

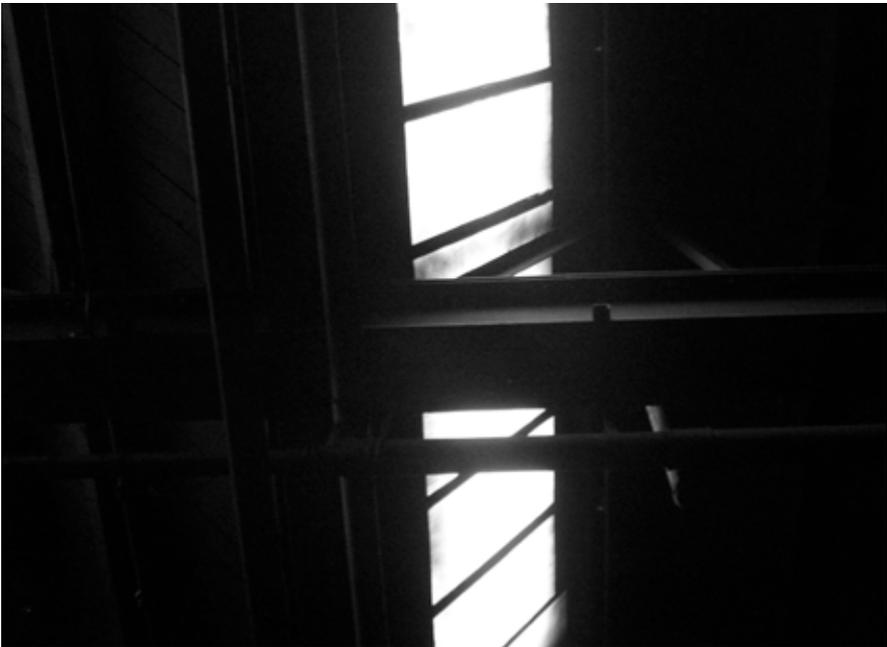




WELDEX

CONTENTS

Page 14	CONFESSIONAL David Low Kok Kiat
Page 16	MAPPING THE TERRITORY Nora Heidorn
Page 18	∞ Richard Duffy
Page 24	CATACHRESIS Alison Green
Page 38	EXPANDING AS POTENTIAL EXPANDING AS PROCESS Chris Ifould and Polly Wright
Page 44	DECONSTRUCTING CERTAINTY O. R. Bonsu
Page 46	TERROR TUNNELS Cole Denyer and Sean Lavelle
Page 48	SO FAR Evanthia Afstralou, Victoria Grenier, Anna Litchfield, Julia Villard and Sasha Webb
Page 52	AIRreport Anna Hart
Page 55	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

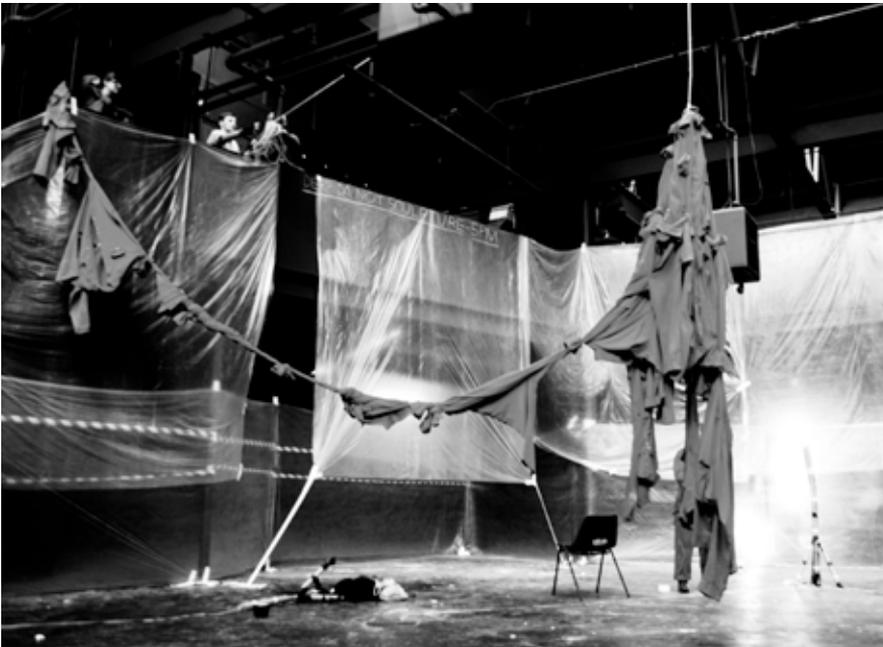
















This looks interesting, please can you tell me about your work?

It is an interruption between two chairs. We are making a screen. It will be at the corner of a park where a concrete path leads up to the two chairs. It seems a little strange in a fairly large park area to have two solitary chairs. We came up with the idea of a confessional, a screen interrupting the two chairs. It will be drilled with small holes so that you have the opportunity to speak through it. It provides you with an opportunity to talk with a stranger. But of course it creates quite an uncomfortable space between the two chairs for the occupants.

Where would you place this sculpture? Or do you call this a sculpture?

I think it is a sculpture. It is a 3-D form. I would call it a site-specific installation. It interacts with the environment. We are working from a location.

So that is why you have taken it out of the studio to work on.

Well no - we just feel better working outside. (Adrian) I usually work with computers. (Pippa) I traditionally work in a studio.

To create something temporary really appeals to me because I normally like to make my work lasting. Working in a collaboration is new for me and also entirely temporary, meaning that I have the freedom to express myself without being caught up with aesthetics or 'high aesthetics'. How something looks is very important to me and I normally give my work a highly aesthetic finish. When working temporarily

the piece is not something you look back at and appreciate in the same way as someone who has been working for hours on end night.

Making a temporary piece, do you find that it has more a sense of artistic ownership or of a public display?

If you make something you take ownership in the sense that you conceive it. Here we are taken out of an environment where you are thinking towards a future, a career, or how you make money out of your practice. Now we don't actually have to worry about our art as a commodity, which is very liberating. That is how everything should be. It de-inhibits you somewhat.



The top photograph opposite may look like a satellite image of a surreal landscape with a red mountain range. Participants of *Expanding Fields* will recognise the place it represents, and could venture to read it as a map of the experiment they have been part of.

