Attacking a Human Organ*.

An insight into the difficulties of working this way. The strength of character, sense of humour, and ability not to take yourself too seriously that are required. The talk gave an insight into the couple's working methods and practice rather than a slide show of final works, and I thank them for sharing that with us.

Towards the end of the lecture the lights are raised, and it is question time from the audience to the artists. A slide is still showing faintly on the screen, or is it a cast shadow? There had been a thing like it shown earlier. A small white moulded or carved object? A thing of no real form, scratched into, a rough misshape or found object? A woman nearby raises her hand and the microphone is passed along the row of seats towards her: 'What was the white object, on the slide, near the end? It looked like a human embryo or it could have been a fish.

**Guest: Tim Etchells**

**Host: Penny McCarthy**

**14.10.2009**

Tim Etchells, known for his concerns with the mechanics of the live event and questioning or disrupting conventions associated with theatre performance was beautifully introduced by host, artist, and friend Penny McCarthy through a letter. The sense was of two friends – not sitting side by side on the stage, but communicating by letter to each other from different parts of the world.

Evoking emotionally moving elements, disabled, isolated situations and circumstances. Environments. A sense of a private, missing you dear *Tao*' Dear Penny ... Both a performance, and a lecture. A purposefully dull lecture: presentation used as a tool to empower the emotive content of its underlying subject matter; positive use of negative sensations and circumstances making the audience actually feel something. This was palpable.

The audience in dimmed light with very little in the way of visual stimulation (slide changes few and far between), analogies made to journeys made through long, dark train tunnels in quiet, low, slow voices. A claustrophobic situation. A 'trapping'. An attempt to bring closer what you do not particularly want to experience. In this, the enforced communication transmission of the unwanted – it became oppressive. The presentation needed to be experienced in its entirety, to act, by its design – function following its form. Dull, slow, and slow to start, the affect took time to build up – the answers came later. The effect of the oppressive atmosphere induced resentment in the audience, with coughing and shuffling and yawns throughout. The work had become an art form that actually induced a physical response in the viewer – through the drawn-out performance, rendition, and close physical controlling relation of the artists, their manner

of presentation, timing, actions, almost overbearing presences and performativity. The audience became both spectator and participant as opposed to seated, silent, watching, waiting, sponge-like viewer. Like it or not: malleable material. The slides of the dislocated shards and remnants of old documents and maps that spoke of time were adequate as visual 'tools'. They offered a leap back in time to those of Borges's readings. This too managed to 'fit' the dark aesthetic of the evening, again presented in a depressing, nauseating (Etchells' own words) manner. The artists conveyed claustrophobic, lonely, potentially empty worlds where you could experience separation through both time and space.

Like Borges, who after losing his sight still coveted his private collection of books and employed a private reader, 'my imagined elsewhere' became of importance. If this was its intention, then it was successful. Dr Kivland thanked the artists thus; 'Thank you, that is the first time anybody has made an art work especially for one of these lectures.'

**Guest: Roderick Buchanan**

**Host: Andrew Sneddon**

**21.10.2009**

From the outset Roderick Buchanan held the room extremely well, with confidence, wit, good presentation, personality, and an honest demeanor. His research methodology, work in the field and in situations of a high risk during still difficult times of sectarianism in physically close communities were shared and gave a definite edge to the lecture. In a lilted Irish accent he began by sharing insights into his close family's recent history, including the 'before he was born time' related to him by his father as a young boy; the sometimes dislocated relation with both Scotland and Ireland; the many times he travelled between the two through different generations during ages of great difficulty and strife. The historical pictures drawn were of great insight and educational worth through the potato famine and political struggles of the eras born as they were of firsthand account. Buchanan managed to talk, sit amongst the audience, and direct proceedings from the stage. A curious balance. A serious, but still entertaining mixture, giving respect and consideration to the obviously dark subject matter of his work. Asylum, violence against women, sectarianism and the Loyalist/Republican troubles.

