

News release

To be released: Immediately
Date: 9 February 2004

Contemporary Art in Historic Places

Richard Wentworth '14 Rooms Upended' – Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk

9 July – 30 October 2005

Louise K. Wilson 'A Record of Fear' – Orford Ness, Suffolk

27 August – 1 October 2005

Imogen Stidworthy 'Audio Cab' – Dunstable Downs & De Greys Mausoleum, Bedfordshire

4 September – 4 October 2005

Commissioned by Commissions East, English Heritage and the National Trust, Richard Wentworth, Louise K. Wilson and Imogen Stidworthy have created site-specific work for historic locations in the East of England. Working closely with property staff, volunteers, visitors and neighbouring communities, the artists have been inspired by the unique character, culture, heritage and environment of each site.

Concurrent with an exhibition of his work at the Lisson Gallery (8 September – 8 October 2005), Richard Wentworth uses a series of carefully positioned mirrors to reflect and distort the interior of Felbrigg Hall, a fine country house near the North Norfolk coast.

Celebrating the pleasure of looking as well as the natural light and skies for which the area is renowned, Wentworth's installation creates a series of tableaux that ask the viewer to look at the formal and utilitarian spaces of the house from a new perspective. Speaking about '14 Rooms Upended', Wentworth says "The duplicitous optics of reflective surfaces remind us not only of the tricks which light plays, but also how capricious we are. We mature, we change our minds, we encounter different points of view. We discover that our own modernity also becomes history."

Commissions East

St Giles Hall, Pound Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AE

T 01223 356882 F 01223 356883 E info@commissionseast.org.uk W www.commissionseast.org.uk

Registered charity number 1045657. Company registration number 2802661. VAT registration number 636778589.



Photographer: Richard Davies

With unique access to one of the most remote and secret places in Britain, Louise K. Wilson has created sound and video works for Orford Ness - the largest vegetated shingle spit in Europe and once a top secret military testing site. As the scene of the invention of radar, atomic bomb tests and Cold War surveillance, Wilson's project, 'A Record of Fear', compounds the mystery and intrigue which characterises the Ness. For her video piece, Wilson invited the London-based Exmoor Choir to perform madrigals in the remaining military buildings - songs of love and longing providing a poignant counterpoint to the stark and disturbing interiors. The viewing gallery of the Black Beacon Receiver is the location of Wilson's audio work, which contains manipulated sounds recorded on site as well as some that are usually inaudible to the human ear. A publication exploring the research undertaken by Wilson during the project together with a CD will be available in November.



Photographer: Louise K. Wilson

Responding to two different sites in Bedfordshire, Imogen Stidworthy has developed a CD work installed in local taxis in Luton, hosted by their drivers. 'Audio Cab' may be ordered or stumbled upon by chance. During a series of taxi journeys to Dunstable Downs and De Grey Mausoleum, the sites became locations in which to record conversations between the drivers and the artist. Outside the cab and the driver-customer contract, these rich contexts provoked strong associations and memories. Drawing on her recordings, 'Audio Cab' brings together speech, languages, music, taxi radio and ambient sound to invoke a space between real and absent places. "Memories of Pakistan, India and most often Kashmir colour the vision of the Mausoleum and the seemingly endless view from the Downs", says Stidworthy, "Where I see a pastoral idyll of peculiar Englishness, Kashmiri taxi drivers insist that the landscape is a hundred percent like home." For Stidworthy, the image of the driver in the rear-view mirror reflects something of the situations of driver and passenger, between different and sometimes conflicting cultural, geographical and emotional spaces.



Photographer: Imogen Stidworthy

Contemporary Art in Historic Places is a unique collaboration between the National Trust, English Heritage and Commissions East, developed to enable visitors to experience sites in new ways by offering reinterpretation, contemplation and an element of surprise.

Contemporary Art in Historic Places is funded by Arts Council England, East.

- Ends -

To arrange interviews, filming or photography contact:

Charity Green Director of Development
01223 356882 charity@commissionseast.org.uk

Editors notes:

1. Access and events

Richard Wentworth '14 Rooms Upended' **Felbrigg Hall, Felbrigg, Norwich, Norfolk**

9 July – 30 October 2005

Opening times: Saturday - Wednesday, 1pm - 5pm

Entry: Adults £6.60 Children £3.10

Artist tour and talk: 10.30 – 4.30pm on Thursday, 22 September. Book by contacting Commissions East on 01223 356882.

Louise K. Wilson 'A Record of Fear'

Orford Ness, Orford, Suffolk

27 August – 1 October 2005

Open Tuesday to Saturday

Entry: Adults £5.90 Children £2.95 (NT Members £3.90; Children £1.95)

Access to Orford Ness is from Orford Quay by ferry only.

Outgoing ferry crossings between 10am – 2pm. Last return ferry 5pm.

An off-site element to the project can be viewed at Wolsey Art Gallery at St Mary-at-the-Quay in Ipswich until 17 September

(www.wolseyartgallery.org.uk).

On 25 September, visitors to Orford Ness can experience a specially commissioned audio work which will be installed in some of the test laboratories, which are not normally accessible to the public – to book tickets for this free event contact the National Trust's East of England Regional Office on 01284 747500.

Artist tour and talk: 1.00 – 4.30pm (TBC) on Tuesday, 27 September. Book by contacting Commissions East on 01223 356882.

