

PEER SESSIONS / / TRIALOGUES

www.peersessions.com

Peer Sessions presents TRIALOGUES; 3 short residencies each with 3 artists collaborating to create new work, resulting in 3 exhibitions.

▽ RESIDENCY 01

Kate Pickering / / Emily Rosamond / / Steve Levon Ounanian

Private view Fri 4th Apr; Open 5th – 11th Apr

▽ RESIDENCY 02

Tina Hage / / Claudia Djabbari / / Charlotte Warne Thomas

Private view Fri 25th Apr; Open 26th Apr – 2nd May

▽ RESIDENCY 03

Vera Kox / / Lisa Selby / / Megan Broadmeadow

Private view Fri 16th May; Open 17th – 23rd May

Open Mon – Sat 1:30pm-5pm

Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

A free educational workshop will accompany each exhibition, aimed at those unfamiliar with the world of contemporary art. The workshops will be led by the project organisers, who will discuss each exhibition, inviting viewers' participation and response.

WORKSHOP 01 / / 2pm-3.30pm Fri 11th Apr

WORKSHOP 02 / / 3pm-4.30pm Sat 26th Apr

WORKSHOP 03 / / 11am-12.30pm Mon 19th May

PEER SESSIONS / /

Peer Sessions (PS) is a non-profit crit group, which was founded in 2009 by artists Kate Pickering and Charlotte Warne Thomas as an educational support network for practicing arts professionals.

PS holds monthly meetings, where two artists present their recent work to gain useful feedback from peers. Sessions are moderated by Pickering and Warne Thomas, and provide a forum for reflection and dialogue, which is focused on viewers' response to the artworks. The resulting discussions are lively, thought-provoking and beneficial to both artists and participants. PS is always free for artists and participants to attend.

Over five years, PS has grown to become a valued regular space for post-grad level art education, peer mentoring and practice based research. PS has gradually expanded its remit to include residencies, exhibitions and educational workshops, bringing its unique approach of feedback-led discussion to a wider audience.



TRIALOGUES / /

TRIALOGUES is the second Peer Sessions residency series, in which artists who have regularly participated are invited to collaborate and produce new work. TRIALOGUES consists of 3 short residencies, resulting in 3 exhibitions. For each 3-week residency, 3 artists will occupy the gallery as a working studio for two weeks. During the final week the gallery will open to the public for an exhibition to showcase the outcome of each residency.

By challenging the artists to collaborate and work outside their usual parameters, TRIALOGUES aims to foster exciting cross-fertilisations of concepts and practices, supporting the development of innovative and inspiring new ideas and artworks.

TRIALOGUES builds on the success of PS's first residency project at Enclave in 2013, in which nine artists participated in four week-long residencies, resulting in the production of four ambitious exhibitions.

Collaboration between Rowena Harris & Joey Holder for Peer Residencies 2013



**THE NON-LOCAL ACADEMY: ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
UNIVERSAL EDUCATION / / Tom Trevatt**

The ultimate aim of all visual arts is the complete building! To embellish buildings was once the noblest function of the fine arts; they were the indispensable components of great architecture. Today the arts exist in isolation, from which they can be rescued only through the conscious, cooperative effort of all craftsmen. Architects, painters, and sculptors must recognize anew and learn to grasp the composite character of a building both as an entity and in its separate parts. Only then will their work be imbued with the architectonic spirit which it has lost as "salon art". (Walter Gropius, Bauhaus Manifesto)

