

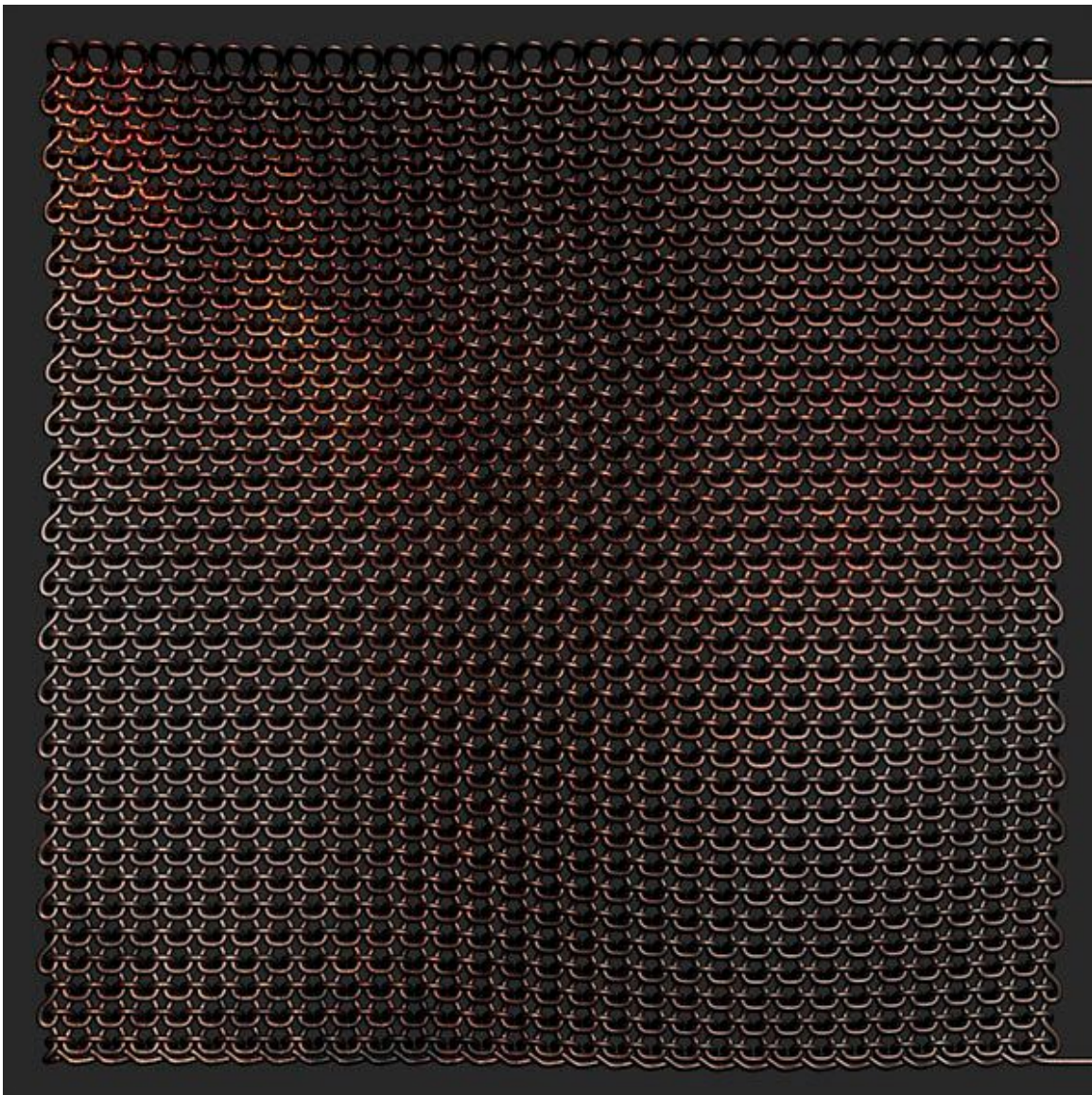


## The Mesh: an exhibition by The London Group

17 March - 21 May 2017, Daily 10am - 9pm, FREE

Private View : Friday 17th March 6 - 9pm

Watermans Art Centre, 40 High St, Brentford, TW8 0DS



## **Introduction :**

In 1913 a group of young artists with radical new ideas were being rejected by the Royal Academy and the prevailing art establishment, so they had a meeting and formed their own group. Over 100 years later The London Group has represented artists of all callings, media and technology in its distinguished history, so it is no surprise that several of the members use computers as an important part of their practice.

