**‘Re-’: Methods of Illustrative Practice in Heritage**

**ACHS 2020, Fifth Biennial Conference**

**Abstract**

This paper explores the rematerialisation of absent, lost, and invisible stories through illustrative practice and examines the role of contemporary illustration in cultural heritage. It will discuss concepts fundamental to the illustrator; voice and positionality encountered through the process of investigating people-place relationships and the function of creative artefacts in heritage.

The making of creative artefacts through the exploration of archival material and experimental fieldwork is an important investigative process and engagement strategy in the authors respective illustrative practices. This manifestation of subject matter through material storytelling involves a complex process of gathering, negotiating and interpreting and the authors here are concerned not only with illustrative practice as a form of communication but as a discipline defined by active exploration and knowledge generation. This approach aligns with David Harvey’s description of heritage as a ‘process’ (2010, p. 320) that is not inert and it takes place in the present (Turnbridge and Ashworth, 1995, p. 6), ‘people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate it and contest it (…) it is part of the way identities are created' (Bender, 1993, p. 3). It is an action.

The authors will discuss their own practices to unpick their role in the heritage process; a study of the historical wetland site of a deserted medieval village in East Sussex and of historical people (foundling children) at the Foundling Museum. In the analysis of their process, illustration can be framed as a: *re-*turn, *re*-visit, *re*-imagine,  *re*-voice, *re*-assemble, *re*-presentation, *re*-enactment.

**Dr Rachel Emily Taylor** is an illustrator, artist, researcher, and Course Leader on BA Illustration at Camberwell College of Art.

Rachel's practice can be framed as 'situated' illustration and she has fostered a close relationship with Museums, undertaking residencies and exhibitions at the Bowes Museum, the Museum of Witchcraft, the Brontë Parsonage Museum, the Wellcome Collection, and the Horniman Museum.

In 2018, She completed a practice-based PhD funded by the AHRC, titled *Heritage as Process: Constructing the Historical Child's Voice Through Art Practice*, and the study focussed on the representation of biography, historical narratives, and 'voice' in the Foundling Museum, London.

In 2012, she was funded by the British Council to be exhibited internationally and has been awarded funding from Arts Council England in 2015, 2016, and 2017.  has been published by MA BIBLIOTHÈQUE and has work in the Tate Archive and Library.

**Leah Fusco** is an illustrator exploring ideas of place, people and time. Drawing on geographic and historic subject matter, she is interested in past, present and future stories that observe the shaping of communities by physical environment. Her current doctoral research, based at the Center of Research Through Design, Kingston School of Art, and funded by the London Doctoral Design Centre (LDoc, AHRC), examines conceptual, practical and theoretical frameworks in illustrative documentary, led by visual investigation of a case study through mapping, narrative and imaging technologies.

Leah is interested in the relationship between illustrative documentary and adjacent place-based disciplines such as geography, environmental science, archaeology, museology and heritage and has contributed to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across illustration, animation, drawing, visual communication and landscape architecture.