The image is of a terrain, but of much smaller scale: the concrete floor in the central space of a disused warehouse in Archway, London. The zone of around 54m² was barren and somewhat inhospitable until it was populated by a group of artists for approximately thirty-two hours. With the limited resources provided (water, sand, chalk, red paper and red jumpsuits, tea), they explored and appropriated this locality, and so it became a territory.

The setup of the experiment implied a semi-separate group of theorists/observers. So for approximately thirty-two hours, the theorists tried to make sense of what the artists were doing in the terrain. It could be seen as a kind of anthropological study of how humans territorialise space and, intuitively, some of the theorists began using strategies of mapping to document and understand the layers of mental, physical and social activity filling that space.

This may be explained as a western practice of exploring and appropriating strange lands, where a land can only really be understood, and only fully controlled, when it is mapped.

In the end, these real-time 'maps' made on-site are only legible to those who made them, and perhaps to the artists whose traces are inside them. This is not as paradoxical as it may seem: maps use symbols to represent features of space (and, in this even more complicated case, activities and ideas too). Symbols are simplifications, which can in return only be read by those who made or have learnt to read them.



Within reason, the nature of infinity is limited within itself. Consider an event with infinite possible outcomes. As this would suggest, any product of the event, regardless how absurd and implausible, is in fact possible. So it follows that it is entirely possible for the event to occur again, in the exact same way, identically in fact, due to the infinite occurrences subtended from the original event.

Thus infinitely possible outcomes are, rather paradoxically, self referential and bounded by the original event. However, the probability of an event, in which function and product repeat themselves continuously, is so very narrow that, though entirely possible, we believe this event to be negligible and ultimately impossible, due to the nature of infinity as we understand it.

Our perceptions of infinity are therefore conflicted, and 'Infinity' isn't as unbounded as it seems.

We understand infinity as a cyclical concept involving possibility and probability. We can see infinity as a physical concept if the universe is as we believe it; it too is infinite and goes on forever in a similar cyclical fashion. However in the exact same way science will allow us to believe that the universe is infinite, it also tells us that the concept of the infinity is impossible. For example: an object of infinite mass exists, towards which objects of finite mass would gravitate with infinite velocity which is, as science tells us, not observable in reality. It therefore follows that to understand and apply infinity to matters of the physical, we must go beyond the real, exploring, not outwardly – as this would yield innumerable outcomes – but rather inwardly. What we struggle with is the related theory of relativity: that the products of space are proportionally related to the effects of time. Any *possible* outcome in space is *probable* in an infinite series of process and event, given the

added dimensional effects of time.

That is to say, if you flip a coin continuously for two years, you are more likely to land on three hundred heads in a row than if you flipped it for only two hours. Therefore the greater the length of time the more favourable the probability.

We cannot ourselves experience the product and effect of an infinite series because our conscious existence is finite.

Kaufman wrote that 'Most of your time is spent being dead or not yet born.'¹ True. We exist forever in some form, and for the 70 or so years that we are sentient we try to understand how and why this is so. So are we successful?

The answer is yes. Otherwise I wouldn't be typing this, using ideas developed a century ago, in a language which has been evolving for over a millennium.

We are successful at opposing the issues of probability by overcoming the problem of time through documentation and research.

Consider photography. We can remove time from the equation, due to the instantaneous nature of the event. When the shutter snaps, the camera not only captures the image of the space, but also the invisible medium of time, both together in a momentary singularity. When 'the present is the future of the past, and the past of the future,'² all possible and random outcomes occur in that moment and produce the unique.

Does the man climbing the Penrose stairs comprehend the profundity of the event, of which he himself is a product of: forever ascending into his relative space; forever holding onto the hope that he will eventually reach the summit – whether or not that is his ultimate goal?

Of course he doesn't. After all he is timeless. *Forever* is a luxury that he can afford, with no exterior pressures of his solitary reality and, of course, no one to confront him

otherwise on his somewhat futile endeavours. Whereas we the observer, can spend the rest of our days despairing over the phenomenon that the Penrose stairs present.

Removing this apprehension is to remove the control over the finite. Relieving the parameters of control of the *possible*, via the concept of infinity, we leave production down to random chance.

These chance operations are best witnessed in the work of John Cage, in his visual and sound work both of which utilise the momentary. His sound sculptures are experiences, 'unique to each key note, as well as the listening environment.'³ It is within this singularity that the unique and ephemeral form, like traces in a cloud chamber.

These events, initiated by the works, are executed immediately in the mind of the viewer. Redefinition is made possible in the brain, manifesting in one's own unique reaction.

This immediate interpretation of the physical is typified in the work of both Fiona Banner and Robert Barry,⁴ who both make careful selections of words to provoke the mind, particularly in Barry's telepathic pieces and Banner's wall writings. The artists communicate with the viewer via this plane of thought. And it is within this multi dimensional field that the art exists as idea and object. But let's not try to pursue the theory behind 'what is Art'.

Simply put, that which is born from infinity is lost through redefinition in the mind.

All the infinite possibilities that pass through the brain transform as they are realised and develop, through application, in our spatial reality. However, when applying the idea of infinity to productive series, we should be conscious that the process which we follow will be governed by initial concepts.

Artists must understand the natural mediums of space and time, not as something that should be controlled but, instead, we must relieve both our control and our understandings. The true art of the artist is to overcome these boundaries through their work, thus achieving that which is probable and possible simultaneously, by relieving all temporal control and placing our physical explorations in the hands of random nature and chance operations.

Notes

¹ Charlie Kaufman, *Synecdoche, New York: The Shooting Script*, 2008

² Robert Smithson, *Quasi-infinities and the Waning of Space*, 1966, p.1

³ David Briers, Sounds of Silence, November 2010, *Art Monthly*, No.341, p.8

⁴ Robert Banner, Telepathic Piece 1960, Nothing is Forever Exhibition, South London Gallery, 2010

No. 9-1

Walking in Archway. Climbing the street with a Sainsbury's bag. Swear at the bus driver. Swear at the bus driver. Heading to London. Standing in front of the stone-6 miles. 6 miles to London. Climbing the street with a Sainsbury's bag. Passing in front of the stores. Green Inn. Closed. The giant cement columns behind the hospital. Love hut closed? Money Transfer Closed. The giant cement columns behind the hospital. William Hill open. The lion Pub. The toilets open only for customers. There is a pattern here. Passing in front of the stores. Slide made of concrete. For the children to play. For the children to play. Store no.1 closed. Store no.2 closed. Store no. 3 open. The plants on top of Super Persia.