Although only one of the artists in this show describes themselves as 'digital', all of them mix digital and analogue techniques. At each step of the way from idea to rendered object, the use of digital hardware and software threads its way through the creative process. The final objects may be physical, but their expression is necessarily digital. From the algorithmic chain mail in Angela Eames' work to the physical web shot through with electricity by Cadi Froehlich, the network of 3D polygons used by Bryan Benge and David Theobald, to the drawn matrices of James Faure Walker and Erika Winstone, there are meshes throughout the show.

The full range of digital techniques are on display from copy 'n paste to algorithmic design and mathematical rendering - techniques which weave under and over each other in the exhibition and which reflect upon the multi-layered history of the group. Indeed, The London Group itself, and its century of cooperation among artists, can be seen as a tightly knit group; a polychromatic tapestry of people, styles and technologies - a mesh.

## **Participating artists :**

Bryan Benge, Angela Eames, James Faure Walker, Cadi Froehlich, Eric Fong, Genetic Moo, Judith Jones, Amanda Loomes, Peter Lowe, Ian Parker, Victoria Rance, Paul Tecklenberg, David Theobald, Erika Winstone.

**Curated by Genetic Moo and Irini Papadimitriou / Watermans.**

**Website including artists personal pages :** <http://www.thelondongroup.com>

## **IMAGE CREDITS :**

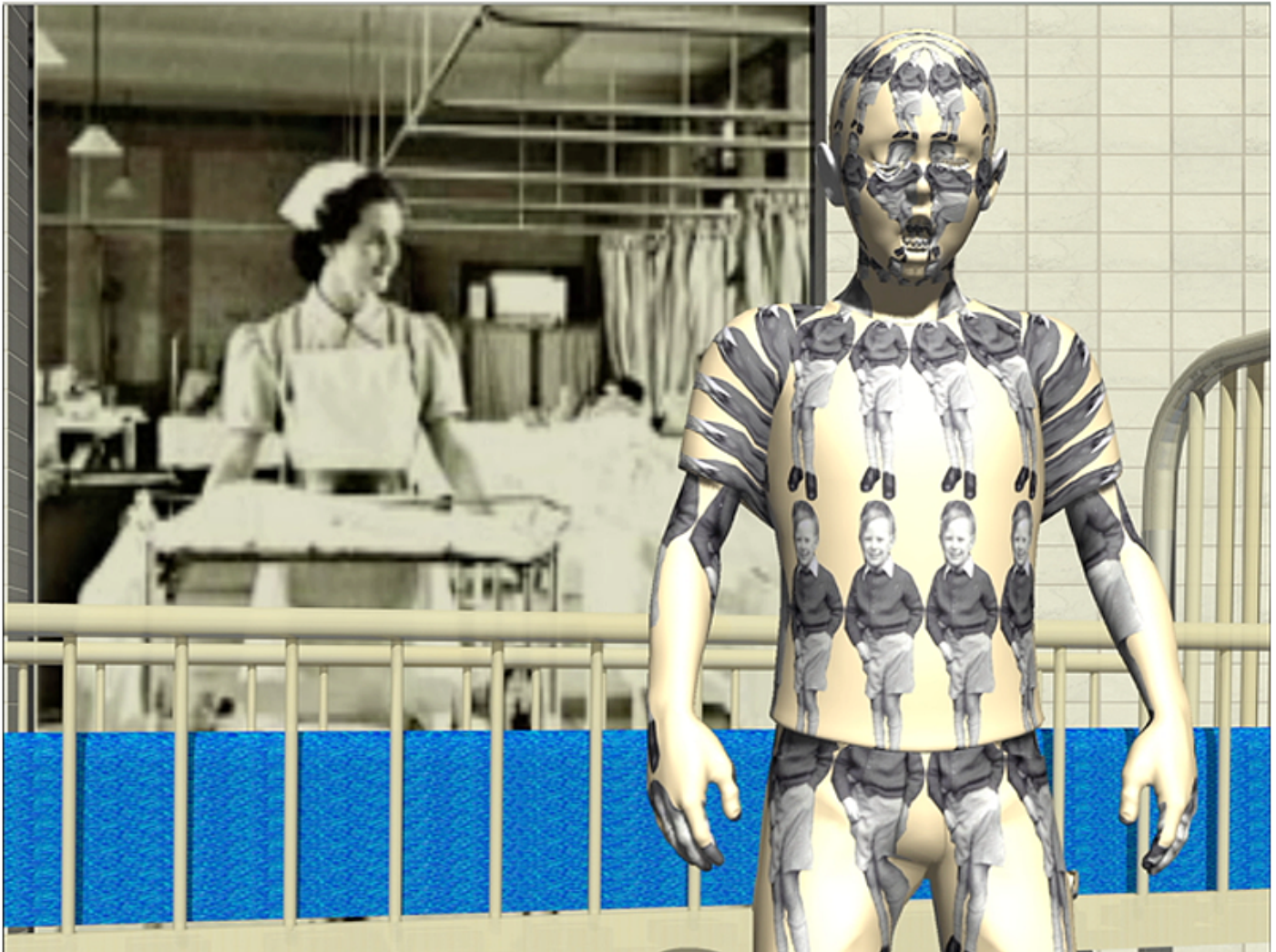
AGINCOURT2, Angela Eames

1958, Bryan Benge

Another dream of summer, James Faure Walker

Lightbulb, Eric Fong





## LIST OF WORKS & ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

### Bryan Benge

#### 1958

My current practice is informed by an investigation into the use of Long Term Memory to refer to specific events in time. I am exploring the concept of Mental Time Travel which deals with perceptual events in the here and now such as sound, smell, vision, taste & touch that can transport us back to an autobiographical experience. The current work 1958, is a memory of a specific event in my past. Within the animation I hope to recover some aspect of emotional memories that may or may not elicit an unconscious psychological / physiological reaction in a shared audience.

I started working with digital media in 1997. The early works were plans or drawings for future projects, never considering the medium as an end in itself to be used in an exhibition. It was not until 2007 ten years later that I made that step exhibiting large scale digital prints. I've recently moved into digital animation. This process is more like playing three-dimensional chess, but in the dark. The levels of thinking are byzantine not always yielding results, other times the light goes on and elements come together in surprising ways!

