



**Material Histories:
Networks of Women and Art in Cornwall**

**Tate Research Centre: Creative Communities
Research seminar**

**Porthmeor Studio 5
Saturday 20 June 2015**

Schedule

09.30–10.00 Registration and coffee

10.00–10.10 Welcome by convenors Helena Bonett and Rachel Smith

10.10–10.25 Virginia Woolf: Inhabiting Fictions
Laura Smith (Tate St Ives)

10.25–10.40 A Landscape of Symbols
Karen Di Franco (Chelsea Space)

10.40–10.55 The Wise Wound: Regendering the Landscape
Lucy Stein

10.55–11.15 Discussion

11.15–11.30 Coffee

11.30–11.45 Absent Others: Dorothy Richardson's Letters from Cornwall
Leonie Shanks (Birkbeck College)

11.45–12.00 Radical Retreats? Women's Material Networks in Britain
Amy Tobin (University of York)

12.00–12.15 Discussion

12.15–13.15 Lunch with poster session

13.15–13.30 Elena Gaputyte and Me: Performing Bodily Networks of Memory
Jeanie Sinclair (Falmouth University)

13.30–13.45 Material Connections: Interpreting Barbara Hepworth's Legacy
Helena Bonett (Tate / Royal College of Art)

13.45–14.00 Discussion

14.00–14.15 Tea

14.15–15.00 Keynote talk and discussion
Material Histories, Surrealist Legacies: Channelling the Mantic Stain
Linder in conversation with Dawn Ades

15.00–16.00 Panel discussion chaired by Sarah Victoria Turner (The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art) and summing up

16.00–17.00 Alternative tour of St Ives led by Jeanie Sinclair (Falmouth University)

Abstracts

Virginia Woolf: Inhabiting Fictions

Laura Smith (Tate St Ives)

'... but after reading a chapter or two a shadow seemed to lie across the page. It was a straight dark bar, a shadow shaped something like the letter 'I'. One began dodging this way and that to catch a glimpse of the landscape behind it ...

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

I am developing an exhibition centred on the literary practice of Virginia Woolf, which will explore her relationship to feminism, post-feminism and biography. Loosely structured in two parts the exhibition will consider the gendering of modernism from the dual perspectives of domesticity and landscape, and will use Woolf and her methodologies as a means of construction. This paper will examine many of the influences that have fuelled the exhibition and will incorporate discussion around several of the artists provisionally included: Eileen Agar, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Vanessa Bell, Sandra Blow, Romaine Brooks, Dora Carrington, Ithell Colquhoun, Margaret Gardiner, Gluck, H.D., Barbara Hepworth, Rose Hilton, Laura Knight, Margaret Mellis, Sheila Mitchell, Marlow Moss, Winifred Nicholson, Dod Procter, Jean Rhys, Gertrude Stein, and others.

In modern autobiographical processes, the constructed self is often seen to evolve in linear time and space. Woolf's feminist programme is bound up with her idea to revolutionise biography. Making use of her thinking, as well as feminist and post-feminist theories around gendered time and autobiography from Linda Nochlin, Julia Kristeva and Judith Halberstam, the paper will underscore the distinction between what Kristeva describes as masculine 'linear' time and relational 'women's' time. Through examining the position of the woman within this dynamic, it will attempt to deconstruct the terms of social privilege and the 'narrating self', favouring process and collective experience over the egotistical and patriarchal 'I'. Drawing attention to many of the connections between Woolf, her contemporaries, and those inspired by her work – whether such connections be tangible, anecdotal, geographic or

imagined – the paper will consider whether connections between women can form an alternative reimagining of the networks surrounding art, literature and modernism.

