

PELTZ GALLERY LOOKBOOK



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Stolen Gazes - images of peoples from Peruvian Amazon and Colombia

By Agata Lulkowska

26 April - 7 May, 2013

Being simultaneously a researcher and a professional photographer, Agata finds her fieldwork particularly fascinating. Having many years of experience in photography, she is always searching for the aesthetic qualities when working in the field. This implies a new quality of image, which has to address and satisfy both scientific and artistic needs and requirements. Her research is practice-led, focusing on visual representations of Indigenous cultures of Colombia. The aim is to produce a collaborative work with a selected community, starting from the dialogue about the existing art works, discussing the ways to represent and question one's identity through visual media, and finally producing the visual materials.



The Day Remains

Curated by Victoria Ahrens

9 - 25 May, 2013

The Day Remains refers to an inversion of the title of the novel by Kazuo Ishiguro (*Remains of the Day*, 1989), in which he uses the structural devices of memory and perspective to interweave past and present in the subtle nuances of unspoken relationships.

Here, the vestiges of memory or the traces of the ordinary were subtly turned on their head as their quiet marks belie their extraordinariness. The traces left behind by an abstract memory, a physical shadow of the reflection of objects in the dark, the vestige of a photograph or the imprint of a long forgotten place emerge in the work on show and create understated connections. This exhibition traced each artist's individual treatment of the theme, in order to present a provocative and challenging visual exploration of the notion of what remains of our fragmentary remembrances of the everyday.



Snow Star

By Sephira Salazar

4 - 5 June, 2013

Snow Star documents a mysterious, ancient Andean ceremony, Qoyllur Ritt'i (Quechuan for Resplendent Snow), which takes place annually hidden in the high altitudes of the Peruvian Andes. The ritual, associated with the fertility of the land and the worship of the Apus (spirits of the mountains), is an important manifestation of syncretism – a fusion of Catholic and Incan pagan traditions.

Sephira Salazar is a self-taught photographer with a background in film development and production.



Intellectual Tactility: An Exhibition of the Text Art Archive

Curated by Holly Pester

22 June - 10 July, 2013

Intellectual Tactility was an exhibition featuring an installation of materials from the new Text Art Archive. A result of creative collaboration between Bury Art Museum and Archives and Birkbeck, the exhibition featured archive records as well as original artworks and studies by artists represented by the collection. Curated by Holly Pester with assistance from Bury Art Museum curators and Bury Archives.

The exhibition was part of an AHRC funded Cultural Engagement project between Birkbeck and Bury Art Museum.



Touching the book: embossed literature for blind people in the 19th century

By Sephira Salazar

19 July - 30 October, 2013

This exhibition explored the history of literacy for blind and visually impaired people in nineteenth-century Britain and Europe through the development of embossed literature. It introduced visitors to the variety of embossed writing systems that blind people were taught prior to the widespread adoption of braille at the end of the nineteenth century. There was fierce debate in this period between educators who favoured a system based on the Roman alphabet that could be read still by sight and those who advocated for an arbitrary system – such as braille – more suited to finger reading.

Touching the book: Embossed literature for Blind People brought together a rich array of material, including important examples of early classbooks, spiritual guides, the first specially-commissioned embossed Bibles, writing devices, pamphlets and visual images. It detailed how early embossing attempts were motivated by religious desire to enable blind people to read the word of God directly through touch. This fuelled investment in embossing processes which in turn improved the quality and durability of embossed books.

Most significantly however, the development of finger-reading practices helped to create new communities of literate blind and visually-impaired people who began advocating for reading and writing systems best suited to the needs of blind people. The exhibition highlighted figures in the nineteenth-century blind community who both raised the profile of and were instrumental in improving literacy for blind and visually-impaired people, including Laura Bridgman, William Moon, G.A. Hughes, Louis Braille and Thomas Rhodes Armitage.

A series of descriptive tours were held throughout the exhibition run by the exhibition curator Heather Tilley.



Breaking the Barriers to Freedom

By Yvette Vanson

21 - 30 November, 2013

Literal barriers to freedom – the ‘peace walls’ in Belfast; the mine field ‘wall’ in the Western Sahara; the Mexico/USA border barrier and of course the Israeli Apartheid Wall - are merely physical reflections of deeper economic, political, ecological and psychological hurdles to peace and security...I believe speaking out is a first step to changing the seemingly impossible... My work has always been in the creative arena. For several years I was an actress conveying meaning through the words of others; as a filmmaker for 20 years I gave voice to those whose needs and struggles were rarely articulated and reached millions of viewers in the process. Since 2004 as a painter Vanson endeavoured to give expression to the unseen, the marginalized; to convey the depths of their privation and yet their defiance against injustice and exploitation.

Screenings of three of Vanson’s award winning documentaries as an introduction to the exhibitions also took place in the Birkbeck Cinema in October/November.



‘The space between’

Curated by Holly Pester

4 - 10 March, 2014

The images on display at the Peltz Gallery in Birkbeck’s School of Arts in Gordon Square told personal stories of women fleeing from Iraq, Burma and Burundi. These successful women involved in education, law, women’s rights and politics, were forced to feel from war-torn countries, arriving in the UK with almost nothing of their past life.

