

Transmission: PROVOCATION

2010 to 2011

WEDNESDAYS 4.00 to 5.45

Pennine Lecture Theatre

Owen Building, City Campus

Sheffield Hallam University

Art as provocation is a concept that has inspired deliberation, controversy, altered perceptions, and possibly inspired some to take flight from typical modes of praxis. However, what actually constitutes a 'provocative' work of art remains in question as a truly provocative act is always contingent on a particular context. Consider, for example, the historical trajectory of the Duchampian 'readymade' and the rhetorical force of its contemporary manifestations.

In our next series of lectures (2010–2011) we will explore how art can provoke, activate, and antagonise the viewer without referring to or employing well-known aesthetic and political strategies that seek to produce shocking and immediate affects. Most importantly, we will consider how the concept of provocation is at its most trenchant when it is conceived as fluid and unfixed, and discussed and disputed outside the borders of the hoary discourse of the historical avant-garde. We are interested in a provocation in art that is determined by a broad range of contingent factors, external to the physical properties of art.

Each week a member of the Fine Art staff will invite the guest speaker, chairing the discussion. This wide-ranging series of talks will, through discussion with the audience, question the concept of provocation and its relation to art.

Reading:

André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969.

Claire Bishop, 'Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics', □ *October* 110, Fall 2004, pp. 51–79. | [Link](#)

Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-garde*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Claire Doherty, *New Institutionalism and the Exhibition as Situation* | [Link](#)

— 'Curating Wrong Places ... Or Where Have All the Penguins Gone?' | [Link](#)

Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: Avant-garde at the End of the Century*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.

Allan Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003.

Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004.

Chantal Mouffe, 'Artistic Activism and Agonistic Spaces', □ *Art & Research*, vol. 1, n. 2, Summer 2007. | [Link](#)

Maria Lind, 'Active Cultures□', *Artforum*, October, 1, 2009, p. 103.

— *Actualisation of Space: The Case of Oda Projesi* | [Link](#)

Blake Stimson. Gregory Sholette (eds), *Collectivism After Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination After 1945*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

Fran Tonkiss, 'Cultural studies and the economic turn', □ in Harrasser, K.; Riedmann, K.; Scott, A.; et al. eds., *Die Politik der Cultural Studies – Cultural Studies der Politik*, Turia and Kant, 2007, pp. 214–226. | [Link](#)

Slavoj Žižek, *Violence. Six sideways reflections*, London: Profile Books, 2009.
— *Living in the End Times*, London: Verso, 2010.

Wednesday 6th October

Guests: Juneau Projects

Juneau Projects was formed in 2001 by Philip Duckworth and Ben Sadler. Most of their work has participatory elements and involves projection, sound, music, animation, and installation. They are particularly interested in the rapidly increasing speed of technological development, its associated obsolescence, and how this sits with notions of handmade objects and artefacts. The proliferation of social networking websites has become important in their research, offering increased possibilities for the promotion and production of collaborative live works and performances. Juneau Projects had their first solo show in 2004 at The Showroom, London. In 2005 their work was selected for 'British Art Show 6' and they have subsequently exhibited at venues including: Tate Britain, London; Ikon Gallery, Birmingham; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; and Frankfurter Kunstverein. Juneau Projects were Stanley Picker Fine Art Fellows at Kingston University in 2007/8 and Wheatley Fellows at Birmingham City University in 2008/9.

Host: Alison J. Carr

Alison J Carr is a Fine Art PhD researcher at Sheffield Hallam University. She completed her MFA at the California Institute of the Arts in May 2009 and BA (Hons) Fine Art at Sheffield Hallam University in 2001. She works in photography, video, performance and writing. Her research, *How do I look?*, aims to weave a narrative between feminism and femininity, new viewing strategies, the voice of the viewed, the relevancy of glamour, while trying to reconcile her personal desires to be a 'showgirl' and a 'theorist'.

