

*Uncertain Exchanges: a symposium in conjunction with the exhibition Landscape,
Art and Uncertainty*

Southampton City Art Gallery
LAND² Symposium 18th October 2013
10.00 – 4.00

This exhibition and associated symposium revisits possibilities of landscape and place for contemporary British artists. Four artists from the research network **LAND²** have responded to the gallery's extensive collection, considering significant works from the neo-romantic period alongside contemporary artists' work. This symposium will free and be of interest to artists, researchers, PhD students and the general public.

The work of neo-romantic artists has unexpected resonances today in our very different digital and global world. There are unexpected parallel concerns: in periods of transformation, change and potential loss how can a revisiting of the genre of landscape be radical? The symposium will offer an opportunity to reflection on and debate these and related issues.

The keynote speaker will be Tim Craven: curator Southampton City Art Gallery the title of his paper is *Questions for a landscape artist*. Exhibiting and other **LAND²** artists will reflect on landscape, both urban and rural, place, evaluations of nature, and human interventions in, and understandings of, environment, past and present in our uncertain world. There will be presentations from the following artists: a detailed programme will be available shortly.

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Programme

10.00 -10.15 Coffee/tea

10.20 – 10.30 Welcome – Melanie Rose and Judith Tucker

Keynote: 10.30 – 11.15 Chair: Judith Tucker
Tim Craven: *Questions for a landscape artist.*

Session 1: 11.15 -12.30 Chair: Victoria Walters

Dr Iain Biggs, Land2
Notes on an anxious landscape: transcribing Keith Vaughan and Peter Lanyon

Dr Harriet Tarlo, Sheffield Hallam and Judith Tucker, University of Leeds
Tributaries: contemporary collaborations with neo-romanticism

Dr Louise K Wilson University of Lincoln
The plasticity of echoes

Susan Trangmar, CSM University of the Arts, London
From Uncertainty to Indeterminacy: An Unfolding Exchange in the Making of 'A Forest of Signs'.

12.30 -1.15 lunch and opportunity to look round the exhibition
(lunch not provided- there is an café at the Sea City Museum)

Session 2: 1.15 -2.30 Chair Iain Biggs

Deborah Gardner, University of Leeds
Shifting Ground: Navigation and Negotiation

Mary Modeen, University of Dundee
Dwelling in the Space of Uncertainty

Melanie Rose, Fareham College
Eggs, Chalk & Landscape

Dr Gillian Robertson, Land2
I may as well try and catch the wind

2.30 -2.45 Tea/coffee

Session 3: 2.45 - 4.00

Chair: Mary Modeen

Anne-Marie Creamer, University of the Arts London
Pirandello's wish

Dr Rebecca Thomas, University of Hertfordshire
Peripatetic practice: leisure, line and landscape

Dr Paul Wilson University of Leeds
A site of uncertain association

Anne Eggebert, CSM University of the Arts
TOPOPHOBIA – Disappearing Places

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHIES

Iain Biggs, *Notes on an anxious landscape: transcribing Keith Vaughan and Peter Lanyon*

Vaughan and Lanyon are loosely associated with Neo-Romanticism and the unsettling of British conceptions of landscape that it represents. In this paper I will indicate some of the concerns that informed my transcriptions of Vaughan's *The Singer* and Lanyon's *Zennor* and related works.

Dr Iain Biggs RWA is a Visiting Research Fellow at UWE, Bristol and an independent teacher/artist/researcher. He is the founder and an editorial board member of Wild Conversations Press and a co-convenor of the PLaCE (UK), LAND2, and Mapping Spectral Traces networks.

Tim Craven, *Questions for a landscape artist.*

Tim Craven is both an artist and has been curator at Southampton City Gallery since 2002. He has recently curated "Under The Greenwood – Present (Picturing The British Tree)" exhibition, St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery, Lymington, October 2013

Anne-Marie Creamer, *Pirandello's wish*

For the last 10 years of his life Italian writer Luigi Pirandello wished to make a film that could act as a precursor to his seminal 1921 meta-play 'Six Characters in Search of an Author'. The texts he produced around this ambition were lost for decades and resurfaced in the archives of Austrian theatre director Max Rheinhart in the 1980's. In taking on the implications of working with the failed ambitions of another individual, working in a different time, location and medium, my paper will explore potential relationships between place, site specific performance and visual practices. I regard Pirandello's text as a kind of ruin, relating it as a form of landscape after Gertrude Stein's proposition in 1922 that plays were landscapes.