**Bryan Benge** received his Fine Art degree from Kingston Poly and his MA In Public Art Practice from Kingston University. He became a member of the London Group in 1992, where he served as its Honorary Secretary for five years. He is also a member of Collect Connect (a small group of artists working with community based projects). For 11 years he managed the Foundation and Further Education Courses at

The University Of The Creative Arts Epsom Campus. He retired early from education in 2015. Recent exhibitions include The Rose Theatre Gallery Kingston, St Pancras Hospital Gallery, Kensington and Chelsea College Gallery, Wimbledon Museum and Art Gallery, Fringe Arts Bath, FAB 2014 and The No Format Gallery, London.

## **Angela Eames**

### **knit\_daisies / purl\_daisies and AGINCOURT I / AGINCOURT II**

Light is meaningful only in relation to darkness and truth presupposes error.

It is these mingled opposites which people our life which make it pungent, intoxicating.

We only exist in terms of this conflict in the zone where black and white clash.

(Louis Aragon)

Cast on 30 stitches. 1st row: knit. 2nd row: purl. Continue for 38 rows.

Drawing and manipulating thread by hand and eye in virtual space.

Turning and twisting through space until the final one thousand, one hundred and fortieth stitch.

Knitting grass and daisies and rusting metal wire; undulating colour field, contemporary chain mail.

Illuminated knit, eclipsed purl.

A renderable line assembled in computing space and located so that no part of it makes contact with any other. A modelled object - interlaced line in a series of connected loops - texture-mapped with organic and man-made. A single light source targets the knit-front-face and percolates through to the purl-back-face. A twice-rendered, modulated, essentially planar object, referencing front/back, light/dark, growth/decay. Entropy and/or entropy?

## **BIO**

Drawing is my means of thinking visually. I explore the territory between the real and the virtual, between material and ethereal. I draw within virtual space and I enter a spatial environment parallel to my physical world. My response to objects and space is equivalent but different. Gravity is missing! I can configure objects to collide, connect or co-exist in this space. My familiar, corporeal sensibility can be disrupted and corrupted. I use the computer to do something, which it can do and I cannot, which I can propose and it can provide, which I cannot see until I can.