The plants on top of super Persia – dry. Heading to London – 6 miles. This memorial stone was laid... This memorial stone was laid...Who opens an Irish bookshop in this place? Green ink closed. Unless he is not afraid. Live on earth forever.

Live on earth forever. The cult member tender to his leaflet. For the Fear of god. The cult member tender to his leaflet. Remember god. Or he'll forget you. Like he has forgotten this place. Despite the fact that it is still robust. Or he'll forget you. The cement slide. Very robust. For the children to play. To play one after the other. In sequence. To play one after the other. Very robust. To play. Silently. Cement slide. Cement elevation. Very robust. Yes! Cement cliff. Yes! Cement stumps. Very robust. Concrete. Yes!

A sign in one tree. 9. Another marked out-1.



\Cat`a*chre"sis\, n. (from Greek κατάχρησις, "abuse") (Rhet.)

A figure by which one word is wrongly put for another, or by which a word is wrested from its true signification; as, "To take arms against a sea of troubles." – Shak. "Her voice was but the shadow of a sound." –Young. The "misapplication of a word, especially in a mixed metaphor" according to the Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory. To use an existing word to denote something that has no name in the current language.

In 2004, when I was beginning to teach in art schools, I wrote a lecture entitled *Catachresis*. At the time I was aiming it at issues around the *medium* in art in light of what was being called, in the late 1990s, the 'post-medium condition'. I chose the literary term *catachresis* as a concept that might steer the discussion away from simple-minded oppositions like making v. thinking, or material v. mediated practices. Catachresis refers to misuse in language, and this seemed a useful analogy for thinking through ways whereby artists showed a medium to be elastic, or where they drew attention to a medium's conventions by putting it to alternative uses, or took a set of concerns from one type of art practice over to another.¹ Defined as 'using a word wrongly where there is no other word to use,' catachresis registers language's ability, when under pressure, to communicate meaning but also its own inadequacy. The reason for focusing on the medium was to counter the millenarian fantasies – technological, but also in the art-world – that any interest in medium was anachronistic. In the age of the simulacra, meaning was unencumbered by materiality, things and bodies, so it went. During the *Expanding Fields* workshop my mind kept casting back to the talk, as the students were thinking about and doing things that prompted many of the same ideas. Some of us decided – with some spontaneity – that a lecture was a good event for the final evening.

The 'post-medium condition' is a phrase that belongs to Rosalind Krauss – also the author of the essay *Expanding Fields* was named after – and can be found in a handful of essays she wrote from the late 1990s onwards. It's a prevailing subject in her most recent book, *Under Blue Cup*.² Krauss' 'post-medium condition' is one of a range of phrases proposed over the past decade or so to explain the dynamics of art practices that have moved beyond the making of objects or pictures to include site, processes and social relations, such as: installation, site-specific art, situationist aesthetics, relational aesthetics, socially-engaged practice, post-studio practice, post-conceptual practice, dialogic practice etc. All of these need to be understood as actively working to differentiate themselves from studio or object-based art practices or from art that can, still, just about, adequately be described using aesthetic terms like 'painting' and 'sculpture'.

Unlike many critics and theorists of present-day practice Krauss has a particular agenda with the medium, and it is longstanding. The 'post-medium condition' is not against or beyond medium, it is about an expanded concept of the medium where mediums specific to art (clay, photography, paint) have been replaced with cultural forms (such as, in the case of Ed Ruscha's *Twenty-Six Gasoline Stations*, 1969, the car³). In 'A Voyage on the North Sea' Krauss writes about artists who don't take medium as a given, but put it to use. Describing the late 60s and early 70s work of Richard Serra, Krauss writes,

Serra's problem was to try to find in the inner logic of events themselves the expressive possibilities or conventions that would articulate this field as a medium. For, in order to sustain artistic practice, a medium must

be a supporting structure, generative of a set of conventions, some of which, in assuming the medium itself as their subject, will be wholly 'specific' to it, thus producing an experience of their own necessity.⁴

James Coleman and William Kentridge are two other artists who, for Krauss, show that medium is something 'they understand they will now have to reinvent or rearticulate.'⁵ The shift here is crucial. Medium is not rejected; it is expanded as a category, reinvented and renamed (here she calls it a 'supporting structure'; in *Under Blue Cup*, 'technical support'). There are rhetorical parallels with Krauss' 1979 essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' where she creates new terms to oppose traditional ones, to expand the concept of 'sculpture' – radically though, not merely to accommodate the challenges posed by contemporary art with an enlarged concept of sculpture, but to place *sculpture* in a field alongside and no better than other terms that might oppose it. (Another parallel is her deference to artistic practices when discussing what is 'beyond' what we already understand: there Robert Morris and Robert Smithson, here Kentridge and Coleman.) A crucial point for Krauss is that medium, as practiced reflexively and inventively, resists becoming 'complicit with a globalization of the image in the service of capital.'⁶ Medium, whether understood as physical, material, technological, institutional, social or otherwise, works against the logic of the simulacra, the readymade and contemporary image-culture, which are tantamount to amnesia.⁷ Krauss' bugbear is the neologism 'installation': weak because it's non-dialectical, conformist, and all together too accommodating to the post-capitalist museum. She calls it kitsch.

There have been strong arguments that medium is irrelevant, and they are usually linked to technological innovation:

back in the early 1970s (another moment when naming was in play, this time under the sign of Conceptual art,) Jack Burnham commented that ‘the artist’s private or gestural relationship to his materials is secondary . . . Quite often execution is redundant or at best for public elaboration.’⁸ As an art critic who was engaged with the liberating potential of new technology, he argued provocatively that the object should be dispensed with entirely: ‘the printed page [documentation, photographs] is an unavoidable belaboring of the point, inelegant communication. Conceptual art’s ideal medium is telepathy.’⁹ Burnham was one of many who embraced technology’s lack of materiality (Marshall McLuhan, Umberto Eco, Jean Baudrillard are notable others, as is nearly every contemporary organ of the ‘tech’ revolution which echoes their evangelism). Krauss would call them – and many of the cultural workers today for whom medium is *uninteresting* – promoters of cultural amnesia.¹⁰