This well known opening paragraph to the *Bauhaus Manifesto* clearly prescribes art a social role in the formation of the urban environment, and one that, arguably, has been occluded within our current neoliberal condition. Lacking such a social spirit the financialisation of the market has lead to an inexorable rise of the utilisation of art not for the sake of social change, but for the increased exploitation of it for capital accumulation. Or more specifically, art *is* used for social change, but as a means of vertically funnelling public money into private pockets. It is a common story, but one that inflects all our operations. At the local level, the art encounter is private and privatised, we are thrown into an individual relation that structurally limits the potential cooperative formation of knowledge as art axiomatically relies on the audience alone for meaning production. Yet, at the global level, this particular artwork demands an integrated universality as it appeals to its contemporaneous formation of the epistemological limits of art as such. The artwork then, rests on this peculiar paradoxical axis between public and

private, between the local absolution of responsibility and the political formation of response. By necessity, then, art is complicit in this logic of privatisation; when we ask of it to be a local sphere of contemplation, to act as an escape from the logic of the market, it acts to universalise that specific formation of encounter, legislating for a structure of the private as divorced from the public. Determined in this way, we are tempted to ask whether this form of art is at all useful for thinking an act of social change.

For years, pedagogy has been a privileged site for posing these questions of art's radical capacity for change, and while that is still predominantly the case, a significant shift in educational institutions is taking place. As described by David J Blacker in *The Falling Rate of Learning* (2013), neoliberal capital's effects on the academy are pernicious. Not only are we as academics, lecturers and students, prey to the logic of quantitative evaluation – through such measurement devices as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) – but the university is now no longer an autonomous realm – a sanctioned space of critical thought, but is increasingly implicated in the process of accumulation. Universities have been sold off, not in any publicly registered auction, but, according to Blacker – writing predominantly of American universities but serving as a warning to their British counterparts – their “publicness” has been bled out over decades’ (Blacker 84). If the university is a site for profit, economic logic prevails in the selection and management of the staff and students. Learning is thus undertaken for the sake of financial reward, rather than as an end in itself. Under this logic, quantitative measurement is performed ultimately to determine who can generate the most wealth. In a society where individuals are valued only for their economic productivity, whole sections of society get jettisoned in the name of efficiency. The name for the policy implemented to perform this jettisoning? Austerity.

Say hello to uselessness, disposability, precarity and whatever other dismal synonyms might describe the growing – and disproportionately young – ranks of the super-surplus humanity that has been squeezed out of a world that simply doesn't need even their hardest and most degraded labour. It simply wants them gone. (Blacker, 102)

This large-scale human obsolescence, as Blacker names it, denies the presupposed lowest earners the access to the education they need, eliminating them prior even to their entry into the labour market. This elimination relies on the ideology of meritocracy to be implemented at a policy level, a meritocracy that 'endorses', as Jo Littler says, 'a competitive, linear, hierarchical system in which by definition people must be left behind' (Littler, *New Formations* 80/81, 54). A key component of this system is that if the highest earners have relied on their own talent and hard work to rise to the top, it follows that the lowest have neither talent nor a work ethic. Thus, they are solely responsible for their own failure. The failure of this class of society is precisely the structural condition of meritocracy, and one that occludes its own structural oppression. As evidenced by a 2005 report on social mobility written by Jo Blanden, Paul Gregg and Stephen Machin, education is the tool for this oppression, benefiting 'those from richer backgrounds far more than poorer younger people'. (Social Mobility in Britain, <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/CP172.pdf>)

As a means to escape from this logic of elimination and oppression, in recent years numerous "free" schools and universities have been set up by non-affiliated groups and organisations. These schools privilege communication and collaboration over competition, and open access participation over exclusion. Focusing on community development,

engagement and building links to the local public, the free school often defines itself by its ability to offer what larger institutions cannot. Namely, a personal, non-economically defined space outside of the logic of accumulation that can leave room for activities that are not quantitatively definable, or at least not in the sense the REF would require them to be. As a means to offer an alternative to the hegemonic educational institution, this non-fungible transfer of knowledge can give opportunities to sectors of society that previously had none.