The main piece of work Buchanan concentrated upon was a video featuring two musical marching bands, each with their own staunch beliefs and affiliations. Separated, on screen, by a broad, vertical, dark band, they had to be filmed, interviewed and presented separately, which went further to emphasise the 'situation' of an artist working amongst both groups. In Buchanan's words: 'a statement of fact, a negotiation to work with both sides.' More dark humour. 'I was pleasantly surprised when both sides came to the opening, although they were still separated by a concrete wall and seemed sad when it was the other bands turn to play.' 'But then I've always been a difficult cunt me!' Laughs.

‘It’s a very binary, mixed identity.’ Giving a ‘voice’ to both sides. ‘I am the living human bridge.’

Buchanan was full of practical advice for students in the audience, informed and beamed across in an everyman’s language. Kind and friendly, informal and insightful. Almost conspiratorial ... ‘My dealer, in France, Bruno, had no interest in the project, he thought it would be a flop. In fact it sold out and was a great success.’ ‘If the guy is only a footnote in someone else’s bibliography then ...’ And ‘No long-distance lenses, it’s about getting up close.’ ‘I studied Belfast to try to come to terms with some of the shite attitudes that I had been brought up with, after a time I began to deal with different issues.’ ‘The quest is to see if I can actually make that happen.’

**Guest: Kelly Large**

**Host: Becky Shaw**

**28.10.2009**

Kelly Large has a history as working as an artist in residence and her presentation highlighted both sides of working as an artist in this way, both positive and negative. The confidence it takes ‘to be paid to be visible’. A sometimes intimidating experience and environment. The public expectations upon what an artist should be when paid for with public money – during a residency at Sleaford high school the headmaster felt the need to ‘pull the plug’ after concerns over the use of art in the current economic climate. Finding the right kind of language can be a difficult barrier. ‘You really have to put yourself through the mill,’ she says. To imagine a world without art is a difficult thing to do but many people seem to accept public art, museums, shopping precinct sculptures and work in libraries as freely available, without wanting to pay for it.

Kelly Large is currently working from a table and chair in the British Library where she has ‘classified herself as artist in residence’. She has identified over eight hundred ‘unpopular’ books with the word artist in the title or text. ‘They have never been seen or touched. Books which are never requested are stored at Boston in the North of England and it takes forty eight hours for requests so I request them to displace other books.’ ‘A mass of books of no value, and when removed there becomes a void.’ Large tells the audience that she cannot give a coherent view of the current work – is not sure yet what it is about – and finishes with an analogy to black holes. Talks of experiments with osmium, the densest material known to humankind.

**Guest: Jane Harris**  
**Host: Gary Simmonds**  
**11.11.2009**

Artist and lecturer Gary Simmonds, as host, introduced friend and fellow painter Jane Harris, also from London. Harris presented a serious, no-nonsense insight into a successful practice that has existed for over twenty years. She communicated a real sense of both this experience and her experience of galleries and gallerists that powerfully emanated from her position behind the lectern. This was further empowered by the obvious sense of her own confidence in her own work leaving the audience in no doubt as to her status. Strong testimonials by curators and other well known gallery figures doubly backed up this general air of cool professionalism, sent out from the stage throughout the two hour presentation to the audience like radio waves passing through them all of the time.

A video, a gallery interior, a modern painting exhibition. The viewers appear to 'dance' in and out of the picture plane. Close, involved with the surface they then ... step back, to view the effect. Pigments, wine and black, copper and cream. Taste. A classical, almost historical sense of time condensed into a modern painting form. Viewers seduced. No 'ducal' seat for 'one'. A difficult thing for a modern painter to be able to achieve, and you just don't get it very often. The art critic Clement Greenberg's enquiries into the relation of surface and depth suggest, in part, a 'situation in modern painting where depth had lost its dignity to surface'. Here, in the paintings of Jane Harris the two both become partners toward an overall sensation. There is a 'gaze within the image'. One of the greatest British painters, Francis Bacon, said 'Well, if you can talk about it, well then, why should you bother to paint it?' Harris' work manages to touch upon similar territory in this sense. To allow your gaze to fall upon one of the scalloped edges promotes a sense of the limen, or threshold into a contemplative, almost timeless 'non-place'. Victor Turner and Arnold van Gennep wrote about a particular state of liminality, with Turner identifying it as 'both a time that is not a time, and a place that is not a place.' Harris' work evokes, or makes palpable in a visual sense this kind of liminal, mesmerised state of mind. The viewer no longer quite sure of their surroundings which may please, or have an effect on some level, as an escape of some kind, albeit for a short space of time from 'world'.

