

# Symposium

## Hidden Ontologies: *Re-interpretation of a Collection*

Friday 22 February 2008, 9.30am – 4.00pm

with access to the gallery and the intervention from 9.00am

### Aberdeen Art Gallery

This event is free but advanced booking is required:

Sandra Still T: 01224 523700 E: [SStill@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:SStill@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

AndersonMacgee in association with The Institute for Curatorship and Education (ICE)

Five Key Speakers will discuss the involvement of artists engaging with and working within existing museum and gallery collections. Speakers from a museological perspective and artists who have worked specifically within the context of collections, will each address the concept of intervention and artists working in museums. The symposium is being held on the occasion of AndersonMacgee's gallery intervention *The Melancholy Thistle and Other Works* at Aberdeen Art Gallery, Aberdeen (27 October 2007 – 24 February 2008).

Prior to the symposium there will be a book launch and informal event on Thursday 21 February 6 - 8pm at Peacock Visual Arts, Aberdeen

Both events are free and open to the public but advanced booking is required for the symposium.

To book a place or for more information please contact Sandra Still at Aberdeen Art Gallery (see contact details below) or visit [andersonmacgee.co.uk](http://andersonmacgee.co.uk)

Aberdeen Art Gallery  
Schoolhill, Aberdeen  
AB10 1FQ  
Telephone: 01224 523700  
Email: [SStill@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:SStill@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Web: [aberdeencity.gov.uk](http://aberdeencity.gov.uk)

Peacock Visual Arts,  
21 Castle Street, Aberdeen  
AB11 5BQ  
Telephone: 01224 639539  
Email: [info@peacockvisualarts.co.uk](mailto:info@peacockvisualarts.co.uk)  
Web: [peacockvisualarts.com](http://peacockvisualarts.com)

#### Speakers:

**Dr. Sara Barnes** – Research Associate at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh  
[www.eca.ac.uk/index.php?id=615](http://www.eca.ac.uk/index.php?id=615)

**Prof. Burkhard Blümlein** – Artist and Theorist, Munich  
[www.bbluemlein.de/](http://www.bbluemlein.de/)

**Prof. Neil Cummings** – Artist, Lecturer and Research Staff at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London  
[www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/17214.htm](http://www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/17214.htm), [www.chanceprojects.com](http://www.chanceprojects.com)

**Robin Dobson** – Artistic Director of The New Generation Arts Festival organised by Birmingham City University  
[www.newgenerationarts.co.uk](http://www.newgenerationarts.co.uk)

**Prof. Marianne Eigenheer** – Director, ICE, will give an introduction to the symposium and talk about the relation of collections and cities.  
[www.eca.ac.uk/index.php?id=385](http://www.eca.ac.uk/index.php?id=385)

**Dr. Dan Smith** – Artist, Lecturer and Research Staff at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London. [www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/35523.htm](http://www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/35523.htm)

**Jason Williamson** – Exhibitions Officer, Aberdeen Art Gallery will discuss AndersonMacgee's intervention in the gallery and past projects. [www.aagm.co.uk](http://www.aagm.co.uk)

**AndersonMacgee** – Briony Anderson and Paul Macgee – have worked in collaboration since 2001. Their work is developed through extensive research and discussion, often seeking a reinvestigation of the cultural significance of objects, traditions and events. Working with Aberdeen Art Gallery, AndersonMacgee's intervention *The Melancholy Thistle and Other Works* adopts an appropriation strategy – taking seven paintings from Aberdeen Art Gallery's collection and re-hanging them within the galleries. Throughout the first floor of the gallery the paintings are positioned in specific contexts which further develop the artist's individuated readings of the works and the areas explored. The selection process has evolved from the artists' own artistic practice and an accompanying publication further develops the intervention's narrative through a series of commissioned texts that reconsider the nature and essence of the selected works. The book is intended to read as a quasi-guidebook to an idiosyncratic collection: the individual paintings are not subjected to mere visual analysis; instead each contributor to the book uses their specialist knowledge to expand the realms of the intervention.

The symposium, 'Hidden Ontologies: *Re-interpretation of a Collection*' is being held in association with The Institute for Curatorship and Education (ICE) – a research institute whose aim is to advance the understanding of curatorship and mediation in the context of collections, exhibitions, public space and non-institutional interventions. ICE is based in Edinburgh as a major research project of Edinburgh College of Art. [www.eca.ac.uk/ice](http://www.eca.ac.uk/ice)

The book launch prior to the symposium is being held at Peacock Visual Arts, Aberdeen. Peacock Visual Arts is the main contemporary visual arts organisation in Aberdeen and the North-east of Scotland and is supported by Aberdeen City Council, the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen. They organise an annual programme of national and international contemporary art exhibitions, as well as talks, critical debates and workshops. They also have extensive print making workshops and digital facilities.  
[www.peacockvisualarts.com](http://www.peacockvisualarts.com)

## Key Speakers:

**Dr. Sara Barnes** – Research Associate at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh

Sara Barnes is an independent researcher in the visual arts. She is currently Research Associate for Species of Origin – a multi-disciplinary collaborative project between Edinburgh College of Art (eca), Glasgow University and the Natural History Museum - developing the potential for contemporary art practice to re-imagine Charles Darwin's work within a current context [www.speciesoforigin.org](http://www.speciesoforigin.org).

