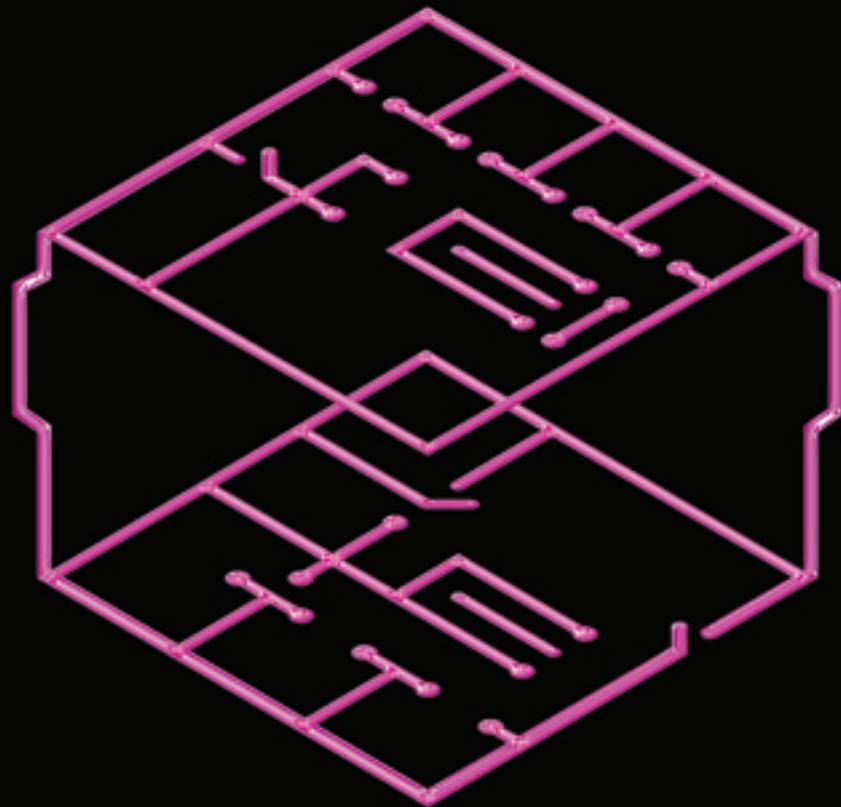


Issue 34
May 2011

BLANKPAGES



S W I T C H C I R C U I T

B L A N K S P A C E M A N C H E S T E R

0 7 | 0 5 | 1 1 6 P M - 0 8 | 0 5 | 1 1 6 A M

blankmediacollective.org/switchcircuit



CONTENTS

GET IN TOUCH	4
WELCOME...	5
COVER ARTIST - KATHRYN STAMPER	6
FICTION - ARDEN REDGRAVE	12
BLANKVERSE - GEOFF HUTH	20
THIS MONTH'S MP3 - YVES	24
BLANKPICKS - HAYLEY FLYNN	32
BLANK MEDIA RECOMMENDS	34
THIS MONTH IN BLANK MEDIA COLLECTIVE	36
SUBMISSION GUIDELINES	38
CREDITS	42

YOU ARE LISTENING TO...

The Scene is Dead by Yves

COVER ART

Window Basket by Kathryn Stamper

Our Websites:

www.blankmediacollective.org
www.myspace.com/blankmediacollective
www.blankspacemcr.org

Submission Guidelines:

www.blankmediacollective.org/blankpages

Email:

editor@blankmediacollective.org

General Enquiries

info@blankmediacollective.org

Development

development@blankmediacollective.org

Communications

communications@blankmediacollective.org

Exhibitions

exhibitions@blankmediacollective.org

BlankMarket

market@blankmediacollective.org

Learning

learning@blankmediacollective.org

Moving Image

movingimage@blankmediacollective.org

BlankSounds

music@blankmediacollective.org

Get Social

You can find us on social networking websites such as; Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Art Review & many more.



Welcome...

The mood in the arts world has been a tentative one recently with the announcement around the Arts Council and HLF funding along with the impending spending cuts under the Tory government, there's been a lot of talk about how things will progress in the arts under these circumstances. How will culture and creative practice continue on the scale it has or improve in the future given these cuts? International artist Anish Kapoor was quoted recently as saying the Tory government are 'rolling us back to the Thatcher years, and that took 15 years for the arts to recover'. This is food for thought but despite the cuts, Manchester it seems is fighting back and the creative spirit is continuing as people pull together to collaborate and keep the creative momentum continuing.

