

## **Solid on Our Source Planet**

### **29 September – 28 October 2012**

Annabelle Craven-Jones, Mat Do, Clare Gasson, Claire Hope, Glen Jamieson, Kit Poulson, Kari Rittenbach, Florian Roithmayr, Alan Stanners

*Solid on Our Source Planet* is a group exhibition by artists who took part in an Escalator retreat at Wysing in May 2012. The artists have had an ongoing dialogue since the retreat and this exhibition brings them together in a formal setting for the first time. Individual works, including sculpture, text, moving image and painting, are presented in a context of discussion and reflection. The exhibition includes group activities and works in progress, alongside documentary materials of the group's previous activities.

**Annabelle Craven-Jones** focuses on the self-portrait mode and locates universal thought processes within the wider context of today's increased therapy culture and that of 'emotionalism'. The work *Unpack <A question on disappearance>*, 2009-2012 stems from a request by the artist to her father: to make a fire with the knowledge that, just as soon as it is built, he will be asked to put it out. This process is edited in reverse whilst the sound continues in parallel and is understood in relation to the psychological 'unpacking' of a mind that is subjected to a course of therapy. This futile action engages with the notion of disappearance in terms of human transience and the looping process inherent in therapy. Ostensibly it also documents the artist inviting someone else to 'make' the work and enter into a kind of psychological performance that also questions the nature of authorship and equally confuses the relationship dynamics between artist and performer, daughter and father. The initial premise of the film has been reenacted remotely via webcam in two locations subjecting the first film to a psychological unpacking. Also on display is the transcript of the dialogue from the film.

**Mat Do** works across a range of media including film and video, digital print and performance. His practice explores ideas of ambition and reinvention at odds with the physical and psychological topography it inhabits and often involves deeply engaging autobiographical experiences of the sites. All of the new works on display are in confluence with each other in their visuals and concepts, and stem from an on-going interest in the remote island of Foulness on the coast of Essex. *For the things that are seen, are temporal, but the things that are not seen, are eternal (I defy thee)*, 2012 is a visual and allegorical diorama of new beginnings; various objects are placed on a geometric backdrop stemming from an eighteenth-century semaphore design. In its centre a mirage depicts the Broomway, an ancient causeway spanning the vast mudflat of the Maplin Sands. The artist's main point of departure began with the text *Crossing the Sands* a letter extracted from the 1900 Essex review, telling the dramatic journey of the Essex Clergy man's return from a Ruridecanal meeting on Foulness and connecting it with his own on-going experience of visiting the island and its Broomway. Also selected for display is a 1900 illustrated edition of *The Pilgrims' Progress* by John Bunyan and a new digital photographic work *Terra Firma / SCARE'M!*, 2012.

**Clare Gasson** *Some notes to try to counteract linearity, the farmhouse, Wysing. September 29<sup>th</sup> 2012*

7' 2010

... seeing and truth via Argento's *Deep Red*/a tight performance in an old warehouse/Born out of talking and talking/Listening and looking/Not rehearsed/Stopping/ Just at the edge/Thought out and out/Placed/Thought over thought/Stake/ Stack of cards in hand/Shuffling/On the fabric of chance/Shot to edit/Pre-recorded/Voice/Anti-sync/Urgent sync sound discussions with Gernot/Film thoughts to life as action as energy as being here now all now everything at once/After hours/A meeting at the shoreline/We agree to give a little and take a little/Moon ray shadows/ Connections happening despite everything/Within illusions of control/Quote confessions/From Brion to Val to *Les Mains* to *Soleil* to *The Passenger*/ Dizzying/ Negatives/Rhythms/Balancing/ Equations/Levels of action and experience/Energy of the present/Of being here now/Of being there then/Of fluidity and movement/Stepping into the river/again

*Performers (towards a dialogue)*

*Wysing September 2012*

... chance happenings of/Clay in hand/Flexible material/Providing for the mistake/Timing and pace/Movements/Fast slow/Twisting twisted propped/Interweaving echoes/A pretext for emotions/Everything else just conjuring/ Characters on a series of rafts/Applying the equations/Skidding on mirror/Spheres of influence/Writing to and from/ Gestures/ Squeezed out through thoughts/Via the hand/Highlighting levels/Towards constructed interactions/On a stage maybe?/In films possibly/In life certainly/Propping up/Mind/ Body/A necessity/Frameworks/Scenes to be reconstructed/And reconstructed again/ Energy echoing in the whole piece/Deepening shadows/Crush them up/Start again