## **James Faure Walker**

### **Another Dream of Summer (2013)**

The '8' in this picture was cut from a watercolour and taped over a painting in progress. The dots underneath were painted, copied from a digital drawing, and the yellow line was drawn with a customised brush – digital again. It does not matter how a picture starts, as long as it gets to somewhere else. Paint software can liberate the way you make a painting. The constraints of painting – it just stays still – help out too.

### **Lapwings (2015)**

I took a sequence of photos of lapwings at Minsmere, initially for a mural project. I was fascinated by the pattern of their flapping wings. I mixed these in with some digital drawings that were on the go – I 'draw' in

pen, watercolour and paint software. With the help of a few mistakes I got to this. It served as a design for a London Group auction, with 64 numbers printed on the back, so it could be sliced up into tickets.

**James Faure Walker** (born 1948) studied at St Martins (1966-70) and the Royal College of Art (1970-1972). He began using paint software in 1988. He had already exhibited his paintings widely (Hayward Annual 1979, a solo exhibition at Manchester's Whitworth in 1985), and had edited Artscribe magazine from 1976 to 1983. He won the 'Golden Plotter' prize at Computerkunst, Gladbeck, Germany in 1998, showed at the DAM Gallery, Berlin, SIGGRAPH, USA, and featured in 'Digital Pioneers' at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2009. His book, 'Painting the Digital River: How an Artist Learned to Love the Computer', was published by Prentice Hall (USA) in 2006.

## **Cadi Froehlich**

### **Cloud**

This installation connects different types of salvaged cables, including domestic power cables, telephone cables, data cables and appliance power cables. They form one complete circuit which unifies the copper within them. Being suspended above the viewer, they appear graceful, belying the weight of the material. Our current dependence on the 'wireless' network actually relies on an extensive installation of cables within our walls and ceilings, under the seas, and even above us orbiting the earth. Cloud evokes the remote connections which facilitate our imagined connections outside of self.

**Cadi Froehlich** is a British artist whose practice explores the physicality of exchanges between people, objects and material. Using salvaged copper, cables and electrical components, her work investigates the hidden infrastructure of the interaction between these things, often highlighting the dichotomy between the drive to improve connections and the costs of the commodification of resources and self. Froehlich joined the London Group in 2015, is a founder member of 2by3 collective, and was a recipient of the London Group Member's Prize 2016. Previous awards include the Red Mansion Prize 2015, AxisWeb MASTars 2013 and the Jerwood Drawing Prize 2nd 2010.

## **Eric Fong**

### **Heinz 57 Varieties (Ronnie Biggs, Great Train Robbery 1963)**

This work was inspired by the Great Train Robbery of 1963, of which Biggs was one of the gang members. The gang hid in a farm immediately after the robbery and, although they had fled before the police arrived, their fingerprints were found on several items. One of them was a Heinz 57 Varieties ketchup bottle bearing Ronnie Biggs' fingerprints, which was used as evidence during his trial.

### **Lightbulb (George Armstrong, d. 1929)**

This work is inspired by a letter written by the Chief Constable of Manchester to the Commissioner of Scotland Yard in 1929. It related to a murder case (George Armstrong) in which the Manchester police found fingerprints on several artefacts, including a lightbulb, which were sent to Scotland Yard for analysis.

For both works, I found the subjects' fingerprint records in a public archive, photographed them and then transferred the images onto glass by etching. By reproducing and transforming private biometric data that is now available in the public realm, I seek to explore the precarious boundary between public/private, and security/vulnerability issues in fingerprint access control and law enforcement.

**Eric Fong's** practice explores issues relating to the body, identity and difference, often informed by his past experience as a doctor. Fong's work has been exhibited across the UK and internationally, including

Ludwig Museum of Contemporary Art, Budapest; Pratt Manhattan Gallery, New York; Gallery 44 Centre for Contemporary Photography, Toronto; EAST International, Norwich; International 3 Gallery and Chinese Arts Centre, Manchester and Shape Open and Creekside Open, London. Fong's works have received awards at the Shape Open (selected by Yinka Shonibare) and Creekside Open (selected by Victoria Miro), London. One of his works is in the Arts Council England Collection.