Harris' sensibilities and particular fascinations revolve around (as a painter) issues of palette, scale, method, material, process and application. Impressive application leading to affect upon the viewer. Abstract mark-making and fantastic cup-cake elliptical forms predominate, augment to each other and assist in the manner of the work almost describing itself and its reason for being 'outside of language'.

The large-scale canvases are painted with great skill and finesse, with or without the assistance of any sort of template, should we really like to hazard a guess. At this level

would that really matter all that much? Individual sensibility, getting to the end result, is of paramount importance. The work benefits from a firsthand encounter. The scale of the work and the brushwork are important to the perception of the works' power. A class act.

**Guest: Amanda Beech**

**Host: Jaspar Joseph-Lester**

**25.11.2009**

This lecture was like a two-hour rollercoaster ride. It went too fast for me, I don't pretend to have understood how it all worked, but I want to do it all again. Dr Amanda Beech began with a short account of how her ideas develop: 'No one unilateral drive, the ideas move around a bit.' Continued with some of the main points of her enquiries; the relation between democracy and violence, scrutinising inflated or empty language in narratives of freedom, popular culture, the language of force and the force of language.

Beech used an example of art from a time and place where the individuals voice had to be suppressed. When real artists starved, went underground, or fled the country. Many 'disappeared' in the night. A slide - Joseph Torak, and a view of his studio interior. Work in progress. Three stone sculptures. A little horse, a middle horse, and a big horse. Torak became Hitler's' favourite artist, and prospered, for a time. A darkly humorous way to emphasise her disdain for 'weak, or uncritical art'. Not 'real' art because it's not for everyone. Making what 'they' want others to see. And propaganda. Everything's great here, just look at our art, you can see. Pastoral idylls, healthy farmers and horses till fertile land.

In an earlier symposium Beech had opened discussions upon an idea of 'nothing existing outside of language', leading into a way of questioning the concept of 'world' as construct. The artist sometimes deconstructs things, shows how they do not work, fractures belief of universal, accepted structures of power and seeks a contingency plan. Opens up philosophical places where things are no longer unquestionably accepted. 'Art's role is to resist and reveal forces of 'bad' power.' Suggests the need for and encourages an art of mainstream utility and usefulness. Is sceptical of 'weak and uncritical art.' Champions an art of social enlightenment. The insightful *versus* blindness. Is critical of culture [in the widest sense] and its political potential. Her positive ideals relate to 'social glue' and solidarity. Promoting that engaging voices and inspiring change require great masses of people and a theoretical point of view on the way forward are the cornerstones of any democratic revolution. The statement 'art can make communities happen' illustrated the potential of art as a part of a process of difference and change. Raising awareness and agitating the unseen dangers of the supposed, perceived as idealistic connections between knowledge and power. How a sense of place and community can equal continuity, contributing to health and wellbeing, fostering civil pride and confidence which raises quality of life and reduces crime. Beech questions the use of language, considers the way

in which power is experienced both through and as images. Relates to examples of how popular culture often presents that the pursuit of the ideals of freedom, justice and success are often hinged on violence, how common practice often relates violence to democracy – how this is disseminated through popular culture.