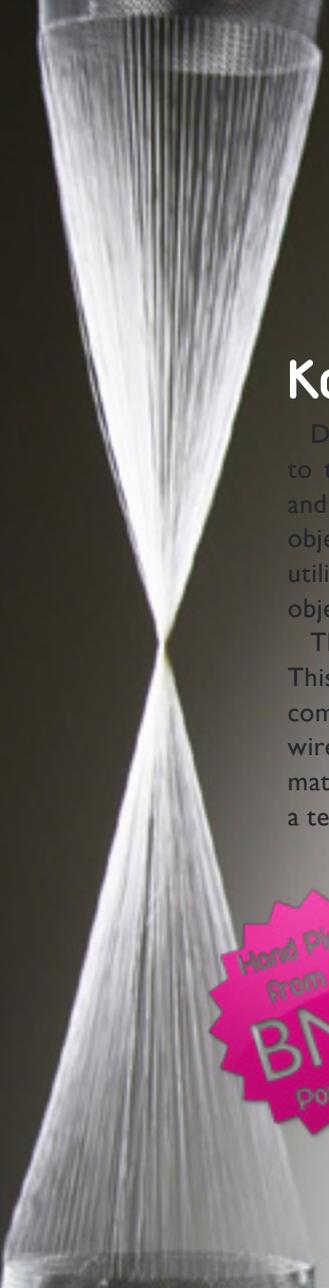
Despite this, some of Manchester's best-loved venues have announced their closure. Last year, Urbis sadly closed their doors for good and more recently the greenroom announced their forthcoming closure. *Who's Laughing Now?* (Sat 21 April - 29 May) will be the final exhibition at greenroom before they close their doors after nearly three decades of providing innovative, creative shows and performances in Manchester.

However, there is still lots to look forward to in this city with festivals such as FutureEverything (11-14 May), now in it's 16th year, pioneering creative new technologies and digital culture. *Switch Circuit*, a collaborative project between Blank Media Collective and FutureEverything launches at BLANKSPACE on 7 May, exploring the possibilities of participation and interaction over a 12-hour period via the cell, with a resulting exhibition.

In_Tuition continues this month, with a very special guest for the Creative Writing strand. Time Out Award-winning writer and performer Ross Sutherland will perform 'The Three Stigmata of Pacman', followed by a Q & A session in a free event at BLANKSPACE on 10th May, so make sure you come along to that rare treat.



Catherine Teague
blankpages Editorial Assistant



Kathryn Stamper

Domestic objects often serve as starting points to the work. They offer the opportunity to explore and intervene with the physicality of material. The objects are elevated from a mundane status. With their utilitarian function denied they become impossible objects, taking on an almost unnerving beauty.

The sculptures engage in extraordinary contrasts. This is demonstrated through the unconventional combination of objects and materials such as thread, wires, nails and plaster. This merging of unlikely materials or the playful alterations to objects creates a tension between the ordinary and the extraordinary.