There are evaluations of our contemporary situation that are less categorical than Krauss’. John Roberts recently wrote that art now is ‘interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, multifarious postobject work; an ensemble of techniques and practices that *at all times* exceeds the bounded aesthetic limits of the discrete modernist object.’¹¹ But he also suggests that resistance to medium is a mark of contemporary practice. You might think the medium is done and dusted, but such is the nature of opposition one is bound to one’s antagonist. I would assert that medium persists on at least two levels: first along the lines of Roberts’ rhetorical object of antagonism, (the ‘aesthetic object’, the ‘pure painting’ that never actually existed). Second, in contrast to artists and critics of the late 60s, we have a good working understanding of new media and technology and how they function as *mediums*. We have forty years experiencing how communication

functions through various combinations of formats and techniques and substances and languages, changing forms but accessed through the senses. For a lot of us this means all our lives. We've learned from its mindblowing possibilities, but also from the corrupted files, outdated software, dropped laptops and reams and reams of printed paper: even if telepathy were possible, it would still arrive in language, or an image. Aren't feelings mediated, too? Which isn't the same as saying that all experience is mediated by language, the message asserted by some evangelists of Conceptual art.

Sculpture, by example

Here is an example of catachresis through sculpture by way of a year in the life of the American artist Michael Heizer. This was on my mind during the *Expanding Fields* workshop. January: working in the Coyote Dry Lake in the Mojave Desert in California, Heizer makes a series of 'paintings' he entitled *Primitive Dye Paintings*. Working in an uninhabited locale and on a large scale with light materials and natural elements (he used wind to make the work), Heizer explored scale, impermanence, performance, automation and forms of documentation (photography) in an experiment against studio/gallery objects. February: invited to participate in the exhibition *Earth Art* at Cornell University, Heizer makes an enormous hole behind the museum. Because of health and safety, *Cornell Depression* is cordoned off and lit up with temporary lights. (Heizer withdraws from the show.¹²) March: Heizer makes two works for the infamous 1969 exhibition, '*Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form*', *Cement Trough and Bern Depression*, both on the grounds of the Bern Kunsthalle.¹³ *Cement Trough* was a long trench cut in the ground and filled with cement hidden behind the museum

building and aligned with the spire of a nearby church. *Bern Depression* – a large hole by the front steps of the Kunsthalle – confronted a visitor to the museum with unmaking, undoing, a void. (*Bern Depression* deployed a Conceptual strategy, being made according to a set of instructions: what results from 25 hits of a wrecking ball.¹⁴) These works are anti-monumental, signify absence, and perform violence against institutions: museum and church. April: Heizer explores similar gestures, notably scaled up, in a one-person show at the Heiner Friedrich Gallery in Munich. The gallery was shut for the month and visitors were directed to a suburban development on the edge of the city where he had excavated an enormous hole, deep enough so that someone standing at the bottom could not see the surrounding buildings, (the site was part of the 1972 Munich Olympics development). The sign on the door of the gallery stated ‘Reading is not looking.’ In an interview Heizer describes this work, *Munich Depression*, in architectural terms: ‘It’s like making a room; the sculpture makes its own area . . . The only thing you can see is the sky. . . . It’s a way to enhance and concentrate vision.’¹⁵

Also April: a film of works made in the desert earlier in the year is screened on German television, in an ‘exhibition’ developed by Gerry Schum.¹⁶ After the broadcast, Heizer pulled out of the project because he objected to the works being filmed from the air, in disagreement with Schum. September: Heizer meets dealer and collector Virginia Dwan, with whose financial backing he begins to plan *Double Negative*, his major permanent work of land art. December: Heizer’s work is published on the cover of *Artforum*; in the magazine is a section of photographic documentation of his sited works accompanied by a text written by him.

Post-script

Krauss doesn't include Heizer in '*A Voyage*' or *Under Blue Cup*, but he featured in 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' as one of those working against what she dubbed 'the idealist space of modernist sculpture', that is, its homelessness or nomadism. Heizer's desert-based temporary works, along with Morris's mirrored cubes and Smithson's non-sites, demonstrated the 'pure negativity' at the heart of the modernist project, they made it evident.¹⁷ In another essay, also including Heizer, Krauss refines this to be a move – a 'passage' – 'from a static, idealized medium to a temporal and material one . . . [which] serves to put both the artist and viewer before the work, and the world, in an attitude of primary humility in order to encounter the deep reciprocity between himself and it.'¹⁸

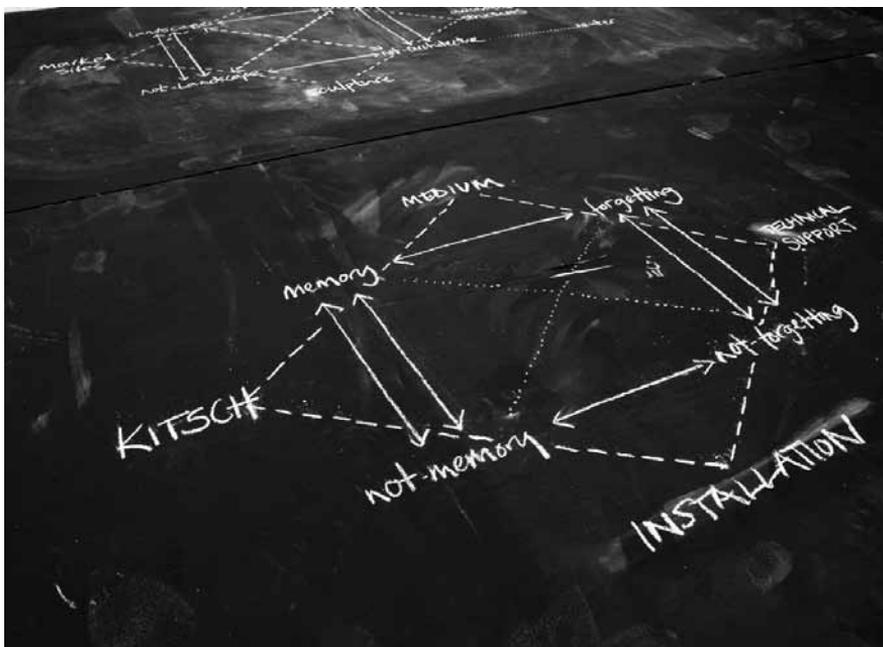
So good, for then, although her 'deep reciprocity' is an idealisation of expanded practice that doesn't engage with how artists like Heizer dealt with the problematics of presentation and representation. To wit: two years after *Munich Depression*, for an exhibition that provided spaces both in and outside a museum, Heizer made *Munich Rotary Interior*, a room-sized virtual experience of images projected on the walls from inside the hole. It was part of a series he called *Actual Size*.¹⁹ The projection apparatus, as well as the joins between images, were totally visible; in other words, this was about mediation *and* immersion, simultaneously. (Under this observation is a question: why did Krauss 'drop' Heizer, but 'keep', for example, Serra, as an exemplar of the post-medium condition? Was Heizer's engagement with materials and site too Romantic?) For me, it is not just that Heizer used a range of media and situations, or that he resisted the institutional conditions that normalised