A Landscape of Symbols

Karen Di Franco (Chelsea Space)

This presentation will use the work of the archeologist Jacquetta Hawkes, in particular her groundbreaking fictional work, *A Land* (1951), as a starting point to examine the occupation of landscape (exterior or otherwise) for a group of female practitioners (writers, artists, poets, curators) including, Mary Butts; Annabel Nicolson; Monica Ross (in collaboration with Kate Walker and Su Richardson); Jill Bruce; Carlyle Reedy; and the writer and curator Lucy Lippard, amongst others. Looking at the activation of landscape through performance, political occupation and writing I want to open out the possibilities for examining the English landscape and Land Art in particular, in a reconfigured environment that, like *A Land*, is concerned by the markers and symbols shaped by human occupation. All of these practitioners have extraordinary biographies that intersect across disciplines and time – Jacquetta Hawkes wrote the script for *Figures in a Landscape* (1953) for Barbara Hepworth amongst many achievements that includes being one of the founding members of CND. It is through understanding the lives and works of these women that we can begin to broaden our understanding of an art historical context that operates beyond dominant binaries. The presentation will include video and audio documentation as well as examples of works from a range of collections and archives.

The Wise Wound: Regendering the Landscape

Lucy Stein

I will talk about my residency at Porthmeor Studio 5, what brought me to it, and the event that I will have just curated with Tate. This is a musical and performance collaboration with various artists called *The Wise Wound* after Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove's book of the same name which is a radical treatise on menstruation from 1978.

I will then discuss my plans for gliding at HMS Seahawk, how this relates to the work of Peter Lanyon and Alan Davie, and how I incorporate these two distinctive perspectives – underwater and aerial – into my contribution to the project of regendering the landscape and artistic legacies of St Ives and the surrounding area.

Absent Others: Dorothy Richardson's Letters from Cornwall

Leonie Shanks (Birkbeck College, University of London)

'Cornwall is being what Dublin calls feenameenle', Dorothy Richardson triumphantly reports in a letter to her friend H.D. (the poet Hilda Doolittle) in 1924. Partly on account of her husband Alan Odle's ill health, the modernist writer spent winters in Cornwall from 1917 to 1939, producing much of her work from rustic cottages on the Cornish coast. H.D. was only one of many

correspondents that Richardson communicated with over several decades. Her epistolary network also included her long-time friend and patron Winifred Ellerman (known as Bryher), as well as publishers, friends, family, literary contemporaries, and admirers of her work writing from diverse corners of the globe.

This paper will speak to the theme of connections between women across time and place facilitated through materials, objects and technologies, examining the relationship between Richardson's epistolary correspondence and her cultural production. It will argue that her letters served as important social agents that did not simply reflect but mediated her personal and professional relationships in important ways, enabling new forms of intimacy and constructions of self-identity to be expressed in ways that were materially as well as creatively and emotionally beneficial to Richardson.

The paper will focus particularly on ways in which Richardson imag(in)es the landscapes, spaces and people of Cornwall in her letters. Through this lens it will locate some of the anxieties and ambivalences underpinning Richardson's epistolary relationships, drawing on postcolonial theory such as Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994) to explore ways in which she positions herself in relation to the geographical centres or margins of 'modernist' production.

Radical Retreats? Women's Material Networks in Britain

Amy Tobin (University of York)

In 1971, the artist Liz Moore remarked, 'women artists are making contact with each other, coming out of their isolation'. The Women's Liberation Movement connected them across distance and difference. But these connections were not only ideological, they were defiantly material, with paper trails, as newsletters, mail and magazines spread news of events and happenings, relayed other women's experiences and provoked a response from the reader. This paper will explore the importance of these material networks to the women's art movement in Britain in the 1970s, particularly in breaking down the isolation of the home and the family for women artists involved in *Feministo: A Postal Art Event*. In this postal event, women exchanged artworks made in the moments between other jobs and responsibilities creating a vital network that pushed at the borders and boundaries of art as well as personal experience. This network extended throughout the UK, but was primarily focused on urban areas. With a particular focus on the context of Cornwall and Devon, I will consider some other examples that extend to more rural areas in order to engage with historic, artistic and mythic pasts as well as the narrative of liberatory freedom associated with these regions as retreats. But just as *Feministo* might be critiqued for keeping women in the home, and a retreat might be thought a place of retrenchment, I will argue for the radicalism of these sites. In this way I insist on the importance of place and locality for networks of women artists.