The lecture subverts language's potential for covert, clandestine, and surreptitious operations and control systems in the sense of surveillant reversal. The work seeks a connection with a politics of enlightenment that pre-supposes a potential for freedom from oppression, inhibition and convention. On some level succeeding in the transformation of the position of the surveillant into the surveilled, which both subverts and makes the unseen seen. Listening to Beech can open up a new way of looking at 'world', at Western art practices in the early twenty-first century, and the freedom of artists who are able to operate outside certain structures of power; at how they are able to use the democratic free-speech freedom of their position to further question the relation between democracy and violence which Beech identifies, and represent the type of society in which it was made, that by making it into art it becomes distinguished from other human-made objects or activities of humans.

Beech harnesses the force of language through the power of filmic new media (image). A video: movement through the city (Los Angeles, any city, it could be Iraq) promoting a real sense of 'the now'. Staccato drum base drum'n'bass? music, fast, at volume. Speed of greyscale images disorientate. Text, too fast to read. Someone else is in control. Monochrome, silver screen grey and the darkness of the auditorium/gallery echo sense of cold city street at night. Speeding through, at height, some direction, but out of control. A sense of danger – of violence made palpable. Atmospheric and linear perspectives, '... to be alone is the lowest that you can get.' Hobbes. Arial above the highway, through and between the city. Below city views fly past fast. The images slow down. The text easier to read: 'HE WAS JUSTIFIED'. Amanda Beech, ideals of freedom, justice, success and the artist's potentiality as 'instrumental to the social'.

**Guest: Juan Cruz**

**Host: Sharon Kivland**

**02.12.2009**

The reason for 'translations', I have no other skills. One of his children as the cameraman. The artist rendering an old wall. A video. Well, if you can't remember pal ... I wish it had said that in the programme. Third translation. Can't remember, probably Kant or something. I don't know why I've included that slide really. Only I laughed. A friend concerned for my sanity. Covered in ten dustsheets to keep the horse out.

What is outside of frame, what is inside? Engage with in same way as a painting. Framed the window first. The difference between one work and another. Another translation. The

spaces in between the words. Arduousness. The pauses in-between the words. Without stopping. For six hours a day.

Reads chapter 42. Orange? From behind a window of coloured glass.

The translation through a microphone. This time from within a room. But. Again.

Translation of *Don Quixote*, 2005. Not the behaviour of a shy person. A half hour performance. A square in London.

The next piece is a performance of a translation. Again *Don Quixote*, a two-week job. Cruz talks about the next piece, another translation. The abstract of a theme. Not necessarily to mean a translation of words/languages. 'I always tend to revert back to that first translation and stay with that, I use language as others might use images.' He explains that as part of his praxis.

The slides begin; a car boot sale. 'I chose four items, no reason so I just put them together.' Interested members of the public, local artists, students of all ages and abilities. An easy way in? He could baffle us. Philosophical mystification, should that be his want. So this is nice. Good of him. A gift.

What a fantastic name for an artist. Juan Cruz. Prima donna. And get away with it. It would be easy for him, I am sure, to flounce onto the stage. A big name in contemporary art, philosophy, writing.

'Difficult'. 'It is unnerving, having to explain the absurdity of one's explorations.' [I feel?]  
'Guilty, I have/have not done things.'

Juan Cruz follows this up makes an ambiguous opening observation.

Superego. That is not a question. Wouldn't they? Make time. Naturally. True friends would do that anyway. But then manners don't cost anything, do they? Freud. Superego. It would be rude not to. Host. Intro, key words, timing, flow. Weeks before? Email? They must discuss the format beforehand, meet them at the station, a meal, or at least a coffee at the Café Ritazza. Guest artist, writer, and philosopher Juan Cruz. Nervous laughter from the crowd. 'Superego'. 'Touching you.' 'That would be weird.' 'As I would want to do.' 'I cannot sit on the stage.' 'A friendship that he may not want.' Dr Sharon Kivland introduces her good friend and fellow artist, Juan Cruz.



