

A BULLETIN  
ISSUE FOUR  
A FOUNDATION  
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## Introduction

### This is the fourth Edition of A Foundation’s A Bulletin. Our Autumnal almanac of what’s happening at A Foundation’s two sites in London and Liverpool.

Our last edition covered A Foundation’s Liverpool Biennial exhibitions; meteorological analogy was deployed to describe the swirling vortex of artworks thrown up like barricades to resist a collapse into spectacle across Greenland Street, as the banks were nationalised and we got nostalgic about the spirit of 68<sup>1</sup>. In a slightly apocalyptic tone we prefaced an invitation to consider these works with collaged speech bubbles from the great manifestos of the C20. Twelve months later we are delighted to be back. Sustaining velocity is an artform when the debris of economic catastrophe is the strophe de jour and broadsheets are filled with miserable graphs of priapic failures<sup>2</sup>.

A Foundation has closed its off shore accounts and sold off the collection of rare gems in our vaults under Rochelle School. We have hired mystic accountants to lure riches from HMRC towards our revolutionary mission: Lets Artists Make Art. We invite everyone, even those who might be new to Self Assessment to select us as beneficiaries of Gift Aid. Our Charity number is: 1098692<sup>3</sup>

If due to some delusional Newtonian twist you were trying to work out when the post modern epoch ended you might have missed, our recent exhibitions in London: Clusterf\*\*k, a mental extratravaganzaa of smoke and mirrors, sensory seduction and kamikaze chicks on wheels.

Or in Liverpool; the domestic hallucinations of Daniel Pasteiner, in the first of our series of exhibitions showing artists re-imagining sculpture<sup>4</sup>. In Liverpool we have also hosted Taxed a series of arty parlour games colliding rhizomatics, culinary theory, musical chairs and cut ‘n’ paste. This is already history and we are looking forward to the Really Long Night and Sex for the Disabled with 15mm films in September. We are also looking forward to upcoming exhibitions of; Haroon Mirza, Ben Rivers and Artur Żmijewski.

Read Ben Rivers interview with Jordan Baseman for an insight into points of inspiration, from abandoned film sets in the Nordic night to evenings in the makeshift habitations and universes of a few reclusive hermits.

As Artur Żmijewski has tells us artists today are not preoccupied with the medium of their work but rather its capacity to act as a channel to stream and focus ideas, disseminate and collect data and emotions, create neural networks in which to exchange communication.

In a pyhric victory over Nuts magazine we have made as much space as possible in this publication for featured artists to tell us what they are doing and why they are doing it. This expanded edition also allows us to cover the full spectrum of exhibitions, events and interludes across both Liverpool and London. We are delighted that guest writers have contributed essays on upcoming exhibitions such as; New Work by Whitney McVeigh, whose monoprints and drawings, JJ Charlesworth suggests are provocative meditations on the question of the figurer in painting.

Alas if you picked up this issue merely hoping to find out where the delightful holiday destination on the front is? We cannot say – Maider Lopez has sworn us to secrecy. You might turn up with a blue towel!

But if it is more about our Beyond the Boundary season: Free to Air with Film and Video Umbrella, Interspecies with Arts Catalyst, Bloomberg New Contemporaries, Saatchi New Sensations or seven provocative artists from Spain who will occupy our London galleries in, Off Street, and much, much more, then keep reading.

Off Street is curated by Blanca de La Torre and creates a centrifugal experience around Arnold Circus. It offers a stop off from the drudgery of everyday life to indulge in post situationist aesthetics, the world is turned upside down and the banality of commodity exchange is put on hold. This is most extensive international exhibition to date in our London gallery. The special Off Street section introduces each of the artists and their proposed projects which wil include an explosive performance from Short Bus Window Licker.

Enough of this detail we must return to the elusive effects of the editorial preface. It is not what it seems. It is not the second Chapter of: On the Threshold of Hospitality but rather some words arranged neatly on a page as if....<sup>5</sup>

You will notice a proliferation of footnotes which divert the gaze away from the forward momentum of the sentences into a delicate undergrowth that by its positioning reveals subtle erotic tensions at work. All of these special effects seem alien and yet just what you expect from A Foundation. It is anarchic and rebellious in a manner that is both sophisticated but accessible. The artists whose words you will read at your leisure are sincere and lucid about their works. The tone does not betray an eagerness to over familiarize itself with you but rather edges you in its direction: which is towards the works of the artists in our galleries in London and Liverpool.

We do not presume to dictate their modus operands but celebrate their artistic vigour. We are mad and should not be trusted with your minds. We play the Air Loom<sup>6</sup> from our secret vaults to secure benefactors. We have gathered together artists who radiate subversion using nothing less than the putrid ether of a culture in turmoil, distilled into a fragrance that is uniquely alluring like the musk of the Elephant Man. We hope you enjoy all our endeavours and look forward to hearing from your through the intricate loom of the web.

<sup>1</sup> To rewind these experiences visit our blog: [www.afoundations.blogspot.com](http://www.afoundations.blogspot.com)

<sup>2</sup> Future art historians will have to dig deep to comprehend why the quaint notion of the ‘altermodern’ became a distraction.

<sup>3</sup> If you give certain assets to a UK charity you can claim Income Tax relief and lower your tax bill. You can also claim relief if you sell the asset to a UK charity at less than its market value.

<sup>4</sup> Download Daniel Pasteiner interviewed by Bryony Bond from our website or itunes – Its free! [www.twitter.com/AFoundation](http://www.twitter.com/AFoundation)

<sup>5</sup> To follow this elipsis track our Twitter: <http://twitter.com/AFoundation>

<sup>6</sup> The first recorded case of paranoia in medical literature was of one James Tilly Matthews, a London tea broker who in 1810 claimed his mind was being controlled by a gang operating a machine he called an “Air Loom” which was hidden in a London cellar and sent out invisible, magnetic rays.



# Haroon Mirza

Haroon Mirza’s first solo exhibition opens at A Foundation, Liverpool on 1st October. Mirza considers the acoustic and the visual of equal significance in his work, often referring to the cultural significance of music and using sculptural elements to create subtle musical compositions. One of the new works included in the exhibition has been commissioned by 176/Zabludowicz Collection, we asked Elizabeth Neilson, Curator at 176/Zabludowicz Collection to talk to Haroon Mirza about his work.

Elizabeth Neilson: When you are making a work with particular context in mind – what is it you are looking for in a space?

Haroon Mirza: The majority of the time I look for plug sockets; where and how many! I then check what the acoustics are like and if there are any architectural features that I might be able to exploit. I habitually use things I find laying around either at home, in my studio, out on the street or where I install. I guess I look for elements that I can convincingly appropriate, it makes things more gestural. The Blade Factory in the A Foundation has typical gallery spaces in that they’re white walled and concrete floored. The ceilings are quite high so the acoustics are brilliant in the sense that the sound will reverberate throughout the space, although serious thought needs to go into compartmentalising three works that all have a strong element of sound.

EN: Is it the space, a subject or the materials which start the making process?

HM: It is a combination of all three really. Subject and materials seem to feed into one another. I’m interested in the socio-cultural history of objects that appear in my work and the contexts in which they originally emerged/ developed. At the moment the main object I’m focusing on - which in the end may not seem that important - is the turntable. They’re an obvious object for me because I’ve always had them lying around from DJing. Although I’ll once again be using turntables for their rotational quality, in this instance, I’ll also make use of the ‘pitch control’ to synchronise the rate at which other elements are struck to produce sound. Pitch control is the function on a turntable that allows you to adjust the speed of the record by a further 8% in addition to the 33/45 rpm records are generally cut at. It’s called pitch control because adjusting the speed inevitably affects the pitch of the music due to the analogue nature of the medium. The technicality of it is quite boring, but the important thing is that this function allowed DJs to mix records, which in turn gave way to many of the genres of dance music we have today. Therefore this use of pitch control in the work is very much akin to the craft of DJing. I recently started finding out about the conditions in which ‘beatmixing’ (synchronising the tempo of two records)

emerged and the individuals involved. So what was happening in New York’s disco scene from the late 60’s through to the mid 80s is really informing one of the new works for the A Foundation show. It was predominantly a black, gay subculture that came to head with the proliferation of AIDS, but it was this period that formed the foundations for club culture as we now know it.

The sound however is slightly different. It’s not so much ‘sound’ in my work but rather music insofar as the sounds are arranged and structured using musical conventions. I see my practice as a really convoluted or elaborate way of creating musical compositions, although it’s definitely rooted within the aesthetic concerns of ‘visual’ art – I studied art and have no formal training in music.

EN: That’s a conundrum – not sound, but music that is rooted in aesthetics – do you describe the works as sculpture?

HM: They are sculptures or assemblages or installations when they inhabit space. I’m constantly thinking about what something looks like from all possible angles, you get a different picture depending on where you stand.

I’m fascinated by the idea of making a space into place, which is both physical and experiential – recording the sound looses that quality. Max Neuhaus talked about this in relation to his ‘Times Square’ installation. This was during the time when a handful of avant-garde musicians including Cage and Stockhausen were really taking their music to the peripheries of art and indeed in some circumstances, it entered the discursive realms of ‘visual’ art. In many ways I’m working the other way round – I’m

trying to take visual art to the peripheries of music. It always ends up with semantics when we try to distinguish between disciplines and that’s why I find objects so important. A piece of furniture may have nothing to do with the music or the ideas that inform the work and that’s where something begins to happen. Then there are all the delicate subtleties of working with objects; form, colour how things are positioned. All these aesthetic concerns also exist in creating music so I try and somehow mirror the visual with the acoustic. Sometimes that happens by default due to the nature of how I create sounds – a flashing LED generates a pulsing sound.

EN: That appears quite practical, creating musical combinations out of the mechanical or electrical sounds that are latent in objects we might use everyday, but there is a poetic sensibility which is this “mirroring the visual with the acoustic”. Can you say a little more about that?

HM: In many ways it’s a synaesthetic sensibility but not in a phenomenological way. All sound is causal and in most cases the cause can be made visible, so I attempt to reveal or demystify what you’re hearing. We’re really lucky now that we’re able to go online and download a Motown record within minutes but it’s so far removed from how that song came into being that it almost becomes something else and I find that quite disturbing. But also there’s something interesting about perception in that you can hear the noises emitted from familiar objects organised in a way that they’re perceived as music. It’s like what Varèse said almost two centuries ago; “all music is organised noise”, which is like saying all sculpture is organised materials. I guess I combine the two.



Maidier Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005





Maiden Lopez—*Playa Izurun* (Detail), 2005





# Ben Rivers

An exhibition of Ben Rivers’ film works, etchings and installations will be in the vast Furnace gallery at A Foundation, Liverpool from 4 September to 17 October. The exhibition will span Rivers’ recent work exploring the lives of people who have chosen to live outside of society and earlier work that focused on empty spaces.



Maider Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

This is a conversation between Rivers and fellow filmmaker Jordan Baseman, whose work also often focuses on the personal narratives of individuals.

JB: Can you please describe your films for me, and perhaps more importantly why you make them?

BR: When I start shooting they are closely related to documentary films, but they are not about facts. I'm not just documenting, I am of course recording actual people in their in actual living settings, but I always think of that just as a starting point. It's a catalyst for what the film is actually going to be, which is only worked out while its been made, and even more so while its being edited.

By the time I'm at the editing stage I'm not even thinking of the work as documentary, its become much more fictionalised. I'm doing so much construction, particularly with the sound, I'm transforming it into some other world, which is somewhere between reality and fiction.

JB: When I've looked at your work, some of it seems very portrait driven, would you use that word to describe your work?

BR: I would. I've talked about all of the films of people as portraits. But somehow I try and move away from just creating a portrait, I do hope that that an element is still there in the finished film, but at some point in the filming it moves away from being a portrait directly and becomes more about something else I've seen in that space. I want to be truthful to that person and sensitive to their way of life, but at the same time I'll discuss with them that the film is going to go off on tangents. For example with *Ah, Liberty!* all the adults are all left out, so that film becomes much more fictionalised and unlike what its actually like to be there, but at the same time somewhere at its core, there's a portrait of that family.

JB: Does this 'something else' really start to come through in the editing process?

BR: That's when it starts to make sense. When I'm filming I try and make more than visit, and that's become increasingly important. So I'll film then go home and look at what I've got, get a sense of what the film might become and then go back and do some more filming, responding to what I've already done. The editing is really crucial, that's really where the work is made. The filming is the gathering of material, it's the fun bit really, it's the bit I enjoy the most, I get excited by the travel and the adventure – the work really starts when I'm back home.

JB: I totally understand that. Can you please tell me how you go about making your films, how you find you participants and why you choose those people?

BR: Generally I've found people through friends. The participants tend to be friends of friends and not that far removed from my life really. I spend quite a bit of time in the countryside therefore I get to know people who live out in the sticks and they know other people who live further out in the sticks! As the films have grown I get recommended to people – you know, there's a guy who lives 20 miles down that dirt track – you should go and visit him.

Its been a really natural progression, the whole thing started by accident really, with *This Is My Land*. I wasn't thinking about making portraits at all, I was making things in the studio without people and I suddenly felt the need to put people back in the work.

JB: There seems to be a clear shift in you work around 2006.

BR: Right, yes, I was really excited by the idea of filming people again and how that would change the work. I'd been making films about spaces filled with the ghosts of humans for quite a few years and it was a half holiday going to visit Jake Williams [the subject of *This Is My Land*]. I had my camera with me just in case there was a possibility of doing some filming, but as soon as I got there I knew he was the perfect person for me to make a film about. In a way it continued looking at hermetic worlds, these spaces I'd been looking at, the enclosed house or the village, so this guy who'd created his own world in this acre of space in the centre of a forest seemed like a natural move.

JB: The relationships you've developed with these guys they seem to me to be cultivated, but not manufactured. Your relationship with the participants are very clear throughout the films, even though we don't see you we're aware of your presence.

BR: I'm really happy about that. The awareness of the filmmaker is something I knew was key right from the start and I wanted to make an audience aware of the construction of the film. If we come back to the documentary term, my dislike for it is because of those negative reasons of not wanting to be involved in that supposedly objective view. I want to be seen to be involved, being there and affecting the situation. Building a relationship with those people is really important, talking to them about what I'm doing and discussing what might happen in the film.

JB: How much footage are you shooting?