Elena Gaputyte and Me: Performing Bodily Networks of Memory

Jeanie Sinclair (Falmouth University)

My performative auto-ethnographic research practice emphasises the experience of the body. The practice of my everyday life is the practice of my research. I am part of the community (the social body) that I am researching. My encounters form relationships, or networks. By focusing on bodily memory and orality as a feminist/queering practice of history, my work aims to 'rehabilitate the anecdote' (Lubbren, 2003). According to Rebecca Schneider, 'the place of residue is arguably flesh in a network of body-to-body transmission of affect and enactment – evidence across generations, of impact' (2011).

Elena Gaputyte is a Lithuanian artist who, fleeing Soviet occupation via Germany, Paris and Canada, arrived in St Ives in 1958, pregnant and unmarried. This is the story of Elena, explorations of art colonies past and present, and the performance of networks of memory and history.

Material Histories, Surrealist Legacies: Channelling the Mantic Stain Linder and Dawn Ades

In this keynote talk, artist Linder and art historian Dawn Ades discuss their shared enthusiasm for the surrealist painter Ithell Colquhoun (1906–1988), who stayed in Cornwall from 1949 and wrote *The Living Stones: Cornwall* (1959).

Linder was artist-in-residence at Porthmeor Studio 5 in 2013–14, the first artist in Tate St Ives' Artists Programme. During her residency she explored predominantly the work and life of Barbara Hepworth, but also began to explore Colquhoun's work. Following the success of Linder's ballet *The Ultimate Form*, which responds to the legacy of Hepworth's sculpture series *The Family of Man* (1970), Linder is creating a new ballet on Colquhoun commissioned for *British Art Show 8* (organised by the Hayward Gallery and touring in 2015–16).

A conversation between Linder and Dawn Ades has recently been published in the monograph, *Linder* (Ridinghouse, 2015), in which they focus on Linder's use of photomontage, a medium about which Ades published a seminal book in 1976, *Photomontage* (Thames & Hudson). Here they extend this dialogue to focus on Linder's new work that responds to Colquhoun's painting and her essay 'The Child of the Mantic Stain' (1952), including the creation of Linder's own 'mantic stain' works, applying pigment to found images. In this way, Linder's work explores the material histories of Colquhoun, creating a cross-generational network between two women artists working in Cornwall.

Alternative tour of St Ives led by Jeanie Sinclair (Falmouth University)

This walk is a performative, embodied experience of memory and place. Wandering the streets of St Ives, we will explore how oral history and memory are site-specific and relative to place. Encountering gasworks and factories, walls and pubs, we will hear voices and listen to memories that create alternative narratives of modernity in St Ives.

Biographies

Dawn Ades is Professor Emerita of the History and Theory of Art at the University of Essex, where she taught from 1968 to 2008. Her research concentrates on Surrealism and on Latin American Art, and her books include *Photomontage* (Thames & Hudson 1976/1981), *Salvador Dalí* (1982), *André Masson* (1994), *Siron Franco* (Brazil 1996) and *Marcel Duchamp* (with N. Cox and D. Hopkins, 2000). She has recently published essays on the surrealist artist Anthony Earnshaw, on the journal *DYN*, and Surrealism in Latin America, and her *Selected Writings* appear this year (2015). She has organised or co-curated many exhibitions in the UK and internationally, and written, edited or contributed essays to their catalogues. They include: *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* (1978); *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era 1820–1980* (1989); *Dalí's Optical Illusions* (2000); *Salvador Dalí: The Centenary Exhibition* (2004); *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Documents* (2006); *Close-Up: Proximity and Defamiliarisation in Art, Photography and Film* (2008); and *The Colour of my Dreams: The Surrealist Revolution in Art* (2011). She was Associate Curator for Manifesta 9 (2012). In 2013 she was made CBE for services to higher education, is a former trustee of Tate (1995–2005), a Fellow of the British Academy and Professor of the History of Art at the Royal Academy.