Previous projects include curatorial research for the Scottish touring exhibition Anatomy Acts (nominated for the Gulbenkian Prize 2007) and publication research for Anatomy Acts, winner of the Society of Authors and Royal Society of Medicine Medical Book of the Year – the first time a non-clinical book has won the prize.

[www.anatomyacts.co.uk](http://www.anatomyacts.co.uk)

[www.eca.ac.uk/index.php?id=615](http://www.eca.ac.uk/index.php?id=615)

**Prof. Burkhard Blümlein** - Artist and Theorist, Munich

Burkard Blümlein lives in Paris and Munich and is Professor at Villa Arson, Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Nice. From 2002-07 he was Professor at the Ecole Européenne Supérieure de l'Image, Angoulême. In 2007, he showed *Conversations de Montbéliard* – working with the collection of the Musée d'art et d'histoire, Montbéliard. [www.bbluemlein.de/](http://www.bbluemlein.de/)

**Prof. Neil Cummings** – Artist, Lecturer and Research Staff at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

Neil Cummings is an artist, writer and Professor in Theory and Practice at Chelsea. Current research includes collaborative creative practice; the re-animation of the public domain and the creative commons through 'copyleft' viral licensing. The possibilities offered by Free, Libre or Open Source [FLOSS] software development -open structures and content. The politics of creativity and knowledge. The practice of exhibition and display; the public collection and archive - the Museum. Generosity. Previous projects include *Screen Test 1/4* for The British Art Show Six, 2005 - 2006 and *Free Trade* at Manchester Art Gallery - an installation within the permanent collection, accompanying historical lectures and publication as part of the re-launch of the Manchester Art Gallery in 2003. [www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/17214.htm](http://www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/17214.htm), [www.chanceprojects.com](http://www.chanceprojects.com)

**Robin Dobson** – Artistic Director of The New Generation Arts Festival organised by Birmingham City University, Birmingham.

Now in its third year, The New Generation Arts (NGA) Festival is a two-week programme of innovative graduate art shows held in Birmingham. The Festival focuses on developing and showcasing graduates alongside emerging artists who have studied or live in Birmingham. The aim of NGA is to build a nationally recognised festival providing emerging artists and musicians with a professional platform to showcase their work. [www.newgenerationarts.co.uk](http://www.newgenerationarts.co.uk)

**Prof. Marianne Eigenheer** - Artist and Director, ICE, Basel and London

Marianne Eigenheer is an artist, Professor and Director of The Institute for Curatorship and Education (ICE) at ECA. She lives in Basel and London and until 2007 was Professor for Fine Arts at the Art Academy, Stuttgart. She works as a writer and curator since many years specially in the context of cross cultural research, from 1992 – 1998 as the Artistic Director of IAAB/CMS foundation Basel too. Since 1975 she has been exhibited internationally in both solo and group shows. [www.ifa.de](http://www.ifa.de), [www.eca.ac.uk](http://www.eca.ac.uk)

**Dr. Dan Smith** - Artist, Lecturer and Research Staff at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

Dan Smith is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art Theory at Chelsea College of Art and Design. Research interests and activities are currently focused on notions of archive in contemporary art and culture, science fiction, children's literature and the identification of the presence of a utopian impulse within artworks, text and other cultural forms. [www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/35523.htm](http://www.chelsea.arts.ac.uk/35523.htm)

Thursday 21 February 2008

**Book Launch - Peacock Visual Arts, Aberdeen**

6.00-8.00pm Book Launch  
Books launched include *The Melancholy Thistle and Other Works, aMusing*, AndersonMacgee, *Anatomy Acts How We Come to Know Ourselves*, Edited by Andrew Patrizio and Dawn Kemp and *ICE Reader #1: Curating Critique*, Edited by Marianne Eigenheer.

Friday 22 February 2008

**Symposium: Hidden Ontologies: *Re-interpretation of a Collection* – Aberdeen Art Gallery**

9.00am Access to Aberdeen Art Gallery and the intervention  
Coffee, tea and refreshments

9.30am Welcome and Introduction by Chair, Marianne Eigenheer (Director of ICE/ECA)

9.50am Burkard Blumlein, Artist and Theorist, Paris and Munich

10.30am Sara Barnes, Research Associate at Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh

11.10am Neil Cummings, Artist, Lecturer and Research Staff at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

11.50am Jason Williamson, Aberdeen Art Gallery will discuss the intervention and past projects at the gallery

12.10pm Chaired Discussion

12.30pm Lunch  
Short Optional Tour of Intervention by AndersonMacgee

1.30pm Robin Dobson, Artistic Director of The New Generation Arts Festival, Birmingham

2.10pm Dan Smith, Artist, Lecturer and Research Staff at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London

2.50pm Teas, coffees and refreshments

3.10pm Chaired Discussion

4.00pm Closing

**Hidden Ontologies: *Re-interpretation of a Collection* is supported by:**