or instrumentalised his work, (so many refusals). What I think is important about Heizer's work is that it operated with twin aspirations: to put the viewer in the frame of the work – with varying levels of direct and mediated experience – and for the work to articulate the institutional conditions for showing art. These two sides are indivisible in Heizer's work. You can't have one without the other.

Alex Potts has also written about the medium in late 60s art, and his observation of its dynamic is acute in this regard. Acknowledging that 'sculpture was very much a going concern and on its last legs', he also notes that,

the tactile . . . both hypostatizes and desubstantiates the qualities normally associated with sculpture: hypostatizes because the viewer's experience of the work is so strongly infused by suggestions of tactile sensation . . . ; desubstantiates because the structural underpinnings associated with plastic form are rendered largely redundant to allow for an almost untrammelled immersion on the part of the viewer in a sense of material texture and substance.²⁰

This is an intensive use of materials, an opening into them as both substance and cultural object. I hazard to say that this is missing (missed? as in not even grasped as a concept?) in much of the institutional critique we have today, which includes most everything, even painting, photography and sculpture, and assumes in advance of the encounter that the viewer needs to be educated. Such work communicates its message cerebrally, as if it is afraid of the encounter. This might also be kitsch, because it is gratuitous. This would also align it with consumption.



Language: speaking, reading, writing

Here's where I turn away from Krauss, because catachresis is not only relevant to tactile media or making art; its principles emphatically hold in other areas of cultural work, especially 'theory'. Like other literary terms – metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole – catachresis suggests the warping of language to suit the generation of a paradoxical meaning. Catachresis is special, nonetheless (outside of its being the most outdated of these terms): among Medieval literary tropes it was known for being temporary. It indicated a blank space, the lack of a proper word.²¹ A hole in language.

This is not simply a question of language lagging behind innovation (dull form holding back creativity); catachresis implicates the politics of representation. Jacques Derrida used catachresis to refer to language's original incompleteness in an essay where he critiqued Western metaphysics as so much ethnocentrism: 'What is metaphysics?' he writes, 'A white mythology which assembles and reflects Western culture: the white man takes his own mythology (that is, Indo-European mythology), his logos – that is, the mythos of his idiom, for the universal form of that which it is still his inescapable desire to call Reason.'²² In an adaptation of Derrida to other contexts, (a catachresis?) postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak implicates catachresis' meaning of 'abuse' and names it as figuring the linguistic exchange between colonisers and colonised. Spivak writes of catachresis as 'reversing, displacing, and seizing the apparatus of value-coding.'²³ Language is repressive; words misrepresent. But politics can also be played out in the slippage of language. For Spivak, criticism entails a deliberate misreading of major works, 'grand narratives'

of history and canonical philosophical texts. Misreading is the assertion of an ethical position, and the creation of a space beyond a given text (or object), and thus a space of practice. She calls it reading *other-wise*. Importantly misreading is not the same as pre-judgment or rejection in advance of knowledge. Spivak insists on what she calls 'homework', which we might call doing and looking and reading and searching. She calls this 'critical intimacy.'²⁴

I learned about critical intimacy from reading Mieke Bal, and she was also on my mind during the *Expanding Fields* workshop. In her difficult but very rich book, *Travelling Concepts: A Rough Guide*, Bal proposes a number of 'tools' for doing interdisciplinary work, that is, for crossing borders within academic disciplines and other spheres of practice. One strategy is to put more emphasis on the situated meaning of words: if the different meanings concepts hold for different people and in different fields of enquiry are discussed, the practice of interdisciplinary work can become deeper and more effective. Concepts, Bal says, are not simply words. Concepts are loaded, situated, and contextual. Concepts *get* to content. But to get to content, she suggests, we need to question the meaning of words – not just use them – and understand how they reflect and control discourse. The point, for Bal, is that subjectivity gets both *written in* and *explicated* in this method, and this is a sight better than objectivity, the usual position of criticality, formed of distance and producing it again and again. Of critical intimacy she writes, 'Suspending (pre-) judgment is itself productive, because it is not the same as repressing, forgetting, or abandoning judgments to become an un-critical follower.'²⁵ This is relevant for thinking about medium because Bal's critical intimacy keeps form and content (or context) together. She sees them as a 'constructive

exchange' that mitigates the 'naïve contextualism' that can be seen in so many knee-jerk responses to 'form'.²⁶

So here we have Bal and Krauss in temporary alignment, arguing for specificity, arguing for form, arguing for attention to medium. (Their politics are another matter, for another essay.) In *Under Blue Cup* Krauss redesigns the diagram she included in 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field.' Sculpture is gone, replaced by the term that replaced it, installation. From there she enters new territory, with terms that situate art (now installation) in a cultural rather than physical field. Medium is there, situated between *memory* and *forgetting*.²⁷

This seems true, then. Medium is evidence of thought or activity, at the same time as a form of communication. Medium for me, on this project, is very much *this* text, born and reworked through thinking as a teacher, rethought annually (which is just enough time for the conviction of ideas generated from looking, reading, thinking and writing to go slack, and thus necessary to invest again in this direct and regenerative activity), and here rewritten in mind of what was the deepest experience of teaching I've known, a genuine exchange between 'theory' and 'practice', a crossing of minds and materials.