Wednesday 13 October

Guest: Maxa Zoller

Maxa Zoller is a lecturer in moving image art at Goldsmiths College, Sotheby's Institute of Art and Kingston University. Maxa has a keen interest in marginal and interdisciplinary film practices, which focus around issues of the body, expanded cinema, the practice of female filmmakers, and experimental film from former Socialist countries. Since completing her Ph.D. on European experimental film in 2007 she has been organising workshops on moving image art at no.w.here, FACT, and Oslo Academy of Art. In her capacity as a film curator Maxa Zoller has presented experimental film screenings at Tate Modern, Tramway Glasgow, Berlin Kunstverein, Rekord Gallery in Oslo, and an exhibition of Chris Welsby's work at Central St Martin's. She is a regular contributor to *Art Monthly*. Her research is published in a number of academic journals and books, including the exhibition catalogue *X-Screen: Film Installations and Actions in the 1960s and 1970s* (MuMoK Vienna 2003). She has recently curated her first object-based exhibition *All that Remains... The Teenagers of Socialism* at Waterside Project Space in East London.

Host: Jaspar Joseph-Lester

Jaspar Joseph-Lester's work explores the role that images play in determining urban planning, social space, and everyday praxis. Recent work has focused on the conflicting ideological frameworks embodied in urban regeneration projects. He has exhibited widely in the UK and abroad with solo exhibitions at Asprey Jacques Gallery and The British School at Rome. His video work was nominated for 'Pilot: 1' in 2004 and selected for 'All for Show: an international retrospective of UK Video', 2005-6. Recent exhibitions include 'Afterwards' at the Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, and 'The Mortar of Distribution', LoBe, Berlin. He is author of *Revisiting the Bonaventure Hotel* (Copy Press, 2009), co-editor of *Episode: Pleasure and Persuasion in Lens-based Media* (Artwords, 2008), and a director of the Curating Video research group. www.jasparjosephlester.com

Wednesday 20th October

Guest: Tony White

Tony White's publications include the novels *Foxy-T* (Faber and Faber, 2003), and *Charlieunclenorfolktango* (Codex, 1999), two novellas and the travelogue *Another Fool in the Balkans* (Cadogan, 2006). He has undertaken writing residencies at the Science Museum, London (2008), and the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies (2009). He founded artists' book imprint Piece of Paper Press in 1994 and worked for Arts Council England from 1999 to 2007, producing the *Pioneers in Art and Science* DVD series (with Ken McMullen, Gustav Metzger, and John Berger), and managing the Arts Council/AHRC Arts and Science Research Fellowships. Tony White is currently collaborating with Blast Theory on an interactive SMS drama for Channel 4. He is acting chair of the board of directors of London's art radio station Resonance 104.4fm.

Tony White's blog <http://pieceofpaperpress.wordpress.com>

Host: Penny McCarthy

Penny McCarthy works with drawing and text. Recent works have appropriated texts that describe scientific discovery, historic travels, and the fictions of Borges. For the past few years her work has explored the imaginative space of the book in a series of pencil-drawn copies of texts. Her work has been exhibited extensively in Britain and abroad and supported by the Wellcome Trust, Arts Council England and the AHRC. Most recently she has exhibited work at the South London Gallery in the exhibition 'Nothing is Forever'. She is Course Leader for the MA and M.Art in Fine Art at Sheffield Hallam University

Wednesday 27th October

Guest: Mark McGowan

According to JJ Charlesworth, Mark McGowan's work 'takes the ghost of performance art and uses it to haunt the mass media, and the art world, with their own bad faith. Thumbing his nose at those artists who affect an interest in social issues, without stepping too far out of their comfortable enclave, McGowan intentionally grabs at whatever constitutes public discussion at any given time, forcing us to reconsider the hypocrisy and self-flattery that underpins contemporary art's indulgence of both the media and the ordinary public'. Live actions include leaving the tap running for a year at House, Camberwell, the 're-enactment' of the London tube bombing, and eating a corgi.

