



DISRUPTED

Curated by Noëmi Lakmaier

ANNA BERNDTSON

Self Stress Relief

Site-specific installation with bubble wrap (2015)

Performance: 12-13 March, 9am – 10pm – Terrace

The foundation of **Anna Berndtson's** practice is durational live performance. Her body is placed in the centre of the work and she often – although not exclusively – references blindness and visual impairment.

Self Stress Relief is a site-specific installation consisting of bubble wrap adhered to the ground floor windows of the arts centre. During a two day performance, a tall blond woman (Berndtson), dressed in a business suit and heels, moved slowly and meticulously along the covered glazing and popped each and every bubble.

On first inspection *Self Stress Relief* seems light hearted, with the simple act of popping bubbles universal in its irresistible appeal. Yet the installation has an all-enveloping impact on the space and its users. It denies a clear view and changes the quality of the light, subtly disrupting the natural environment.

Self Stress Relief has been specially commissioned by curator Noëmi Lakmaier for the DISRUPTED exhibition at **mac birmingham**.

ANNA SMITH

Swing

Chrome-plated swing, chain and bath seat (2014)

Anna Smith's practice is underpinned by her interests in sociology, disability studies and experimenting with different materials and processes in the studio. Much of Smith's work is concerned with the body and accessibility, and seeks to convey an understanding of disability as a social construct rather than an objective diagnosis on a physical or mental condition.

Made during Smith's residency at **mac birmingham** in 2014, *Swing* takes the familiar form of the popular playground apparatus, modifies it, and renders it frozen in a permanent state of flux. Fixed, incapacitated and isolated behind a chain-link fence, the sculpture invites an awkward pause and a curiosity around its purpose.

Swing was made with the kind support of William Hackett Chains Ltd in Halesowen and Turning Point West Midlands.

NOËMI LAKMAIER

In Progress

Video installation (2010)

Noëmi Lakmaier's work explores notions of the 'Other', ranging from the physical to the philosophical, and the personal to the political.

Her work aims to emphasise and exaggerate the relationship between object, individual and space.

In Progress explores stereotypical notions of things a disabled woman 'cannot do'. Each side of this silent two-screen video installation shows a close-up of the artist's face. Her expressions are both highly animated and emotional, but do not reveal the activity in which she is engaged.

Installed in the very public space of the Terrace Gallery, *In Progress* sits awkwardly alongside the everyday activities taking place here. The viewer is implicated, turned into an inadvertent voyeur, unsure as to what they are bearing witness to.

MARTIN O'BRIEN

Anatomy of a Bite

Metal gurney, objects and photographs (2015)

Performances: 12 March, from 1.00pm

Martin O'Brien addresses what it means to be born with a life threatening disease. He suffers from cystic fibrosis. His work is an act of resistance to illness, an attempt at claiming agency and a celebration of his body.

Anatomy of a Bite began with the image of the corpse in the anatomy theatre. During a succession of one-to-one performances exploring the human orifice of the mouth, O'Brien invited visitors to explore his sick, coughing mouth and the possibilities of their own.

The residue of these performances, jars filled with the artist's bodily fluids, and photographs of bites on his body, is exhibited here. O'Brien's work evokes curiosity, affection and disgust, leaving viewers suspended between wanting to engage and avoid.

Anatomy of a Bite has been specially commissioned by curator Noëmi Lakmaier for the DISRUPTED exhibition at **mac birmingham**

ZÖE PARTINGTON-SOLLINGER & ANDREJ BAKO

Sound Canvas

Audio-visual installation (2013)

Zoe Partington-Sollinger is interested in how we view the world around us. She asks the questions 'What is a canvas?' and 'Who decides it has to be visual?' Developed in collaboration with fellow artist **Andrej Bako**, *Sound Canvas* was conceived to engage audiences in a fun and imaginative way. It was originally commissioned for The Public arts centre in West Bromwich in 2013.

Triggered by passers-by in the busy arts centre, *Sound Canvas* enables audiences to interact through sensors which activate light and sound. Laughter echoes and spills into the space, to either amuse or unsettle the viewer, depending on their disposition.

THE VACUUM CLEANER

The City and Hackney Centre for Mental Health

Altered Hackney Council bin and photographic print (2014)

the vacuum cleaner is an art and activism collective of one. His approach is both subtle and extreme, but always candid, provocative and playful.

This work takes its name from the artist's local mental health hospital. It serves two boroughs at opposite ends of the socio-economic spectrum, and has a reputation for being one of the worst hospitals in London.

Having 'borrowed' one of Hackney Council's bins before altering the lettering, the artist employs a simple pun to address concerns about the state of mental health care provision in his local community. Since it was made in 2014, the 'loony bin' has been popping up in a variety of venues and public space, and raising awareness around local authorities' responsibility in the realm of mental health.

This Civilisation

Video installation and performance documentation (2010)

the vacuum cleaner is an art and activism collective of one. His approach is both subtle and extreme, but always candid, provocative and playful.

This Civilisation poses difficult questions, both on a global and on a personal level. The artist asks: 'Where is our civilisation heading? How can a society focused primarily on wealth accumulation for the few, value and nurture each and every human life?'

Made at the Stanley Picker Gallery in 2010 with fellow artist Franko B, the vacuum cleaner compels us to look at what we would rather not see. His body is already covered in over 100 scars – permanent self-made reminders of private acts of self-harm. As indelible, bloody words are carved into his back, a pointed statement emerges from the open wounds and this personal ritual of cutting into the flesh is made public.

This Civilisation was made with the kind support of The Live Art Development Agency and Artsadmin.

Please be aware, the artwork in this room features graphic images of an adult nature depicting incisions into the skin of the artist. This artwork is not recommended for viewers under 18 years of age.

Disrupted is co-commissioned by mac and DASH as part of the IN project.

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