¹ Credit for the term goes to my MA supervisor at the University of Texas at Austin, Richard Schiff, although it was fellow student Stephan Jost who shared the idea with me. Schiff's interest in language and its application to visuality was the impulse towards trying to put this compelling concept to use (see, for example, his essay 'Chuck Close: Mark, Image, Medium, Interference,' in *Chuck Close*, exh. cat. (New York: Pace Wildenstein Gallery, 2000), pp. 9-10). To date I've delivered versions of this lecture many times to Central Saint Martins Fine Art students, to students on the BA (Hons) Criticism, Communication and Curation course where I mainly teach, and once each to MFA students at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena and MA Fine Art students at Byam Shaw School of Art.

² Much of Krauss' writing on the medium has been collected in her *Perpetual Inventory* (MIT Press, 2010). See also her 'Reinventing the Medium,' *Critical Inquiry* vol. 25, no. 2 (Winter 1999), pp. 289-305, 'A Voyage on the North Sea': Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition (Thames & Hudson, 1999) and 'Two Moments from the Post-Medium Condition,' *October* 116 (Spring 2006), pp. 55-62.

³ Rosalind Krauss, *Under Blue Cup* (MIT Press, 2011), p. 19.

⁴ Krauss, 'A Voyage', p. 26.

⁵ Krauss, 'A Voyage', p. 56. The book's title refers to a 1973-4 work by Marcel Broodthaers of the same name.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Krauss' term is 'forgetting' in *Under Blue Cup*.

⁸ Jack Burnham, 'Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art,' *Artforum* 8, no. 6 (February 1970), pp. 37-8. This is a follow-up on two prior essays, 'Systems Esthetics,' *Artforum* 7, no. 1 (September 1968) and 'Real Time Esthetics,' *Artforum* 8, no. 1 (September 1969). See also Luke Skrebowski, 'All Systems Go: Recovering Jack Burnham's "Systems Aesthetics",' (Tate Papers, 2006) avail. at: "<http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/06spring/skrebowski.htm>" <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/06spring/skrebowski.htm> [accessed 30 November 2011].

⁹ Burnham, 'Alice's Head,' p. 37.

¹⁰ In *Under Blue Cup*, Krauss excoriates French curator Catherine David, director of *Documenta X*, 1997, as an example of the 'malaise of contemporary art'.

¹¹ John Roberts, 'Revolutionary Pathos, Negation and the Suspensive Avant-Garde,' *New Literary History* no. 41 (2010), p. 721. Italics are mine.

¹² Germano Celant, *Michael Heizer*, exh. cat. (Fondazione Prada, 1997), p. 534.

¹³ I've written about this show in more detail in 'When Attitudes Become Form and the Contest over Conceptual Art's History,' in Michael Corris, ed. *Conceptual Art: Theory, Myth, Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 123-43.

¹⁴ It was one of the works that drew controversy to the exhibition, perhaps because of its prominent placement – a local tabloid headlined: 'Asphalt Damaged in the Name of Art.'

- ¹⁵ 'Interview: Julia Brown and Michael Heizer,' in *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, exh. cat. (Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1984), p. 18.
- ¹⁶ Schum was a film director and cameraman who had, since 1967, been documenting the practices of Heizer, Jan Dibbets, Barry Flanagan, Robert Smithson, Richard Long, Dennis Oppenheim, Marinus Boezum and Walter de Maria. The film was called *Fernsehausstellung I* and aired on April 15. Celant, Heizer, pp. 533-34.
- ¹⁷ Rosalind Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' *October 8* (Spring 1979), pp. 30-44.
- ¹⁸ Rosalind Krauss, 'Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture,' in *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (MIT Press, 1981), pp. 282-3.
- ¹⁹ Celant, *Heizer*, p. 535; illustrated on p. 145.
- ²⁰ Alex Potts, 'The Interrogation of Medium in Art of the 1960s,' *Art History* vol. 27, no. 2 (April 2004), p. 286.
- ²¹ Patrick Boyde, *Dante's Style in His Lyric Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 110.
- ²² Jacques Derrida, 'White Mythology,' *New Literary History* vol. 6, no. 1 (Autumn 1974), p. 11.
- ²³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Poststructuralism, Marginality, Postcoloniality and Value,' in Peter Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan, eds., *Literary Theory Today* (Polity Books, 1990), p. 228.
- ²⁴ See Mieke Bal, 'Critical Intimacy,' in *Travelling Concepts: A Rough Guide* (University of Toronto Press, 2002), pp. 286-293. Bal is writing about Spivak's, *Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Harvard University Press, 1999).
- ²⁵ Bal, 'Critical Intimacy,' p. 292.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 288.
- ²⁷ *Under Blue Cup* is framed within Krauss' experience of recovering her mind after a catastrophic brain aneurysm and coma in 1999.

A 'potential diagram' employs text to explore and communicate a cyclical, progressive process. The movement, whereby one point produces another, is a focused, connotative reconfiguration, indicated by arrows. The arrows of reconfiguration are a combination of a fixed mass of energy and velocity, much the same as a particle is understood. The energy is everything in the socioverse¹ – a finite constant. It can mutate and develop new structures, forms, externalities and tension points.

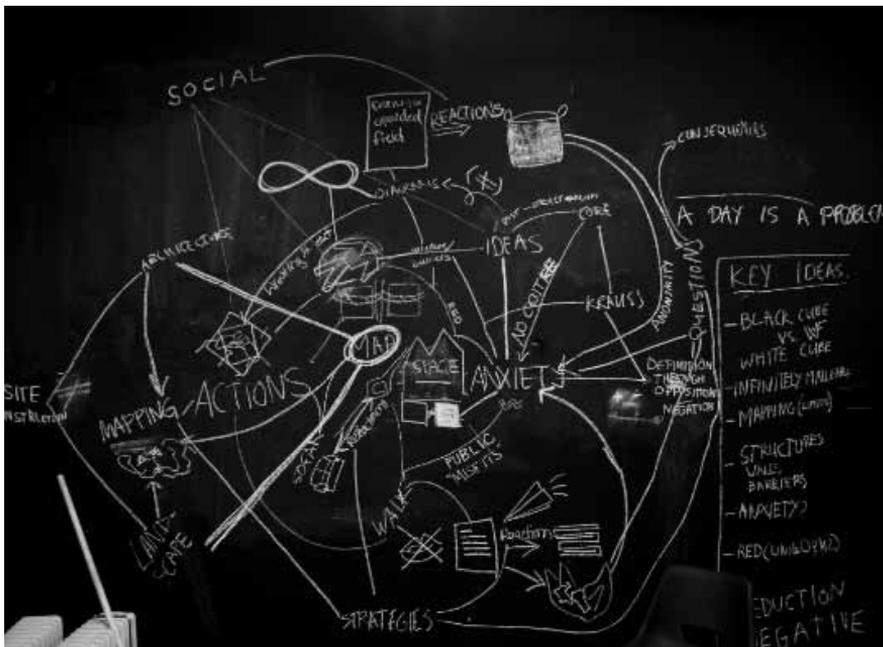
A 'diagram of a moment' applies this process to a moment in time, showing a development of relationships, in respect to one another, whereby an output is created. Through the process of 'discursive subjective consumption of simulation' it may be decided that an aspect of the socioverse is to change. One aspect that this theoretical expansion misses is a notion of delay; there is an inevitable time delay in reaching a different socioverse.

