

DANNY SIMPKINS/PENNY WHITEHEAD

Homebase: LIVERPOOL-Residency: LINZ

We are two artist/organisers working collaboratively since 2006 across a number of experimental disciplines, communicative channels and media. We are currently based at Static Gallery in Liverpool where in 2011 much of our focus has been on the radical potential of de-institutionalised education, which we have explored through a number of DIY pedagogical projects.

We approach our art practice as a means of political agency/activism through which to interrogate and re-imagine the systems and spaces that we occupy. Often working within larger networks or collectives, we believe in the artist as an active citizen and the artwork not as a precious commodity but as a catalyst for action and change.

Disrupt Dominant Frequencies is a record of our joint and individual art practices and will develop as an extension and on-line presence of future projects. We invite proposals for possible collaboration, discussion, projects and exhibitions, so please do not hesitate to get in touch

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS
BY PENNY WHITEHEAD
AND DAN SIMPKINS

2013

We are Only in it for the Money

In March 2013 we will embark on our first foray into the seedy underworld of London's art market, commoditising our art practice in the production of a video which like most commercially viable products is already technologically and visually obsolete and likely to rapidly depreciate in value. As part of the latest project by Scare in the Community.

2012

The International Center of Cultural Exchange and Diplomatic Friendship

During Liverpool Biennial 2012 we hosted a series of residencies initiated to examine the role that art and culture have in reproducing or redefining cultural hegemony. Project participants are each contributing to a new publication as a critical exploration of international art, cultural exchange and soft power.

The Empire is Revolting at SPECTRUM

In May 2012 we took part in SPECTRUM, an exhibition at Wolstenholme Creative Space (WCS), producing a new work to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Falklands war, aiming to disseminate the islands' alternative name by which they are known throughout Latin America, and to think through contemporary manifestations of Empire, language, imperialism and resistance.

Curfew Tower residency

Throughout April 2012 we lived and worked in a former prison, now owned by artist/writer/musician Bill Drummond, on the Antrim coast of Northern Ireland. During the residency we produced an audio work in response to Ulster's history of imperial rule and sectarian division and to the context of the Curfew Tower, which as a place of confinement for idlers and rioters provides fertile soil for projects of dissent.

2011

Tent City University Drawing Class / / /

Documents of Hope and Resistance

A drawing session at Tent City University in which artists and non-artists were invited to explore ways of documenting and responding to the activity at Occupy LSX, with the aim of contributing to the active and enduring visual record of the London occupation and more broadly of the international movement.

Terminal Convention

An intervention permanently installed in the main public/social space at Static Gallery, Liverpool. It was made in response to the 2011 UK riots and to the internationalist context of Terminal Convention, an exhibition and series of events which took place throughout November 2011.

Values 4 Money [TM]

A new line of art objects for the winter 2011 season made by hand* exclusively for you in our bespoke studio in Liverpool** with some exciting internet discounts available and special promotional prices for institutions.

* Some art objects may have been mass produced.

** Some art objects may have been produced in China and Haiti.

Strategies for Free Education

Since October 2010 we have been researching, developing, acting upon and disseminating strategies for free education by attempting to study without enrolling at University. This will underpin all of our work for the foreseeable future as a new mode of research and practice that is conceived as an act of resistance against the corporatisation of education and the cuts to the arts and public services.

FAREWELL STATE: PROPERTY

A new series of a collective disruptions, imagined alternatives and responses to life, society and space. The series will start by examining notions of property through a week of daily discussion, spontaneous actions and explorations in to the neo-liberal frontiers of the city.

2010

Culture Strike!

THE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF LABOUR IS THE MOST EXTREME COLLECTIVE CHALLENGE THAT ARTISTS CAN MAKE TO THE STATE.

The Politics of Utopia: Marxism, Mysticism and Religion.

As part of The Politics & Aesthetics Reading Group we collaborated with Maresa MacKeith and Ange Taggart, broadcasting on Homeland, a temporary pirate radio station, in response to texts by Maresa and Ernst Bloch.

Free Radio Africa

In 2010 MANIFESTA 8, the roving European biennial of contemporary art, directed its focus towards Africa from the Murcia region of southern Spain. We responded to this curatorial premise, broadcasting on a temporary pirate radio station Free Radio Africa, a critical intervention in to the discourse of the festival that was initiated by artist duo No Fixed Abode.

The Plaza Principle

Art is popping up in disused shops everywhere as businesses and governments in cities across the globe realise that culture not only increases the value of private property but is also an inexpensive distraction from the capitalist crisis. In late October 2010 we performed cultural CPR on the cancerous heart of Leeds' commercial centre and significantly increased the share price of the largest commercial property

company in the UK.

Disruptive Histories

A series of videos made in collaboration with Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau in which we examine the hostile, parasitic and neutralising relationship that hegemonic art has with society.

2009

Fortress Europe

A video installation presenting a polemic on European immigration policies. Images were taken over the course of a day in two nearby Austrian villages, one being the location of a controversial refugee camp and the other the home and political safe haven of the former leader of the American Klu-Klux-Klan.

In Situ 66: Revealing Contemporary Struggles

A video installation which aimed to inscribe in to the streets of Linz, Austria the troubling events surrounding the anti-fascist demonstration of 1 May 2009 which was brutally broken up by the police through highly aggressive methods such as tear gas, beating with batons and 'kettling'.

Protest kit no. 67: FREE

Occupying the front of the Salzamt, the new flagship art institution in Linz, Austria for a week, this banner made a pseudo-political declaration in opposition to the cultural elitism in which it, we and our work were implicit as invited guests of the venue.

Translocation

An exhibition in Linz, Austria presenting a series of experimental projects, subversive actions and interventions around issues of immigration, neo-fascism, cultural elitism and the control of public space that we produced whilst in the city for a 3 month artist residency.