**Guest: Kate Davis**  
**Host: Julie Westerman**  
**27.01.2010**

*My damp skirt slaps against my legs.* Her *my*, my *me*.  
Her highly personalised *me*. **Her...**  
'Voice' over filmic new media.  
*She* presents from the stage. Centre. Left. Stood. Stark ~  
But not.  
Dark jeans & 'T' ...  
Face in shadow, half-light picks up the contours.  
Cups her peaks, her trunk and curls her thighs.  
Liminal. Half lit. Lectern.  
The *affect* of a ghostlike *part presence* ...  
The narrative reading clearly emanates ... from the  
surround-sound-speaker-system around the walls,  
rather than from ... herself. Distant ...  
*Non~presence*, self negated. Speaks from somewhere else.  
The effect is a very close and difficult thing to be able,  
to pick up upon. *She* becomes *not-here* ...  
I would rather have 'said' *not all there* ... But I cannot. Superego, too, speaks from  
somewhere else.  
On? or around, **'the bridge?'** Unseen? A liminal being. Betwixt. Between. *Presenilation*.  
Assist, affect. The *style*. Materiality *oipresent*. Of words. The gaps in-between the size of  
page, but not page stage. Margins ... **Posit. This** idea [art]. Ov. *'The Bridge'*. As spine.  
From., the solid, undeniable, and objective, *'concrete'* **bridge**. To ~ the body. Flesh. 'Drift'.  
Fluid. Feel. Change ... Unknown workings. Tacit knowledge. The supposed and  
philosophical *space* of 'duality'. This? From head. Down. To hole below. The spine. **The  
bridge.**  
The centre of the middle. Journeys are for 'others'. Bridge is place. Bridge is *'HOST'*.  
Bridge transmits from head to hole. *My damp skirt slaps against my legs..* Feel ... Feel.  
Evening. Turning, into. Night. Dusk, mid-point, liminal, dangerous. Limen. Threshold.  
Place. Diapason. Buses as they gear away. Middle distance. Away. Away the end. Away the  
end ... of the bridge.  
Another place ... journeys are for others.  
Upon the bridge. Time. *Dérive*.  
The *draw* of water, *through*. Drift.  
A 'gateless gate'.  
Green tints. Brown clouds blow.  
Half light early a.m. sky,  
Lens of street lamps glows,  
Night comes damp to morn/day slow.

Black dark river, forces, through, below.

Damp skirt slaps my [*my not your-become, your*] legs.

**PISS, CUM, SPIT.**

Startled cack-laugh pan mouth clacks.

Cityscape lifeform. Mind. Separate. From. Body.

Though still the same.

**Bridge** conduit spine.

From head, down, to hole below.

Derive.

Body. Host. Open. Hole. Open body. Open share. Private[s], Intimate[d], Her mental space. This place. This host. This hole. Separate. Same. Shared. Both hers and yours.

Damp skirt slaps against my legs. Again ... again, yet not against.

*Analepsis ...*

The bridge was the last place I saw him.

The bridge connects. Back.

Leading down, from head to hole. **The bridge.**

One side ... the 'other'.

Camera. Pan. Scan. Across. Slow.

Survey. Scan. Time and time.

Night to day and back again. Abridged from here.

Foreshort for now.

Her non-place. Fort. Host. Bridge and omphalos. *The now.* **Bridge. Back** to the city.

Where he is? One leg through the first railing [...]

They brought me drinks. Talk, swallow, cry, piss. I swore if I ever walked again ... Invalid.

Rash. *Rash...* 'Rush, water, head. *From head.* Down. To hole.

Headwater, brush brow, trunk now, past bough, down to, dark, wet, open holes below.

Derive. Flow. Water. Through Pull. Through.