Anne-Marie Creamer is an artist. Her practice encompasses videos, drawings and paintings. Creamer's work is regularly exhibited internationally at galleries and museums such as: Sogn og Fjordane Kunstmuseum (Norway), Palm Springs Art Museum, Kunstvereniging Diepenheim (The Netherlands), The Sir John Soane's Museum (London). Publications that feature her work include *The Drawing Book*, edited by Tania Kovats (Black Dog Publishing, 2006). She received the Derek Hill Scholarship in Drawing at British School at Rome, 2012. She was educated at Middlesex University & the Royal College of Art. She lives in London, where she is a Lecturer at the University of the Arts, London.

Anne Eggebert, *TOPOPHOBIA – Disappearing Places*

The combination of the proliferation, quality and quantity of images of place somehow become its unmaking. Topophobia arises when these technologies of disappearance do their work on our sense of place and arouse our anxiety for what is slipping away from us. Eggebert reflects on how a number of the works included in

TOPOPHOBIA approach these technologies towards a radical view of contemporary and historical representations of landscape.

Anne Eggebert uses photography, sound, video, drawing and teletechnologies to interrogate our understanding and performance of place (both local and distant). Recent exhibitions include TOPOPHOBIA curated by Eggebert-and-Gould at Danielle Arnaud, London, the Bluecoat, Liverpool, and Spacex, Exeter (2012). Eggebert is a senior lecturer in fine art at Central Saint Martins, UAL, London. <http://www.anne-eggebert.com/>

Deborah Gardner, Shifting Ground: Navigation and Negotiation

A gradual contemplation of certain works within Southampton City Art Gallery's collection has prompted me to reflect on the sensory and imaginative processes of walking and viewing. I wish to explore how both the *Google Earth* sourced aerial views of *Portland Isle*, and John Piper's close up dramatic views of the 'romantic desolation' of the island allowed my imaginative navigation of a place I have never visited. And in the significant reconfiguration of my exhibited work *World within World*, I should also consider how both uncertainty and mishap played as much a part in the renegotiation as did my response to works by Hamish Fulton and Stanley Spencer.

Since 2010, Deborah Gardner has exhibited in several group exhibitions in London, Berlin, Turin, Madrid and Lodz. Closer to home, she has collaborated with the Arts Council at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in a large solo exhibition at Huddersfield Art gallery, a Rednile unique commission in collaboration with the regeneration project Burslem Port Trust, Stoke and a collaborative residency with Judith Tucker at the Leeds City Industrial Museum. Recent Land2 group exhibitions include *Close to Home* in Leeds and the current exhibition *Art, landscape and Uncertainty* at Southampton City Art Gallery

Mary Modeen, Dwelling in the Space of Uncertainty

A student described his work as being photographs so ubiquitous as to be 'no place', equating the proliferation of 'snapped' images, taken at various heights, with placelessness. Yet at the same time, he said his motivation for taking these hundreds of images was to foster a sense of belonging, to create a sense of home through the image-capture of objects and people. The paradoxical state that he occupies is the uncertain in-between of the physical and the metaphysical, the photograph as indicative of the place we inhabit by looking outward while trying to come to terms with the dissatisfaction of how they signify. Ultimately, this uncertainty is the space between longing and wish fulfilment; art depicting place as we encounter it driven by the vision of place as transcendent of emotionless objectivity. Dwelling in-between is the ground of uncertainty that opens the possibilities for this creative exploration.