BR: Not too much, I tend to be quite tight. It's about a four to one ratio of what's shot and what makes it into the film. That's the other advantage of repeated visits, you spend a lot of time just looking before you shoot. This is one of the reasons I like using film, you're forced to make some editorial decisions while you're filming. I don't like to have too much footage, the editing hard enough as it is, so if I had five hours of footage I'd find it really difficult. I like to really consider what I'm filming, and one practical side to using film is that it encourages that.

JB: Because I came from a video background, I've made films where I've shot over 70 hours worth of raw footage, you could make 500 films from that 70 hours! I'm learning late in life that it's not necessarily the best strategy. A lot of your films seem to focus on people who have removed themselves from contemporary, urban society, to focus on an idea of, and this is my word now, the Romantic hermit – I used to want to be a hermit when I was a kid, you know, you'd build forts and stuff.

BR: That's probably how it started, why I ended up going to visit Jake and not going to visit somebody else in a city, it tapped into my own possibly idealistic notion of what it might mean to be a hermit, to go and live in the middle of the forest in a cabin. I mean these are fantasies I've had as a child and as an adult. I think in a way it was seeing how real that was and seeing the actual possibilities. The more I've met these people, the more respect I have for what they do.

What I really like about all those people is that it's not that straightforward, yes they're living without a lot of technology, but Jake's got a laptop which he powers by an enormous generator, he and Stuart both have these diesel-guzzling, black-smoke-billowing machines. There's a lot of contradictions going on with all of those characters and they are not dogmatic, which is important. I want the Romance to be seriously undercut by a sense of unease.

JB: And I think that comes across in the films, you've allowed them to come across in a complex manner, you haven't simplified what they're doing or how they're living.

BR: Thanks!





Maiden Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005



Maiden Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005



# Whitney McVeigh



Whitney McVeigh — *Untitled IX*, 2009

Looking at Whitney McVeigh's new work, the big monochromes and the fragile collages and monoprints on aging paper, provokes some surprising questions about what makes art contemporary, and how contemporary art deals with its own history. Because McVeigh ploughs a very different furrow from a great many artists working today. She doesn't work with video, and she doesn't make 'conceptual' art or installation art or performance. She doesn't make ironic work about how weird it is to be an artist, or art that is to do with pop culture or fashion or politics. Her work is not high-tech, or obsessed with mimicking the high finish of design objects or luxury goods. She works with paint and ink and paper and brushes – traditional, basic materials and techniques – and her constant theme has a classical dimension to it, as if returning to first principles – making a mark in which the human figure often appears to emerge, from little more than the visible shift from black to white.

This isn't what you tend to expect from artists working today, and McVeigh's work seems to ask of us that we should stop to consider

what it is we have grown used to in contemporary art, and how her work differs from this. Mostly, what it asks is for us to wonder whether some important ideas, that once focused the energies and arguments of artists, have been forgotten or put aside in much of the art of the moment. But given that McVeigh's works are not a simple return to past attitudes and ideas, but cut across different ways of thinking about and making art, what might these questions be?

McVeigh's monoprint works combine an openness to the spontaneity of fluid materials with an acute sense of attention to what they might yield, producing surfaces on which physical matter becomes image. She might say that she is not making images so much as trying to discover them, and when she talks about working with the materials she uses, she suggests that they might have a 'life of their own'. Unlike a more conventional painter, whose mark-making is defined by the intermediary of brushes she uses, McVeigh works with a more unstable and unpredictable set of procedures, in which paint is poured onto or applied to paper, and in which a process of folding over of the paper, and the

# Between Bodies & Images



Whitney McVeigh — *Untitled X*, 2009

transferring of the paint between sheets, allows it to be configured in multiple layers. While McVeigh's way of working is highly tactile, it is also distanced by the layers of paper she uses to impress the paint – she's often pressing through the paper to the paint, rather than applying paint onto the paper with a brush. It's a way of working that stops us from being too preoccupied with the 'touch' of the artist – of the sense that what one is looking at is a form of 'writing', in which the movement of the brush is the equivalent of the gesture of the artist's hand; and, by implication, a sort of extension and expression of their emotional state or their personality.

Most famously, it was Jackson Pollock who did away with the touch of the brush in painting, allowing drips and pours into painting's range of technical possibilities. Other artists come to mind: the Surrealist Max Ernst developed ways of pressing oil paint under glass to produce unpredictable, organic patterns and forms; and Yves Klein notoriously used the direct impression of naked human models onto canvas in his series of *Anthropometries*. Such a range of examples points to

an important development in western art in the latter half of the last century – the shift of interest from painting as a carrier of images or representations, towards the painted mark as a material presence in its own right, or as the direct index of another physical presence or object.

What these earlier examples share is a fascination for how a material such as paint might be released from the codes, habits and traditions that tend to dictate how it has been used by artists in the past. They explore the potential of chance and accident in the making of a painted surface, and they partially relinquish the painter's authority over his or her materials. In so doing, they tend to foreground the matter of the medium – the physical substance of the paint itself – emphasising its own identity and particular qualities. With artists like Klein, painting was rolled back to its most basic conditions – that of the recorded imprint of a physical body onto a surface, in which the paint acts as both image of, and one-to-one impression of, the original subject.

All of these examples reflect some aspects of what goes on in McVeigh's





Whitney McVeigh — Double Portrait, 2009

monochromes, even though they are only partial affinities and handy approximations. Nevertheless, thinking about artists like Pollock and Klein allows us to think about the nature of a *body* and its relationship to a painting, and to us. Jackson Pollock's body might not be 'represented' in his drip paintings, but they are full of the implied movement of his body. At the opposite extreme, when Klein pressed living bodies against canvas, these were not paintings of bodies, but paintings *made by* bodies. In the former, the need for an image has been replaced by an interest in the paint's material presence. In the latter the image is the direct record of the object, not translated via the eye and the hand of the artists.

McVeigh's work, by contrast, is still interested in the possibility of the painted image. Her monochromes are full of bodies; bodies made of heads, necks, torsos. They're not 'studies', however. McVeigh hasn't looked at someone and made an image of them. Instead, the bodies in her paintings 'emerge' in and among the formations of paint that are shaped and organised.

But perhaps the bodies in McVeigh's works should really be called 'figures'. What, then, is the difference between an image of a body and an image of a 'figure'? If nothing else, this has something to do with what we understand a human being to be, as distinct from a human body. With McVeigh's work, I'm preoccupied with the distinction between a *body* and *somebody*; between the mass of flesh and bones that makes up each of us, and the presence of thinking, living, communicating beings that are this thing we call human, which can't simply be reduced to just a heap of dumb matter. In her monochrome works, it's as if this distinction is the only thing that matters in the world.

Out of the formless matter of the paint emerge forms which remind us of human beings, forms which suggest the gestures of bodies that are alive with feeling and consciousness. They're not painted as if they were at a distance – seen within the space of some visual surrounding, an image of a subject in a setting. Instead, they seem *up close*, almost as imprints of bodies, but still just far enough away to appear as images. This slight shift, between the bare, physical presence of the paint and the intuition



Whitney McVeigh — Reverse of Double Portrait, 2009

of a human figure, could be seen as analogous to that slight shift that exists between the human *body* and the human *being*. McVeigh's studio is full of portrait photographs culled from magazines. they are always of people whose faces are full of shape and incident, which are undeniably *solid*, flesh and bone, and yet looking at the camera with the intensity of attention one accords another human being. The question at stake in McVeigh's images is *presence*; the possibility that we might recognise a presence that corresponds to our own in the matter that is in front of us.

This is undeniably a way of thinking about images of people that finds its roots in the modern art of the last century – it is this period that most vividly produced images of human beings caught between the materiality of existence and the experience of being. In more recent decades, the philosophical tendency has been to reject such metaphysics, and reduce human beings to mere matter, biological machines that have neither soul (if you are what used to be called 'religious') nor free will (if you are what used to be called a 'Humanist'). But maybe what it means to be human might still add up to more than the sum of its material parts, in the way that McVeigh's minimal, reduced forms of paint still add up to more than

just paint smeared on paper. In McVeigh's small drawings, made on the pages of second hand technical books, there is little more than a kind of black smudge – a vertical body or a whorl of knotted black energy - which nevertheless manages to say something like 'I am here', beyond the mechanical and lifeless information that is printed on the page beneath. One particular drawing stands out, when thinking of McVeigh's attitude towards presence. On one side is a reproduction of a *Portrait of a Young Woman*, by the sixteenth-century German painter Jorg Breu. But over her face has been traced another face, of an old crone. It makes little sense, until one discovers that the origin of the tracing is to be found on the reverse of the page, in another reproduction, of a portrait of an old woman. The face of one woman is traced into the face of the other, as 'lines in her face'. What was an image of the human body has become physical, once again, inscribed not as a reproduction or re-presentation, but as a physical inscription of a body, inscribed into another body. More than an image of a thing, it is the mark of human presence, and of the artist who makes it.

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# Interspecies Artists collaborating with animals

Can artists work with animals as equals? If not, what is the current state of the human-animal relationship? It has recently been shown that humans are closer to the higher primates than previously thought, with chimpanzee and gorilla behaviour reflecting politics, deception and even possibly creativity. What does this mean to the way we see ourselves as one species inhabiting a planet in crisis? Interspecies uses artistic and participatory strategies to stimulate dialogue and debate, showing artists in contact with real animals and negotiating a new power relationship, questioning the way we view our interactions with animals during Darwin's anniversary year.

*Interspecies* follows provocative exhibitions such as *Atomic* and *Clean Rooms* where The Arts Catalyst has commissioned artists to explore contested issues in science and society. This exhibition centres around a durational work by Kira O'Reilly and draws together projects by Nicolas Primat and other artists who question the one-sided manipulation of non-human life-forms for art, and have tried to enter the animals' point of view as a fundamental part of their practice. It has to some extent been inspired by Donna Haraway's *When Species Meet*, but was triggered by discussions with the late Nicolas Primat.

Nicolas Primat was the only artist in the world who specialised in directly working with monkeys and apes in collaboration with primatologists. In *Portrait de Famille*, he is playfully swarmed by a tribe of squirrel monkeys, in *Demo Bonobo*, he established a relationship via sexual signals with a group of Bonobo apes and in *The Making of Les Petits Hommes Vers* he and his colleagues make a science fiction film with a group of monkeys. Nicolas Primat (it was his real name) believed there is a hidden monkey in all of us.

Kira O'Reilly, artist and Deliah, a pig, take part in the durational performance *Falling Asleep With A Pig*. Kira O'Reilly is one of the most experimental and provocative performance artists in the UK, currently artist in residence at the school of Biosciences, University of Birmingham. For *Interspecies* the artist and pig will cohabit a living space, partially viewable by the public for 72 hours. At some point the pig and artist will fall asleep. The work addresses the ethics of human and animal interaction, acknowledging the implicit ambivalences and violence in the appropriation of animals as a resource. Kira and Deliah carried out the performance at Interspecies in Manchester earlier in the year and now undertake the work for a longer period.

Antony Hall's Enki *Experiment 4* allows visitors to Interspecies to communicate with an electric fish on the same level, avoiding the use of language, instead stimulating a shared empathy through a physical connection. Ruth MacLennan's work explores the relationship between a bird of prey and the human being who trains it, capturing the rapt gaze of hunter and bird, recalling ancient ideas of shape-shifting and shamanic transformations. Rachel Mayeri's *Primate Cinema: Baboons as Friends* juxtaposes footage of baboons taken in the field with a re-enactment by human actors, shot film noir style in a bar in Los Angeles. A tale of lust, jealousy, sex and violence transpires simultaneously in non-human and human worlds.

Beatriz da Costa's work *PigeonBlog* proposes an alternative way to participate in environmental air pollution data-gathering through equipping urban homing pigeons with GPS-enabled sensing devices. *PigeonBlog* is intended as a social experiment between humans and animals. Da Costa is a former collaborator with Critical Art Ensemble. Snaebornsdottir/Wilson's *Radio Animal* involves a mobile unit – a specially designed caravan in which the artists to travel to various locations in the UK to gather material from people about their relationship to animals. They are particularly interested in animals that are considered 'unwelcome' visitors but have for whatever reason found their way into what we may consider our own territories.

The Arts Catalyst in partnership with A Foundation present Interspecies to explore Donna Haraway's ideas about reversing the role of species. In her investigation of the 'companion species', i.e. dogs, she posits, half-humorously that "reversing the order of invention, humans didn't invent dogs, dogs invented themselves and adopted humans as part of their reproductive strategy". In her lectures, she also shows a cartoon slide of several wolves in a forest, one of whom is wearing tracking equipment. "The telemetrically-equipped wolf is being introduced to the wild pack by her mentor and the mentor is saying: We found her wandering at the edge of the forest. She was raised by scientists."

## Associated Symposia & Events

### Friday 2 October

6pm, Exhibition tour with curator Rob La Frenais

7–9pm, Symposium: Non-Human Primates with Patrick Munck, collaborator with Nicolas Primat, Rachel Mayeri and Sarah Jane Vick, primatologist. Limited spaces, please email [booking@artscatalyst.org](mailto:booking@artscatalyst.org)

### Saturday 3 October

1–6pm, Primate Cinema: How To Act Like An Animal. A workshop with Rachel Mayeri for 16s and over. Please email [booking@artscatalyst.org](mailto:booking@artscatalyst.org).