These women, separated from their home country, faced the loss of their family, friends and even their sense of self. Starting a new life, in a place of safety and strangeness, finding refuge in education, accepting the past and rediscovering their lost self. These women were so much more than the label of ‘refugee’, they were women whose voices had gone unheard.

The exhibition, developed by Birkbeck in partnership with the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA), highlighted the courage of women who have defended their rights as women and the right to academic freedom. The exhibition was first displayed in London in 2012.



Print Dialogues

By Victoria Ahrens

1 - 9 May, 2014

Print Dialogues was a solo exhibition of lens-based work by the artist and researcher Victoria Ahrens. Her work explores the interstices between photography and printmaking in the depiction of the lost landscape.

Working initially from rediscovered analogue snapshots of the Paraná River in South America, she reworks the imagery through various screens, questioning the fragmentary nature of memory and the possibility of the ruin in her contemporary print installations. Like typewriter ribbons that preserve an imprint of the stories written on them in their fibres, these experiments in print map the successive layers that erase and transform the landscape, generating a new narrative and collapsing past and present. Victoria won the Celeste Photography Prize 2013 and the Clifford Chance Purchase Prize 2013. She has exhibited widely in the UK and abroad, and is currently studying for her practice based PHD at Birkbeck College, UL.



Sally Heathcote, Suffragette: Remembering Female Suffrage

12 - 16 May, 2014

This exhibition presented artwork from Sally Heathcote, Suffragette by Mary Talbot, Kate Charlesworth and Bryan Talbot, a contemporary retelling of the suffragette movement in graphic novel format.

Accompanying the art was a collection of artefacts and extracts from the BBC TV series, *Shoulder to Shoulder*. These representations of Edwardian female activism produced in the early 1970s explore how the first wave was re-remembered at the time of second wave.



East and West: Visualising the Ottoman City

Curated by Leslie Hakim-Dowek

6 - 30 June, 2014

As the main impact event of the AHRC conference project Ottoman Pasts, Present Cities: Cosmopolitanism and Transcultural Memories, this exhibition brought together three contemporary artists using lens-based media, focusing on the representations of the Ottoman City: Aikaterini Gegisian, Leslie Hakim-Dowek and Paris Petridis. Leslie Hakim-Dowek is also the curator of the exhibition.

In this exhibition, at the intersection of personal and history, the artists focused on Ottoman cities bridging East and West, past and present. Through various approaches including documentary photography or archival-based practice, some works focus on the legacies of and transitions from the Ottoman Empire and its multiple histories of Diaspora and erasure. Other works look at the transformations and forgotten sites of Ottoman cities articulated through post and transcultural memories.



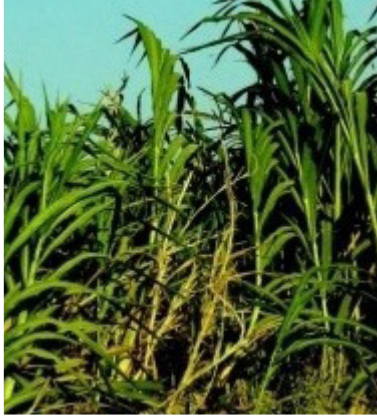
Reframing Memory

Curated by Family Ties Network

3 - 25 July, 2014

Suze Adams navigated the borders of fact and fiction in an exploratory retracing of her maternal ancestors on the Isle of Mull. Nicky Bird drew on family albums belonging to others to illuminate personal, political memories connected to place. Jacqueline Butler's poetic approach alluded to sensory memories prompted by public photographic collections and her personal archive. Rosy Martin re-enacted a lost past as she embodies both of her parents in their family home, as well as using projections to evoke a sense of haunting. Lizzie Thynne's sound-led work examined the inter-subjectivity of life histories, highlighting the link between memories of childhood and feminist politics. Sally Waterman employed literary adaptation as a mechanism for self-portraiture, recalling traumatic memories of family conflict through T.S Eliot's poem 'The Waste Land'.

As artist members of the Family Ties Network, their work offers a poignant and provocative response to themes arising from the associated conference, Picturing the Family: Media, Narrative, Memory.



Conflict transformation art

By Evanthia Tselika

15 - 17 September, 2014

Conflict transformation art is an interpretation developed by Evanthia Tselika in response to a practice-led research process which explores how socially engaged art practices are used to resist contexts of urban segregation in Nicosia, Cyprus.

Due to the ethno-nationally divided condition of the city the social function of the arts in resisting urban segregation was identified in the use of the arts for peace-building purposes, and this was described for the purposes of this research as conflict resolution art. Conflict transformation art subsequently emerged as a hybrid method of practice and interpretation that is informed by socially engaged and conflict resolution art practices, and which questions multiple forms of urban conflict and patterns of social division as those are manifested in the landscape of the divided city of Nicosia.