Mary Modeen is an artist and academic at the University of Dundee. She teaches undergraduates and postgraduates both fine art and interdisciplinary studies, founded and directs the MFA in Art & Humanities, and supervises PhD candidates in

interdisciplinary practice-led studies. Her own research has several threads: perception as a cognitive and interpretive process, and place-based research, which tends to connect cultural values, history and embodied experience. As such, this work usually combines creative art with printmaking practice at its core, and writing. Currently, she co-convenes three research groups, *Mapping Spectral Traces* and *Land2*, and *PLaCE International (UK)*, the last of which is part of an international research consortium, with partners in Australia, Minnesota, Ireland and France.

Gillian Robertson, *I may as well try and catch the wind*

The wind - romantic lyrical genius, material and political resource, solar phenomenon uncontrollable by science. Painting outside in the landscape I'm windblown. It's a question of how it catches my contemporary mind.

Dr Gillian Robertson trained at Winchester School of Art and teaches at the University of Southampton. An exhibition of her work *Gillian Robertson - Landscapes* is currently running at the Turner Sims Concert Hall until 1 November.

Melanie Rose Eggs, *Chalk & Landscape*

The South Downs is where Ivon Hitchens lived and work, as do I. Making work in response to this Neo-Romantic artist has been both a learning curve and a delight. With Hitchens characteristic white space left around the edges within his compositions it became a signal to accentuate the whiteness and the chalkiness of the South Downs. Gesso combined with pure pigment and my own hens eggs provided the medium by which the paintings were made. The narrative is offered on various levels, but in particular the digital age meeting a medieval method of working. The rhythms and working methods have changed dramatically from the 1940's to the twenty-first century. The luxury of being an artist recording the landscape without the bonus of digital equipment would have made this project virtually impossible.

Melanie Rose is an artist and lecturer; exhibiting both in the UK and internationally. Specializing in drawing and painting; specifically egg and graphite/tempera. Projects include working with Paul Smith, NHS & Ravi Shankar. Rose has been lead artist on four successful Arts Council funded projects as well as outreach community projects associated with regional galleries

Harriet Tarlo and Judith Tucker, *Tributaries: contemporary collaborations with neo-romanticism*

In this joint paper we reflect on how, working in collaboration with each other and with artists in the neo-romantic tradition (in particular, Graham Sutherland and the contemporary artist George Shaw), complicates our experience of landscape, scale and space through a series of recognitions and resistances. In returning to our own places and visiting those of other artists, we raise questions about memory and landscape, how we get from there to here, across places and decades, unsettling temporal and spatial relations.

Harriet Tarlo is a poet, academic and Course Leader for M.A. Writing at Sheffield Hallam University. Publications include *Poems 1990-2003* (Shearsman 2004), *Nab* (etruscan 2005) and *Sound Unseen* with Judith Tucker (Wild Pansy, 2013). She is editor of *The Ground Aslant: An Anthology of Radical Landscape Poetry* (Shearsman, 2011). She has been collaborating with Judith Tucker for two years on the place-based projects, *Tributaries* and *Excavations and Estuaries*.

Judith Tucker is an artist, academic and Senior Lecturer in the School of Design at the University of Leeds. She is co convenor of two relevant and linked research networks: Mapping Spectral Traces and Land2. She has exhibited widely nationally and internationally at galleries including Brno, Czech Republic, Abbey Walk Gallery and Surface Gallery Nottingham, F Block Gallery, UWE, Bristol, Armory Gallery, Blacksburg, Virginia, USA, Myles Meehan Arts Centre Darlington, Gainsborough's House, New Hall Art Collection, University of Cambridge, Suffolk, Stanley and Audrey Burton Gallery, Leeds, Lounge Gallery, London, Mercer Gallery, Harrogate, Gallery Oldham, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre, North Lincolnshire, An Tobar Tobnemory, Mull, and Only Atelier, Vienna.