2pm, Tour of ENKI experiment 4 with Antony Hall

3–6pm, Symposium: Animals, Humans and Power (BSL interpreted) with Antennae editor Giovanni Aloï, Photographer Karen Knorr, Helen MacDonals, writer of Falcon, Ruth MacLennan and Snaebornsdottir/Wilson

6pm, How to Act Like An Animal performance

### Sunday 4 October

2–5pm, Interspecies Family Day

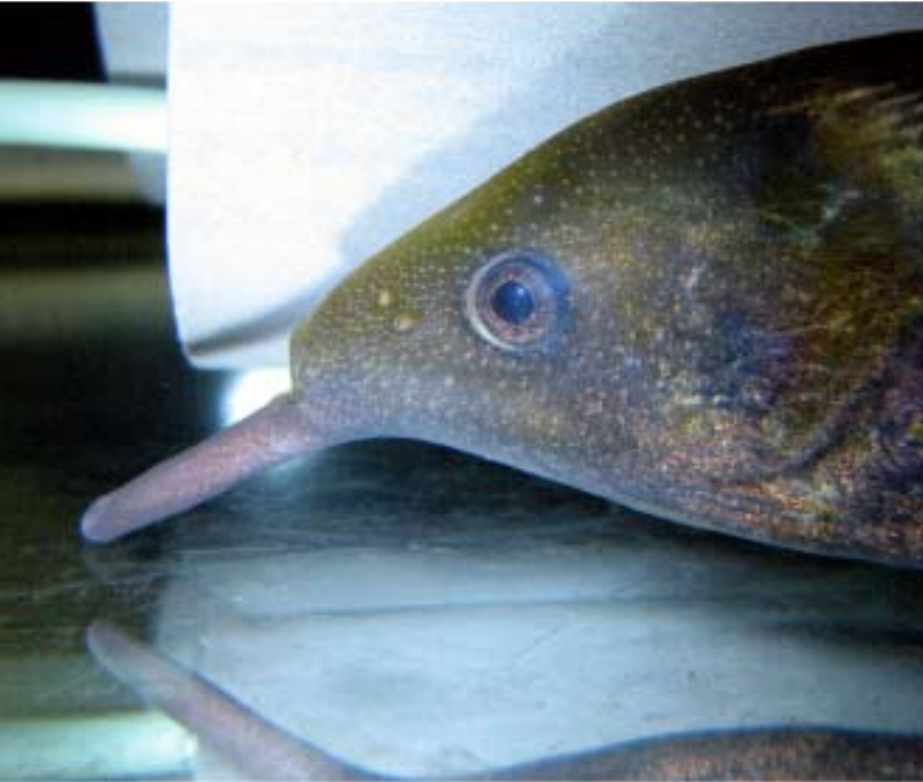
2–5pm, Making Nests for Bower Birds led by artist Sally Hampson

2pm, 3pm and 4pm, Interspecies Tales by poet and storyteller Shamim Azad

4.30pm, Animal Handler's Tales, James Mackay in conversation with curator Rob La Frenais.



Kira O'Reilly — *Falling Asleep With A Pig*



Antony Hall — *Enki Experiment*



# Taxed

Curated collaboratively by a team drawn from partner studios and A Foundation *Taxed* is an exploration of the power of imitation and the recycling of other people's good ideas. In recent months we've 'borrowed' Sarat Maharj's reading group format, Paul Butler's Collage Party and Städel Schule's week-long celebration of hospitality and food, Gasthof. Now we turn our sights to Hans Ulrich Obrist and round off the year with a return to the first *Taxed* event.

*Taxed: 24 Hour Interview Snickers*

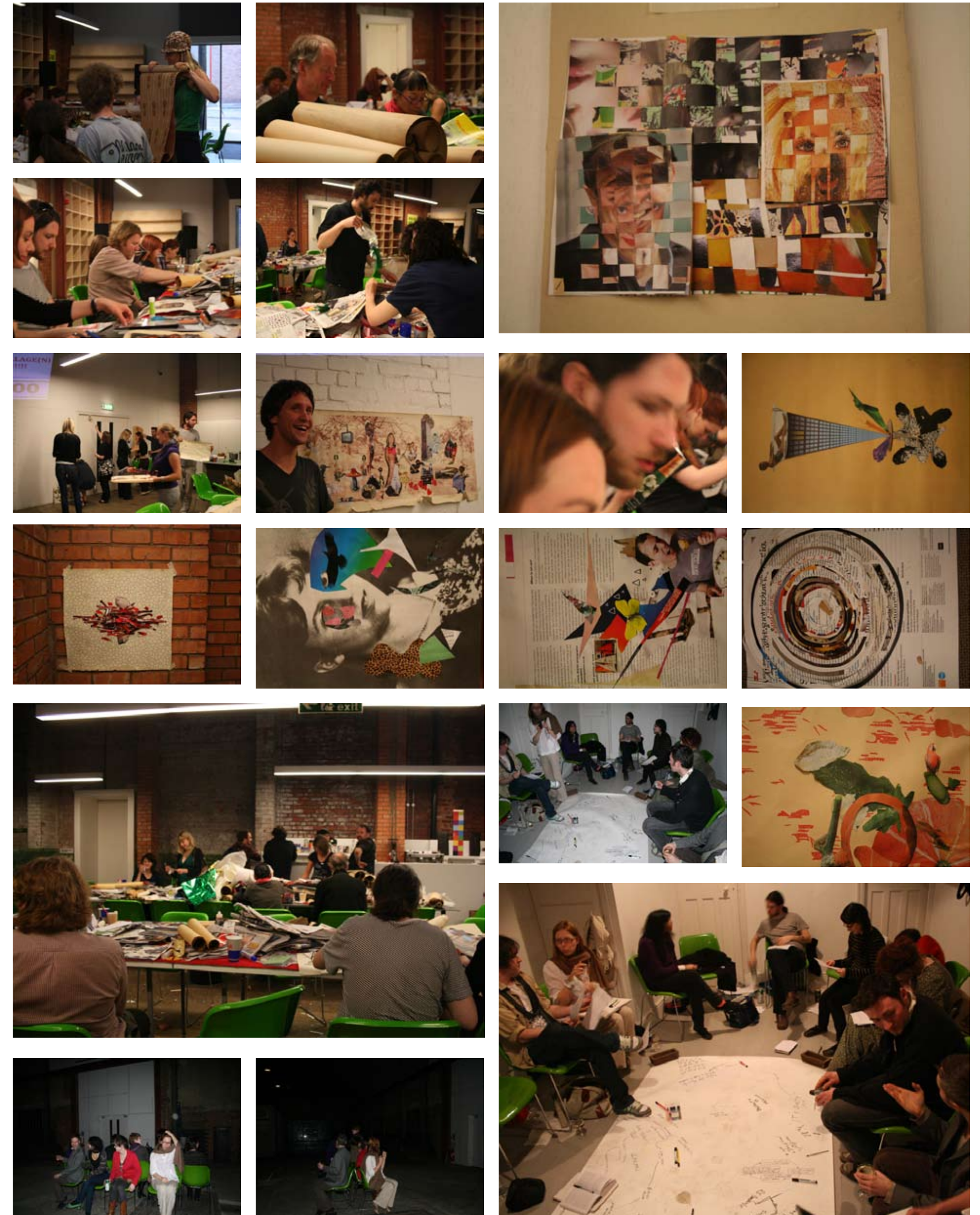
Midday Thursday 24 September to Midday Friday 25 September

A non-stop 24 hour programme interviewing over 70 artists, curators, musicians and insomniacs creating a portrait of the city over one day.

*Taxed: Slip & Slide Slam 2*

Friday 13 November 7pm

The last in the series of *Taxed* returns to Art in General's Slide Slam, showcasing over 20 artists in a succession of quick fire presentations.





# *Sleep Walk, Sleep Talk*

Suki Chan’s new video installation, *Sleep Walk, Sleep Talk* is one of a number of projects initiated by Film and Video Umbrella as part of a wider set of activities entitled Free to Air, which is based around artists’ responses to the theme of ‘freedom’, and, specifically, in this first year, to ideas of freedom of expression.

SB: I want to begin by asking how you related to the theme, and what it resonance it had with your recent practice? (THIS COULD BE MENTIONED AS PART OF A MORE GENERAL INTRO TO THE PROJECT; LEAVING US TO GO STRAIGHT INTO THE QUESTION AT THE END OF THE PARA...)

SC: Before I saw the brief for ‘Free to Air’, I was starting to develop a project in Shanghai, where I had visited to research some new towns that had been built in the suburbs to relieve population pressure in the city. At that point I was interested in urban planning, how people’s needs are anticipated and how the architecture and the urban environment shape our sense of reality. The new towns such as Thames Town or the German-inspired Anting automobile town offer a better version of reality – where people’s place of work, and all their domestic and leisure needs, are located in one particular area. I was thinking about simulacra, where the copy becomes truth or reality in its own right. People needn’t go to Shanghai at all – everything is catered for. Living there gives them freedom to do and be what they want; but to me it also seemed quite artificial and restrictive; narrowing as much as expanding people’s choices.

When I got back to London, I started to think about other cities and the formative influence of the urban environment. I started to wonder to what extent we are moulded by the environment we live in: how it motivates us to behave in a certain way or to pursue a particular lifestyle; how we in turn construct our own beliefs and value system. I wanted to understand the way that space is organised: what are the forces at play that shape or regulate our public and private spaces? Also I wanted to consider the physical as well as the psychological restrictions that might be imposed on us as we navigate the city on a daily basis: to what extent are we

overwhelmed by the architecture of the city or how we might feel empowered to effect change

SB: London, in contrast to the new towns you were visiting in China, is a prime example of an unplanned city; one that has built itself up, in a largely unregulated way, through the accumulated influence of people who have come to it. Compared to what you might have seen in China, it’s a kind of ‘free for all’. ‘Sleep Walk, Sleep Talk’ highlights this freedom of movement, this feeling of chaos and flux. Underneath the surface, however, in certain parts of the video, you seem to hint at the presence of some kind of deeper, underlying structure.

SC: This came about from a feeling I often have as I walk through the city. Although on one level I might be venturing somewhere new, exploring the city on foot, I often feel that my every step has already been anticipated. On a personal level, I feel I can go anywhere I want to in London; but there’s always this feeling that something governs or directs my movements. On a micro-level, it feels like there is freedom but on a macro-level, when you zoom out, there is order, pattern and systems which sometimes are repetitive, restrictive and predictable. The piece instinctively references films like Koyaanisqatsi and Powaqqatsi where you see the pulses and flows of people as they move across the road. When you look at large cities with large populations, and you observe them from a distance, people look like atoms, there’s an incredible order in the way they congregate, move and flow. I was interested in looking at what drives people to certain places. Why is it that they walk down a certain side of the road when the other side is totally clear? What are the motivating factors that direct people spatially and temporally?

At the same time, I was also looking into the development of the concept of freedom in European history. During the 18th century enlightenment, Voltaire said ‘I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.’ Freedom as an idea is hard to pinpoint; in a way there is no such thing as an absolute, unchanging freedom; it is always viewed in relation to something else. My idea of freedom is totally different to yours and in a lot of instances they may well conflict. The closest we might get to freedom is perhaps a space where all conflicting ideas are played out – that rather than instigating an order or a structure from the top, perhaps individuals will eventually self-organise themselves; just as some cities begin to

# Suki Chan



Maidier Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005





Maider Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

SC: The figure of the security guard was important in that they are an integral part of a city but usually invisible and very confined, in their job, by time and space. They have to be in a certain place at stipulated times. I wanted to explore how they turn an environment that is highly structured to discover their own freedom.

SB: The security guard or night watchman is ostensibly doing nothing, but is in a state of constant alertness. When the city sleeps, there are always people out there watching over it. As you point out in the piece, many of the people employed in this job come from a country where their freedom was curtailed. In this dead time at work, when they appear to be doing nothing, they are free to think, and be more themselves.

SC: Most of security guards are busy doing business plans trying to work out what they're going to do now they're here. A lot of the guards are from Nigerian origins and are highly educated. I often find it really interesting to speak with them as they have so much to offer. They find themselves in a predicament here in the UK as they can no longer practice their profession, but rather than being downbeat about that they use this time to re-invent themselves. I find that really inspiring. The time they spend at work is a time of transition – using the imagination to engage with space and time in a different way, to take oneself out of a confining situation, to somewhere else beyond.

The most active group are the skaters as they're physically asserting their presence in the streets that are normally dominated by traffic; they take over the space. They actually do it in total cooperation with the police – it's a highly organised phenomenon, it's highly regulated. There are certain rules: you have to keep within the front and end marshals and meet at a particular time and place. The skaters seem to be exercising their individual freedom of expression but what they're doing is in fact very controlled.

SB: Superficially, it seems to carry an echo of the imaginative remapping of the city proposed by the Situationists. But it's true that as soon as you get a large group of people participating in an activity it presupposes a need for planning and consensus.

There is a constant modulation and negotiation at work that lets people both enjoy their freedom and not have their freedom trespassed upon. Individual personal freedom is outwardly encouraged within the space of the city; at one level, London exists almost as a kind of playground for the individual. Becoming part of a group (like the skaters) is a way for us to have our interests endorsed and shared, but in some ways by doing things in a collective entity you're also giving up a little bit of freedom. That seems to me a microcosm of how we rub along in the city: one person's freedom may be an intrusion on someone else's, and needs to take that into account. Freedom isn't a fixed and transcendent commodity; it's a series of exchanges. The nuances and ambiguities around the whole concept of freedom is something we wanted to reflect in 'Free to Air'.

SC: I think by joining the group and by conforming to its rules of conduct the individual gets lost. Temporarily, they give over their individuality in exchange for group cohesion. As you watch them skate you can sense their exhilaration – of achieving something greater beyond that of any one single individual. What's interesting is that they gain this by submitting their individuality to a larger collective.

I was drawn to the skaters because of this swarming, something that was important in my earlier work, 'Interval II' – the enigmatic murmurations of the starlings over a Victorian pier. Deleuze and Guattari's ideas of difference and repetition offer an interesting frame of reference, in particular the notion of 'swarms of difference' where plurality becomes a unity in space and time.

SB: In addition to the skaters, who appear at regular intervals in 'Sleep Walk, Sleep Talk', we get lots of glimpses of people going about their everyday lives – people on buses and on tubes; lost to the world, switched off, dozing even. This is the 'sleep walk' that we talked about, in which people are revealed to be very much creatures of habit or routine. I'm interested in 'sleep talk'. 'Sleeptalking' isn't a phrase we use very often. How are you articulating this in your work?

SC: 'Sleeptalking' for me is a form of expression that implies getting closer towards the truth: the individual muttering something that in normal everyday life is suppressed; evading some process of self-censorship that happens when we're awake. A bit like when, in a state of hypnosis, you blurt something out that is a truer expression of what that individual really feels.

Sleep Walk, Sleep Talk is presented at A Foundation from Thursday 10 September–Saturday 12 September as an outdoor projection piece, from 7.30–9pm daily, and will be exhibited at 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, Lambeth, as a twin-screen installation from Monday 14 September to Monday 19 October.

The project is commissioned and presented by Film and Video Umbrella in collaboration with A Foundation and 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning and is funded by London Councils as part of 'Free to Air'.