The research installation 'Conflict transformation art' presents an interpretation of a practice-led research project that explores how a method of socially engaged art is developed in segregated urban environments, using Nicosia, Cyprus as a case study. This practice-led research is based on three projects that I collaboratively developed (2010-2012) and which are documented in the three booklets included in this research installation. This research installation does not represent a documentation process of the three projects but a reinterpretation of these endeavours and the practice-led research journey.



Biography of an archive: The June Givanni Pan-African Cinema Archive

10 - 24 October, 2014

Over 32 years ago June Givanni, a remarkable curator of African and African diaspora cinema, started out working on the Third Eye Film Festival in London, she then went to programme nationally and internationally, eventually setting up the African- Caribbean unit at the British Film Institute (BFI) in 1992. From 1993–1996 June published the BFI's Black Film Bulletin with Gaylene Gould.

Throughout her career June has been programming prominent film festivals around the world and on this journey has built up a wealth of material of and about Pan-African cinema which dates from the 1970s (films, photographs, audio interviews, journals, posters, scripts and memorabilia), all devoted to the celebration of Black experiences on film.



Moving Portraits Exhibition

28 October - 9 November, 2014

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust presents an exhibition of Moving Portraits of six survivors of genocide who now live in the UK. The collection draws upon the significance of memory, photographing survivors holding a belonging that is evocative for

them.

These moments in time have been brought to life in an extraordinary way by artist Will Head, turning them from still images into Moving Portraits. This launches the first part of our exciting #MemoryMakers creative project for HMD 2015, which explores the experiences of those who have survived genocide through the arts.

Explore the Moving Portraits of Avram and Vera Schaufeld, Joan Salter, Sokphal Din, Eric Murangwa and Safet Vukalić, finding out what they went through during genocide and why their object helps to keep the memory alive.



How We Read: Sensory history of books for the blind

15 - 23 November, 2014

An exhibition exploring the history of technology to help blind people read, from braille to audio books, is being shown at the Peltz Gallery for the UK's first national festival of the humanities in November. A variety of books will be on show in the form of

embossed print, braille, talking book records, speech synthesizers, screen magnification systems, and optical character recognition reading machines.

Among the historic artifacts are embossed books by William Moon, creator of one of the first raised alphabets for blind people, and historic talking book recordings made in the 1930s for veterans blinded in the First World War. The EMI Group Archive Trust has also agreed to display the oldest surviving talking book shellac records from 1935.

Curator-led descriptive tours, hands-on activities, interactive workshops, and live performances will also encourage visitors to use sensory perception to try out alternative ways of reading with their eyes, ears, and fingers. Dr Rubery, who is an expert on the history of the book, said: "Understanding the role played by braille, talking books, and alternative reading formats in Britain since the 1800s will increase awareness of the challenges faced by disabled people to access literature.



92 Million Miles from the Sun

By Susan Butler

29 November, 2014 - 5 January, 2015

This is the approximate distance of earth from the sun in mid-November, around the second or third week. Most often this time of year the mornings are dull with cloud, perhaps damp, too, with mist or drizzle. But sometimes there is a brightening, maybe only for two or three mornings during these weeks. Then the sun casts its rays low across east London, through the windswept leaves of a tree and on to a grey bedroom wall. For about 35 minutes, a chiaroscuro illumination moves across the wall until it slowly but inexorably closes down to a thin needle of light and then disappears.

Susan Butler's new video work records this simple physical event. It is a visually very beautiful experience which, at the same time, offers the possibility for meditation on the fragile and ephemeral coincidence of the sun's movement, the tree's last foliage, the resulting shadow's duration and its framing by the surrounding urban architecture. Observing shadows allows us to recapture a sense of time, and of being in time, in the present moment. Yet meditating upon a shadow can also induce a drift into subjective reflection, and the unbounded time of reverie. It is this play across differing temporalities, unique to each viewer that 92 Million Miles from the Sun invites.



Exercises in Orientation

12 January - 11 February, 2015

How do contemporary Cypriot artists orientate themselves in a landscape marked by conflict? What kind of issues do they seek to address when they choose to do so, and how does their work contribute to our understanding of landscape? These are some of the questions which were initiated by Exercises on Orientation, a curatorial project that investigated the significance of landscape in the work of contemporary Cypriot artists.

Initially presented as part of the exhibition Other Indications held at NiMAC (Cyprus, 2013), Exercises in Orientation involved the development of two projects: Transcapes/The Halted Traveler (2013) by artist Maria Loizidou and Overtones (2013) by Antonis Antoniou. For the exhibition at the Peltz Gallery, the project includes Mustafa Hulusi's Recollections of Underdevelopment (2014) and Panayiotis Michael's Landscape (2013).



Dwellings

By Carlos Reyes-Manzo

19 February - 20 March, 2015

As part of a cycle of events organised by Birkbeck's Politics Department on the London housing crisis, this exhibition brings together some 50 photographs by the internationally acclaimed Chilean photographer Carlos Reyes-Manzo - alumnus of the College and Ben Pimlott writer-in-residence for 2014. Reyes-Manzo explores the human condition in relation to dwellings: places and spaces where people try to find shelter, protection, comfort and belonging.