Rebecca Thomas, *Peripatetic practice: leisure, line and landscape*

In this illustrated talk Rebecca Thomas will discuss her practice of drawing while hill walking. Using pens, oil pastels, and a variety of sketch pads, the drawings are executed not during pauses during the walk but whilst actually moving through the landscape. This approach has resulted in a large collection of drawings comprised of a complex of accumulated marks which echo in their frenzied overlay the arhythmic movement of the artist's body as it engages with the uncertainty of the natural terrain. These drawings are not intended as preparatory studies but as works in their own right forming a record of the phenomenological engagement with the environment and raising thoughts about perception, documentation and visual translation. The talk will also consider the changes in approach and medium over time, most recently the additional of a textual element to the work.

Dr Rebecca Thomas, University of Hertfordshire
<http://www.land2.uwe.ac.uk/rthomas11.htm>

Susan Trangmar, *From Uncertainty to Indeterminacy: An Unfolding Exchange in the Making of 'A Forest of Signs'*

A brief journey retracing steps in the making of 'A Forest of Signs', a photographic project which explores urban arboreal presence through concepts of porosity and transitivity, variation and multiplicity. 'A Forest of Signs' has been published as a visual essay 'A Divided Glance': A Dialogue Between the Photographic Project 'A Forest of Signs' and the Figure of the Tree in Virginia Woolf's Writing, *The Literary London Journal* [http://www.literarylondon.org/london-journal/Volume10 Number 1](http://www.literarylondon.org/london-journal/Volume10%20Number%201) (Spring 2013) and in *Photography and Culture* Vol 4 issue 5 Berg and performed as a moving image and text based reading at Bloomsbury Festival October 2013.

Susan Trangmar is Reader in Fine Art at CSM. Her practice explores the

interrelationships between place, site and landscape using lens based media, text and sound.

Louise K Wilson, *The plasticity of echoes*

There are perhaps multiplicities of personal, political and psychological reasons why numerous contemporary artists have wished to explore the 'uncomfortable monuments' extant from the Cold War. This long-lasting conflict exerted a tangible effect and clearly touched lives in profound ways, not least with the persistence of fear. This talk will critically reflect on different methodologies employed by artists gathering materials at such sites: asking how their processes 'borrow' from other disciplines; analyzing the repeated citations of W G Sebald in particular; and questioning the place of novelty in the face of shared territory.

Louise K Wilson is a visual artist who makes installations, soundworks and videos. She has exhibited widely in North America and Europe and recent exhibitions include the Dukes Wood Project (Nottinghamshire, 2013); Mistaken Presence (Greyfriars, Lincoln, 2012); Topophobia (Danielle Arnaud Gallery, London; Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool and Spacex Gallery, Exeter, 2012); SOUNDWORKS (ICA, London, 2012); Re-sounding Falkland on the Falkland Estate (Scotland 2010, made with David Chapman), I Hear Too: Live (York Minster 2009), Composure (Impressions Gallery, Bradford 2008), Post-Cinema (RMIT Project Space, Melbourne 2007); Sonic Arts Network Expo (Plymouth 2007) and the International Film Festival Rotterdam (2006). She teaches at the University of Lincoln and the University of Leeds.

Dr Paul Wilson, *A site of uncertain association*

Formerly the Mechanics Institute (opened in 1834 and moved to the corner of Cavendish Street and North Street in 1870), Keighley College was active in educating the people of the town until 2009, when a merger with Leeds City College led to the opening of a new campus within the town (under a different name / identity). Currently, the old College building stands empty and a planned sale by its current owners (Bradford Council) is being pursued. This would, most likely, result in the demolition of the buildings on the site - both the former Mechanics Institute building and the - newer - extensions which were added in the 1950s. While there is some architectural merit in both sets of buildings, it's certain that whatever the results of the sale, significant changes would result to one or both and landmark in Keighley's build environment would be lost. The presentation focuses on the moment of uncertainty which the building currently finds itself in, alongside the legacy of popular education within the town of Keighley.

Dr. Paul Wilson is a Lecturer in the School of Design at the University of Leeds. His research activities centre on aspects of typographic process and practice, investigating the relationships between language, typography, writing and aspects of everyday life. He is particularly interested in narratives of community and place and focuses on sites of situated class experience at moments or points of transition, decay or termination. His current research explores ideas of activism, alongside notions and practices of sonic and co-design.