For more information on the Free to Air programme please visit [freetoair.org.uk](http://freetoair.org.uk)

Film and Video Umbrella commissions, curates, produces and presents film, video and other moving-image works by artists from across the world. Projects encompass moving-image practice, from large-scale film productions to intimate video works and the use of online media such as YouTube. Film and Video Umbrella have consistently been at the forefront of new practice, developing audiences and promoting innovation through its support of some of the most exciting contemporary artists including works by Cory Arcangel, Tacita Dean, Johan Grimonprez, Isaac Julien, Mark Leckey, Gillian Wearing and Jane & Louise Wilson. Film and Video Umbrella is funded by Arts Council England.

[www.fvu.co.uk](http://www.fvu.co.uk)



# Artur Żmijewski

Kowalski's studio produced many of the highest profile Polish artists of the last decade, including Katarzyna Kozyra and Pawel Althamer. He is known for his technique teaching students to respond to each others artwork, by adding, removing or changing aspects of it. Żmijewski's workshop approach differs from his tutor's in a significant way – Kowalski believed that art should be removed from worldly concerns in order to be effective, Żmijewski believes just the opposite; that art is only effective if it is involved in life.

During November 2009 Artur Żmijewski will use A Foundation, Liverpool as his studio and backdrop for a new film commission to be presented in June 2010.

In the UK Artur Żmijewski is perhaps most well-known for *Them*, a film commissioned by Documenta 12 in 2007. Filmed in Poland, *Them* documented a series of workshops undertaken by groups with differing religious and political affiliations, including Polish Catholics, nationalists, Jews and socialists.

Initially, each group was invited to make a poster, with the completed designs including a church, the Polish sword and flag and phrases indicating the various political and ideological positions of the groups. Over a series of further sessions the groups are brought together and then invited to amend one another's banners as they see fit.

The film begins amicably enough, with a member of the socialist group cutting open a door of the church on the Catholic poster, an adjustment the Catholic women approve of. But the workshops soon become fraught; women's and gay rights, Polish history, the holocaust, communism and sources of pride and shame all come quickly to the fore. Banners are graffitied, white-washed, turned into aeroplanes and launched out of windows, people leave and threaten each other. The film ends with Żmijewski extinguishing a banner that's been set on fire and the whole building being evacuated.

*Them* is representative of Żmijewski's recent work, which often takes the form of a workshop examining collective group identities, a format derived by Żmijewski from his education in the studio of Grzegorz Kowalski at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw.

On this subject Żmijewski stated:

"If I were to argue with Grzegorz Kowalski today, I'd say the point where I disagree with him the most is his idea of the Studio as an isolated enclave where people seek refuge from the oppression of reality, where they find shelter in a small community of people who understand each other. Kowalski developed the formula in the 1980s, under communism. He enclosed himself with his students inside a 'bubble' from which they observed reality, experiencing a safe mutual presence. That translated into the notion of the Studio as a greenhouse where the students, like delicate plants, can quietly ripen, and the hostile world doesn't poison them with its venom. A student of that studio is like an inmate who is released after a couple of years in prison and cannot find himself in the world. He doesn't know how to buy a bus ticket, clothes, or food. That was the biggest problem with the Studio, because on the one hand, we received a powerful artistic tool that could be used for ideological work and for communicating important messages, but on the other hand, because of the rejection of the outside world and current politics, we were sentenced to helplessness."

Żmijewski's work is particularly relevant in the UK today, where it is all too easy to find art that is purely instrumental; its successes measured only in its capacity to be useful socially, economically, even politically. But Żmijewski's work deals with serious issues without becoming instrumental, through works like *Them*, he engages with, and simultaneously interrogates, the role of art and artist within society.

Żmijewski challenges the Romantic view of the artist as genius and dreamer acting outside of society. He feels strongly that artists should be involved in society, and not just to hold a mirror to it, saying "artists should give answers not just ask questions."

So what answers does Żmijewski propose? Certainly by the end of *Them* the participants do not visibly resolve their differences or transform their opinions.

The resolutions, and answers that Żmijewski gives are to be found in the experience of his films themselves. None of his protagonists come out well, or more accurately; no-one comes out better or worse than anyone else. There are no sides, no obvious good guys or bad guys and there are not necessarily any happy endings.

Żmijewski's unwillingness to sugar-coat conflicts, or to add a veneer of societal nicety to fundamental and often irresolvable problems, reveals how much a tolerant society can still being driven by prejudice, belief and histories. Żmijewski offers no clear route of escaping indoctrination, but suggests that we need to find our own way; that it is the easy, unswerving paths that are the most dangerous.

Bryony Bond, Curator – A Foundation

Artur Żmijewski's new commission will be presented at A Foundation, Liverpool in June 2010. Cornerhouse, Manchester will present a major UK survey of Żmijewski's existing works from 13 November 2009 to 10 January 2010.

Artur Żmijewski's exhibition and commission are a partnership project between A Foundation, Cornerhouse and The Salford Restoration Office and was initiated by The Salford Restoration Office.

For further details on the partners please visit [www.cornerhouse.org](http://www.cornerhouse.org) [www.thesalfordrestorationoffice.org](http://www.thesalfordrestorationoffice.org)



Maider Lopez—*Playa Izurum* (Detail), 2005



# Off Street

The exhibition features:

Avelino Sala, Democracia, Elena Bajo, Jacobo Castellano, Josechu Dávila, Maider López, and PSJM.



Maider Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

Seven artists with radical strategies for engaging urban space present works conceived for A Foundation, London. The exhibition site, Rochelle School, is a Victorian building located at the heart of the Boundary Estate Conservation Area, built in 1890s on a former shanty town. Following a brief Summer research residency, the site-specific works create dialogue with this historic area of East London, its cultural and social specificities, and the community that inhabits it. In order to remap the aesthetics of the social, the project reclaims the street as a social point of

encounter. It claims the particularities of the urban through a series of challenges or future topographies beyond the boundary of gallery and locality that address issues such as; globalisation, social integration, collective memory and imaginary and corporate identity. These artists represent key figures in the Spanish arena but will play with an environment which is not theirs to create an exciting remix of the vernaculars of street art, exposing the architecture of memory and meaning, whilst rethinking the street from a socially engaged perspective.

## Democracia *Welfare State*

The welfare state is based on the principle of equality and aims to achieve an increase in the quality of life of all its citizens. This is different in comparison with other social models that see intervention as a threat against freedom and public expenditure on social services as a waste of resources.

The welfare state, however, needs economic prosperity, which is the privilege of developed countries. This generates the potential for a disparity of resources for those outside of social and economic networks or the majority, or marginalized minorities for whom the mechanisms are insufficient - a "superfluous" society.

Democracia proposes a meeting between the integrated and the marginalised society at the time when the welfare state acts in search of justice and equality. One of the largest slum settlements in Europe still survives in Madrid: El Salobral. Recently, the Community of Madrid and the City Council agreed to its demolition and the consequent rehousing of its inhabitants, with the majority being gypsies. In this settlement those marginalized by socio-cultural factors are found with those who are voluntarily there such as drug dealers in search of an area away from surveillance. On the other hand, the demolition of the slums and the relocation of its occupants attracted new inhabitants to this area looking to be rewarded with a new home by the social services. The extinction of El Salobral not only implies the destruction of sub-standard housing but also making the land uninhabitable so that it can no longer be built on.

The project proposes the staging of the demolition of this marginal community as a performance for all members of society. Over and above considerations such as the disappearance of specific cultural forms (that of the gypsy culture), here society celebrates the disappearance of the ghetto via a media performance. The "integrated" society are the hooligans who applaud the action of the diggers demolishing the ghetto. The path of the marginalized society is its integration in the spectacular consumption society, which will assure them of their basic rights.

## Elena Bajo *The Rooks Have Returned*

Concept: The re-reading of the social, historical and political layers woven into the neighbourhood's fabric

This intervention consists of a collective performative installation of sculptures made out of used furniture found around the area which have been upholstered by using the discarded fabric from the shop Master Upholsterer located at 14 Calvert Avenue. Master Upholsterer has been reupholstering the furniture of local neighbors for thirty-five years.

An ephemeral space will be produced by the creation of a 'common' territory for 'the rejected fabric'. A reference to the 5,666 people who were forced to leave their homes and displaced into slums. The creation of an area of possible disruption might pin-point the social, economical and political factors that produce these conditions. This action becomes "a right of resistance". Paolo Virno who in his book *The Grammar of the Multitude* defines "a right of resistance" as a practice belonging to a community assembled to defend either certain elements in common, or its existence as such from attack by a centralised power. Resistance against the effort to control people's housing rights, which has become the motor of the capitalist system and the government's policy on urban areas appears as one in a long line of administrative mechanisms that function to this end. This work registers the importance of local resistance against situations of extreme oppression and deprivation, but it also signals the necessity to open such struggles to the global dimension.

## Josechu Dávila *Project to Spread the Message of an Anonymous Woman in London with a Punk Band*

Josechu Dávila has been recording the speech of a woman at her window in Madrid - through a song composed for this occasion, these words will be interpreted and played by a punk band during the preview opening. The song will be performed in the bandstand of Arnold Circus and will be broadcast in real time in the interior of the exhibition space.

The punk band *Short Bus Window Lickers* have composed a song with transcriptions of her numerous speeches, whilst they were given total artistic freedom they remain faithful to the idiosyncrasy of her message. This is part of a 'General Project' that aims to explore the process of transmission and translation, between linguistic and geographic contexts, the daily speech of an anonymous woman who speaks from her window in reproach to the world in Madrid, transcribed into English and transposed into song. The project aims, within the common structure of *Off Street*, to initiate a series of metamorphosis that reflect on translation and transference. The message first travels from a neighborhood in Madrid to another one in London, it's translated into English. Words will be animated into song, and finally a live performance from the street relayed and projected in the gallery and uploaded to iTunes. The message does not rest but its velocity is altered through the medium.

The project aims to spread through artworks in various spaces, countries and circumstances, the daily speech of an anonymous woman who speaks from her window in reproach to the world. A suite of soliloquys that address the fate of humanity and little by little reveal her life. Surprisingly, She never mentions her name.



Jacobo Castellano  
*La muerte de las  
cosas (The Death  
of Things)*

Jacobo Castellano's goal is to get into the skin of the archaeologist who is removing thin layers of soil to reveal the world. Each place has its own history and the objects that reside in its streets are a part of it. Through the objects found in any street of any town we can get an idea of the social, economic or cultural reality that surrounds us; they are indeed living elements.

After removing those objects from their environment, he invites them to dialogue in the exhibition space, where new meanings may arise, meanings that can show reality as it is or distort it by creating multiple meanings. The outcome of these processes could be covered under the generic title: *Death and Resurrection of the Living Object*.

PSJM  
*Citizen Identity*

PSJM are conceptually focused on the representations of individual identity in consumer society. For PSJM subjectivity is determined by signs and mythologies of identity constructed through the mass media. "I" becomes defined through identification with values and narratives commercial brands promote. *Citizen Identity* reveals this process and reclaims the traces of a more complex subject through a game of compilation and re-branding in which the citizen authenticates their ownership of the public realm through the flourish of their signature.

*Citizen Identity* is a two part project. Firstly a happening called *Signatures Collected for Aesthetic Aims*, a street-art performance played by PR hostesses in corporate apparel. This work comprised the collection of a sample of citizen's signatures in Shoreditch. From this raw material a selection has been made using aesthetic criteria. This was subsequently digitally manipulated through the application of colours and a prominent outline, turning these signatures into forms visually reminiscent of both commercial logos and graffiti tags, probably the most ubiquitous symbols of popular culture.

The second phase is the exhibition of these new “people’s brands” inside the A Foundation, installing them with vinyl on the wall and screening the video of, *Signatures Collected for Aesthetic Aims*. The project works inside and outside, in art and life.

**Maidier López**

*Bidegorri* project proposes changing the colour of the bicycle path in Arnald Circus, painting the green bicycle path red and converting it in a perfect circle. The goal is to rethink the meaning of colours according to the place where they exist. In the Basque Country, homeland of the artist, the bicycle lanes are red, and its denomination is "bidegorri" (red path), as opposed to the traditional green paths usually found in the UK and other countries. This creates a semiotic system of colours. A temporary change of the path's colour reinterprets the Arnald Circus bicycle path, underlining its presence and the circular structure by establishing a difference to the green ones that characterise the rest of the city. This also refers to globalization in a subtle act of unifying languages and criteria, as well as emphasizing the uniqueness of the neighborhood.

Maidier Lopez's challenge is to transform the public space and subtly modify the environment positively, giving new possibilities and interpretations.

Traffic signals which seem to have meanings which we can't identify.  
Advertising bunting which doesn't publicise,  
pillars which don't stand on anything and  
walls which are not walls.

A traffic jam in the middle of the hills,  
in a place where a traffic jam would be  
impossible, but a natural traffic jam is  
created by public appeal. An impossible  
image, like *Waiting for Godot*.

A beach in which everything seems to be absolutely normal, but there is something that betrays a certain strangeness; everyone's towel is the same colour. Could it be a coincidence?

In *Football Field*, staged at the Art Square in Sharjah Biennial, a soccer field was painted while the existing street furniture remained in the middle of the field, creating new interactions in the form of coexistence.



Maider Lopez—*Playa Itzurun* (Detail), 2005



Maidier Lopez—*Playa Itzurun* (Detail), 2005





Maidier Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

# Interview

During the opening days of Venice 2009 a deluge soaked the Giardini and Blanca de la Torre and I were forced to seek refuge in one of the packed Pavilions to discuss her concept for *Off Street* and the artists whom she had selected. In August she brought those artists to A Foundation London for a site vast to Rochelle School and the Boundary Estate. This visit coincided with the opening of *Clusterf\*\*k* to the public and the annual Arnold Circus, *A Hundred Revolutions* a surreal event that involves cyclists doing 100 laps in a dizzying cavalcade. The experience helped to focus the ideas for the exhibition and frame this dialogue between the curator and the artists.

Mark Waugh – Executive Director, A Foundation

## Blanca: How do urban spaces affect your work?

AVELINO: I am interested in the communication of ideas in public spaces, as a way of making people rethink, deconstruct their lives and the society in which we live with its paradoxes and contradictions. Working in the streets is very lively, it has realism.