A selection of Reyes-Manzo's images taken over the past two decades illustrates the different conceptions and realities of domesticity, housing, homes and homelands across the world. Their juxtaposition with some of Reyes-Manzo's London photographs underlines the interconnections between dwellings, shelter, displacement and settlement at home and abroad. The exhibition invites us to reflect philosophically on dwelling as a form of being in the world, as well as politically in terms of how buildings foster inequality, poverty, alienation but also collective identity and a sense of belonging in a physical space.



Music Saved My Life

By Arn Chorn-Pond

3 March, 2015

In his talk Music Saved My Life, Chorn-Pond highlighted the power of the arts to give a voice to individuals and bring peace to societies. From the Khmer Rouge genocide, to his latest venture, the Khmer Magic Music Bus, Chorn-Pond will explore how music has helped him, and how he now uses music to help others.

When the Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia in 1975, Arn was sent to a children's labor camp. There, he learned to play the Khim and played propaganda music for the Khmer Rouge generals, escaping death. He later reached a refugee camp in Thailand, where Reverend Peter Pond adopted him in 1980. In the U.S., Arn began a series of community rebuilding projects and founded several organizations. In the mid-1990's, he returned to Cambodia to find his family and his music teacher. He 'discovered' other artists who had survived the war and were living in difficult conditions. Cambodian Living Arts was born.



Shoot The Pianist: The Noise Scene in Taipei 1990-1995

26 March - 3 April, 2015

This exhibition revisits the underground noise scenes in Taipei during the first-half of the 1990s. The title, *Shoot the Pianist*, is taken from a dystopian parable written by the Taiwanese noise band LTK Commune, which depicts how the social system of Taiwan gradually collapses when a number of classical pianists are shot dead and ‘the nation becomes under the control of a bunch of pang-ke (punks)’.

‘Shoot the Pianist- The Noise Scene in Taipei: 1990-1995’ held at the Peltz Gallery will for the first time in the UK, trace the historical development of these local noise scenes with archival materials. These materials include handbills, ‘zines, photographs, moving-images, homemade cassettes and records from alternative spaces Sickly Sweet and Apartment No. 2; the art group, Taiwan Documenta; the noise bands, Z.S.L.O. and LTK Commune; Taipei Broken Life Festival (1994/95) and the first local record label focusing on experimental sound, Noise. These historical documents will be augmented by prolific Taiwanese artists HOU Chun-ming and YAO Jui-chung’s works, which include prints and photography documenting the urban ruins in the early 1990s.



Do or DIY

11 - 18 April, 2015

Do or DIY (Expanded Second Edition) (2015) revisits a pocket-book essay and art installation originally made in 2012 for the Whitechapel Gallery (London). Both elements mixed anecdote and advocacy to introduce the concealed history of do-it-yourself publishing as undertaken by some of the most revered writers in the Western literary canon, from Laurence Sterne to Irma Rombauer via Virginia Woolf and Derek Walcott.

This newly commissioned low-fi installation documents the project to-date. It presents a sample of the anecdotes added since 2012 on bi-lingual posters, reflects on the place of self-published literature in the economy of the modern book trade, and offers free-to-take Xerox copies of the expanded manuscript in English for the first time.

Do or DIY (Expanded Second Edition) is co-produced with Riccardo Boglione, Kate Briggs, Annette Gilbert, Marianne Groulez, and Carlos Soto Román, and in various ways has been made possible by the kind support of the London Art Book Fair, Whitechapel Gallery (London), Arts Council of England, Das Kapital Books (Santiago), Salon Verlag (Cologne), and the Cultural Literacy in Europe steering committee.



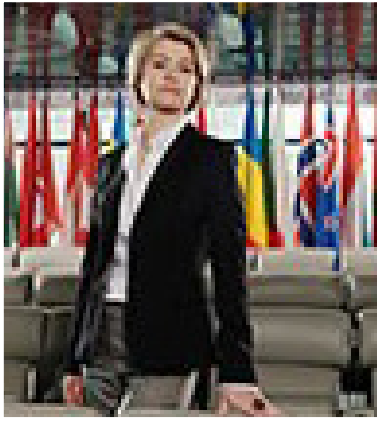
‘The Man with the Film Projector’

By Kao Chung-li

23 April - 5 May, 2015

The Man with the Film Projector is Kao Chung-li’s first solo exhibition in the UK. Kao is one of most important artist working in Taiwan today, and his practice combines filmmaking, painting, photography, sculpture and installation.

The artist is undeniably influenced by the impact of European avant-garde cinema (when works by auteurs such as Alain Resnais and Jean-Luc Godard were introduced to Taiwan by Theatre Quarterly in the 1960s), but he has also created his own aesthetic languages. In particular, he has modified a variety of cinematic devices in order to reflect the socio-economical complexity of contemporary Taiwan (which he describes as the ‘audio-visual underprivileged of the Third World’). Reflecting on the way in which cinematic mechanisms of the West have been transformed and interiorized by the visual culture of Taiwan, Kao modified 8-mm film and slide projectors, renaming them ‘photochemical mechanical mobile images’ and ‘slideshow cinema’ respectively.



