

Interrupteur

Rachel Smith

*Artist in Residence
at Jessop West Foyer
University of Sheffield*

*on selected dates between
11th April - 29th May 2018*

rachelartsmith.blogspot.co.uk

Interrupteur

interrupteur holds both the mistaken notion of the interruption and the actual translated sense of the word – *switch*: as exchange, shift, or transformation.

Forging conversations and collaborations between artists and academics is at the heart of the project's endeavour, but initially Rachel Smith as artist in residence will be present in the foyer of the Jessop West building on selected dates (see below), working, making art, and being interrupted by conversations and the unexpected encounter.

Smith uses drawing, photography, and writing to explore the materiality of the peripheral details in the acts of reading, writing, and listening. The grasping action of finding sense in the face of the excesses of language sometimes pushes the work towards wordlessness. Equally gaps, voids, misunderstandings, and errors are opened in the work, containing the potentiality of that which has yet to happen. Producing these generative spaces allows room for other voices. These gaps in the practice may contain no visible language, but they are not empty – they possess a latent energy. These are the spaces inhabited by the other, the as-yet-unwritten, the as-yet-unread, the as-yet-unspoken, or the as-yet-unheard.

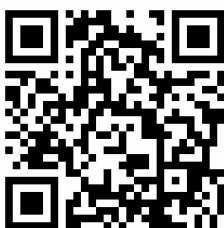
Beyond producing her own work Smith will host conversations, events, performances, staged dialogue, and even accidental occurrences. The project explores how artists might open spaces for dialogue and collaboration between and beyond expected outcomes, engaging across disciplines and inhabiting liminal and in-between spaces. In her occupation of the foyer at Jessop West, other artists will move through the space, stopping to collaborate, discuss, perform, and workshop ideas.

Not-knowing, error and misrepresentation, hybridity, constraint and improvisation, are some of ideas explored during the conversations and work in progress during the residency.

Quotations selected for each day of work will act as provocation or a filter through which to work and think.

You are welcome to interrupt, join in, exchange ideas, observe, listen in, or merely glance and walk by.

There is a blog associated with the residency which will be regularly updated with work in progress:
<https://residencyinterrupteur.blogspot.co.uk>



Dates and Events:

Wednesday 11th April

All day

We must begin wherever we are

Rachel Smith will be present all day in the foyer at Jessop West, setting up the residency, working in the space – please do interrupt her
rachelartsmith.blogspot.co.uk

Tuesday 17th April

1.30 p.m. onwards

An ERRANT, or Improper Form

For their live film-projection/writing performance ‘An *ERRANT*, or Improper Form’, artist-writers Emma Bolland and Rachel Smith will produce a speculative narrative by writing directly into the timelines of projected films – films they have not seen, in languages they do not understand. Mimicking modes of ‘fansubbing’ (the phenomenon whereby collaborative groups of amateur translators subtitle and stream material as diverse as Anime, or Game of Thrones, within hours of its first broadcast, often using formal experimentation and interventionist translator notes), they will produce new and experimental text narratives.

‘Fansubbing is defined as ‘improper’[...] however, the errancy of fansubbing exceeds this definitional parameter, also manifesting in more explicit, intentional forms of disobedience and irregularity.’

Emma Bolland is an artist and writer based in Sheffield, who works across critical and creative writing, film, drawing, and performance, using strategies of expanded screenwriting and live film narration. She is interested in ‘faulty translation’ in relation to post-traumatic language, and art practice as a strategy for speaking the unspeakable.

<https://emmabolland.com>

@emmaZbolland

Tuesday 24th April

All day

The copyist remained anonymous; now he claims authorship. Once copying was an act of reproduction; now it is nominated as an act of creation

Following Simon Morris' example of copying out Jack Kerouac's novel *On The Road*, Rachel Smith and Madeleine Walton will use manual typewriters to copy out Herman Melville's novella *Bartleby the Scrivener*. Mirroring the disruptive action of the character Bartleby's refusal to engage with his copying job, mildly professing, 'I prefer not to' in response to requests from his employer, they will copy badly, allowing distractions from the foyer to disrupt the flow of the copying process and interrupt the development of the novella.

Come along and interrupt to become part of the typed distraction in the work, or join in and take over the typing process.

Madeleine Walton is a Sheffield-based artist using text, textiles, paint, and collage. She often produces and collaborates as a member of HMRCollective, an artist group made up of Helen Frank, Madeleine Walton, and Rachel Smith.

<http://hmrcollective.blogspot.co.uk>

<http://madeleinelwaltonsheffield.blogspot.co.uk>

Wednesday 25th April

All day

In the universe, there are things that are known, and things that are unknown, and in between them, there are doors

Rachel Smith and Clee Claire Lee will be discussing common interests and collaborative possibilities while making work.

Clee Claire Lee is a Sheffield-based artist working with sculpture, multimedia installation, and live art. She uses these different forms to explore the concept of liminality and threshold, the synergy of the senses, and to invite the audience into the space between certainty and doubt.

The engagement of her body, both as medium and tool, is crucial as she draws ideas three-dimensionally with wire, and in negotiating boundaries with other human bodies through collaborative voice and movement work. By focusing on the body, Lee contemplates the way the viewer connects with their own body – the immediate sensation, empathy, reflection, and action.

www.cleeleeeartist.com

<https://www.instagram.com/cleeclealee/>

Tuesday 8th May

From 10 a.m.