Host: Becky Shaw

Becky Shaw's work explores the relation between objects and people, and ideas of objectivity and subjectivity. Recent works include *Getting Warm*, a collection of drawings for the Korean International Art Fair 2010, and *A: The Christmas Party*, a durational radio work made with readers from Roehampton University, commissioned by Sheffield Contemporary Art Forum. An ongoing work, *Aggregate*, explores the materials to be used in the new Firstsite building, Colchester. New works stubbornly refuse to respond to place or external requirements, and involve myopic study of single objects including an extraordinary inlaid marble table and a secondhand vintage classics t-shirt.

Wednesday 10th November

Guest: Thomas Thwaites

Thomas Thwaites is a designer whose work examines how technology, science, and economics interact with trends, fictions, and beliefs, to shape our present society, and possible futures. As an undergraduate he studied economics and biology at University College London, and this training informs his design work. He completed his Masters in Design Interactions at the Royal College of Art in 2009, and his work has since received several awards and is exhibited internationally. His first book, *The Toaster Project*, is to be published by Princeton Architectural Press in 2011. Based in London, he is currently working on a commission from the Wellcome Trust.

www.thomasthwaites.com/

Host: Jerome Harrington

Jerome Harrington is an artist based at S1 Artspace in Sheffield. His practice is interdisciplinary in nature and draws from his background in glass making. This is manifest in a wide range of outputs including the production of new objects, critical writing and projects that involve collaborative dialogues and curatorial roles. He is currently undertaking a practice based PhD at Sheffield Hallam University, which explores our relation to objects and to the making process that produces objects. It focuses specifically on how we encounter the making process through film, photograph, and image. He studied at Edinburgh College of Art (1998) and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam (2004). Recent exhibitions include: 'A Conference for The Glass Archive', Site Gallery, Sheffield; 'Making fact Making fiction', National Glass Centre, Sunderland; and 'What Happens If...?', Storey Gallery, Lancaster.

www.jeromeharrington.net

Wednesday 17th November

Screening: *A Rolling Stone: The Dynamics of Cliché* a film by Sally O'Reilly

A documentary that posits the generative uses of cliché, as well as its negative associations and operations, drawing on examples from visual art, theatre television and cinema. Includes clips from Samuel Beckett, Martin Creed, *General Hospital*, David Lynch, The Two Ronnies and Gary Stevens.

Sally O'Reilly is a writer, contributing regularly to many art and culture publications, including *Art Monthly*, *Cabinet*, *Frieze*, *Art Review*, and *Time Out*, and has written

many essays for international museums and galleries. Her book *The Body in Contemporary Art* was published by Thames & Hudson in 2009, and she was co-editor of the thematic, interdisciplinary broadsheet *Implicosphere* (2003-8). She has also curated and produced numerous performative events and is co-curator of the Hayward Touring Exhibition 'Magic Show'. She is currently writer in residence at the Whitechapel Art Gallery.

Host: Michelle Atherton

Michelle Atherton's work explores the way we move and are moved in our everyday life. Her recent work, *Dreams of Flying*, was exhibited at RAF Museum Cosford, 2009 and will be at Zeppelin Museum, Germany 2011. This video installation, supported by the AHRC, explores what is considered, or at least marketed as, one of the ultimate flying experiences of the twenty-first century, taking a ride in a fourth generation military jet fighter. Other recent exhibitions include *Cancelled: One in a series*, Whitstable Biennale Satellite Programme, 2008; *Missed the Boat II*, Dagmar de Pooter Gallery, Antwerp, and Linnagalleri, Tallinn Estonia 2006-7. She is currently researching the role of humour in contemporary art practice

Wednesday 24th November

Guest: Craig Richardson

Craig Richardson is an artist, writer, and curator. He has recently published in *Visual Culture in Britain*, *Map* magazine, and *The Journal of Visual Culture*. Recent catalogue essays include texts on the artists Tracey MacKenna, Wong Hoy Cheong, and Christine Borland. His recent curated exhibition *Ross Sinclair versus Sir Edwin Landseer* was at Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museum in 2007. Notable publications include *Face On: Photography as Social Exchange* (with Mark Durden) and a forthcoming monograph *Scottish Art Since 1960* (Ashgate, January 2011). He is currently Director of Postgraduate Taught Programmes in the School of Arts and Humanities, Oxford Brookes University.