## **Judith Jones**

### **Brutalism goes Pop Art**

This Triptych is hand drawn on an iPad using the 53 drawing app. Bright colourful naïve images of brutalist tower blocks and a church in a 'Pop Art' style references the consumerist society that developed along with these brutalist concrete structures. Brutalism promised modern homes and bright new futures. The church and triptych symbolises mid-20th century adoration and idolatry of materialism and consumerism. The brutalist tower blocks promised a better life for those previously in the London slums but in many respects they failed. The yellow lines on the road symbolise the concept that we can never gain satisfaction or contentment in such a materialistic society; perfection and happiness always seems just out of reach and unobtainable - A concept pop art explored in the mid-20th century.

### **After Horst, Patterns in Brutalism 1**

Using my photographs of brutalist architecture I created small digital sections via computer editing software which were then pieced together to form repeating patterns. The resulting abstract images resemble Horst's 1940's kaleidoscopic patterns of nature. My resulting images allow us to view the brutalist concrete jungles with a new vision. The work questions the aesthetic judgments of beauty and ugliness.

**Judith Jones'** work is focused mainly in the photographic genre. Awarded an MA (distinction) in Photography in 2009 her main interests include social and philosophical studies of urban life expressed within my street, urban and twilight photography. Her work has started to move towards a more concerted use of digital software and editing programmes often in combination with her photography. This allows her to produce work that is increasingly diverse and allows her to be more experimental in her exploration of our interaction and interpretation of urban spaces. She has shown work all over the UK and abroad including The Royal Academy Summer Show, The Royal West of England Academy, Bristol, Mall Galleries, GX Gallery and Somerset House, London,

## **Amanda Loomes**

In **Studies for Post Production** four experimental digital documentary films are shown on monitors supported on pallets. The films, whilst rooted in the physical world of timber production, make apparent their digital post-production techniques. The films use the ability of digital video, through the use of non-linear video editing, to bring together distant conversations, crop, cut, speed up production and reverse mistakes. This manipulation of material is mirrored in the work of the foresters along with an acknowledgment of the time-based nature of both forestry and filmmaking. The films provide a record of the labour that haunts the pallets, which in turn act as a prop to support the work. The work was made for the inaugural Jerwood Open Forest and shown at Jerwood Space in 2014.

**Amanda Loomes** works with the digital experimental documentary form, imbuing materials and places with the abstracted stories and personalities of the people they were made by, whilst reflexively drawing attention to the works digital construction. She graduated from the RCA in 2006 and was shortlisted for

Jerwood Open Forest in 2013 and co-commissioned by HOUSE and photoworks as part of Brighton Festival in 2015. In 2016 she was invited to work with the National Trust, producing *Keepers*, a multi layered digital documentary of the past and present estate workers at Lyme. She was elected to The London Group in 2008.

## **Peter Lowe**

### **Like to Like (2014) and Unlike to Unlike (2014)**

It is a mathematical fact that there are 18 different ways that two colours can be arranged around a seven-sided figure to form 18 distinct groups.

In both works, each compound group is joined to another according to a predetermined rule. In one work it requires the join to be made between colours which are the same. In the other, the join is made between colours which are not the same. All 18 groups are used. As in a game of dominoes, there are many ways that the groups can end up. A degree of choice is permitted in the placing of each group of seven but the connective rules are strictly applied. The sequence of laying down each group influences the possible outcome. Aesthetic choices are minimal. A computer was used to draw and print the results.

**Peter Lowe** was born in Hackney, East London in 1938. His very early work was in a realist manner, but his experiences of studying under Kenneth and Mary Martin at Goldsmith's College in London had a powerful effect on his development and work. From the early 1960s Lowe rejected figurative art, instead producing geometric abstracts in a variety of different media. His compositions were always derived from rational mathematical systems, invariably very simple yet extremely elegant. Lowe made use of modern materials such as Perspex and well as more traditional media. He has produced many wall based reliefs – the style for which he is perhaps best known - but he has also produced free standing sculpture, paintings, drawings and prints. As Alistair Grieve has noted; "Scale is important. Though Lowe has made large, ground based works, most of his reliefs are of a modest, domestic scale. They are reassuring objects to live with, beautifully made, precisely ordered, accessible and constantly intriguing." copyright 2015 courtesy Waterhouse and Dodd.