DEMOCRACIA: On many occasions our work has been connected to urban spaces. In these cases we try to be aware of the context. Beyond the urban or “formal” considerations, we are interested in the social context, in the communities and their memories. Recently we worked in the streets of Cartagena (South East of Spain), starting with the strong presence of the immigrant Moroccan community. The project was aimed at that community - we intervened in the city through big billboards with political messages written in Arabic. This meant Moroccan people could understand them but not the native Spanish who, on the other hand, would be made aware of the presence of another community, culturally and socially different and in the heart of city life. In this way some distrust was manifested from the Spanish side that smacks of racism, and latent paranoia.

ELENA: My work is generated by information found and researched in the urban spaces, historical, social, political and personal. I don’t conceive my practice without the urban element, in a direct or indirect way, whether on the scale of cities or on a micro-scale. This zooming in and out is part of the investigation. The space of the city and everyday life contain the basic materials I need to establish the dynamics of the work. This is expanded into an internal dialogue, a variety of discourses then become embedded in the work and an open dialogue is developed between the viewer and the piece.

The work pinpoints rhythms and routines of daily life in the city as they happen and as they are perceived, avoiding mediation, but reinstating them in a new context, renegotiating them within the exhibition space, using different media such as installation, text, video, photography, sound and performance. The approach to the ‘urban’ attends to the multi-dimensional quality of everyday life.

JOSECHU: Urban Space doesn’t directly affect my work and it’s not a terrain which I’m specifically interested in. However, as it is my “natural habitat” it has been an important element of reference and medium for most of my works. In the piece *You are part of an artwork* (2004), after selecting an urban rectangle in Madrid of 480 x 937 m2 as an artwork, the thirty six thousand seven hundred and twenty people who lived in that area were informed that they were part of an artwork. Each notification (with the measurements proportioned to the urban rectangle) corresponded to a slip numbered identically that recreated the same rectangle inside the art gallery where the project was presented. In the end, the installation suggested an atemporality reflected in a commitment of passing these notification slips to the past and future inhabitants of the rectangle.

JACOBO: I have never worked directly on the street so this project is a challenge. It is true that some of my projects have been associated with the exploration of private spaces, particularly in some of the houses where I used to live. In those houses I recovered objects with a personal, and to some extent, collective memory. In this situation I plan to engage the street with a similar approach; as an explorer in search of strange objects or sounds that will situate me in the space in which I move.

MAIDER: My projects are made with specific spaces in mind, and the context is the starting point for the development of the project. The idea grows from the experience of the city and how people live and enjoy public space.

PSJM: We always work with urban space, regarding it as public space that includes mass media too, such as advertising, TV, Internet and the like. Actually our work is inspired by socio-commercial behaviours which wholly belong to society. We are focused on the industrialised cartography, in the sense that we play with the signs that mark the city and produce meaning. For us urban cartography is a point of departure and a destination at the same time.



Blanca: Would you describe your practice as bringing together complementary styles into a liminal space between performance, street art, installation, public art, social art and intervention?

AVELINO: Well, I am not very interested in the idea of finding a definition for what I do, in this era where boundaries are unnecessary, the artist must be able to work in any media. The important thing is the concept, after that the way of formalising it is less important. What the artist has to say is more interesting than the medium of translation.

DEMOCRACIA: We are not interested in any labelling or definition, we leave that for you, the critics, art historians, we simply use one or other medium depending on its convenience for the project that we want to make, we are not fetishists of the disciplines. Of course all this crossovers that you mention are present but at the same time we are not interested in them.

JOSECHU: To me everything supports the ideas. I have never understood people ranting about the death of painting or bullshit like that, because that gives the authority of a concept to something that is just a means. If an idea requires the use of painting I use it, if it has to be a video and so on...a performance, a sculpture, a radio show, a magazine, paranormal phenomena, bank cheques or any other imaginable media which can be useful to my work.

JACOBO: Starting a project I certainly never interrogate myself about how or through which means it is going to be shown. I like to ask how it wants it to look. Having said this, in most of my work overlaps occur between sculpture, painting, photography or drawing, resulting in what I call *Choral Works*. These are artworks composed of independent elements of information, which in the process of relating to each other generate new meanings.

MAIDER: Yes my work is situated in an intermediate point among different practices. It is located sometimes between art and architecture and at others between design and social art. Sometimes it simply points to a fact, or offers a new reading of the space, a new use of the space that didn't exist before.

PSJM: Absolutely. Our practice inhabits these boundaries in order to blur the limit between art and reality. We usually make simulacra at the edge of art, aiming to provoke a reflection on brand politics, art markets, and the aesthetics of socioeconomics. Our simulacra are real but they are also fictional, allowing us to explore two fields simultaneously.

Blanca: Working in the streets and urban surroundings means working with a living entity. In this situation is the street more like a tool or purely a context?

AVELINO: It depends on the project itself. If you work with the community as a part of the project and they get involved, you start a dialogue. This is the intention, to relate different energies and create a complex and plural artwork. A relational way of producing artworks.

DEMOCRACIA: The street should never be considered as just a scenario for art, that leads us to that paternalist idea of bringing art to the public or even worse; to purely decorative dynamics. We believe that public interventions have to consider their context, of course there are different angles to approach it: the communicative, the communal, the social, the historic, the street can be a live entity, but also completely dead. We cannot forget that public space is completely controlled, it's hard to go outside the script. In the street the flow of capitalism is organized and many city spaces become theme parks for tourists. Only by trying to subvert this programmed use can we speak about the street as a live place. Quoting Jünger, lets remember that the eye of the urban planner is the same as the pilot of the bombing plane.

ELENA: It's both. Presenting artwork in the context of streets is a way of expanding the work beyond the confines of the white cube into a space where hierarchies are not clearly defined. It could be a way of subverting and extending what might be considered the traditional boundaries of art. As a tool, it creates the possibility of easy access to a constant flow of discarded materials generated by capitalist machinery, the appropriation of these materials and the use of the street as a canvas in a literal sense, the use of components of urban language, such as text, or the word as a graphic symbol.

JACOBO: The street is a living element, and as such is full of surprises. The street talks and shows itself as it is. It is pure and generous. In this sense the street is both, a tool and a context.

MAIDER: Working in the streets means, usually, working with people. My projects aim to show people's capacity for transforming urban space and building the city with their own use of space. So, working in urban surroundings, means working in a context made by people, allowing the artist to work in a broad and real context.

PSJM: For us the context always reveals a tool with which to construct meanings. Indeed this tradition was started when Duchamp's ready-made appeared on stage. We thrive on the person-to-person, person-to-thing or thing-to-person relationship, in the street outcomes are unpredictable, non-linear, rhizomatic. The *Spatial Practice*, suggested by Lefebvre, is made through symmetries and asymmetries, like the spider's production of webs. Human bodies and social bodies secrete paths, places, nodes, and boundaries, yielding space while they take over it. This theory sees the city not like a text but like a texture.



Maider Lopez — *Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005





Maider Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

## Blanca: Rethinking the street as a magical scenario, looking for the unexpected, the uncanny in the everyday, that tangential outlook - how do you find magical possibilities in the street, does the artist use a poetic, political or social perspective?

AVELINO: The reaction of people is often unexpected, which is sometimes good because it completes the works. The social and cultural background of the community is very important. I prefer to take the three characteristics you mentioned, and make a mix of political and social perspectives with the poetic coda in the visual work, manifesting the aesthetic perspective.

DEMOCRACIA: We disagree with the idea of the street as a “magical scenario”, where the unexpected or unknown arises. In advanced capitalized societies, the public space is a space for consent, where the social is perceived as an homogeneous whole. We believe that is precisely the latent conflict after Rousseau’s “social contract” that has to be made explicit, the irreconcilable differences between the different social groups. When this conflict is explicit or visible we might find the unexpected, the unknown, even the magical! In the meantime public space is a space of control and surveillance cameras, what one body is capable of among the mass; that unknown thing, and that un-definition, is that “could be”, that power wants to control. The city doesn’t like this “could be” and wants by any means to have it constantly monitored.

ELENA: Since my practice is conceptually generated, my work is triggered by ideas that revolve around my political, social and historical interests. My walks around the city, my relationship to the urban starts in the realm of the invisible. Chance, as a method of approaching the urban landscape is welcome. Sometimes through sound and text, sometimes through gesture and image, or both. It has a lot to do with the ephemeral quality of the situation, the unspecific time and space coordinates, originated in a specific location or site, the “situationist” approach, through “derive”, letting things happen, in an unplanned fashion. And then I guess that magic just happens and a situation comes together as a three dimensional visual poem, that engages in an open relationship with the inhabitant of the city. These poems are the containers of political and social issues.

The street presents a situation where the absence of hierarchies allows one to have a direct approach, through ‘dialogue’ the work becomes totally embedded in the urban landscape, opening the possibility of it becoming poetry to be read outside the white page. These are the ‘new monuments’. These ‘new monuments’ are opposite to the ‘old monuments’ whose main role was to enshrine and memorialise, past fragments of a frozen history. The new monuments are not on a plinth, in the middle of a square, they are ephemeral and can last the duration of a glance, they reflect a more democratic agenda, they grow out of a spatial or architectonic dialectic with the site, or they grow out of the everyday actions and lives of ordinary people, this organic “growth” of content and matter makes a rhythm that echoes the poetic qualities of space.

JOSECHU: beginning at the end, I try to avoid the use of a poetic, social or political perspective, as I think they are elements used to adorn unremarkable works. It is another thing when the work generates these concepts or uses them as a raw material. In *La Mancha de Alcorcón* (1999) I intended to create a rectangle of paranormal phenomena. For some weeks, information was spread around the Alcorcon clubs and bars about a strange phenomena, ‘a rectangular stain was appearing and disappearing on the floor.’ The formal result was a protected zone with a police cordon where the stain was supposed to happen (always nonexistent), with the conviction of all the neighbours that “there are always strange things happening in this space”.

JACOBO: I feel more comfortable at a sociological level as it leads me to wonder about the history of objects I find. I am concerned with the origin of a paper or the reason why a piece of furniture is leaning against a lamppost. I am attracted by the fact that a person has written something on a table, the smell of the room in which the table was, and why the furniture is no longer in a room. It is acting as an archaeologist who removes the layers of the earth in search of information.

MAIDER: In my projects more than creating magic I am interested in exposing the tricks. The magician perfoms a trick that the public doesn’t see and thus conjures their seduction and admiration of him. In my projects, however, it is the public who generates the trick, revealing the mechanisms or functions of the public space.

On the other hand, it’s true that the street is full of small “events” that transform and create the idea of a city. Within this context is where I frame my project *Crossing*. The Project consists of a series of photographs taken when a person walks by a building or urban element of the same colour in which that person is dressed. I wait in front of a building until someone dressed in the same colour of the building walks by. I think artists use political, social and poetic perspectives at the same time, in that sense the poetic and aesthetic perspective are required for developing social and political issues.

PSJM: We prefer ‘reason’ to ‘magic’, though we are interested in unplanned events and systematic paradoxes. Max Weber regarded the “disenchantment of the world” as an important distinguishing aspect of Western culture, the freedom from magic. This process begins with the rise of the great religions and finds its fulfilment in industrialisation. Now, in postmodern culture, brands can be rendered as myths, they work not through reason but emotions. To deconstruct the magical realm, in order to reach a critical rationalism, is not to pursue a more standardized world but to think freely. Instincts are definitely dangerous. Adorno, who was a fervent critic of the reason of the Enlightenment, noted too that Nazi communication worked more through the unconscious than consciousness. Philosophies like vitalism or irrationalism could be a useful counterpart of ‘instrumental reason’ but, in fact, currently these are modes exploited by late capitalism.



Blanca: Urban space as a canvas also suggests a certain relationship to materials. Do you set strict limits to define the use of materials within your work?

AVELINO: No. obviously there are no rules in the context of the street. The language is different if you work in a gallery, or institution. On the street it might be less intellectual but should be comprehensible for everyone.

DEMOCRACIA: We disagree. From our point of view the street cannot be a space over which the artist acts as if he would do with a canvas. This would despise the complexity of the urban, its visible and invisible devices. The materials for the urban intervention can't be like the traditional artist's, but are more like those of the sociologist, anthropologist, and activist or like the materials of the town planner or the publicist.

ELENA: The rules of the game are that the material used is never chosen just because of its formal qualities. Every aesthetic decision is a conceptual one, the concept rules the materials. Usually a mixed source of materials is used, new materials with existent materials acting as a reference for each other.

JOSECHU: When one works with urban spaces there are other limitations like security, durability, weather issues or simply budget issues. But these limits or circumstances are part of the work and are in some way comparable to the white canvas of the painter.

JACOBO: I do not have any type of complex when it

comes to use of materials. In recent sculptures I have been using dust, collected from my old house, which is processed to adhere to surfaces coated in tar. Dust composed mostly of dead skin. So I like to think that when our lounge or our city streets are swept, something from us ends in the dunghill. A curious paradox after the pampering we give ourselves.

MAIDER: The project defines the material. In *Dunafelfedes*, I used green umbrellas (Danubio's colour) to help four thousand people make the Chains Bridge of Budapest disappear, or red towels used by people at the beach to make the *Playa* red. On some occasions material is the colour, or paint is used for example on a football pitch in a square of Sharjah, but it is always the people who activate and finish the project.

PSJM: The material is the relationship between the artwork and the audience, between the citizens and the institution, between the people and the social meanings of things. Here the art produces a relationship, to use the term coined by Craig Saper, a "sociopoetic" work of art. We could say that the material here is an immaterial one. This tendency in contemporary art matches the nature of commodities. Using Inna Blom words: "Just as the standard interpretation of the knowledge economy or immaterial economy would seem to be affecting, feelings, sensitivities, and communications—in short, social relations—the artwork or art event could equally be understood as a social space rather than an object—a producer of social relations." The production of an artwork in relationships needs a corporate structure where the tasks are separated and most of the raw stuff is information, dialogue, communication. In PSJM: the management-marketing and the creativity-theory duties are distributed among Cynthia and Pablo. The production work is shared. All decisions and statements are taken in consensus. The PSJM brand is a company based on empathy.