Helena Bonett is a curator, writer and lecturer undertaking an AHRC-funded collaborative doctorate at the Royal College of Art and Tate on the sculptural legacy of Barbara Hepworth. Helena is an Associate of Tate St Ives' Artists Programme, for which she has produced a film about the Barbara Hepworth Museum, and in 2013 convened a Tate Research seminar focusing on the preserved studios at the Hepworth Museum. Prior to her current studies, Helena was Research Curator at the Royal Academy of Arts, lectured at University of Kent and has published on British art and modernism. She is co-convenor of the seminar *Material Histories: Networks of Women and Art in Cornwall*.

Karen Di Franco is an archivist and a curator, working with collections of materials and ephemera of individuals and institutions. Recent projects include the solo exhibition, *Icons of a Process*, of the artist and poet, Carlyle Reedy at Flat Time House (2014) and the development of Book Works online archive and the touring exhibition and publication *Again, A Time Machine* (2010–12). She has written for the *Art Libraries Journal* about digital archiving and regularly presents research material to academic and industry conferences, such as the Transforming Artists' Books research group at Tate (2012); a conference paper for *Archives 2.0: Saving the Past, Anticipating the Future* at the National Media Museum, Bradford; an essay 'The Library Medium', for the publication about the Piracy Collection by AND Publishing, launched at the NY Art Book Fair; an academic paper, 'Losing, Finding, Collecting: The journals and practices of the artists' collective Inventory' as part of the academic panel *Artists' Books since c.1970: Making, Teaching, Collecting* at the Association of Art Historians Annual Conference; and the presentation and workshop at AND Publishing, 'Putting the Piracy Collection

on the Shelves' at Grand Union, Birmingham, (all 2014). The essay, 'On Being Organised' for The National Irish Visual Arts Library was published in March 2015 and an essay for the journal EROS, is forthcoming in the summer of 2015. She co-organises the New Materialism reading group at Banner Repeater, London and is a member of ARLIS (Art Libraries Society). She has been an independent researcher in the UK Web Archive at the British Library, a director of the artist-led organisation, Plan 9, Bristol and is currently involved in the research project 'The Disembodied Voice' and programme curator at CHELSEA space at Chelsea College of Arts. Karen is beginning a PhD in the autumn focused on artists' books.

Linder played a key part in the late 1970s punk and post-punk scene in Manchester, creating the photomontage used for the Buzzcocks' debut single *Orgasm Addict* in 1977. She has had numerous solo exhibitions since with major retrospectives at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville Paris and at Kestnergesellschaft Hanover in 2013; she also had solo shows at The Hepworth Wakefield, Blum & Poe Los Angeles and Tate St Ives. In July 2012, Linder won the third Latitude Contemporary Art prize with her *Stringed Figure (Octobass for the 21st Century) (Version I)*, a sculptural instrument inspired in part by Barbara Hepworth and composer Hector Berlioz. In 2013 Linder's ballet *The Ultimate Form* debuted at The Hepworth Wakefield and in 2013–14 Linder undertook the first residency at Porthmeor Studio 5 as part of Tate St Ives' Artists Programme, where her work focused principally on Hepworth. During this residency, she also became interested in the work of surrealist artist Ithell Colquhoun and is working on a new ballet commission inspired by Colquhoun for *British Art Show 8* as well as her own 'mantic stain' pieces. A new monograph, *Linder*, including a conversation with Dawn Ades, was published by Ridinghouse in May.

Leonie Shanks is a PhD student at Birkbeck College, under the supervision of Dr Joanne Winning, author of *The Pilgrimage of Dorothy Richardson* (2000). Her PhD, on the subject of Dorothy Richardson's correspondence and modernist networks, seeks to map and theorise the question of gender in relation to modernist networks through a study of Richardson's letters. It aims to rethink her lines of connection with the modernist network through both an understanding of female patronage and editorial control in the modernist field and through models of networks of female friendship and support. The PhD is part of an AHRC-funded cross-institutional project that seeks to produce scholarly editions of three volumes of Richardson's collected letters and seven volumes of her collected fiction. The project involves Keele University, Birkbeck College, University of Birmingham, and University of Oxford. Leonie received her M.St in Modernism from Cambridge University (2006–8), and her B.A. in English and Related Literature from the University of York (2003–6). Her current research interests include modernist networks, gendered conceptualisations of space and place, and the politics of cultural production. She previously worked as a social researcher in London, and is co-author of the book *Learning a Living: Radical Innovation in Education for Work* (2013).