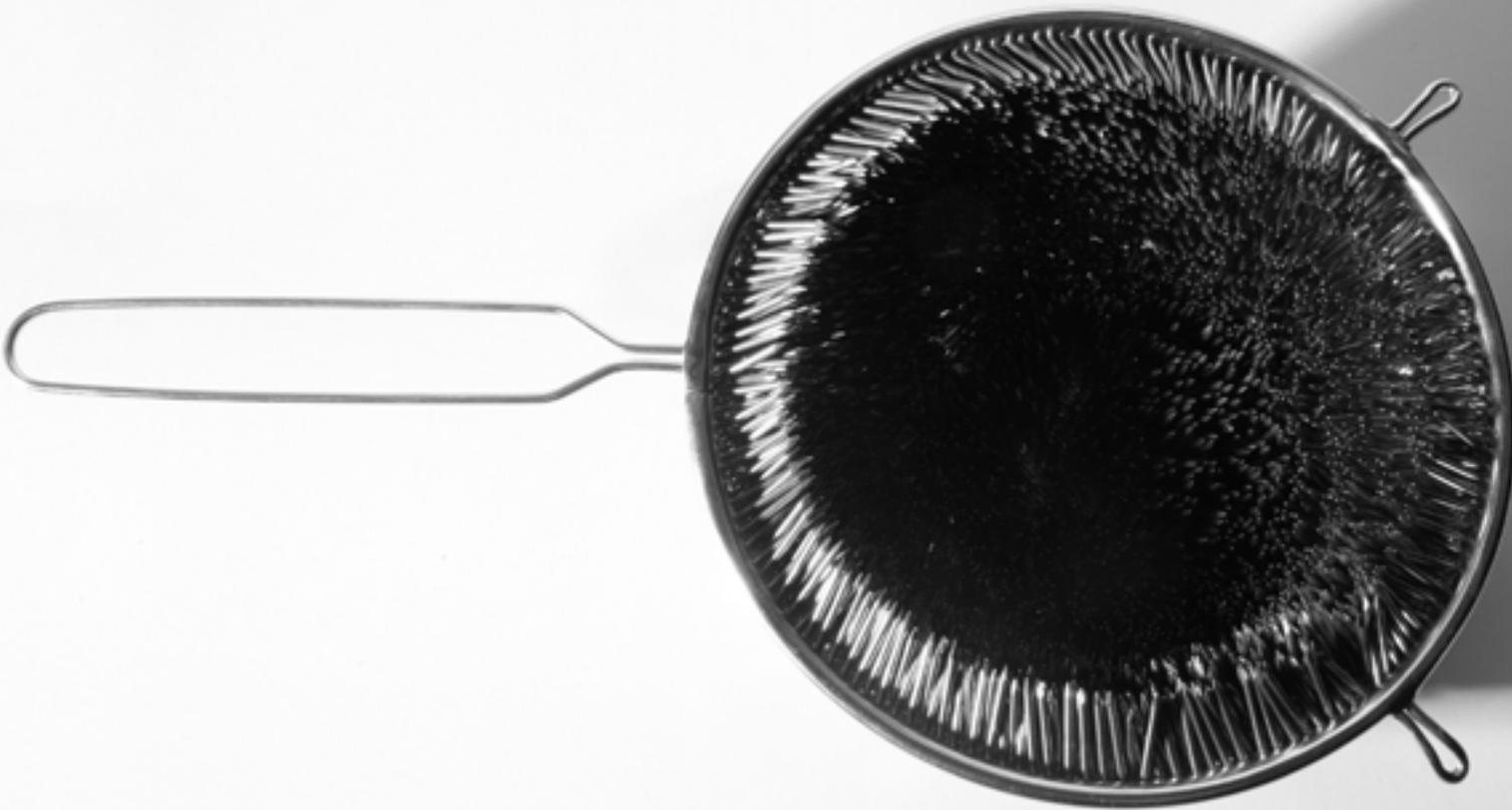


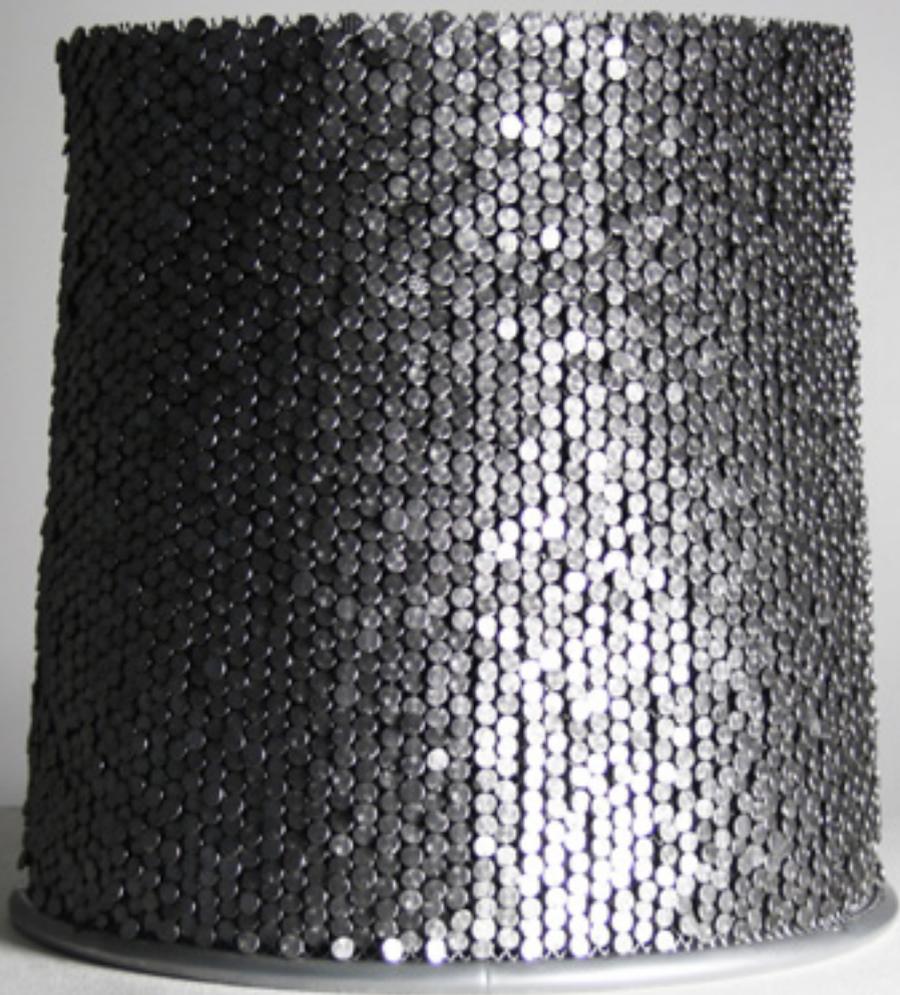
The use of household objects makes an oblique reference to the woman's stereotypical role as housekeeper. Filling these objects with plaster or penetrating them with nails imposes an assertive and less forgiving force upon them; a masculine force. Such unions allude to qualities of masculine and feminine. There is a juxtaposition of hard with soft, light with dark and open with closed. The light, tensile and fragile pieces can transform into dense, hard, heavy and impenetrable objects. The different forms connect yet work in a strange opposition.