Maider Lopez — *Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

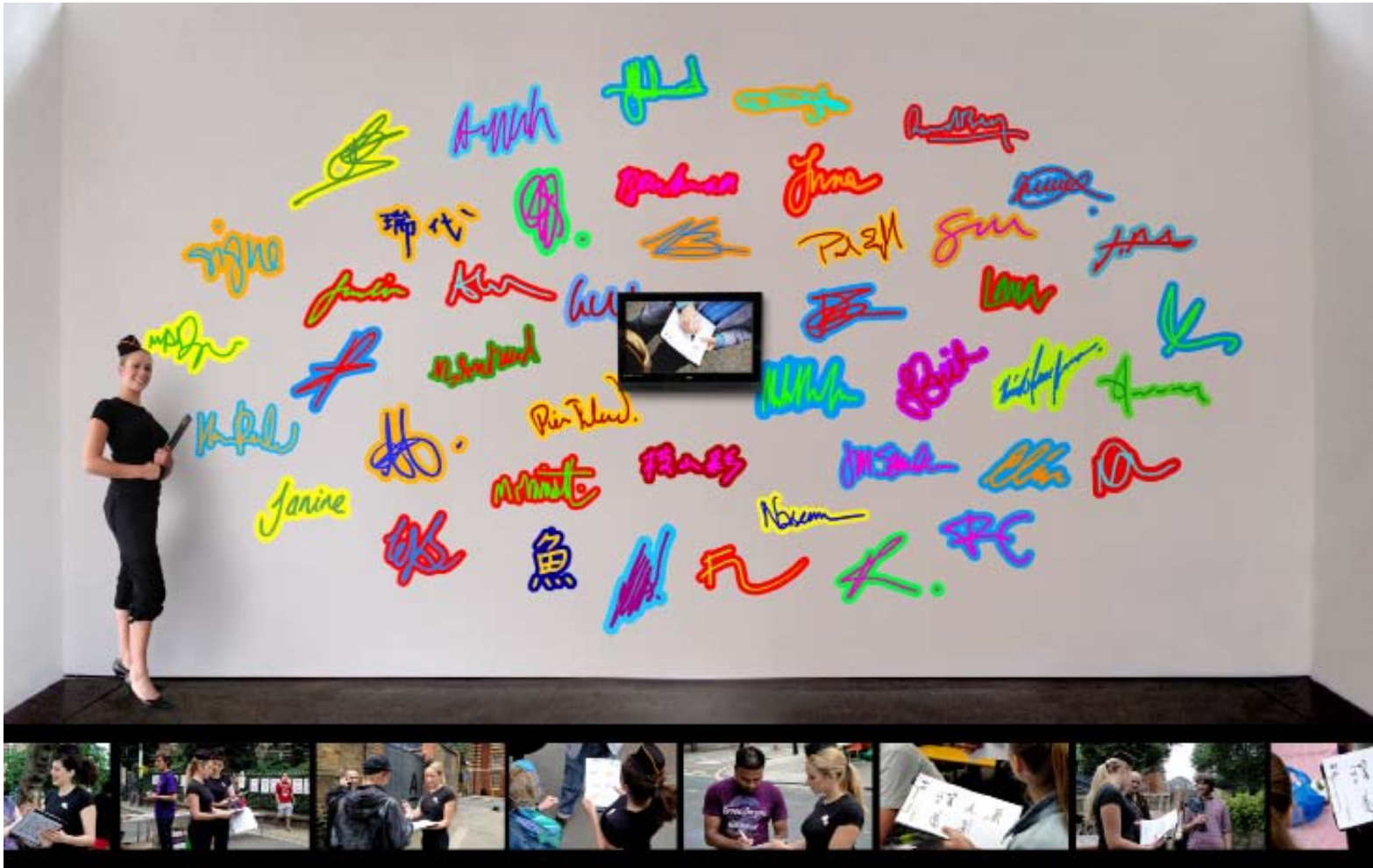


Maider Lopez — *Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005





Maidier Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005



Maidier Lopez—*Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

## Blanca: The Boundary Estate has complex social and cultural specificities. In what sense is interaction with the inhabitants of an area important with your work?

AVELINO: I think that it must start with a deep investigation of the context and its social and political characteristics, so the first step is to research the context. After that we can start preparing the work. The interaction with the public is essential, we must be able to traverse the gap between the community and the artist.

DEMOCRACIA: Interaction is important, but often this gets confused with participation or enjoyment but as we said before, if what we have to reveal is the conflict, then we can't please everybody and not everybody is going to feel involved, precisely because of that intention of questioning. A negative reaction from certain interventions can be a symptom of a successful proposal.

ELENA: Art within a contemporary cultural context is as open and democratic in its forms, manifestations, conception and sites as possible. It requires a degree of engagement between the artist and the community. It is about reframing the relationship of the inhabitants of the 'global city' in a 'local' way'. It is about addressing the needs of the individual that are all too often subsumed by those of the corporate, it is about a dialogue where these voices are listened to. The work has to resonate within the social, political, historical circumstances of city living.

JOSECHU: The work I make doesn't act directly with the surroundings but it acts through being transferred from one country to another and the socio-cultural elements that this generates.

MAIDER: Normally, my practice is informed and activated by the inhabitants of the space and their experience. My projects attempt to rework the idea of the city through the practice of the people. The project is for those who live in the area and people using the urban space in their daily lives.

People build the piece through their interaction. There is no project without their participation: In *Football Field*, for instance, different ways of using the public space cohabit. In the same football field some play a match, bikes cross the field and a cricket match is happening in the same area, while families play with their children at the benches on the other side.

PSJM: In *Citizen Identity* the interaction with the inhabitants is essential. They are the main character in the movie. People are seriously considered in all our work, it is important for us that our artworks are democratic. We strive to obtain two reading levels, one for the individuals unfamiliar with art codes and one for those immersed in the art world. We solve the first through exploiting the language tropes of the global culture industry, and the second through our contribution to the current aesthetic debate. Our projects become alive when they begin to interact with the audience. The reaction of the people, the media and the social body form the artwork's biography.

## Blanca: How do you think a project like this can affect the people and its surroundings?

AVELINO: I would use a more general question: is art useful for anything? I think it is, art is one of the last 'places' for reflection, freedom to say anything, and can alter the world that surrounds it. Maybe this sounds very utopian, but I am sure we need to believe in utopia.

ELENA: Art may have an influence in defining our wishes for what we want the world to become. With Modernism in which Art existed for art's sake, the work of art having a social role was not of conceived. The role of the communal and the environmental is emphasised but the individual voice is not neglected, there is still room for self-reflection and poetry. It is about repositioning of art and its role within society.

The ephemeral and temporary quality of many of today's art interventions allows for subtle effects in areas of the city that have been neglected. It is very common now that artists' projects involve community groups, in which a temporary work is generated by this interaction in which issues relevant to the needs and vision of a particular community have been discussed. Wastelands in cities produced by processes of redevelopment in which demolition of housing has occurred, are ripe for interventions by reclaiming this common terrain and implementing poetic appropriation. Vacant spaces can be reclaimed short-term as sites for social, political and historical thinking. Art can be integrated in buildings such as hospitals, schools or in the work place, where anaesthetic dialogue can be initiated.

MAIDER: My challenge is always to make something that can transform the place, creating new possibilities and offering new interpretations of that specific environment.

PSJM: By creating experiences with people so they acknowledge that they are the main ingredient of culture, letting them participate in the event, not as passive audiences but as users of a device made for/by them.

## Blanca: In what sense has art a social power?

AVELINO: Social power is an abstract term - every agent in a scenario plays its role, artists have one, but organisations have theirs too and with the work of everybody things can be changed.

DEMOCRACIA: We don't know if art has a social power. From our perspective, art is the only space where we can get people's attention, get an audience and a communication channel. We use it like that, in the most independent and autonomous way possible.

ELENA: The power of art doesn't belong to the realm of the spectacle but is closer to the effects it has on collective psychology through very personal and intimate levels, whilst referencing the outer social being in the wider fabric of society. The production of these spaces of reflection in the urban context will allow personal and the social/political to converge in the public sphere, and to produce thinking that is alive and growing.

JOSECHU: Art is the only creative act executed by human beings that is useless and that makes it automatically become a pure abstraction, which is the essence and motor of human thinking.

JACOBO: Multiple factors are involved in any kind of social, political or economic transformation. If they exist at any given time, then the makeover is possible.

MAIDER: Art has a lower visibility than other practices, so its social power may also be lower. But art, with its mechanisms, can also influence in less negative ways and more subtle ways. We can't forget that contemporary artistic practice is far from society, and that lecture trips can only try and bring people closer to those practices. Art tries to be closer to society but remains dislocated and distanced.

PSJM: The art world has limited audiences, therefore critical activists are like an ant in front of the ideology spread by mass media. But there are gaps, narrow ways to act. An example: our project *Corporate Armies* was based on an article we read in *The Guardian*, in July 2007. Russia's parliament voted to allow the country's biggest energy monopolies, Gazprom and the state oil pipeline company Transneft, to employ and arm private security units in order to 'protect themselves from terrorist attack.' Russia's interior ministry said they would supply Gazprom with guns from its own armoury. This was the starting point of *Corporate Armies*, a project of 'political fiction' in which we pushed to the extreme the possible sequels of the Russian proposal. Of course, our project has exclusively been shown in art spaces, like ARCO'09 where thousands watched the video, but it was mediaworthy, reviews picked up our work and published it as news. Otherwise only the lefty *The Guardian* would have exposed this issue.



## Blanca: We are trying to remap the aesthetics of the social. How is it possible to remap any aesthetic today and how would you introduce it within the social realm?

AVELINO: For me that is a very difficult issue, the ways we can change things are very small, but it still can be done, things can be changed. The aesthetic of the social is in a way a metaphor of something else.

DEMOCRACIA: To work with aesthetics in the social realm is a double edged weapon because the social aesthetics are not those of fights or vindications, or that raise an egalitarian access within the social realm of our time. Rather its labour is to maintain the seduction of the constant market and its impact is so high that it constitutes our way of life. The old concept of the thirties which said, 'against the aestheticisation of politics we need to raise a politicisation of aesthetics' is still valid, but now fascism is much more refined and diffused.

JOSECHU: I think the process is the other way around. Artists, to be useful to future aesthetics must draw out the creative attitude. Developing a work inside a system of maximum freedom which could go beyond the artistic arena, and become an aesthetic reference accepted by all society and not only in the sociohistorical context of the artist.

MAIDER: Maybe it's naive but I think the aesthetic has the potential for social transformation by itself. It's important to think of the uses we can make of urban space, instead of deactivating it through spectacle. Nowadays we tend to theorise and direct urban space. I propose spaces without thinking, without design, which are activated by use. Which then defines the space itself, instead of imposing a model space that defines all behaviours. In the city we tend to theorise every corner; overdetermine how to move and inhabit public space.

PSJM: Our work is about the individual's identity in consumerist, informational, semiotic society. The new "generic city", as Koolhaas likes to call it, is a zone of flux and flow, no-identity areas which grow between the contradiction of planned urbanism and randomness. As Scoth Lash has pointed out, urban space is a mess, a chaos that can be only organized by the commercial signs, the brands. The brands mark these territories. Imposing their semiotic rules, making noise and making meaning at the same time. These are signs imposed from above, but another ubiquitous mark exists all over our streets, and they come from below; these are the graffiti tags, the signatures that remark the territory, adding noise and meaning to the city. The individual lives amidst that branded field, receiving signals from all sides, trying to build an identity by themselves. With the proposed *Citizen Identity* project we want to throw some light on this situation by acknowledging the primal individual's brand, his/her signature. Converting this into a new sign between global culture industries and global subcultural expressions.

## Blanca: How do you feel about the transposition of making art on the streets and reconstructing it in the gallery space?

AVELINO: In a way this a new format for me, a diorama of the piece that was made in the street might be interesting.

DEMOCRACIA: If the gallery is a protected space for art, while in the street the art circulates without a name, only as an archive or documentation, what happens can be translated from the public realm to the artistic one. In fact we ourselves have entered that dynamic because it's demanded from the contemporary art system. Anyway, we are not interested in that dense archive, our archives are conceived from aesthetics, which is our specific work field. They are archives/documents that arise while the action in the public space takes place. For instance *Welfare State*, comes from a concrete action that invites civil society to contemplate the demolition of a shanty town, as if it were some kind of spectacle. But this documentation is already conceived as a video installation with a cinematic narrative. It's not the naked document, there is an aesthetic re-elaboration from the action in the public space.

JOSECHU: I'm interested when the system completes the work and becomes an indissoluble part of the work. In other circumstances it's just what museums do conceptually, although it's fundamental to document and recuperate works with ephemeral character. But it is a question of the art world rather than the artist.

JACOBO: Places have history. Every city, each street corner has its own story. But the same applies to exhibition spaces. Inevitably, artwork suffers a transformation when we relocate it. In this process, we can even change the way we perceive it. I like to think that this process is rewarding. Good works will be good in any context. That is what it is important.

MAIDER: The change of context between where the project is conceived and where it's exhibited generates a contradiction in itself. There are many ways to work in real contexts but later show a manifestation in a museum.

In my work, on many occasions, the project takes place in a specific environment and moment. I generate documentation and from that the work that will be later shown in a museum. In *Ataskoa*, for instance, through an open call I created a traffic jam in the mountain, in an idyllic context where there would have never been a traffic jam normally. *Ataskoa* was created in order to create a traffic jam in a context that doesn't correspond to it, to have a festival day in the mountain, to create an encounter with people, to reflect on the use of the car, not in order to make a picture of it. It was created as an experience, but that doesn't stop me editing some photographs or video of the event. Pieces work in the art context, even though they were created through the intervention of citizens and in a very different context from a gallery.

PSJM: Art that mixes itself with reality, with life, is subjected to a structural contradiction. That is the bind of *Dissolution-distinction*. These facets entail two stages. Firstly the art event needs to dissolve itself into reality to gain effectiveness, afterwards it must be distinguished as art. The challenge here is to make a work equally effective as art and as a life experience. The intervention in the public space has the advantage of being direct, four light boxes with the Puma, Nike, Adidas and Reebok logos sharing the same slogan: Made by slaves for free people. The work was censored by Adidas. We later exhibited this work in galleries, art fairs and museums, and the company did nothing. Public spaces and open whereas the art space is closed, but this closure allows a protected space for freedom of speech. We had an experience related to this, during our *Asia Project* in which we presented, in a public space are delimited by a new kind of proprietorship, not of objects but immaterial things. Copyright, registered trademark and intellectual property make more money than material values. We are involved in a symbolic struggle.