Women Lawyers

Curated by The Athena Project at Birkbeck

23 April - 5 May, 2015

This exhibition was a ground-breaking collaboration that brought together Birkbeck’s School of Law and Equality and Diversity team, working with CMS Cameron McKenna, leading international law firm, and Leonora Saunders, a dynamic and tal-

ented photographer.

Through the medium of striking, contextualized portraiture, this exhibition championed women who have succeeded in a variety of ways in a profession where women remain significantly unrepresented in senior roles. The exhibition aimed to celebrate these women who have blazed their own unique trails exploring the obstacles they faced along the way as well as to challenge our ideas on gender and ability. In doing so it presented memorable and inspiring portraits and profiles of these often hidden role models in our society and in our profession, ranging from the 686th Lord Mayor of the City of London to the first female and first person of color to be Attorney General in the United Kingdom.



Artist's Impression: Mangled Metal

John Timberlake (artist in residence)

8 June - 14 August, 2015

Bow Arts and the Peltz Gallery at the School of Arts joined forces to award the first Artist-in-Residence in the Peltz Gallery. The aim of the Residency is to explore how artistic engagement with academic research might simultaneously develop reflective arts practices and advance academic thinking.

Artist's Impression: Mangled Metal, was a collaboration between artist, John Timberlake, and Dr Gabriel Koureas, Senior Lecturer in Visual and Material Culture. John Timberlake worked with Dr. Gabriel Koureas exploring issues around the representation of the figure of the 'terrorist' in the context of Britain's 'small wars' 1945 – present. Central to their collaboration were reflections on the use of mangled metal as exhibitionary strategy by museums of war in representations of 'small wars' and the War on Terror. As Gabriel has previously written, the specimen of mangled metal, the fragment of wreckage, frequently becomes an exhibitionary trope, establishing the inhumanity of the insurgent in contrast to the artefacts such as tanks, artillery, rifles or aircraft that are often chosen to represent humane and heroic wars. The dialogue that takes place between the shining, smooth surfaces of the machinery of war and the rough surfaces of mangled metal is one between justifiable and unjustifiable war, good and evil, heroes and villains.



Passing Encounters

Photographs by Christopher Jonas

16 September - 17 October, 2015

Passing Encounters celebrated Christopher Jonas's recent photographs of cathedrals and museums dramatise the underlying complexity of the way we inhabit idealised embodiments of our shared world; movement and rest, concentrated looking and rushing about, being part of something greater than ourselves and yet unaware of what this means, being there and not there at the same time. They remind each of us of the importance of our shared history and culture, and the ease with which, barely noticed, it can slip from our grasp. (Dr Richard Noble, 2015)



AGORA

By Ain Bailey

23 October - 5 November, 2015

Ain Bailey is interested in the acoustics of sites of assembly that bring together diverse populations. This relationship between acoustics, architecture and assembly culminates in a series of compositions, which will be installed at the Peltz Gallery. As well as the installation, compositions will also be performed at their sites of origin. Locations include the British Museum and St. Georges, Bloomsbury.



Positive Living: Art and AIDS in South Africa

Curated by Annie Coombes

13 November 2015 - 22 January, 2016

This exhibition focused on the struggle for self-representation by those affected by the virus during the worst period of AIDS denialism under former President Thabo Mbeki from 1999 to 2003. It explored the way fine art and the process of print-making, painting and other creative practices produced effective therapeutic treatments for HIV/AIDS sufferers and enabled proactive memory work to be performed as a legacy for bereaved families and children. The exhibition included photo-documentary work aimed at alerting the international community, fine artists' responses to the pandemic and initiatives from within the hardest hit communities in South Africa itself. Many of these initiatives have since been adapted to other medical and mental health contexts globally: intimate Memory Boxes commemorating the lives and loves of lost family members as a personal legacy for those left behind; print and poster workshops promoting safe sex practices; human scale Body Maps from Khayelitsha tracing the trajectory of the virus and individuals' personal strategies for living with AIDS; large-scale tapestries with imagery borrowed from Picasso's 'Guernica' transposed to the Eastern Cape, transforming the historic iconography to foreground the experience of fighting for antiretrovirals and coping with the day to day management of living with HIV in a seriously deprived economic context.



Manual Labours: The Complaining Body

6 February - 3 March, 2016

This exhibition presented the process, findings and analysis of an 18 month long investigation into the physical and emotional affects of complaining, receiving complaints and not being able to complain in the context of work. The research involved a series of workshops with call centre workers in a London Borough Council, commuters on a train station platform in Worcester and staff dealing with student complaints in a UK University. The exhibition presented practice-based methodologies and offered a moment for new contributors to engage and discuss the findings, drawing on what complaints we share and can collectivise around.

The show asked what are the physical impacts on the body when complaining, receiving complaints and when you feel unable to complain? The emotional labour involved in listening to and managing complaints; the social and cultural conditions of complaining and the affect of not complaining all have repercussions on the body as a site of resistance, absorption and expulsion. The research explores the normative discourses of the good, healthy, productive body which are disrupted by the complaining body. The uncomplaining body is often in fact a sick body, having to perform a healthy body and happy self by internalising and stifling our complaints. The exhibition reflects on stories of how and why the complaining body is performed, silenced and internalised.