Without space here to engage fully with the possible limitations of this model, it would nonetheless be useful to flag a number of important operations that the free school should consider. As Walter Gropius demands in the *Bauhaus Manifesto*, art must be engaged in the process of building, and here I take building to mean not just a building, a dwelling, an architectural structure, but the *act* of building the urban fabric, the social world we inhabit. And for this art must think constructively through an institutional operation, where it can act to form and strengthen connections, composing social relations anew. And do so not only in the local sphere of the community, but as a means to produce a counter hegemonic challenge to power through the formation of universal axioms to disabuse us of the comforting embrace of volunteerism. Education, then, must be used as a process of building; constructing and strengthening the purposive movement of eviscerating the academy to save it from itself.



PARTICIPATING ARTISTS



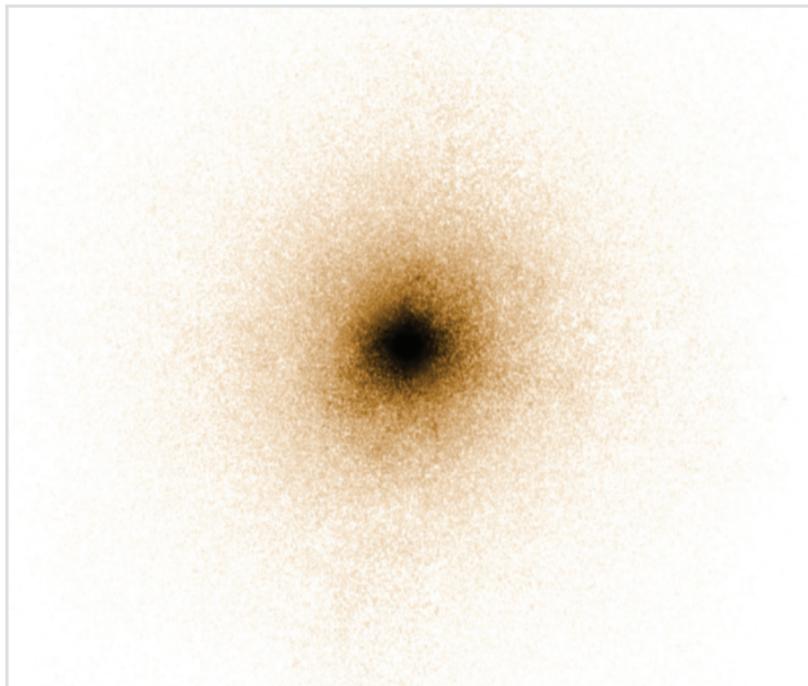


RESIDENCY 01 / / KATE PICKERING

www.kate-pickering.com

BA Sheffield Hallam University, UK, 2005; **MFA** Goldsmiths College, UK, 2009

RECENT *Opening Connections*, Stroud Visual Arts, Stroud UK, 2013 / /
Motorcade/FlashParade National Open, Motorcade/FlashParade, Bristol UK, 2012
/ / *EVA Retrospective Video Art*, National Art Gallery, Bangkok TH, 2012 / /
Waiting For Suicidal Hares Video Art Festival, Moon Event Space, Chongqing CN,
2011 / / *Sentences*, Bury Text Festival, Bury Art Gallery & Museum, UK, 2011 / /
FACT: Darren Harvey Regan & Kate Pickering, R O O M artspace, London UK, 2011



The Believers (detail) 2013, digital print, dimensions variable



RESIDENCY 01 / / EMILY ROSAMOND

www.erosamon.com

BA York University, CA, 2002; **MFA** Simon Fraser University, CA, 2007

RECENT *Cross Sections*, Modern Literature and Culture Research Centre, Ryerson University, Toronto CA, 2014 / / *QGJCPLB*, X Marks the Bökship, London UK, 2013 / / *La Grande Ourse*, Espaces R2D2, Brussels BE, 2012 / / *Consumed*, Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, Brandon CA, 2011 / / *International Camp for Improbable Thinking*, Wysing Arts Centre, Bourn UK, 2010 / / *Night Shift*, AceArt, Inc., Winnipeg CA, 2010