Maiden Lopez — *Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005





Maider Lopez — *Playa Itzurum* (Detail), 2005

**Blanca:** Should we pursue these kind of interventions as something permanent or is its ephemeral quality critical?

AVELINO: The works can be ephemeral but not their consequences, if the process is something temporary or limited, it is ephemeral, but you need to wait to see if there is any response, action or change in the social space where the activity has occurred.

DEMOCRACIA: We have been involved in discussions about public art for a long time and at first we thought that the ephemeral quality was a value, because any imposition on the citizen was eliminated. We are not so sure now, especially in a moment when advertising discourse has been imitating strategies and aesthetics of public and street art, in this moment the ephemeral stopped being an ethical safeguard for public art.

JOSECHU: They are two different questions. The ephemeral character, except when it's a conceptual part of the work itself, is a circumstance and not very important and with time we will not even value it. In fact, every creative act is ephemeral, but we are used to preserving the medium in which works are conceived. An ephemeral work obeys the same requirements of purchase and sale, conservation and exposition as any other physical art work, though the terrain is still green and we need to work on its development.

JACOBO: I have always believed in the power of the ephemeral. Everything that disappears gives way to something else. The disappearance does not involve non-permanence. Perhaps, what it is important is to remain in the memory. There may lay the power of any proposal.

MAIDER: I usually understand urban interventions as something ephemeral. However, if a project gives something to the place, helps public space to live or generates a new use, I think its permanence is totally OK. What I am interested is that the work doesn't interfere with citizens but generates new connections and uses of the place.

PSJM: We must keep going, it's the only means we have at hand and we should take advantage of it.

**Blanca:** How do you think the street art scene is evolving?

AVELINO: It is necessary to take art from the institution and take it closer to the public, otherwise the gap between them will never disappear. And also the opposite way, bring the people to the institution. But this is not an easy project.

DEMOCRACIA: The explosion of creativity generated through graffiti and Street Art, especially from the perspective of the dissolution of the spaces of legitimacy for art is very interesting. But, on the other hand there is something about the street art scene that worries us and we mean the facility with which those strategies have been assimilated by the advertising system, and that many people interested in street art celebrate these advertising campaigns the same way as any other street art work, without any critical sense of the appropriation of a popular aesthetic by the machine of seduction that is publicity.

JACOBO: I think there are artists more connected to the street; artists with a broader and real knowledge on the evolution and development of street art. Probably they can answer this question more accurately. I guess I like to think that art, done in the street or not, should always leave questions in the air. It should never be conclusive.

MAIDER: Art shows a growing interest in the street and what is happening in it. This is absolutely positive, at the same time there's the risk of converting this into a cliché, a way of working in the street. Art has to work in terms of deactivation of the mechanisms of contemporary seduction, giving importance to the experience and the activation of urban space - thinking about the use of the urban space, instead of deactivating it through spectacle.

PSJM: We think there are two types of street art, the one that is made by contemporary artists inside the circle of art and on the other hand street art made by graffiti artists, usually very linked to hip-hop culture. Often these two currents meet each other, when artists borrow subcultural aesthetics, and when the street artists attain conventional gallery support and enter the art market and the artworld institution. We have seen very interesting works in both fields.



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DEAN ROGERS (2009)

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# Denk mal

As this year passes we struggle to let go of what we all know.  
 We still appear to turn pages in documents and magazines that  
 determine the group, the market place, the demand for the idea  
 to be known, understood and placed within a critical path of acceptance.  
 We need instead to allow a time of letting go, of moving forward through  
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Ellen Gallagher



Artists  
Adam Bainbridge, Myka Baum, Frances Blythe, Sam Burford, Amir Chasson, David Cochrane, Andrew Curtis, Jorge de la Garza, Nicolas Deshayes, Bee Emmott, Teresa Eng, Anna M.R. Freeman, Felix Frith, Joseph Gower, Susie Green, Alexandra Handal, Richard Healy, Jung-Ouk Hong, Benjamin Jenner, Peiyuan Jiang, Michael Just, Dean Kissick, Paul Knight, Una Knox, Simone Koch, Rinat Kotler, Martina Lindqvist, Susanne Ludwig, Rachel Maclean, Francis Mason, Jack Newling, Marco Palmieri, Rebecca Parkin, Chinmoyi Patel, Johanna Piesniewski, Sam Plagerson, David Price, Konrad Pustola, Hannes Ribarits, Nick Smith, Christopher Thomas + Kristel Raesaar, Jonathan Trayte, Jack Vickridge, Amanda Wasielewski, Barbara Wolff, Freya Wright, Laura Zilionyte

10 November – 20 December	12 September – 25 October
A Foundation London Club Row Rochelle School London E2 7ES	Cornerhouse 70 Oxford Street Manchester M1 5NH
<a href="http://www.afoundation.org">www.afoundation.org</a>	<a href="http://www.cornerhouse.org.uk">www.cornerhouse.org.uk</a>

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ENGLAND**



## Liverpool Location



### Key

- A: A Foundation
- B: Tate Liverpool
- C: Open Eye Gallery
- D: FACT
- E: Walker Art Gallery
- F: The Bluecoat



### On Foot

Greenland Street is a 15 minute walk from the city centre and train stations. Walk south towards China Town, carry on along Great George Street, turn right at the lights and cross over St. James Street onto the top of Greenland Street. Walk down the hill past NOVAS, over Jamaica Street and A Foundation is on the left.

### Local Bus

The S1 City Centre Circular stops on Great George Street, a couple of minutes walk from A Foundation. The bus can boarded at Lime Street Station, Queen Square Bus Station, Albert Dock (Hartley Quay) and at many other stops along the way. It runs every 10 minutes during the day, including weekends. For more information about this and other services: Tel: 0871 200 2233 Web: [www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk).

### Rail

National services terminate at Lime Street Station, which is a 20 minute walk or 5 minute taxi ride to A Foundation. A 15 minute walk to A Foundation is a 15 minute walk to A Foundation.

### Road

Exit the M6 from the north or south at junction 21A, and take the M62 to Liverpool. At the end of the motorway, take the A5080, which becomes the A5047 Edge Lane. Turn left onto the A5089 Durning Road. Take a right onto the A562 Upper Parliament Street. Take the right turn opposite Cains Brewery, onto Jamaica Street and then an immediate left onto Greenland Street. A Foundation is on the left. Free street parking is available on Greenland Street, Jamaica Street, Flint Street and most other streets in the area.

### Air

Flights from a number of European locations land at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, which is 20 minutes by taxi to A Foundation or 40 minutes by bus to the city centre. Flights from national, European and world locations land at Manchester Airport, which is an hour by train or car to Liverpool.

## Liverpool Gallery Information



### A Foundation

67 Greenland Street  
Liverpool L1 0BY

### Public Enquiries

Tel 0151 706 0600  
[info@afoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@afoundation.org.uk)

### Press Enquiries

Tel 0151 706 0600  
[press@afoundation.org.uk](mailto:press@afoundation.org.uk)

### Opening Hours

20 September – 30 November  
Tuesday – Saturday, 12pm – 6pm  
Also open:  
Sunday 21 September and Sunday 30 November, 12pm – 6pm

Admission is free

### Disabled Access

A Foundation is fully accessible with the exception of the first floor of The Blade Factory. Disabled amenities are available in the Blade Factory. If you have any particular needs or concerns over access please call the A Foundation office.

### Support Us

A Foundation is a not-for-profit arts charity. Our core aim is the commissioning of the very best, most ambitious art by living artists. We have an especial interest for working in the City of Liverpool.

We rely on a variety of funding sources for our activities. Our work could not exist were it not for the broad support of our patrons. These include a number of private individuals, companies and trusts who share our vision and help our work to grow – in Liverpool, London and on-line. This support will become increasingly vital for us as the scope of our ambition grows. There are many ways in which you can contribute to this growth, either through close involvement with our artists, our new building plans, or corporate sponsorship.

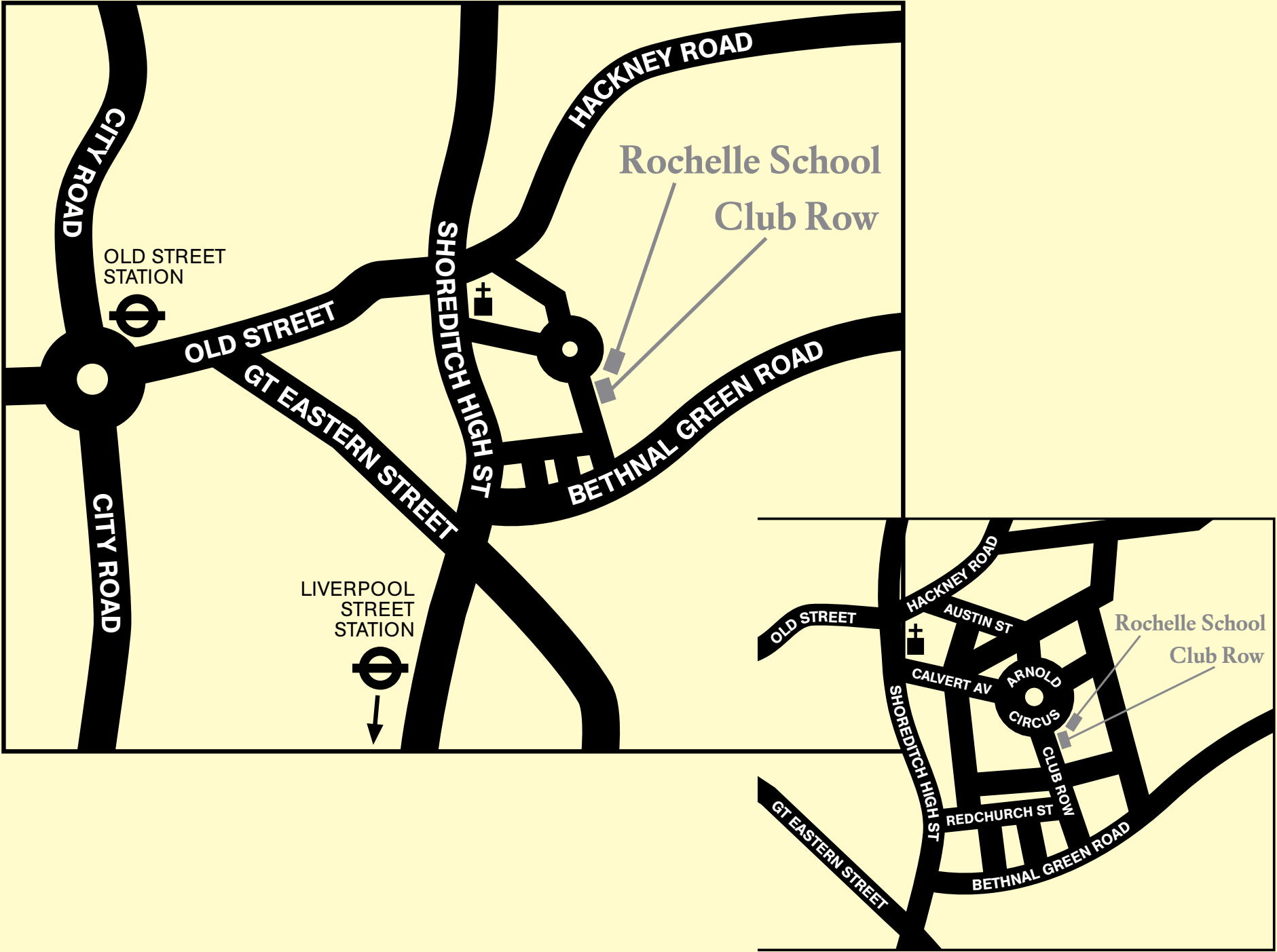
We thank our donors for their loyalty and enthusiasm and look forward to working with new friends as we build for the future.

For more information about how you can become more involved in the growing plans for A Foundation, please contact:

Anthony Bennett: 0207 729 8257 or [anthonyb@afoundation.org.uk](mailto:anthonyb@afoundation.org.uk)



## London Location/Gallery Information



### Tube

Take the Northern Line to Old Street or the Central, Hammersmith & City, Circle or Metropolitan line to Liverpool Street.

On foot from Old Street station – At Old Street station take exit 3 and walk North along Old Street until you reach Great Eastern Street. Cross over to Rivington Street and continue past Charlotte Road and Curtain Road until you reach Shoreditch High Street. Cross over the road to Calvert Avenue. At the end of Calvert Avenue go right around Arnold Circus roundabout and the entrance to the gallery is on Club Row.

On foot from Liverpool Street station – Turn left out of the main exit and walk along Bishopsgate. Keep walking for about 10 minutes and Bishopsgate will become Shoreditch High Street. Continue along Shoreditch High Street until you turn right into Calvert Avenue. At the bottom of the street go right around Arnold Circus roundabout and the entrance to the gallery is on Club Row.

### Bus

There are a number of buses which travel close to A Foundation including the 8, 26, 55, 135 and 243. Visit [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk) for further information on bus routes.

### Rail

The nearest mainline station is Liverpool Street. Kings Cross and Euston are 2 and 3 stops away on Northern line. There are also overland trains to Old Street and Moorgate, both within walking distance.

### Air

Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton airports all have good transport links into central London. The Stansted Express train arrives into Liverpool Street station and there are direct trains from Gatwick into nearby London Bridge station.

### Road

Visit the [www.theaa.com](http://www.theaa.com) for a comprehensive Route Planner.