*My damp skirt slaps against my legs.* CANT SWEET COME and VOMIT. The centre of the middle, in-between. Bridge. Joins one. Joins 'other'. **Separate. Same. Now.**

**Guest: Taconis Stolk**

**Host: T C McCormack**

**03.02.2010**

Mr Stolk posits an idea and the usefulness of 'planck' (a basic physical constant = to the energy of a photon [allegedly] that when divided by its frequency @ the approx value of  $6.6261 \times 10^{-34}$  ( by ) power of joule seconds) as a linguistic tool for re-designing the way in which we are potentially able to understand, explain, and use our dialogues, narratives, and languages in an attempt to live in greater harmony with the universe, in so much as we are able understand it today at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

This proposal for a new universal postmodern language based on the scientific notion of Planck is a way of using numbers to nurture nature by default. Mr Stolk and his team make artwork in the form of a harbinger, a vision of a new postmodern language that is a purposeful intention to repulse by evoking the horror of a super-technological, cold, future world. The furtherance of 'world' where music is reduced to a monotone drone with the only relief provided through intermittent gaps of silence. Colour reduced to mid grey-green, grey-blue, computerised, mathematically controlled dull tertiary hues. To illustrate how this system might become manifest Stolk offered sonic and visual representations through mathematical equations, giving examples using models of nature, nurture and number to share his visualisation of a new way of looking at, measuring and discussing the universe.

The economic actual cost indicative of the impossible implementation of it as a viable, either physically as a working, international, system, need or want left to one side, the work asked questions, whether intentionally, or no, to any thinking person, on issues such as would we want a world where a deep cobalt blue summer sky is replaced by mid-grey simply because it alludes to a physics or finite math constant?

Have we not done enough damage yet to Lovelock's planet? I don't like the idea of going much further beyond landscape until such doubtful a time as a future where-within we are capable of managing what we already sat upon and are responsible for in terms of our actions. These, I can only hope, are some of Mr Stolk's real aims and questions, a Mierle Laderman Ukeles kind of 'social mirror' that might shock or embarrass us into action. Stolk sat, confident, as a worldly, favourite uncle with all of the answers in front of a hyperbolic new object image form language on cinematic scale computer screen. No waving arms, mad bulging eyes or long frizzy hair, but something much more powerful – a future world view of apocalyptic portent.

What's the problem with contemporary art? Why inflict this upon the multitudes? The answer can only be to show the future, or one possible future. At least for those lucky enough to not have spend every waking hour in search of a drop of clean water to drink or a scrap of food to share with kin and tribe. The message? Get back to basics or GET READY!

**Guest: Lindsay Seers**  
**Host: Chloë Brown**  
**10.02.2010**

'Friendship in a crowd a London station suddenly I see an "actual" friend, a flash of energy - friendship a \_ bond !'. Community. Oh friends ...

The visiting artist Lindsay Seers wonders how photography may change emotion time cultural perspective how it may, possibly, trigger desires.

Can you ?

ever really be yourself in front of a camera ... lens ... ?

Without 'acting'? Trying to 'project' an image..... [are You? ]..... of something, someone

somebody else? What do you/1 think about in that split second shutter time [ > ] frame?

Act like this > ? Can we be honest?

Dressing up, not to be self by not being self, can become yourself. Dressing up without dressing up. A poetic, beautiful way in to her deep theory, philosophy, and presentation.

A friend, a male, a photograph. A male dame in mouse-shaped slippers sits upon a pink flowered armchair. Camera. Film. Still. Theatre, actor, or not?

A shift. Your body, a 'mechanical' part of the art making process and result. Inner and outer space. The journey of being a camera'. The body also becomes a part of the subject.

The light sensitive film is in

her mouth..... Teeth frame tree. Nature. Light passes through the side of the mouth. Red hue.

*Ex tenebris lux.* Out of darkness light Internal self portrait. Beauty. The performative aspect.

Dressing up. Acting. Process. The mouth embodies the subject. Lips are shutter. In black sack.

Sat Still Silent. Process, t -1 -m e 'A system that will be exposure.' Body. Camera. Dark.

Light. External space. Internal. Intimate. *Ex tenebris lux.*

'In order to be a good camera two become one thing the relation of camera to eye > photographs of retinas in the material body > the sense of looking »<<into.'

Onsite work, field tree sky » process> wind on up develop film, black bag over 'camera'. Camera. > Self.