Model for a Screen, 2012, notebooks, tar, aquarium pebbles, glue, 20.3 x 28 x 2.5 cm



RESIDENCY 01 / / Steve Levon Ounanian

www.stevenlevon.com

BA University of California LA, US, 2006; **MFA** Royal College of Art, UK, 2008

RECENT *Marseille Capital of Culture*, CGP, London UK, 2014 / / *Curious*, West Norwood Cemetery, London UK, 2013 / / *Do Androids Dream of Electric Beatles?* Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo BR, 2013 / / *Peak Anxiety Satellite*, ICA, London UK, Riga LV, Newcastle UK, Los Angeles US, Vancouver CA, 2012 / / *Now I Gotta Reason*, Jerwood Visual Arts, London UK, 2012 / / *Louder than Bombs* Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston UK, 2010



Peak Anxiety Satellite, 2012, performance broadcast from LA to Newcastle UK

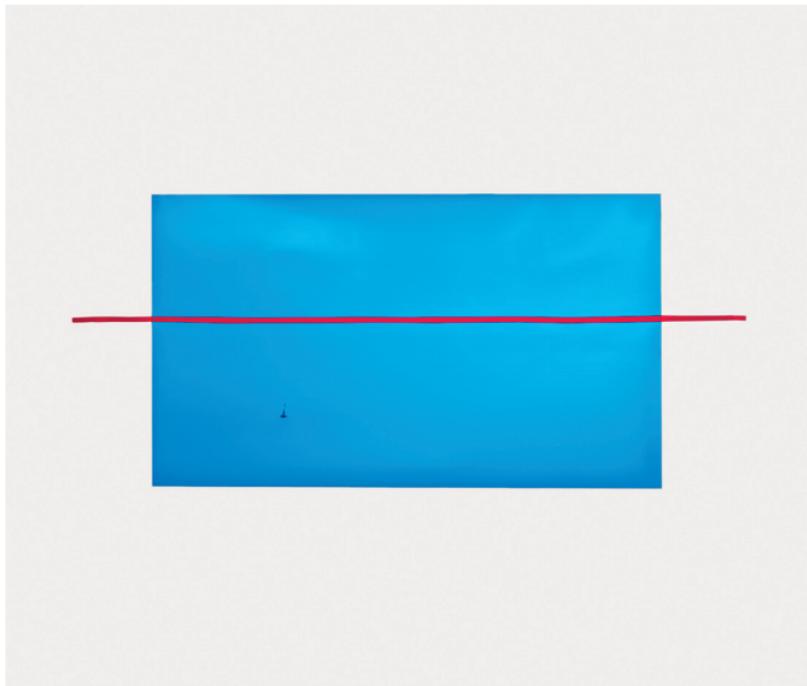


RESIDENCY 02 / / TINA HAGE

www.tinahage.com

BA Academy of Media Arts Cologne, DE, 2004; **MFA** Goldsmiths College, UK, 2009

RECENT *Residency at Largo das Artes*, Rio de Janeiro BR, 2014 / / *New Positions*, ArtCologne, Thomas Rehbein Gallery, Cologne DE, 2013 / / *Presence*, Ku Gallery, Taipei TW, 2013 / / *What is an Art Book? Vol.3*, The Modern Language Experiment at Garis & Hahn Gallery, NYC US, 2013 / / *There will be others*, The Modern Language Experiment at Angus-Hughes Gallery, London UK, 2012 / / *Renewal Award*, Deptford X, London UK, 2011