Identity

RELAPSE collective

28 April - 20 May, 2015

RELAPSE collective presented its first exhibition, with guest artist Penelope Koliopoulou, under the auspices of the Minister of Education and Culture of Cyprus, Dr. Costas Kadis. The exhibition focused on the concept of identity

as constructed and performed through social rituals and its embodied visceral manifestations. The public and artists were invited to take a step back from themselves, and join in a ritual of self-observation in order to open the work to collective authorship negotiated between performer and viewer thus reclaiming the constructs of our own identity.

Created by artists Vasiliki Antonopoulou, Nikolas Kasinos and Dimitrios Michailidis, RELAPSE is an online community for artists working in various media. Beginning as an observation of affinities between their work, the artists came together to plan a group exhibition. The process led to the creation of RELAPSE. Placed within virtual space, RELAPSE is an explorer aiming to give artists from different disciplines and geographic locations, the opportunity to come together and produce collaborative work; an attempt to dissolve the limitations distance and boundaries impose upon collaborative artistic production.



Tejas Verdes: I was not there

By Margarita Palacios and Livia Marin

23 October - 5 November, 2015

Bringing together Palacios' research on violence and Marin's work around loss and care, the project consisted of visiting several ex-detention and extermination sites in Chile and the performing of an aesthetic intervention in each of them. The result of the intervention is the production of a series of abstract realist objects that register traces of the material remains of these sites, marking the materiality of the violent event in its multiple layers of meaning and yet registering its unreadability. This aesthetic intervention explores the possibilities of representing violence without reproducing it and the challenges of non-colonizing experiences of witnessing. The exhibition includes as well a photo projection that shows numerous images of both sites and objects aiming to document the places and the experience of collaboration.



ABSORB

By Victoria Aherns

5 - 23 September, 2016

Working with the notion of permanence and impermanence, instability and uncertainty, photographs, films and books of the rivers of Argentina become an allegory for the passage of time. Teasing out the traumatic history and politics of these rivers, Aherns turned these topographies into abstracted or fragmented surfaces using traditional and digital photographic processes, film stills and projections. Where these practices overlap, the surface of the photographic print becomes imbued with fragments of the place itself, as the water of the river is used to develop the photographic etching plates in situ. These experiments in print looked to confront the imperfections of memory, and like typewriter ribbons that preserve an imprint of the stories written on them in their fibres, map the successive layers that erase and transform the landscape, generating a new narrative from a history of loss and disappearance.



A Museum of the Everyday: Cinephilia and Collecting

Curated by Matthew Harle & Jack Wormell

7 October 2016 - 27 January, 2017

A showcased selection of the Cinema Museum's extensive array of personal archives and records built by amateur film enthusiasts, largely unnoticed by visitors and researchers until now.

The exhibition looked at how these fascinatingly personal, creative and intricate collections begin to form a kind of life writing or autobiography, documenting the everyday lives of cinema enthusiasts. From Vic Kinson, an amateur cinephile, who amassed an archive of over 36,000 index cards – each card intricately detailing the careers and personal lives of the film stars he saw on the silver screen; Peter Ewing, whose scrapbooks and film diaries record his cinema-going teenage years in London through the Blitz and the remainder of the Second World War; to Graham Head, who painstakingly snipped off squares of celluloid from every reel of film he projected and kept them in little brown envelopes.



Decolonising witchcraft: Portraits of traditional healers in Bolivia

3 - 25 March, 2017

This exhibition portrays the women whose livelihoods involve the traditional rituals, artefacts and medicines that play a central role in culture and health in Bolivia. The indigenous wisdom involved in this work has been sidelined, either as 'witchcraft' under

colonial powers or as merely 'folklore' by positivist, Western approaches to medicine. Nevertheless, in the western highlands of Bolivia the vast majority of people meaningfully engage in these rituals and practice them seriously and devoutly, and Bolivia's first indigenous president, Evo Morales, has embarked on a decolonisation project which challenges the institutions and value systems which have marginalised indigenous knowledge.

These portraits are accompanied by quotes from the women themselves, discussing how they came to this profession and their role in the community. These women are referred to exotically in tourist guidebooks as 'witches' but are known locally as *chifleras* and *amautas*; the former prepares the materials for traditional healing rituals while the latter conducts the ceremony. The items used in these rituals include coca leaves, desiccated llama foetuses, the *q'oa* herb, alcohol and brightly coloured llama-wool and sugar figurines. These practitioners have long standing relationships with their clients and may be the first ports of call for those seeking assistance and guidance with their physical, emotional and/or spiritual well-being.



El Encanto

By Freddy Dewe Mathews

6 April - 4 May, 2017

The series, developed over the last 3 years, looks at the history of the rubber industry in the Putumayo, a large area of the Colombian Amazon once heavily exploited for this naturally occurring resource. Developed from various trips made by the artist to remote and historically important sites, the show looks at how, at the nucleus of a spiralling and often paradoxical history, the essentially harmonious process of tapping - an interaction between a tapper and a rubber tree - has come to echo the central allegory attached to it, that of bleeding.