<http://www.disruptdominantfrequencies.net/main/linz/translocation.html> (Urban Intervention Residency 2010)

Linz European Capital of Culture 2009

A 3 month residency in Linz, Austria as part of a one-off project Urban Interventions: Artistic Perspectives (UIAP) in which we continue to ask questions of the commercial, political and cultural strategies adopted by cities during their tenure as the European Capital of Culture

We, The Others: Marketing Suite

We collaborated with Sheffield-based duo No Fixed Abode in constructing a raft as a literal and metaphorical platform for exploring ideas of community, contemporary colonialism and the ownership and control of urban space in the wake of the economic meltdown and subsequent property crash

Artists of the World Unite! (with caution)

Developed for the event INTERNATIONALE: A project to radicalise the notion and practice of internationalism in the arts, this video work seeks to ask questions around art tourism, the

proliferation of English as the International Art Language, and the fetishisation of art from zones of conflict.

ARCADE Project: Sacrifice Zone

Following our viral newspaper project Future Visions of History – see 2008 projects below – we were invited to contribute to an online series of commissions by artists and writers examining the links between art and regeneration agendas.

2008

Future Visions of History

A one-off newspaper distributed virally throughout Liverpool over the course of a day, offering a temporary alternative to the cultural propaganda that proliferated throughout the Capital of Culture 08 programme.

Closed Studio

We staged the compulsory purchase of our studio by Liverpool City Council as part of a city-wide “Open Studio” weekend.

FANTASTIC

A collective project centred around the weekly ritual of playing the National Lottery, FANTASTIC aims to raise questions about UK arts funding and to provide a structure in which alternative systems and approaches can be explored.

Sheffield to Paris in Under Six Hours

We collaborated with a fabric trader from

Sheffield's largest market on a one-day event drawing links between artists and independent traders as they become increasingly displaced from city centres by globalised commercial redevelopment.

Centrifuge

An extensive international collaborative project based around research, travel, collectivity and discussion.

Swing That Art Bat: BEAT ATTACK THWACK!

An exploration of the power structures underpinning contemporary artistic practice, as part of a month-long programme organised by No Fixed Abode exploring the metaphor of a bat as a representation of an artist's cultural "weight" or status.

2007

HOST

As a group of six recent graduates we collaborated on an experimental exhibition and series of activities, dialogues, encounters and events, based around themes of social and hierarchical positions, cultural networks, hospitality, intrusion and occupation.

2006

Objects In Waiting

221 artists contributed to Objects in Waiting,

exhibiting objects / ideas / research material
meant for use in an artwork but never realised,
revealing the underlying processes of inquiry,
evaluation and censorship determining artistic
practice.

GIFT

Following Objects in Waiting a series of
encounters ensued which aimed to liberate the
objects from their previous owners and vice
versa, and demonstrate the politics of exchange
and reciprocation inherent in gift-giving.

THE END

A collaboratively curated group show featuring
more than sixty graduating artists and symposia
on Collaborative Curating and Institutions.

Throwing Something At Boxes, 2006

An intervention into Rachel Whiteread's
installation Embankment and Jonathan Meese's
performance Noel Coward is Back: Dr. Humpty
Dumpty vs Fra No-finger at the Turbine Hall of
Tate Modern.

PROJECTS
BY
PENNY WHITEHEAD

2009

The Royal Standard

I am director of an artist-led studio, gallery and
social workspace in Liverpool with an active
programme of talks, screenings, exhibitions and
residencies and more than 25 studio holders.

2007

May I Introduce...

I curated a mini-festival of performances and interventions by undergraduate art students, aiming to contest the hierarchical structure of the Sheffield art scene and instigate collaboration and integration across the graduation divide.

2006

Art in the Pub

A series of monthly live / video art events that I initiated and continued to co-curate throughout my final year at Sheffield Hallam University, providing a platform for students to experiment with live / video art, installation and intervention in a social setting outside of the university / gallery context.

2005

Lantern Theatre

I organised, co-curated and performed in a one-off event at the Lantern Theatre, Sheffield, working with over thirty artists on a diverse range of performances, installations and interventions.

PROJECTS
BY
DANIEL SIMPKINS

2009

Relational Athletics

Amassed as a contribution to British Artists

Football, Liverpool's premier artist football team combines the two seemingly disparate worlds of art and football to provide an alternative perspective from which to explore the two.

2008

30 Minutes in Silence

I was one of 50 'experts' that contributed to Blackmarket: An Installation with 50 Experts, a Digression on the Rhetorics of Dialogue and a Shadow Play for a Dialogue Duo as part of the Liverpool Biennial 2008.

What Price Autonomy?

As Higher Education reached crisis point What Price Autonomy? explored the implications of national education reforms on the future of academic and professional arts practices.

2007

The Winners

A one-night exhibition that was sold throughout its duration as part of The Royal Standard Turner Prize Extravaganza! was the first in a programme of unique one-off events bringing together studio members and artists from across the UK to respond to elements of the Liverpool-based organisation's context and locality.

The Dissemination of (Re)Evolutionary Ideas
For the BLOCassembly#7, titled Time, I coordinated a series of hopeful interventions by a number of anonymous participants selected for their active and invested interests in current, local affairs.

HOST: Past / Possible / Provisional

A series of walking guides, site-specific texts and walking discussions focussed on the critique of the physiology, sociology, culture and economy of a single moment in a rapidly changing urban environment.

2006

O B S E R V E R / D

(may take a few seconds to load)

Following the dubious 22/07 police shooting of Jean Charles De Menezes in Stockwell

Underground station this work was conceived to highlight the subjectivity of surveillance and to expose the proliferation of institutional observation in the context of a university faculty.

CONTACT

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