Project, project. Projection from mouth. Construction Installation Performance. "The final stage of 'being' a camera". *Ex tenebris lux.* Darkness out of light. 'I [She] finally become a projector, I can project light out of me, illuminate.' Speak. Filmic. Mini man-sized theatre. Hall. Host. Beautiful.

Altered. Image. State.' T • it

**Guest: André Stitt**  
**Host: Hester Reeve**  
**17.02.2010**

Notes from a dark lecture theatre. Stitt has really been through the mill. This comes across in his performance work in a powerful and intense form. Hester Reeve in introduction says that ‘André is a friend to art’. How can **we** write about this, and do it justice? We can’t. We may only try and show respect in some small way and gratitude for his honesty, his attempt to be as responsive, reflexive to his poetic delivery. In a strong Irish accent, Stitt talks about some of his motivations and influences from life experiences, his ‘akshuns’.

Although also a painter, Stitt, in this lecture, concentrates on his performance works. Threads, as he says, of what remains in a place ‘after’. Links with Sheffield, industry, ‘CITY OF STEEL’, social rules and use of art. Threads, connections. People die, disappear. Stitt mentions influences both primary and secondary: Tyler Durden, *Fight Club* filmic fiction character. Highly personal places and times. Belfast. Amnesia. Link. Real. He speaks in poetic form although sometimes too fast to follow, fragments, but this adds rather than detracts from the affect of his surety, confidence, and presence on stage. Powerful. Dark. ‘You have had modernism’, I think he says.

‘Confetti of human flesh falls,’ he shouts, ‘Dead eyed dads.’ Slumped student forms in hoods jump from silhouetted near-sleep states. I don’t like this, at all, everybody’s worst nightmare, but what can you do? He’s said it now. How much more meaningful, moving than that can contemporary art actually be? Daniel Farson wrote about the post-WWII Bacon show: ‘people’s minds snapped shut at the very sight of them (*Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*).’ Back to Stitt, insight is given, personal, shared, darkness. Allegories, materiality of words. ‘Drink and drugs, to excess, sleeping in your day clothes mess? Well you can just imagine can’t you?’ he asks. We can. Stitt illustrates his sentiments powerfully and emotionally (there are passages that I cannot mention here). Peoples minds attempt to shut at the ... Stitt’s presence disallows this luxury aggressive and intrusive even if I leave now, he has affected me.

The photographic stills shown include nudity and tomato sauce and have obvious links to Paul McCarthy’s performances but without any of the wry humour. Stitt darker, sadder, skinter, realer, in the ‘British’ manner. Dark times. Unemployment. Loss of community. Old chestnut. So much more highly personalised no McDonalds references quite so obviously but they are in there somewhere. His world (our world if we are honest), his art. Stitt mentions the difference between painting (privately, alone) in the studio and performance.

You make art, but what do you really fucking know?  
You make art, but what do you really fucking know???

You make art, but what do you really fucking Know?

He screams at the audience, a menacing sneer scans the student, staff and public audience from the stage and it seems for a moment that he might leap from the stage and out into the shocked crowd. André Stitt might have been aggressive and intimidating to some, real art born of real life often is. Stitt was like an African witch-doctor's doll, built from clay, clumps of human hair and faeces, chicken bones, earth pigments, twigs and blood imbued with life, affected by magic and a cross between a Francis Bacon painting come to life, to visit, after dark, in a live theatre of performance. Notes from a dark lecture theatre.

**Guest: James Pyman**

**Host: Lesley Sanderson**

**24.02.2010**

Drawing is important to art. Any one show by Pyman with a coherent theme might well be an enjoyable experience. The size and the scale, the sometimes quite brilliant draftsmanship, the choice of subject, the 'knowing where to put things', individual sensibility, and innate visual talent that the artist has clearly 'got' would, I am sure, benefit from a firsthand gallery experience. *But*. This two-hour presentation with hundreds of slides showing adequate through quite good to exceptional drawing styles and skills became a real bore. Drawing from old comics for personal and nostalgic reasons, from *Poggles Wood*, *Pippin*, and *Thor*, through copying adolescent fashions and pop-music album covers of his preference, his times, by Genesis, Joy Division, and so on *ad nauseum* really gave me little enjoyment.