Horizon, 2014, photographic print, red electric tape, 180 x 105 cm



RESIDENCY 02 / / CLAUDIA DJABBARI

www.claudiadjabbari.com

BA Academy of Fine Arts Munich, DE, 2006; **MFA** Goldsmiths College, UK, 2009

RECENT *Acting in the City*, Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Norrköping SE 2013
/ / *From Outside or Otherwise* Mottahedan Projects, Dubai AE, 2013 / /
Winter Pavillion, Waterside Contemporary, London UK, 2012 / / *Unconscious
Architecture*, Visual Artists Association, Nikosia CY, 2012 / / *In Storage / No
Neutral Ground*, German Ambassador's Residence, London UK , 2011 / /
Outside In, Aichi Triennale, Nagoya JP, 2010



In Storage, 2011, mixed media installation, dimensions variable



RESIDENCY 02 / / CHARLOTTE WARNE THOMAS

www.charlottewarnethomas.com

BA University of Leeds, UK, 2002; **MFA** Goldsmiths Collage, UK, 2009

RECENT *Paradise Lodge Redidency*, Lonavala & Studio X, Mumbai IN, 2013

/ / *Willpower*, ASC Windowspace Gallery, London UK, 2013 / / *Art Moments*

Festival, Artplay, Moscow RU, 2013 / / *Overview*, Frans Masareel Centrum,

Kasterlee BE, 2012 / / *Translate/Transcribe*, Art Moscow, Moscow RU, 2011

/ / *Renewal Award*, Deptford X, London UK, 2011 / / *Creekside Open selected*
by Dexter Dalwood, ATP Gallery, London UK, 2011



Looking back, 2013, photographic installation, dimensions variable



RESIDENCY 03 / / VERA KOX

www.verakox.com

BA University for the Creative Arts, UK, 2006; **MFA** Goldsmiths College, UK, 2010

RECENT *Residency*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin DE, 2014 / / *Objectness: Outpost Members' show*, Norwich UK, 2013 / / *The marks you make, when you try to make a pen work again*, Minibar, Stockholm SE, 2013 / / *Alt.Macht.Neu*, Villa Vauban, Museum of Art, City of Luxembourg LU, 2013 / / *Temporary forms and permanent doubts*, Dag Erik Elgin & Vera Kox, Galleri Opdahl, Stavanger, NO, 2013 / / *Residency*, Casino Forum d'Art Contemporain, Luxembourg LU, 2012



The marks you make, when you try to make a pen work again, 2013, plaster, anodised aluminum, wax, dimensions variable



RESIDENCY 03 / / LISA SELBY

www.lisaselby.com

BA Nottingham Trent University, UK, 1999; **MFA** Goldsmiths College, UK, 2011

RECENT *Must come down*, Inova, Institute of Visual Arts, Wisconsin US, 2014 / / *Honorary Fellow & Visiting Artist*, University of Wisconsin US, 2014 / / *Ceramic Artist in Residence*, Künstlerhaus Stadttöpferei, Neumünster DE, 2014 / / *Uphold Withhold (performance)*, Royal British Society of Sculptors, London UK, 2014 / / *Royal British Society of Sculptors Bursary Award group exhibition*, London UK, 2013 / / *Creekside Open selected by Ceri Hand*, APT Gallery, London UK, 2013



Uphold Withhold, 2014, performance, 27:00 minutes



RESIDENCY 03 / / MEGAN BROADMEADOW

www.megartmix.co.uk

BA Slade School of Art, UK, 2002; **MFA** Goldsmiths College, UK, 2014

RECENT *Under The Influence*, g39 Gallery, Cardiff UK, 2014 / / *To Begin at The Beginning*, NURTUREart, Brooklyn US, 2014 / / *Plants Vs Zombies*, Boetzelaer|Nispen, De Clercqstraat 64, Amsterdam NL, 2013 / / *Film 4*, Glyn Vivian Gallery, Swansea UK, 2013 / / *This is The End (Part 2)*, 319 Melrose, New York US, 2012 / / *The Man Don't Give A Fuck*, Motorcade/FlashParade, Bristol UK, 2012 / / 11433.83 / *Two Sides Of The Same Coin*, g39 Gallery, Wellington NZ, 2012