Please be aware that there is limited parking around the area. Pay and Display machines are in operation Monday – Friday 8.30am – 7pm and on Sunday 8.30am – 2.30pm, parking is free on Saturdays. The following National Car Parks are nearby:

9-11 Tabernacle St, Shoreditch  
London, EC2A 4DD  
Tel: 020 7638 0670

62 Paul St, Shoreditch  
London, EC2A 4NA  
Tel: 020 7613 3639

288-290 Old St, Shoreditch  
London, EC1V 9EY  
Tel: 020 7613 4669

# ADS FREE SPACE



## London Calendar of Events

## Exhibitions

11 September – 4 October	15–20 September	24–27 September	9–18 October	9 October – 1 November	6 November 2009 – 6 January 2010
Off Street	Denk Mal	Product	New Sensations 2009	Whitney McVeigh: New Work	Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2009
Exhibition curated by Blanca de La Torres Featured Artists: Avelino Sala, Democracia, Elena Bajo, Jacobo Castellano, Josechu Dávila, Maider López, and PSJM	University of Westminster MA Fashion and Design Graduate Exhibition  Open 10.00am–6.00pm daily	De La Espada presents new products from Autoban, Leif. designpark, Matthew Hilton, and Studioilse.  11.00am–8.00pm  www.delaespada.com	Exhibition Preview Thursday 8 October 6.00pm–9.00pm  www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk	Exhibition curated by Sotiris Kyriacou  Exhibition Preview Thursday 8 October 6.00pm–9.00pm  Monday–Sunday 12.00pm–6.00pm Late Thursday 8.00pm  www.whitneymcveigh.co.uk	Exhibition Preview Thursday 5 November  www.newcontemporaries.org.uk
During the exhibition the galleries are open: Wednesday – Sunday 12.00pm – 6.00pm & Late Thursday 8.00pm. Free					

## Events

10 – 12 September 7.30pm – 9.00pm	4 – 10 September 11.00am – 5.00pm	4 – 10 September 11.00am – 5.00pm	8 September 11.00am – 5.00pm	9 & 11 September 11.00am – 5.00pm	12 October 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Free to Air: Sleep Walk, Sleep Talk by Suki Chan	Off Street Workshops	Workshop with Elena Bajo	Workshop with Avelino Sala	Workshop with PSJM	Off Street: In Conversation
Presented at A Foundation as an outdoor projection piece from 7.30pm – 9.00pm daily.	For further information about the Off Street workshops, or to book your place please email: sophie_williamson@hotmail.com.  The workshop is FREE, but booking is essential			Cultural Commodities for Commitment — Art as Social Tool  A two-day workshop for art students and recent graduates including theoretical debate and practical exercises	Artists Democracia & Maider Lopez with curator Blanca de la Torres and Director of A Foundation Mark Waugh.
27 September 7.00pm	3 October 1.00pm	4 October 2.00pm – 5.00pm	22 October 6.30pm	12 November	
International Necro- nautical Society (INS)	Interspecies	Interspecies Family Day	Whitney McVeigh In Conversation	Conference ‘The Economy of Art’	
Aerial Reconnaissance Berlin Evidence to the INS Inspectorate Committee (public session); publication of the Dossier. Chair: Tom McCarthy, INS General Secretary Reconnaissance: Anthony Auerbach, INS Chief of Propaganda Rendezvous: 1900h followed by a reception.  Aerial Reconnaissance is part of a series of surveillance operations carried out with the authority of the INS Inspectorate. The Inspectorate’s mission in Berlin — the World Capital of Death — reflects the INS’s central concerns: marking and erasure, transit and transmission, cryptography and death. A public session of the Inspectorate Committee will hear evidence and inspect material recovered by Anthony Auerbach.	Primate Cinema: How To Act Like An Animal. A workshop with Rachel Mayeri: 1.00pm–6.00pm. 16s and over.  Tour of ENKI experiment 4 with Antony Hall: 2.00pm  Symposium: Animals, Humans and Power: 3.00pm–6.00pm (BSL interpreted) with Antennae editor Giovanni Aloï, Photographer Karen Knorr, Helen MacDonalds, writer of Falcon, Ruth MacLennan and Snaebornsdottir/Wilson. Limited spaces, www.artscatalyst.org/interspecies to book a place  How to Act Like An Animal performance: 6.00pm	Becoming Bowerbirds. 2.00pm–4.00pm These intriguing birds show unusual creativity - they construct bowers which they decorate with found objects to attract females. Be a bowerbird for the afternoon with artist Sally Hampson. (From an Arts Catalyst project at London Zoo).  Interspecies Tales by poet and storyteller Shamim Azad 2.00pm, 3.00pm & 4.00pm  Animal Handler’s Tales 4.30pm James Mackay in conversation with curator Rob La Frenais.	“The question at stake in McVeigh’s images is <i>presence</i> ; the possibility that we might recognise a presence that corresponds to our own in the matter that is in front of us.” (JJ Charlesworth, catalogue text, <i>Whitney McVeigh</i> : New Work)  Whitney McVeigh will discuss her work with Sotiris Kyriako, curator of the exhibition, and JJ Charlesworth (writer and reviews editor of Art Review).	Design Artists Copyright Society (www.dacs.org.uk) and Cabinet (The Creativity and Business International Network)	

# Liverpool Calendar of Events

## Exhibitions

During the exhibitions the galleries are open:  
Tuesday – Saturday, 12.00pm – 6.00pm, Free

4 September – 17 October	2 October – 14 November
<b>Ben Rivers</b> <b>A World Rattled</b> <b>Of Habit</b>	<b>Haroon Mirza</b>
Exhibition Preview Thursday 3 September 7.00pm – 9.00pm	Exhibition Preview Thursday 1 October 7.00pm – 9.00pm

## Events

<p><b>24 &amp; 25 September</b> Midday – Midday</p> <hr/> <p><b>The Really Long Night</b></p> <p>A full 24 hour programme including performance and an after party for the Long Night of the AND Festival:</p> <p><u><b>TAXED: 24 Hour Interview Snickers</b></u></p> <p>The TAXED series takes on Hans Ulrich Obrist's 24 hour interviews, with a non-stop 24 hour programme interviewing over 70 artists, curators, musicians and insomniacs.</p> <p><u><b>Dream Screenings</b></u></p>	<p><b>26 September</b> 11.00am – 6.00pm</p> <hr/> <p><b>Sex for the Disabled</b></p> <p><i>Sex for the Disabled</i> ironically addresses the question of sex: Do disabled people have sex and if so, is it different to able-bodied people? Over the Saturday you are invited to view the 15mm Films collective at work in an open set, where audiences can watch the shoot and discuss the film with the actors between takes. A collaboration between AND festival and Dada fest. Part of Abandon Normal Devices. For more details please visit <a href="http://www.andfestival.org.uk">www.andfestival.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>13 November</b> 7.00pm</p> <hr/> <p><b>Taxed: Slip and Slide Slam 2</b></p> <p>The last in the series of TAXED returns to Art in General's Slide Slam, showcasing over 20 artists in a succession of quick fire presentations.</p>	<p><b>26 November</b> 7.00pm</p> <hr/> <p><b>Artur Zmijewski In Conversation</b></p> <p>One of today's most exciting contemporary artists discusses his previous work, including <i>Therm</i>, 2007 shown at Documenta 11 and <i>Repetition</i>, 2005 shown as the Polish Pavilion in the 51st Venice Biennale, and talks about the progress of his new commission to be shown at A Foundation in June 2010.</p>
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## Offsite Events at the Cornerhouse

13 November – 2 December	13 November 4.00pm	26 November 10.00am – 4.00pm	2 December 7.00pm
Artur Żmijewski at Cornerhouse	Artur Żmijewski in the Context of Polish Contemporary Art	Democracies	The Making of an Artur Żmijewski Film
A Foundation has been working in partnership with Cornerhouse and Salford Restoration Office and whilst Żmijewski is making new work at A Foundation, Corner- house will host an exhibition of existing works and an accompa- nying programme of talks and events. For more details please visit <a href="http://www.cornerhouse.org">www.cornerhouse.org</a>	Discussion about Żmijewski's work with Sebastian Cichocki from Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, with Lesley Young and James Hutchinson from Salford Restoration Office and Contempo- rary Polish Art.	A focus on Żmijewski's most recent work Democracies, which brings together scenes of political and social unrest from across the world.	Bryony Bond, Curator at A Founda- tion discusses Artur Żmijewski's work in progress, with participants taking part in the filming at A Foundation.



# Kaleidoscope Caravan Club

September 19

**Joakim & The Disco (Live)**

Joakim (DJ)

Kelpe (Live)

Nadia Ksaiba

The Invisible (DJ)

Tigersushi DJs

20jazzfunkgreats

8 – 3, Saturdays  
cargo-london.com

**CARGO**

Introducing



September 26

**Alexander Robotnick**

John Morales (M & M mix/NYC)

Neon Indian

The Chap

French Horn Rebellion

Jesper Christiansen

Modular DJs

## Re-Imagining October

Curated by Mark Nash, writer and curator, and Isaac Julien  
2 October–6 December 2009

Address: Calvert22, 22 Calvert Avenue, London E2 7JP  
Contact: +44 (0) 20 7613 2141 info@calvert22.com  
Nearest Tube: Old St./Liverpool St

Opening hours:  
Wednesday–Saturday: 10am–6pm  
Sunday: 11am–5pm

CALVERT  
**22**



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A Foundation  
67 Greenland Street  
Liverpool L1 0BY  
T: +44 (0)151 706 0600  
info@afoundation.org.uk  
www.afoundation.org.uk

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www.yesstudio.co.uk

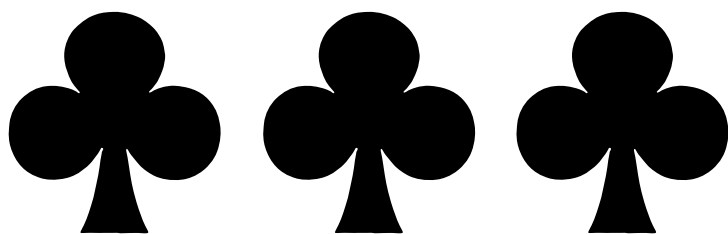
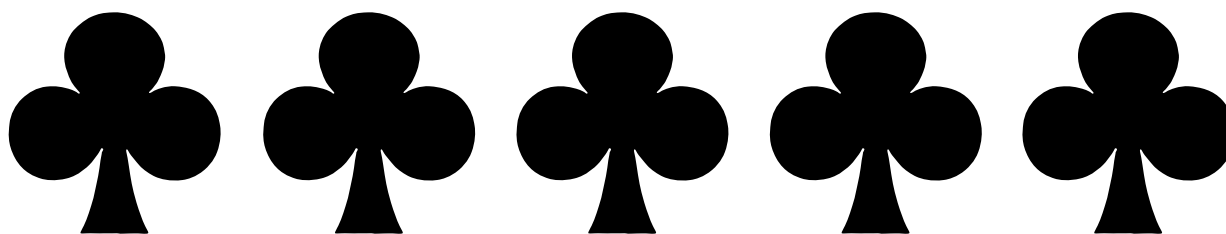
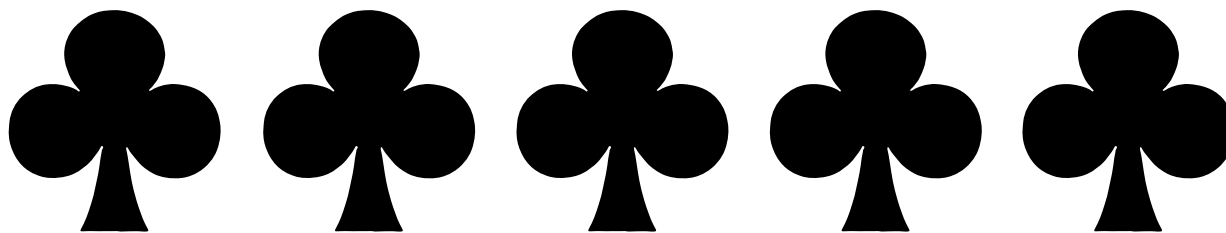
Front cover image:  
Maidier Lopez *Playa Itzurin* (Detail) 2008

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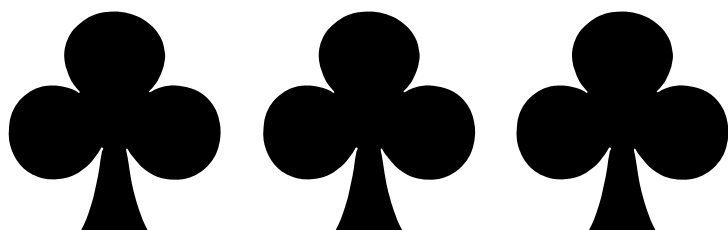
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# Zoo

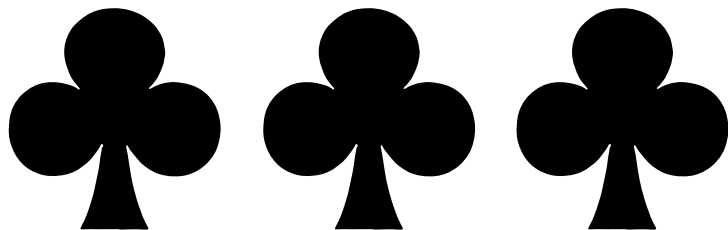
## 2009



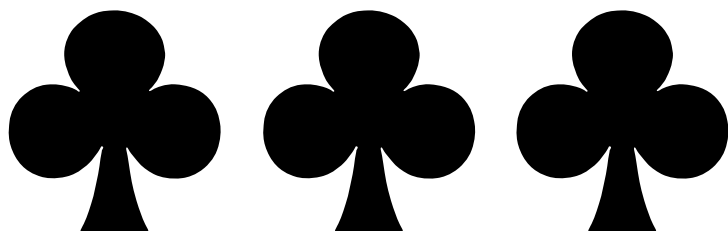
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16–19 OCTOBER

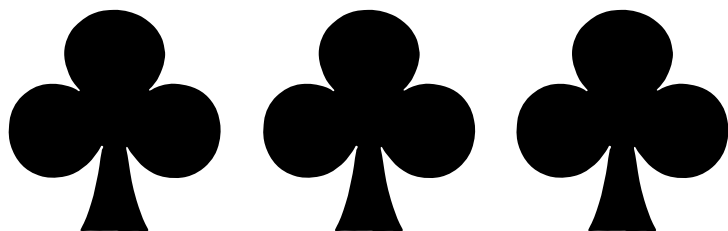
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[www.zooartenterprises.com](http://www.zooartenterprises.com)



The producers of Zoo Art Fair present Zoo 2009, an event that brings together up to forty-five contemporary arts organisations and practitioners, through a series of specially curated exhibitions and stand presentations.



Within a new multi-site location situated in London's East End, Zoo 2009 will include specially curated exhibitions by FormContent, LUX, Studio Voltaire and Rob Tufnell; solos shows of last year's winners of the Champagne Perrier-Jouët Prize – Scoli Acosta and the John Jones Art on Paper Award – Clunie Reid; twenty-five stands showcasing young commercial and non-commercial contemporary arts organisations and a section of booths selling artists' editions and multiples.