The project also seeks to explore the many parallel histories that have developed from this industry, such as the indigenous myths of transfiguring and sexually predatory dolphins or the sexual exploits of the British investigator that went on to be hanged by his own government. The project refers to the source of this spectral material and the inherent metaphors in the process of bleeding this tree and comprises 16mm film, sculptures, engravings, drawings, photographs, and installations. Some works in this exhibition use latex to connect the forest directly with the city, the past with the present; other works employ used and discarded tyres that evoke their cultural and historical transformation.



Mr A Moves in Mysterious Ways: Selected Artists from the Adamson Collection

15 - 25 July, 2017

The Adamson Collection is one of the world's largest collections of artworks made by psychiatric patients. It consists of approximately 6,000 paintings, drawings and sculptural objects, produced between 1946 and 1981 by the residents of Netherne, a long-stay British mental hospital, under the guidance of Edward Adamson.

Adamson (1911-1996) was initially engaged to assist with research into the relationship between mental illness and creativity: as a professional artist, his job was to encourage the patients to paint, with the resulting works transferred to clinicians for analysis. After the study ended in 1951, Adamson established an open studio where residents were allowed to come and paint freely. He rejected the diagnostic focus of the earlier experiments, convinced that the very process of art making was therapy enough, and that creative expression could be a tool to help people find their way back to wellness.

This exhibition displayed selected works by eight people, chosen for their distinctive visual styles and particular histories. By presenting these individuals as artists, rather than as un-named and undifferentiated psychiatric patients, and framing their objects as artworks, the exhibition highlights the aesthetic, personal and historical dimensions of the collection, whilst remaining sensitive to its medical and therapeutic contexts.



In Pursuit of Love

By Sunil Gupta

20 September - 31 October, 2017

The works in this exhibition explored what it meant to be an out Indian gay man being desired in the world. 'Homelands' (2004) grew out of Gupta's experiences being gay, of Indian origin but living in the West, and being HIV positive. Since the virus lived within, these landscapes which Gupta had called home at various times belonged to the virus as much as they belonged to him. It was a shift from exclusively postcolonial terms of reference to geography and location. A stepping back.

'Homelands' led Gupta to move back to India. This was triggered by a sudden, unexpected and overwhelming love affair that began at a show of 'Homelands' and 'Exiles' (1977) in Delhi in 2005. 'The New Pre-Raphaelites' (2008) was Gupta's attempt to visualise the moment of sexual liberation and restlessness that was no longer 'the love that dared not speak its name' but the love that was suddenly having Pride marches and demanding equal rights.



Conceiving Histories

8 November - 13 December, 2017

How can something that doesn't happen have a history? How can there be a material trace of un-pregnancy in the archive? This exhibition explored this paradox, finding and considering a material history of pregnancy feigned, imagined, hidden and difficult to diagnose. Reimagining, through structure and shape, the look of things that have been left to us in text, the Conceiving Histories exhibition re-materialises with photography, sculpture and drawing the past of un-pregnancy.

Conceiving Histories was a collaboration between academic and literary historian, Isabel Davis, and visual artist, Anna Burel. From this collaboration emerge fantastical and fictional reworkings of archival materials, work which explores the power, and lack of power, of the mind over the reproductive body. Attempts to diagnose pregnancy fertilize the imagination and, so, the imagination compensates in the face of reproductive disappointment. This exhibition explored the search for signs of pregnancy in, from and on the body as well as messages and messengers, divine or otherwise. Empty uterine spaces are displaced from the corporeal frame, sometimes labelled and dated, sometimes filled with strange visions, reimagining female subjectivity in relation to the unknowability of the body. Swollen and flat structures, pads and envelopes, empty and filled, contrast the fantasies of or desire for pregnancy and the reality of the un-pregnant body. The body can be as opaque as history, resistant, mediated and difficult to read. This exhibition threaded together lived experiences through time, linking the past to the present, offering new ways to think about our reproductive futures.



Replaced Lives

8 January - 16 February, 2018

Printmaking is a global art form that makes and plays with multiples and series. It is a means for reproduction that has many different uses and connotations, and responds to a need to duplicate, transfer and translate. Jan Bastow depicted the dramatic impact of technology and worldwide mass communication on the lives of four generations of women. Catherine Guy-Murrell reframed viewpoints to emphasise multiple perspectives in the mechanics of perception. Ros Ingham used metaphors to comment on both continuity and change in our links to the past and our relationship to objects. Trish Roberts' work reveals a very personal WWI story: the tragic death of a wife and mother whose sudden disappearance and replacement had consequences still in evidence today.

Working in 2D and 3D, on paper, textiles and ceramics, the artists have used new and more traditional printmaking techniques that conjure up hidden layers, shapes and textures. As a result each print was both unique and original, deliberately created for the part it must play in reflecting intense narratives and changing states of being.