## **Genetic Moo**

**It's Alive!** sees two populations of parasites in an endless battle of destruction and creation. The image is a live feed of the river outside the Watermans Gallery. The maggots feed on the RGB pixels, eating through the image. The ants continuously wander across the surface of the image looking to repair damage caused by the maggots, filling in holes with fine trails, their programmed desire is to restore order. The three intertwined activities of the webcam, maggots and ants operate as a living ensemble, to create a continuously reconfigured parasitic interface consuming energy from the river.

**Genetic Moo** have been creating interactive art since 2008 using computer code, graphics, sensors and projection. They fill spaces with digital creatures which respond to the space, the audience and to each other. They try to engage with the audience in as many ways as possible and they often include workshops in the mix - inspiring the next generation of digital artists. Importantly the results of the workshops are then fed into the show, making the participants instant digital artists. Going forward they're excited to explore the game changing potentials of digital art.

## **Ian Parker**

### **Screens**

The content for the projection and paintings exhibited was generated from screen grabs of a succession of moments which occur just before images load when conducting a google search. These 'pre-images' consist of coloured rectangles where the colours appear to be determined by the momentarily unseen images. The google searches conducted were for named 20th century male artists, criminals, comedians, politicians, soldiers and scientists. The overall structure of the film was arrived at using chance elements generated within a digital editing application. Early experimental modernist film, for example *Rhythmus 21*, is referenced. The paintings are derived from individual screen grabs where the images were arrived at through the same search process used for the film. Their format was determined by the area of the image as viewed on an iPad. The text lists a selection of the names searched as they appear on wikipedia.

**Ian Parker** studied at Wimbledon School of Art, Kingston Polytechnic and the RA Schools.

He has been exhibiting since 1977. Venues have included the Hayward Gallery, Fruitmarket Gallery Edinburgh, Camden Arts Centre and Guildhall Art Gallery.

Works are inherently fractured and dispersed in terms of content and process. Outputs take the form of painting, drawing, photographic and film works. The relationship between the haptic space of the studio and the digital space of the screen is central to current practice.

Fellowships and residencies include Cardiff Institute of Higher Education and Newcastle Polytechnic. Ian has held academic posts since 1980. He retired in 2015 as Head of School, School of Fine Art, UCA.

## **Victoria Rance**

### **Fasnacht**

When I made *Fasnacht* in 2013 I was thinking about Jung's definition of the persona (the social self) as a mask, and of *Fasnacht*, an annual festival, when from sunset people wore masks and under cover of darkness could freely vent their repressed feelings and insult their neighbours until sunrise, when the masks came off and civilised behaviour and the public persona resumed. This was a ritual which perhaps helped contain the shadow or dark side of the human psyche. In *Monkey Mask* (2017) I look at the fear of ageing and ambivalent responses to it ranging from horror to tenderness. And also at the denial of our closeness to primates, the animals that we are. Both stop frame animations are produced using digital manipulation of photographs of myself interacting with sculpture/costumes I have made.

**Victoria Rance** studied Fine Art at Newcastle University (BA Hons) and Art and Space at Kingston University (MA). She won the 2003-4 Mark Tanner Sculpture Award and is based at APT Studios in Deptford, London. Solo and two person exhibitions include *I Wish*, Deptford X (2015), *The Sleep of Reason*, BBK Osnabruck Germany (2013), and *Medusa Stories*, Chalabi Gallery, Istanbul (2012). Group shows include *Personal Relations*, Pulchri, The Hague (2017), *Fe216* Morley Gallery London (2016), *One Plus One*, Lubomirov-Angus-Hughes, London (2015) and *Crossing Thresholds*, Gallery Tettix, Thessalonika, Greece (2015). She is a sculptor and digital animation/film-maker concerned with the exploration of social and human behaviour.