**Claire Hope** explores how ambivalent experiences of the human psyche, shared visual culture and flows of capital, may relate to opposing individual and collective desires to objectify, control and fix human experience. *A Determined Search beyond Romance*, 2010 - a live performance shown here as an installed video loop - stages two young people exploring intimate relations through affection, formality and style; resulting in a shifting action of touch and gesture which extends into increasingly repetitive behavior. Skirting closeness the young man and woman make a series of often misapplied approaches as they adopt postures reflecting cultural and filmic representations of romantic affection. Extending into increasingly abstract and animalistic interactions, intimacy becomes caught between a frenzied exploration and forensic routine. A number of the artist's other works are also on display: a written text, a hand drawn copy of a sketch for a future work, a digitally printed tracing of a photograph and a photographic print of an early public billboard project. These smaller works have been specially produced (or presented) for the exhibition, and together with the performance, can be seen to form a dialogue; a collection.

**Glen Jamieson's** core concern is to investigate landscape's reluctance to conform to depiction, and the photograph's unreliability to truthfully depict. On display is the new work *Short Cut To A Picturesque (after John Crome the elder)*, 2012, which began as a study of an untended plot of land where a flyover cuts through a historic city street in Norwich. Among the Tudor housing that was swept away to make room for the flyover was the house of John Crome, nineteenth-century artist and founder of the 'Norwich School of Painters'. Crome's paintings had their source in the city but the outcome was testament to a landscape of memory and imagination - a short cut to acquire a picturesque outside of the present, the topography of the self. Just as Crome's paintings failed to describe the city in the nineteenth century, Glen Jamieson has also made short cuts in the description and documentation of what is in front of him. The work is an attempt to direct the focus of study towards a landscape – a landscape of the photograph, not the indexical depicted scene.

**Kit Poulson** is interested in conversation, in matter and mutter, in negotiation. Much of his work has been concerned with an exploration of how we use the static to apprehend vitality. He works with a variety of media, particularly painting and installation. He frequently collaborates, and this reflects an interest in thought as a performance. In these collaborations he has worked at various points with sound, music, sculpture, dance, text. Having a flexible and fugitive sculptural approach the artist has created another element in the exhibition with the new work *CLUSTER II: MUBBA, DUBBA and BUBBA*, 2012 which gently disrupts the order of the display tables, but has also found its own shape through the arrangement of things around it. He displays five new paintings from a series he is currently working on. Their modest decorative colours contrast with the humorous and telling titles. The paintings suggest architectural spaces of Sci-Fi environments, nomad huts, skyscrapers and floating islands. The basic need for shelter generates a mixture of the baroque and the practical, whenever it is given space to flower.

**Kari Rittenbach** writes, curates and organizes curatorial projects as *primary work surface*. For this exhibition she presents a newly written text *Liquefaction*, 2012, pasted on the wall. The text consists of various short narratives - revised at the same time in the writing process.

**Florian Roithmayr's** work often refers to a particular experience of environments as actualized manifestations or testing-sites for abstract ideas. His practice which involves hand-crafted sculptures and castings, ranging from the wall tiles in a German subway station to the cave paintings of prehistoric culture. On display are a series of new works titled *Soft Shoulder no.01, Soft Shoulder no.02 and Soft Shoulder no.07*, 2012, which include elements such as acupuncture needles, towels and earplugs. These objects associated with care and alternative therapies suggest the cushioning, plugging and piercing of an unknown internal space within the body or an object on an emotional level. Elements such as ratchet-straps might also refer back to the making of *Soft Shoulders*; they seem to weave together the various forms of imprinting these works consider – archetype, mould and cement cast – as consequences of material procedures when they become institutional metaphors in exhibition and museum displays.

**Alan Stanners' works** pose questions and problems that explore different aesthetic legacies within modernism, through bold abstract, humorous and semi figurative paintings. By including the work *The Qualmlessist Manifesto*, 2011 – a screen printed text - Alan Stanners shows his interest as an abstract painter rethinking the painting process and high jacking different painting styles by playing games with different modes of art production. Written in a poetically humorous and satirical way, the 23 declarations state aspects of his relationship to his work and thoughts on the condition of art. Also on display is the painting *Blank expression*, 2012. Two table tennis bats, objects themselves, are placed on top of a representation of watery space – both the bats and water dislocated from their assumed context – the surface and the bats are converted into abstraction rather than representation. The bats suggest somehow playfully a game of exchange – a nonverbal communication.