



**Press release**

**17 November – 20 December 2013**

**Press preview Saturday 16 November 3-4.30pm**

### **X-Operative**

How we read, write and collect knowledge will be challenged and subverted as part of an exhibition involving the relocation of a specialist independent bookshop, publisher and project space to Wysing Arts Centre.

X-Operative, will see **X Marks the Bökship** setting up in rural Cambridgeshire, for a special programme that is part exhibition, part events series and part functioning shop for artists' books and independent publishing.

The title ***X-Operative*** is taken from an essay by Ksenia Cheinman, who uses the term to describe common places where the cultural space becomes simultaneously creative, productive, commercial, domestic, and educational.

It is this notion of a multi-functioning and dynamic space that provides the playful platform for the specially commissioned artist-made display systems by **Adam Burton, Sophie Demay, Rory Macbeth, Beatriz Olabarrieta** and **Keef Winter**, each supporting a wide range of publications available to read or purchase from each station.

Independently produced by artists, designers, writers and thinkers; these books sit in relation to five separate themes illustrating the multi operations of X Marks the Bökship: reading & writing, production, performance, distribution and exchange. Over the duration of the five weeks, each construction will become activated as the focus of a packed events programme highlighting each theme including talks, screenings, workshops, readings and performances.

On the theme of writing and reading, **Rory Macbeth** has reproduced a set of glasses to the same prescription as Sigmund Freud that can be used to examine the stack of journals and texts placed alongside. Artist and publisher **Keef Winter**, on the theme of Production, has installed a destructive production line: books about production are shredded and reformed into concrete book blocks.

Concentrating on performance, artist **Beatriz Olabarrieta** imagines the scripts and publications her sculpture holds are theatrical characters, presenting them to the audience as if on stage. On the theme of distribution, artist and publisher **Adam Burton** has written an essay investigating the problems of independent distribution and suggesting alternatives.

Finally, on the theme of exchange, designer **Sophie Demay** has created the centre stage of the exhibition – a reading area that also functions as a space for conversation, discussion and performance events.

The events allow for an environment for exchange and study as well as action, reflection and discussion and include contributions from **Anagram Books, And Public, Eleanor Vonne Brown, Adam Burton, Adam Chodzko and Rob Young, Michael Dean, Chris Evans and Will Holder, Rory Macbeth, PERSONA Journal with Melissa Gordon, Jessica Wiesner and Marina Vishmidt, The Fox with Mathew Whittington, and Lucy Woodhouse.** In addition, **Rebecca Jagoe** will be based at Wysing Arts Centre as Bökship Writer-in-Residence for the duration of the exhibition.

## Events

### **Saturday 16 November 5-8pm**

Preview and Launch event

After an introduction to X-Operative by Eleanor Vonne Brown artist and publisher Keef Winter activates his installation, *Lets Build Our Own Tomb*, shredding books about production and reforming them into concrete book blocks throughout the evening. Alongside, Lucy Woodhouse uses printers and scanners to create live visuals and unique prints in the gallery in a durational performance of *Experimental Ink Jet*.

### **Saturday 30 November 1-5pm**

Day for the exchange of ideas led by Eleanor Vonne Brown

From 1- 2pm there will be a free lunch available for publishers and those interested in publishing to meet and discuss new projects they have been working on. Afterwards there will be discussion on the theme of distribution led by artist Adam Burton. Speakers from various fields, bookshops, a distributors, online platforms and independent publishers will meet to discuss solutions to current problems with distribution. The event will include a performance by artist Michael Dean created with new writing he has been working on as part of his residency at Wysing.

### **Saturday 7 December 3-5pm**

In-Conversation and screening of Adam Chodzko's *Plan for a Spell* (2001)\*

From what seems like random patchwork of images and sounds Adam Chodzko's *Plan for a Spell* conjures an oblique but compelling picture of Britain at the turn of the millennium. Playing with ideas of repeating patterns and cryptic codes (whose hidden meaning is always just about to be revealed), the piece even promises to be the definitive word on its subject, while self-consciously disclaiming how this knowledge could ever be possible. In this special screening at Wysing Arts Centre, Adam Chodzko looks back on the piece, and its place within his wider practice, in the company of writer and critic, Rob Young, Editor-at-Large at The Wire magazine, and author of *Electric Eden: Unearthing Britain's Visionary Music*, published by Faber and Faber. The screening will be followed by a signing of the accompanying publication *Plans and Spells* by the artist.

Adam Chodzko's *Plan for a Spell* was commissioned as a Film and Video Umbrella Touring Exhibition in association with Mappin Art Gallery. Supported by Arts Council England. This event is part of Film and Video Umbrella's 25 Frames.

### Saturday 14 December 3-5pm

Launch of new publications and journals with talks and readings including:

#### **PERSONA magazine**

*East Coast / West Coast* a conversation between Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson re-enacted by Melissa Gordon, Jessica Wiesner and Marina Vishmidt.

#### **The Fox Journal**

Mathew Whittington launches new journal

#### **The Wanderer by Franz Kafka**

Rory Macbeth presents an audio piece from his forthcoming book

#### **Errors Hit Orient**

Lyrics by B.S. Johnson. Live musical performance with Chris Evans and Will Holder.

### Notes for editors

**X MARKS THE BÖKSHIP** is a bookshop and project space for independent publishers in London, UK. It specialises in small press publications by artists and designers. It promotes contemporary publishing activity through book launches, events and production resources that bring together individual practitioners to create a local publishing community. Projects include Publisher of the Month, Publisher's Lunch, eShelf, the XARCHIVE and the XALPHABET; a print edition of 26 Xs by 26 artists. X Marks the Bökship has a shop in Cambridge Heath Road. It previously shared the space with Donlon Books and Swiss publisher Nieves.

**WYSING ARTS CENTRE** provides alternative environments and structures for artistic production, learning and knowledge exchange. Wysing's large rural site near Cambridge comprises artists' studios, education and new media facilities, a gallery and project spaces, a 17th century farmhouse and outdoor structures. Wysing offers a unique environment for art to be developed and presented; with an ongoing and innovative artistic programme of events, exhibitions, retreats and residencies; and a unique programme for young artists, Wysing is delivering a rich programme that is accessible on many levels to a range of people. Art developed at Wysing is shown at significant venues around the world, and Wysing is part of national networks including Plus Tate, Contemporary Visual Arts Network, and Arts Council England's National Portfolio.



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