Therefore the 'actual velocity' of a moment shown in the 'diagram' is a finite horizontal expanse. The time delay elongates the horizontal velocity into a vertical dimension. This perceived vertical velocity creates a progressive linearity. The optical velocity suggests progress or movement towards a direction, rather than a pure potential of autonomous exhaustion, within the moment.

Often, progress is actually a development of a signifier, or signified, in terms of its own web of externalities. A diagram could be considered such an example. It is in constant exposure of new influencing externalities causing its continuous evolution.

¹ The individual universe in its social qualities and relations, as well as material amount, considered as a unit or verse. It is in distinction from the individual as an animal or as a mind.







The theoretical premise and indeed the name of the workshop *Expanding Fields* is borrowed from Rosalind Krauss' 1979 essay, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field'. Krauss, a scholar and critic of modern art, summons a wealth of examples opposing the conventional activities of sculpture. She negotiates the difficulties of verbalizing the ephemeral and complex nature of sculpture with a series of schematic diagrams and concise prose. Her study constitutes a demonstrative exploration of sculpture's potential and limitations, which underpinned and defined the activities of the workshop and created a mutual interest between the fine art and theory students. The artists were presented with various forms of theory, criticism and narration from Krauss to Derrida (via interventions, interruptions, gobbets and 'unofficial announcements'). Mapping the boundaries of sculptural activity highlighted our attempts to derail the transgression of the medium from verb to noun.

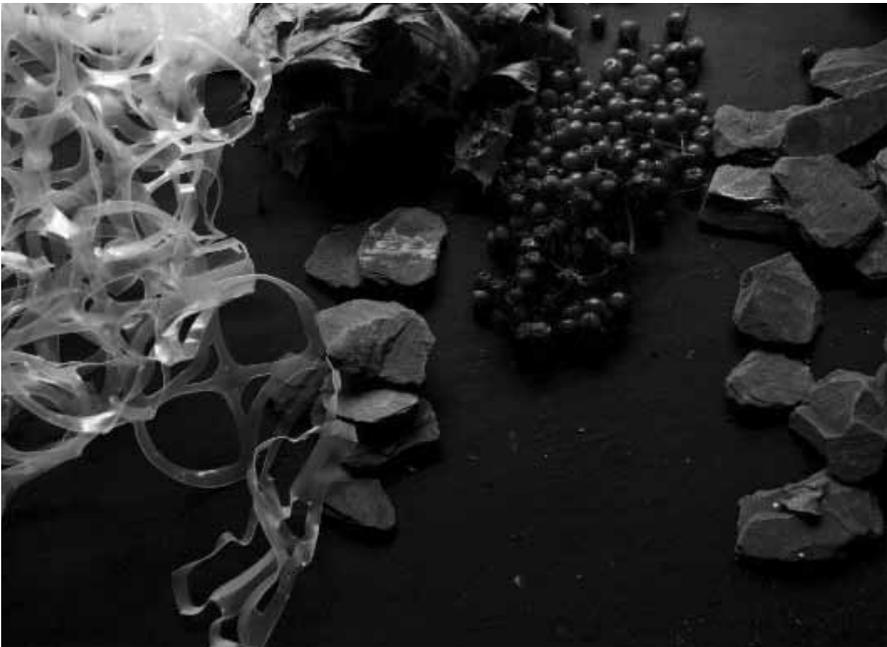
In the warehouse, an imposing 'black cube' (the inversion of an ideological 'white cube'), we donned boiler suits, each of us appearing formless and ultimately unidentifiable under an excess of already worn red cotton. Without clear obligations or prefixed motivations, the artists took their cue from the '(not-) landscape / sculpture / (not-) architecture' elements of the Krauss' diagram – an exploration of sculpture's metaphors in geographical terms. After some deliberation about Krauss' intention, a small yet defiant group became intent on defining what the medium is not, as opposed to what it is. The artists found cadence in Krauss' observation that sculpture is 'infinitely malleable.' This was, as one student remarked, the 'way out'. The clear juxtaposition between Krauss' original diagram – symmetrical, mathematical and logically sound – and the notion of 'infinite malleability' allowed for a freer form arguably more

conducive to the practice of sculpture itself.

After some time, the artists' responses became physical. Krauss' diagram (drawn in chalk in the middle of the floor) was transformed by one into an almost masochistic wrestling ring where participants ignited in battle. Owing everything to feeling and nothing to theory, bare feet carelessly obscured the diagram's words and symmetric form. This primordial performance was the first documented action of opposition to the given conditions.

Familiarity set in and the artists moved beyond contemplating their situation. They began to intervene in the 'expanded field'; responses to Krauss' ideas proliferated, thus contributing to an 'expanding' field. Artists found things within the space and the community of Archway and avoided traditional resources and materials. Nothing lasts forever, it seemed. Such ephemerality shifts us toward experiences, tenuous though they may be. Sculpture seemed alive and infinitely complex, monumental and on an inevitable decline. The work produced at the *Expanding Fields* workshop was never really applicable to the discipline of sculpture itself: this may be the caveat of the experience. Artists' interactions with theoretical discourse created paradoxical results, from precise analysis to revelations of contradictions to occult understandings of materiality. *Expanding Fields* is the common denominator of work the artists made, but the works reached for their own meanings.





In 2003 a pedestrian subway in Archway was ripped of its function as an underpass and filled with concrete as a cost-effective solution for the crime and graffiti it was attracting. In an attempt to unsurface some of the antagonisms that the concrete covered over, we re-visited the art intention of Islington Council who in 1990 commissioned mural artist Gary Drostle to make an abstract painted mural in the underpass, a project that failed and resulted in it being filled in.