Imogen Stidworthy 'Audio Cab'

Dunstable Downs, Dunstable & De Grey Mausoleum, Flitton, Bedfordshire

4 September – 30 October 2005

To book an Audio Cab contact:

Spearhead (01582) 50 50 50 (private hire)

Elite Cars (01582) 70 70 70

Alpha Taxis (01582) 599 499

Luton Taxis (01582) 73 55 55 (black cabs)

Artist tour and talk: 1.30 – 4.30pm on Tuesday, 18 October. Book by contacting Commissions East on 01223 356882.

2. The artists

Richard Wentworth has played a leading role in New British Sculpture since the end of the 70s. His work, encircling the notion of objects and their use as part of our day-to-day experiences, has altered the traditional definition of sculpture. By transforming and manipulating industrial and/or found objects into works of art, Wentworth subverts their original function and extends our understanding of them by breaking the conventional system of classification. These sculptural arrangements and assisted ready-mades play with the juxtaposition of objects that have nothing to do together as well as with a range of material whose use does not belong to art.

Born in Samoa, Richard Wentworth worked for Henry Moore, studied at the Royal College of Arts and was awarded the Mark Rothko Memorial (1974) and the Berlin DAAD Fellowship (1993/94). He taught at Goldsmith's College from 1971 to 1987, worked in New York and now lives in London. His works have been shown in various institutions such as the Serpentine Gallery, the Whitechapel Art Gallery, the Hayward Gallery, London; the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; the Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna; the Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris.

Louise K Wilson is a visual artist whose work includes installations, sound pieces and videos. She has undertaken numerous artist residencies and commissions in Europe and North America and produced site-specific work in diverse public sites as well as galleries.

Wilson's work explores perceptual, social and cultural aspects of science and technology. Processes of research are central to this practice and she frequently involves the participation of individuals from industry, museums, medicine and scientific research in the making of work. Previous associations have included the Montreal Neurological Institute, the Science Museum, the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training facility in Moscow, the RSPB and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. Recent video and broadcast audio pieces spring from a curiosity about how the technology of flight affects our physiological states and psychological selves. To this end she has participated in a movement experiment in zero gravity, co-opted a team of air traffic controllers in formation cycling on the runway at Newcastle Airport and been a passenger in an aerobatics plane repeatedly looping the loop in Northumbria airspace. Exhibitions have included Artists Airshow, RAF Farnborough (2004); Arena, Baltic (2003); Blue Streak, Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle (2003) and Runway/ Spadeadam, Gallery TPW, Toronto (2003). Her video Spadeadam is in the Archive at the Imperial War Museum, London.

Imogen Stidworthy is interested in the meanings and processes of communication. Using speech as a sculptural material of sound, body, space and language, she questions the roles and limits of language and asks: how do we translate experience and what are the terms we are using? Language and other social thresholds are spaces to be addressed and opened out through installation, video, film and audio work.

In 1992 Stidworthy moved from the UK to Holland to study at the Jan van Eyck Akademie and continued living and working in Amsterdam and Brussels until 2001, exhibiting internationally and teaching. In 2001 she was awarded a one-year residency at Akademie Schloss Solitude near Stuttgart in Germany. She currently lives in Liverpool. Awards include the Dutch Prix de Rome (1996) and Becks Futures (2004). Recent exhibitions include 'murmur', TENT, Rotterdam (2005); 'How do we Want to be Governed', Art Central, Miami (2005); 'Shrinking Cities', Kunst-Werke, Berlin (2004); 'With Hidden Noise', Henry Moore Institute, Leeds (2004); 'Versions', Kunsthall Bergen, (2004) and 'The Whisper Heard', Matts Gallery, London (2003).

3. The sites

Felbrigg Hall is a National Trust property located near Cromer on the North Norfolk coast. Its architecture reflects not only the successive decorations and additions of its past owners but also the rigors of the Norfolk weather. The interior contains an invaluable record of a past lifestyle perhaps best epitomised in the extensive collection of Grand Tour paintings by artist Giovanni Busiri. In recent years the house has become well known not only for its collections, but also its important historic parklands and gardens which are believed to be designed in part by Humphrey Repton.

Orford Ness is the largest vegetated shingle spit in Europe, 16 kilometres in length, containing a variety of habitats which are home to nationally rare birds, animals and plants. Managed by the National Trust, it is a National Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, not only for its nature conservation, but also for its military history.

Dunstable Downs is the second largest area of chalk grassland in Bedfordshire, where the steep slopes are rich in flora and associated fauna. Its high vantage point offers magnificent views of the surrounding countryside, making it a popular destination for local people. It is owned by the National Trust.

De Grey Mausoleum is one of the most remarkable aristocratic funerary monuments in the country, due to the number and range of memorials it contains. Attached to the Church of St. John the Baptist, it stands in the parish of Flitton, in Bedfordshire and is an English Heritage property. The mausoleum was built by the De Grey family of Wrest Park and dates from the early seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The memorials date from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

4. Project partners

Commissions East is the visual arts development agency for the East of England, providing an advisory and management service for commissioners, a programme of special projects addressing new areas of visual arts practice and a range of services for artists. Press contact: Charity Green on 01223 356882 or charity@commissionseast.org.uk

English Heritage exists to protect and promote England's spectacular historic environment and ensure that its past is researched and understood. Press contact: Karen Dowle on 01223 372791 or karen.dowle@gnn.qsi.gov.uk

The National Trust is a charity with 3.4 million members and 43,000 volunteers that looks after and makes accessible over 300 historic houses and gardens, industrial monuments and mills, forests, beaches, farmland and nature reserves. Press contact: Lynsey Thorpe on 01284 747557 or lynsey.thorpe@nationaltrust.org.uk

5. Funder

Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts. Between 2003-06 it will invest £2bn of public funds in the arts in England, including funding from the National Lottery.