Cultural Sniping: Photographic Collaborations

Curated by Patrizia Di Bello

9 March - 28 April, 2018

This exhibition showcased important materials from the archive of the late Jo Spence, British photographer, writer, and self-described 'cultural sniper', tracing links and collaborations in activist art, radical publications, community photography and phototherapy from the 1970s and 1980s. Consistent with Spence's ethos of radical pedagogy, this exhibition

focuses on her collaborative working methods. It opens up the archive, displaying books, magazines, journals, collages, photographs, posters, pamphlets, notes, letters and props, to provide insights into Spence's practices and the culture, politics and activism informing them. Screenings and workshops will run alongside the exhibition.

On display were works made in association with Spence's collaborators, including Terry Dennett and Rosy Martin. Materials from the Photography Workshop community project to the Polysnappers, the group she worked with while a mature student, show how they used photography to interrogate dominant representations of labour, class, race, gender and sexuality, developing a praxis of political and social change through education. Life-long learning was crucial to Spence, who encouraged others to engage in visual critiques and consciousness-raising projects based on their own life experiences. She and Martin pioneered the practice of phototherapy, working through themes of working-class identity and stigmatisation, sexuality, grief and illness, using photography in an empowering and transformative way.



Transitional States: Hormones at the Crossroads of Art and Science

By Dr Chiara Beccalossi

10 May - 11 June, 2018

What effect do hormone uses have on emotions, sensations, sexual expression and desire? This video art exhibition presented the work of 14 artists and collectives who explore the immense role hormones have on our everyday life. The works raised crucial questions about how society

influences and regulates gender identity, and captured broader explorations of sexuality and gender fluidity. The featured artists took viewers on sometimes intensely personal journeys and demonstrated the liberation they have experienced through the use of hormones. Other works looked at the medicalisation of women's bodies in relation to birth control, menopause and ageing, and offer an important commentary on how we use hormones to improve and sometimes constrain our lives in ways we rarely consider. Artists, performers, writers and activists have employed various techniques to produce these works, including 3D animation, stop motion, and infrared video, and use a range of formats such as performance for the camera, music video, documentary, TV show and online feeds.

Transitional States was developed and led by Dr Chiara Beccalossi (University of Lincoln) with support from the Wellcome Trust. The video art exhibition was curated by Giulia Casalini and Diana Georgiou (Arts Feminism Queer).



Capsule: Inside the Medieval Book

By Anthony Bale and Shay Hamias

26 June - 30 July, 2018

In the winter of 2015 Professor Anthony Bale, a medievalist at Birkbeck College, rediscovered four beautiful and rare books in the College's library. Dating from c. 1425 to 1499, these books are the inspiration for this art project, the result of a creative collaboration

between Bale and Shay Hamias, who specialises in narrative-based animation art.

The four medieval books are a kind of 'capsule collection' of medieval culture and art: representing religion in France, medicine in Siena, philosophy in Verona and historical literature in Venice. The exhibition at the Peltz Gallery explores the materiality of the medieval book and the idea of the 'capsule collection' to showcase contemporary ways of thinking through medieval objects. Birkbeck's four medieval books will be on public display at the centre of the exhibition, with explanatory material for the general public; Hamias' artwork will surround and animate the manuscripts, drawing the visitor into the enticing world of the medieval book.



Day for Night: Landscapes of Walter Benjamin

By Diego Ferrari and Jean McNeil

21 September - 27 October, 2018

This multimedia exhibition inspired by the landscapes inhabited in the life and thought of Frankfurt School intellectual Walter Benjamin. Text, photography and film takes the viewer on a journey from the place of Benjamin's birth in Berlin to Capri and Naples, where he spent formative episodes of his life. The exhibition ends in Catalunya, northern Spain, where Benjamin died while fleeing the Nazis in 1940. It documents the lasting legacy of Benjamin's work nearly 80 years after his death.

The exhibition takes its title from an effect in filmmaking in which night-time scenes are deliberately shot in the day then underexposed. This reversal allows the viewer to consider a basic principle of photography: how light and dark are mutually constituted. Through image and film the exhibition explores the interstitial zones of our lives, caught between exposure and refuge, and provokes a timely and urgent meditation on the enduring relationship between place, literature and rights.

The exhibition is a collaboration by fine art photographer Diego Ferrari, Kingston University, and Jean McNeil, Reader in Creative Writing, University of East Anglia.



Circus Life: Art and Artistes

By Dr Chiara Beccalossi

7 November - 12 December, 2018

The Academy of Circus Arts and the Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre present Circus Life: Art and Artistes.

The art form of circus was invented by impresario and trick horse rider Philip Astley in London in 1768. Its skills, traditions and iconography, as well as its global community of dedicated performers, have provided inspiration for the work of countless artists including Seurat, Renoir, Degas and Picasso.

This new exhibition celebrated the 250th anniversary of Astley's remarkable creation; investigating circus' continuing appeal as a subject for visual artists through the eyes of recent and contemporary British practitioners. Their work has captured the people, places and performances which combine to make circus a unique way of life as well as a universally accessible form of live entertainment.

Featuring paintings, drawings, photographs, films, ceramics and sculpture by artists currently working alongside the circus community, including Peter Lavery, Kate Stone, John Stillman, Abel Kesteven and Curtis Tappenden; as well as prints by Laura Knight, and pieces by Clarice Cliff and Clifford Hall.