Mastaba, 2013, video still of performance on Mastaba sculpture

FEEDBACK / / Charlotte Warne Thomas

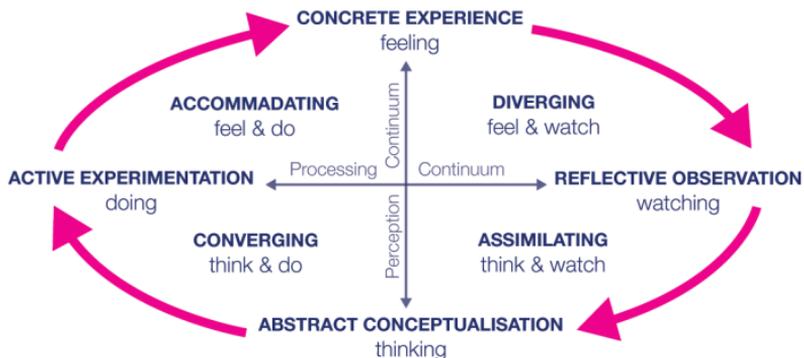
The term feedback indicates a chain of sequentially linked events; the gap between intention and action – a system, circuit, loop or mechanism. In the natural world, balance is maintained by multiple interrelated feedback systems, such as the self-regulating cycle of predator to prey ratios which limit the populations of earth's organisms. Break the circuit and a new cycle with divergent outcomes is liable to take its place. For example, global warming is cited as both cause and effect of *ice-albedo feedback*; melting ice exposes dark ground, which in turn absorbs more heat and causing temperatures to rise and more ice to melt.

Be it the howl of a microphone picking up its own amplified sound, the float-valve which cuts off water supply as the toilet cistern fills, the release valve inside the steam engines which powered the industrial revolution or the current housing price bubble, our daily lives – politically, socially, biologically and physically – are governed and controlled by feedback systems, visible and invisible. Feedback then, informs the structure supporting the innocuous backdrop to our functioning model of reality. Thus focussing on feedback and unpicking its various cycles and mechanisms allows us to glimpse the tip of the iceberg of ideology.

Human psychology too is full of feedback loops, which see us consciously and subconsciously regulating and adjusting our behaviour, in order to navigate the world and maximise positive outcomes. Learning, clearly, relies on systems for testing out actions and adjusting accordingly, enabling students to adapt and modify their future behaviour in light of knowledge gained. In education – both within and beyond formal institutions – the concept of feedback is recognised as central

to reflective practice and iterative experience. Specifically, through Kolb's *Learning Cycle* (1982; below), a repetitive sequence of practice-observation-reflection-experimentation-analysis-change-reflection and so on, learners explore the challenges they encounter, leading to the development of knowledge through reflection. Thus feedback and reflection form the backbone of practice-based activities, including contemporary art practice. At Peer Sessions, the conversations and discussions which take place in the meetings and residencies facilitate practitioners in their own productive version of Kolb's cycle.

In his essay, Trevatt draws our attention to the capacity of the burgeoning free schools movement to reinvigorate the emancipatory aspect of education. As such, Peer Sessions provides an independent space for feedback, development and collaboration, insulated from the pressures of the market-driven art world, as it creeps inevitably into the value system prescribed by the university institution. Just as people-powered initiatives like free universities and peer support networks rely on their members to contribute to the production of knowledge, so PS and its expanding list of participants attempt to use feedback to offer an alternative educational framework for practice-based research.



PEER SESSIONS WOULD LIKE TO THANK / /

Artists Studio Company

Rowena Harris

Tom Trevatt

Darren O'Brien

Julia Rees

Emily Rosamond

Steve Levon Ounanian

Tina Hage

Claudia Djabbari

Vera Kox

Lisa Selby

Megan Broadmeadow

All the artists and participants who have taken part
in Peer Sessions since 2009

WWW.PEERSESSIONS.COM