Leaving aside the main philosophical question of taste, there were some fine illustrations for a recent edition of *Dracula*. More than adequate as 'illustration' but did we really need to know that he had 'read the text first, and then gone out to search for images'. Is it art? Pyman's large-scale fine art drawings produced for the gallery market were very impressive but were lost within a too-large selection of 'other' work. We all need to diversify in order to be able to make a living, we cannot all be Damien Hirst, but the slide show, I nearly said 'lecture', frankly just had much too much of the feel of and the sense of a childish 'look what I've drawn, mum' demonstration.

**Guest: Neville Gabie**  
**Host: David Cotterrell**  
**03.03.2010**

Gabie's international practice revolves around sculpture, film, photography, and the role of artist in residence. Through an unselfish approach he explores the site-specific aspects of locations in a state of flux. The work is process-based, rather than focusing upon a finished piece. Bristol 2006, a city centre development. A portakabin in the centre of the site. His studio. How do I fit in? What might I mean, to those who live, and work there? Three thousand guys busy moving stuff around. I'm in the way. Canteen to talk to guys without noise. Sixty-two guys on site – an international community. Materials and truckloads coming in all the time. Global sources. Granite from the mountains of China. 'The top of a mountain, not a hole in the ground.' Unseen work. He tracks one piece along its journey. Documents it. Cut. Sections. Small Chinese text on one surface. One hundred and sixty kilos on a trolley as hand luggage. Stopped at Russian customs, a problem? 'All I had was a piece of stone, nothing else!' Explain. An artist. They celebrate the mundane element. Back. Rest. The canteen. The diverse communities, the different nationalities use food in a simple way. He explores the interchanging residencies of visiting workers. The identity of the temporary communities through meals. Punjab and Polish banquets. Songs, languages, Welsh choirs, English white middleclass, management, and performances. Interchange – learn – discuss, through a build in progress. It all comes together, transmits, translates, and disseminates on site. Bristol women sing a moving Polish song on a high floor of the uncompleted concrete team build. An amazing experience even on video as the concrete auditorium echoes and strong sunlight shines through the open sides.

Halley, Antarctica, four months and forty strangers stuck. An ephemeral, simple, but harsh environment. Gabie elaborates, illustrates the experience of place poetically. Dark cloud and clear water. Drawing on the window as the ship moved. Drawing to noise. Iceberg pass, fast close, far slow. Ice-sheets crack. Horizon line, 'the last bastion of representation' (Oliver Lange). Slow goes white. Nature, size of self and sublime. The natural world to small self. Affect. Sign of sun. Melt. Sonic shock.

'Welcome party', never seen the other. Remote experience – a mind/space 'test'. Vast ice-cliff background. Nearest stone forty miles away. Two miles of shelf ice out to sea everyday – everything moves. Supplies. A mile long load of stuff to offload. Barrels marked by sticks, spend your life attached to ropes. Fissure and crevice down below a surface of dust. Sea-level view same, no scale. Red/orange absorbs heat and melts self into snow. Albedo. 1993 AWOL. A breakdown. Own physicality, scale, space, cognitive mapping. Kite. Physical. 'A guide across and above you.' Drawing. Kite – camera attached. Odd to see life all pale, all white. Has affect – deal with self. All reflected back. Smallness is where it's at. Tried? To make? Bring back to yourself? That kind of image tried to make? Dig. Dig. Move snow. Two locations, two cameras. Move and fill hole from one to two.

Back and forth, visible/not. Absence of presence on reflect. Result. Nothing to photograph. Low sun, shadow long. Tent sign. Pole. Kite high. Camera shakes in bursts of wind. A shock to return to normality. Busy and full. The body of work whole, but not processed. A powerful, emotive experience. 'A rushed presentation to hold onto, and explore, is the idea of the work.' The lonely, tenuous, short term, human contribution to this panorama of landmass.

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