## **Paul Tecklenberg**



### **Random Passages (Sound installation)**

In 2009 – 2010, I was the first artist-in-residence at the Swedenborg Society. I collaborated with the membership to make 'Random Passage'. I took Emanuel Swedenborg's book, 'Heaven & Hell' as my starting point. He would reduce his breathing rate down to one or two breaths a minute and in this altered state he would have rich and vivid visions of heaven and hell. I digitally recorded members of the society reading passages at random. The sound installation consists of these readings being played back on 'shuffle' on multiple channels so sometimes it is a lone voice and other times, it can be a cacophony of voices.

**Paul Tecklenberg** is fascinated by science, the subconscious mind and revealing what is often hidden or overlooked. He studied sculpture at Nottingham and then progressed to the Slade where he did an MFA in fine art media. After graduating, he curated 'DIY- 19 variations on the theme of wallpaper' that was critics' choice for 2000 in Time Out, reviewed in the Metro and Italian Vogue. He has shown extensively in the UK and USA. His solo show 'Bodies and Antibodies' was reviewed in The Guardian and made their critics choice. He worked with the Swedenborg Society on a group show and a solo exhibition titled '21 gram's' that explored the notion of what a soul might be. He was elected a member of the London Group in 2008 and is a senior lecturer at UEL.

### **David Theobald**

**The You Way You Tell 'Em** is named after the catch phrase of deceased comedian Frank Carson, famed for his 'one liners'. It features a digital stand up telling jokes in ten different languages with sub titles. Advances in information technology (machine learning, artificial intelligence and big data) mean that more and more of our everyday activity is disintermediated by machines - our behaviour patterns are tracked and jobs are systematically being replaced by robots. However, sometimes it seems that language can resist the very best efforts to translate thoughts through machines and across boundaries - I think it's got something to do with being human.

**David Theobald** is a video artist born in Worthing in 1965. He pursued a career in finance for fifteen years, living both in New York and London. He then decided to change profession and dedicate himself to becoming a full-time artist, attaining an MFA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths in 2008. Most recently, his main works have been digital animations structured from rendered objects, blending these together to create a familiar yet alien environment. These may be structured as conventional films or as continuous loops. Recent exhibitions include Artist Screenings, at the KARST Gallery, Plymouth, the solo show PC World at Motorcade/Flashparade, Bristol, 971 Horses and 4 Zebras with a screening at the Tate Modern, Deepest Sympathy at Ikon, Birmingham and Animate Project's' Digitalis. David's work was included on the recent DVD, New Contemporaries Moving Image 1968 - 2010, and is part of Move it: Parts and Labour a UK touring exhibition of artist animation. David curated the exhibition Modern Times at the Vegas Gallery and was also winner of the 2015 Creekside Open selected by Richard Deacon, and the Open West 2011.

### **Erika Winstone**

#### **Shame with Pride projected (2016)**

I work with gesture; however, in contrast to traditional gestural abstraction, my actions are attempts to transitively capture the communications of others. I use video as a screen to filter how individuals relate from different periods in time, mixing both personal and fictional experience. Afterimages permeate our actions and the relationships we form, including those between who we are, and who we would like to be.

'Shame

with Pride projected' began when I recorded Matthew Warcus's film crew, dismantling the bookshop on the set of his film *Pride* 2014. I returned several times to film the location when it was no longer a set using video to capture everyday events. I draw into paint while repeatedly watching videos on a monitor combining sources and interpretations. My materials include the medieval technique of metal point, painting and digital video, each interlink and inform the resolution of the work. I hope to create a space in which to contemplate a meeting between that which is fluid in motion and that which is formed however transitory. The individual elements of this installation may be reconfigured for different situations to best respond to a particular space.

**Erika Winstone** is best known for her wall installations combining drawn paintings and video. Her materials encompass the medieval practice of metal point and digital video. She creates a space in which to contemplate a meeting between that which is fluid in motion and that which is formed however transitory. A member of The London Group and [NAME]. Also featured in publication *Drawing in Silver & Gold: Leonardo to Jasper Johns*. She was educated at Kingston University, Camberwell and the Slade. She has exhibited widely in the UK and abroad including recently; *Tarnished*, Arthouse1, London (with Susan Schwalb), *Lustrous Lines*, Norfolk Arts Center, Nebraska, *Drawing With Metal*, Patrick Heide Gallery, London, *Talking With Deptford*, DeptfordX Gallery, London, *After Image 2*, Emerson Gallery, Berlin.