Host: Andrew Sneddon

Andrew Sneddon is a Scottish artist now living and working in Sheffield. He studied at the British School in Rome and holds an MA in Fine Art from Glasgow School of Art. He has exhibited nationally and internationally and is currently engaged in a practice-led PhD at Edinburgh College of Art. His practice is concerned with exploring our complex relations with space and place, in particular how place influences the decision-making process of the artist. He has recently completed a residency at Yorkshire Sculpture Park and co-authored *The slender margin between the real and the unreal*, with Gavin Morrison and Kiyoshi Okutsu, (Artwords Press, 2007).

www.andrewsneddon.com

Wednesday 1st December

Guest: Phil Collins

Phil Collins lives and works in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include: Tramway, Glasgow (2009); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2008); Dallas Museum of Art, Texas

(2007); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2007); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA (2006); Tate Britain, London (2006–7); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2006). Recent group exhibitions include: 'The Making of Art', Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2009); 'Acting Out: Social Experiments in Video', Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2009), 'Cinema Effect: Illusion, Reality and the Moving Image. Part II: Realisms', Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington (2008); 'Life On Mars', 55th Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2008); 'Double Agent', Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2008). Collins was nominated for the 2006 Turner Prize.

Host: Yuen Fong Ling

Yuen Fong Ling is an artist based in Manchester. He is currently completing his PhD by Practice at the University of Lincoln (2007–ongoing) and previously studied on the MFA programme at Glasgow School of Art (2005–07). Recent works were presented as part of the 'Art School: Inventions, Invectives and Radical Possibilities' conference, University College of London (June 2010); and 'China: Birth and Belonging' conference, Wellcome Collection, London (February 2010). Recent group exhibitions include: 'Triple Base', San Francisco (2009); Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2009); Gasworks, London (2007); Tramway, Glasgow (2007), Artnews Projects, Berlin (2007), The Central Academy of Fine Art Beijing touring throughout China, Denmark, Australia, and UK (2007–8); and Urbis, Manchester (2007).

Wednesday 8th December

Guest: Marcia Farquhar

Marcia Farquhar is an artist working in performance, photography, video, and object-making. Her practice revolves around the stories and interactions of everyday life, particularly in relation to the meaning and histories of objects. Engineering unexpected social interactions in which the distance between audience and performer is frequently breached, Farquhar probes the nature of biographical and autobiographical storytelling as a strategy that is forever renegotiating its relationship with truth. Her site-specific events have been staged and exhibited internationally in museums and galleries, as well as in lecture theatres, kitchen showrooms, pubs, parks and leisure centres. Among her recent works are *The Horse is a Noble Animal* at the Tatton Park Biennial (2010), the 30-hour live-in performance *The Omnibus* at the National Review of Live Art, Glasgow (2010), and the *12 Shooters* project (2007), for which she revisited a number of live works from her past in a series of short-film collaborations with thirteen different artist-filmmakers. Her website is www.marciafarquhar.com.

Host: Hester Reeve

Hester Reeve navigates her complex relationship as an artist with the world through her conceptual persona HRH.the. Her practice encompasses drawing, live art, philosophy, sculpture, and works for camera. Public showings of her work include former Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, LIVE Biennale, Vancouver, Site Gallery, Sheffield and most recently The Art Center of Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. She has co-authored three publications, most notably *Libkovice: Zdař Bůh* (DIVUS 97), a three-year dialogic exposé of post-revolutionary Czechoslovakia. Reeve is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Sheffield Hallam University.