Jeanie Sinclair is currently undertaking PhD research at Falmouth University, supported by the European Social Fund. Using the oral history archive in St

Ives, her performative, auto-ethnographic research practice uses sound to explore how art and cultural practice, past and present, connects individuals and communities, and how memory and identity is intertwined with and performed through space and place.

Laura Smith's research interests focus on developments in international contemporary art and its relationship to modernism, with an emphasis on questions of gender and identity and their relationship to art production and literature. She is interested in the legacy of feminism as capable of reshaping historicity and biography, and elevating discussion beyond engendered body politics. Currently a Curator at Tate St Ives, she is responsible for a programme of historical and contemporary exhibitions, collection displays and associated research and publication activity. Recent exhibitions include the widely touring *Marlow Moss* (2013), as well as solo exhibitions by artists including Linder, Bridget Riley, Liliane Lijn, Rivane Neuenschwander, Nicolas Deshayes, Patrick Heron and R.H. Quaytman. She has also worked on group exhibitions such as *Aquatopia: The Imaginary of the Ocean Deep* (2013), *International Exchanges: Modern Art and St Ives 1915–1965* (2014) and *The Modern Lens: International Photography and the Tate Collection* (2015). In addition she is currently developing a solo exhibition with Jessica Warboys, and is working with Rosalind Nashashibi and Lucy Skaer on a re-imagining of Paul Gauguin's 1891 Tahiti voyage. Recent publications include: 'New Visions' in *The Modern Lens*, Tate St Ives (2015); *Summer 2013*, [ed] Tate St Ives (2013); *Kafou: Haiti, Art and Vodou*, [ed. with Kathy Noble] Nottingham Contemporary (2013); *To Arrive Where We Started*, [ed] Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow (2012); 'Danai Anesiadou: Can-can', in *Ritual without Myth*, Royal College of Art, London (2012); and *The Tino Sehgal Archive*, [ed] Transmission Gallery, Glasgow (2011).

Rachel Smith is undertaking an AHRC-funded collaborative doctorate with Tate Britain and the University of York. The title of her thesis is *Connecting St Ives c. 1948–60: Common Ground and International Exchange*. She was co-curator of *International Exchanges: Modern Art and St Ives 1915–1965* at Tate St Ives in 2014 and is co-convenor of the seminar *Material Histories: Networks of Women and Art in Cornwall*.

Lucy Stein. Born in Oxford, UK. Taurus, Scorpio rising. Synesthete. Painter. Performs in the band Death Shanties. Hosts the radio show Squirring The Worm for NTS, London. Her practice engages painting through a historical perspective and works with conceptual frameworks combining ideas of genius loci and feminist critique. Stein uses or derails images and techniques from British post-war modernist painting in works grappling with figuration and abstraction, surface texture and psychological narrative, academic and improvisational composition.

Amy Tobin is a PhD researcher in the history of art department at the University of York. Her research has been funded by the AHRC and the Terra Foundation for American Art and publications include a chapter on the British photographer Jo Spence, as well as papers in *Feminist Review*, *British Art Studies* (forthcoming) and *Moving Image Art Research Journal* (forthcoming).

In 2014 she was a fellow at the John W. Kluge Center, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Sarah Victoria Turner is Assistant Director for Research at the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. Previously, she was a lecturer in the History of Art Department at the University of York. She has a wide range of interests revolving around art in Britain from 1800 to 1950, specialising in cultural relationships between Britain and India and the display and reception of Indian art in Britain, the focus of a forthcoming book, provisionally entitled *Indian Impressions: Encounters with South Asia in British Art, c. 1900–1940*. She is co-principal investigator on the AHRC-funded network *Internationalism and Cultural Exchange c. 1880–1920*, along with several other networks.

Poster contributions

Simon Bayliss (artist)

Jonathan Law (filmmaker and researcher)

Clare Nadal (Courtauld Institute of Art)

Rachel Smith (Tate / University of York)

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