Our project attempted to encapsulate issues of art's quantification by cultural politics and its subsequent failure to resolve the problems that surrounded the underpass. These issues were made partially manifest by our attaching posters to the most visible of the four remnants still present, to bring some attention to the site and subsequently reinscribe it into a contemporary address. We also wanted to challenge the assertion that a mural could 'improve the Archway area' and with it the commissioning of art by governmental bodies as a form of, in this case, the amelioration of site burdened by social deviance deemed reparable by way of an abstract design. Effectively, the mural presents itself as a logical solution, a strategy for expelling the aberrancy by assimilating it, suppressing the singularity and identification of graffiti as embodying defacement.

These are complexities we considered when re-historicising the site marked by its failure as a project and the grubby entanglement of art as a tool to 'heal' a place of its social problems. The posters we made acted as a form of re-identification with aspects of the everyday that have slipped into incoherence, they exist as muted forms of politicised sites.



14.07

So what will we do, will we be baking stuff?

I think we should make sandwiches!

Yeah we need some kind of activity.

Sandwiches!

Sandwiches?

Sandwiches and coffees or crepes and then...

Well coffees... but with crepes we'd need the thingamejigs the...thing.

Yeah.

Coffees are easy.

Sandwiches are easy.

Sandwiches are the easiest thing.

Porridge.

Sandwiches and bagels.

I don't think people would buy porridge.

No.

And soup.

Soup.

Soup?

But how?

Soup's easy.

Ok.

Sandwiches for sure.

With different kinds of bread, and maybe...

We're talking about our activity in our home so should we be making sandwiches, selling sandwiches?

Like a trade, so we can get by. We make no money but...

We have to learn how to draw portraits really well.

We'll sell drawings.

We'll be like hustlers

Does anyone know how to sing?

Er...

Or play an instrument?

No, but I can play

«Oh, my Darling Clementine» on a baby accordion...

That would do. I can play guitar so you can all sing.

Does anyone know how to dance?

I can dance

I can dance

And we can have like er...

A puppet show!

Costumes, you know like

Er...

We'll have weird costumes.

Yeah yeah yeah yeah!

Weird animal costumes!

We will scare people away.

I'd love to do that. Also...

A puppet show!



Do you want to do some performance, 'cause I really want to do some harmony busking. You know like we were doing the other day? You just go Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa... and then you harmonize with it. Yeah. And you get like ten people all doing that and then you busk with it. Ah! And that can be like the main thing and then loads of little add-ons to it. We should go through here. No we can't! Why? It's locked. So we have our home, and the we have loads of little add-ons with it. Like puppet show, theatre... It didn't say it was a dead end. And the we have loads of things ...stuck. Yeah, it needs to be really transformable. And, and like, maybe this time we'll be making it, and next time we'll be living in it.

Yeah
I think.
Nooooo! I think its ok!
Ok. Go up the kerb?
Yeah.
Yeah, and then go up that bit.
Do you want help?
No, no. I'll be alright.
Aw, I feel really lazy.
Me too.
Maybe one of you should have pretended that you're pregnant and we're trying to get you to hospital!
Give me something I can put on my belly!
We'll have to carry the couch at some stage.
Ok.
Sorry?
We'll have to carry the couch at some stage but, it seems fine.
You alright?
Can we get through?
We're going onto the main road aren't we?
Oh we can turn it on the side no?
Yeah.
It should fit.
We should name it, you know, like you name a boat.



AIRreport

Re: an infinitely malleable social idea within (this) anxious space of 2011

Following 'this is an announcement of a non-announcement'(s)¹ I can now make:

An Announcement(s) of ACTION (after the fact)

WALK (ing)

GATHER (ing)

WRESTLE (ing)

FOLD (ing)

KNEAD (ing)

THROW² (ing)

Anna Hart, AIR Organiser, November 2011

¹ At several points during *Expanding Fields*, notably 08.45 (approx.) on 05.11.11 and 13.00 (approx.) on 06.11.11, I made 'announcements of non-announcements' using Hak's megaphone.

² Perhaps Dewey's 'conditions for a vital experience' were established? Dewey, J. (1916) 'Experience and Thinking'. In *Democracy and Education. An introduction to the philosophy of education*, New York: Free Press, 118-125.



Expanding Fields is the concluding project to the University of the Arts 'Shaping Sculpture' initiative and has been generously supported by the Patrons Programme. It was devised, produced and hosted by AIR.

Participants

Ian Edwards, Holly Hayward, Kate Howard, Marija Nemchenko, Emma Payne, Adrien Zapata, Charlie Abbott, Theo Sion (Camberwell), Ralph Brealey, Tom Cameron, Marie Kaus, Ruidi Mu, William Phong-Ly, Adrien Vouillot (Chelsea), Sojae An, Haffendi Anuar, Pauline Bickerton, Thomas Curitore, Cole Denyer, Thomas Garnon, Bahia Haddam, Antonia Halse, Chris Ifould, Alexandra Lang, Sean Lavelle, Ben Lee, Pauline Nadal, Jana Nousekova, Alexandros Alexandropoulos, Richard Duffy, Nora Heidorn, David Low kok Kiat, Osei Rhodri Bonsu, Polly Wright, Darel Seow (Central St. Martins), Evanthia Afstralou, Kirsty Clarke, Victoria Grenier, Kayleigh Handley, Anna Litchfield, Jessica Manley, Pippa Roberts, Anna Spain, Julia Villard, Demelza Watts, Sasha Webb (Wimbledon).

Lead artists

Neville Gabie and Gavin Wade

Artist assistants

Mike Doorley and Caroline Abbotts

Theory mentor

Alison Green

Graphics mentor

Robert Sollis

AIR

Anna Hart, AIR Organiser
Mathilda Fowler, Research Associate
Florence Dent, Projects Assistant

AIR is a project studio at Central Saint Martins College of Arts & Design nurturing speculative and socially responsive action by fine artists within the contemporary urban everyday. Through commissioning, experiential learning and research AIR introduces artists into the situations, conversations and institutions of Archway, and more recently, Kings Cross. (www.airstudio.org)

EXPANDING FIELDS – AN APPENDIX

Published by AIR, April 2012

Designed by Charlie Abbott and Theo Sion

Printed by Ditto Press

© the participants and authors 2012

ISBN 978-0-9557533-7-4