We live in a world where there is more and more information and less and less meaning

Rachel Smith will be interrupting the process of Bryan Eccleshall making additions to his *Digital Rain* collages live in the foyer. Images made, reworked, and passed between the two artists to spark a discussion.

Bryan Eccleshall is an artist who works across disciplines. The works that make up *Digital Rain* draw on art history, current affairs, classical myth, and religion but also reflect his interest in 1970s dystopian science fiction and pop culture. Images are taken indiscriminately from the internet and collided with one another and with photographs of Eccleshall's own work. The project began as an exploration of the issues surrounding Europe's so-called refugee crisis, but it has expanded to encompass many other subjects. The resulting work is complex and baffling, not least to its maker. The works might be thought of as latter-day conversation pieces. The collection currently contains over six hundred images. The work was recently exhibited at the Green Rooms Hotel in London.

<https://bryaneccleshall.wordpress.com/>

Wednesday 9th May

All day

I fight for improvisation, but always with the belief that it is impossible

Rachel Smith and Jo Ray will collaborate (possibly remotely) on timed diversions to explore the area within a 10-minute radius of the foyer, bringing back fragments of footage and digital images which will provoke the making of further impromptu responses.

Jo Ray is an artist, researcher, and lecturer based in Sheffield. Her current practice explores encounters with models and sites of model use. Scale play is recurrent in her work, which uses diverse methods in response to spatial and social situations, archives material, and artefacts. She is interested in the potential of spaces where speculation, play and enthusiasm are possible, and the tipping place between emulation and improvisation. During her practice-led doctoral research, Ray has used artistic practice as a means of exploring 'model-ness' and modelling in enthusiast and self-organising communities, undertaking residencies in the autonomous township Christiania in Copenhagen, and a model railway enthusiasts club in Sheffield.

<http://joray.co.uk/>

www.axisweb.org/p/joray/

Tuesday 22nd May

All day

There is freedom in Constraint

Rachel Smith and Helen Frank will be working under a range of constraints as they explore compliance, misrepresentation, and error within any given system.

Helen Frank works within sets of self-imposed mathematically inspired rules. Her particular focus is on the contradictory potential of these artistic constraints. Both hand and mind are players in the system, and so too are the properties of determinism and free will: diligence, disruption, adherence, and errancy. Often the resulting art works are evidence of a slightly absurdist evolution.

She is a member of the Oupeinpo * and finds herself in Paris from time to time.

* The visual art iteration of the ouXpo groups who work in parallel to the Oulipo. The Oupeinpo work with methods, devices, manipulations, structures, formal constraints which enable the production of visual work.

<http://oulipo.net/>

<http://www.oupeinpo.com/>

www.helenfrank-who.blogspot.com

Wednesday 23rd May

10–12.30 a.m.

Photography is about finding out what can happen in the frame. When you put four edges around some facts, you change those facts.

Rachel Smith and Andrew Conroy will discuss photography, image making, and other common interests – come and join them to find out more.

Andrew Conroy is a curator, writer, lecturer, and photographer. He is interested in the connections and disconnections between space, place, identity, and capital.

@andrewdconroy

Wednesday 23rd May

1–3 p.m.

Insolent in that it interrupts the text, and smitten in that it keeps returning to it

The Roland Barthes reading group will read from and work with ‘The Desire for Haiku’, a chapter in Barthes’s *The Preparation of the Novel*, the series of lectures he gave at the Collège de France between 1978 and 1980, completed shortly before his death in 1981. He declared his intention to write a novel, and explored the process it might take, while his novel remained unwritten.

The reading group will read their found haikus produced using text appropriated from Barthes’s eponymous chapter. The collection, *The Desire for Haiku*, has been recently published by MA BIBLIOTHÈQUE. (The current group includes the artists and doctoral students Emma Bolland, Helen Clarke, Louise Finney, Sharon Kivland, Debbie Michaels, Bernadette O’ Toole, Rachel Smith, and is convened by Sharon Kivland).

Following the readings those joining the session are invited to read, and to construct their own haikus through further appropriation.

Tuesday 29th May

All day

an experimentation in contact with the real. The map [...] constructs the unconscious

Louise Finney and Rachel Smith engage in a collaborative mapping process of the Jessop West foyer and beyond. They will employ a range of drawing techniques, archeological mapping methods, rhizomatic mapping, and notations of interruptions experienced while working in the foyer. This will result in constructing a record of the space that is beyond the expectations of the traditional map or territory

Louise Finney is an artist and researcher currently undertaking a PhD at Sheffield Hallam University. Her work examines ways in which art practice can be used as a means to examine historical documents and objects, using taxonomical devices, diagrammatic structures, and creative writing. Borrowing methods and approaches from disciplines more often associated with the study of history; archaeology, archive studies, museum studies, and even historical fiction, she explores how these devices can be appropriated to highlight the subjective nature of looking at the past. Often what transpires from these efforts is that the artefact in question becomes less important than the method used to examine it; the map is more interesting than the terrain, the catalogue card more interesting than the object.

Acknowledgements:

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