The whiteness of plaster contrasts sharply against the darkness of metal. White forms appear seamless and uninterrupted; reflecting nuances in light and shadow. Nails disturb the stillness by tainting the whiteness as rust seeps across the forms.

Sculptural and textural qualities of the work are also illustrated through photography. The photographs sometimes work as pieces in their own right creating ambiguities in form and scale. By focusing on detail rather than the whole image, the object takes on a quite different identity.

COVER ARTIST



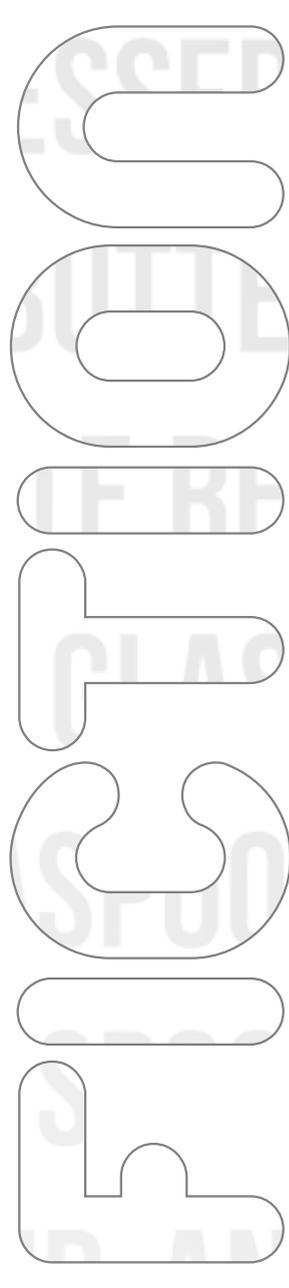




Kathryn has recently graduated with a First Class Honours Degree in Fine Art from Leeds Metropolitan University. Now based in Manchester, she is keen to stay involved in the art world and continue with her own practice. As a sculpture based artist, it is the hands-on aspect of making art that she enjoys the most. Her work investigates the physicality of materials and objects, transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. The new forms explore fundamental elements of structure, texture, space and light.







Better Left Unsaid

By Arden Redgrave

Illustration by Michael Thorp

The waiter arrived and asked what Andrew wanted before he had decided.

“Can I have a few minutes, please?”

The waiter nodded once and hurried off. Andrew felt as though he should have made up his mind the moment he walked into the restaurant.

He noticed a couple sitting to his left. A young woman with gaunt features; pretty like a fashion model. An older man with many chins; expensive suit stretched over his walrus figure. She seemed to be taking a great deal of interest in his words. Andrew couldn't place the language they spoke, but despite his serious expression she smiled and hung on his every word. He certainly didn't look strapped for cash.

At the table to Andrew's right, an old couple ate wordlessly. Listening closely he could hear the clanking of teeth against cutlery. He wondered if they were their own. Silently they ate, rarely looking at each other. Do all couples get like that, he wondered. The ones that stay together.

Opposite, one man shouted a story, slapping his palm on the table and swearing with every

second word. The other listened, interjecting with agreements and a piercing laugh which echoed off the stone walls. He wanted the restaurant to know just how funny it all was.

Andrew's father entered the restaurant. Andrew felt it in the pit of his stomach; a nervous excitement. More like anxiety, or even dread; an emptiness other than hunger. He rarely saw his father. Prior to this meeting he'd thought of all the ways he could escape. The most plausible being that he was busy with work.

He worked long, hard hours in his job as a set designer. He was currently involved with a television drama and often had to put in overtime. There wasn't much time for family and friends and his father would have understood this. Still there was something that brought him here; it wasn't every day his father asked to meet him.

“Sorry I'm late.”

It wasn't a real apology, merely a formality. Andrew saw the evening stretch out ahead as one long scroll of lectures and platitudes.

“That's alright, Dad. Working late?”

“Yes, something like that. Have you ordered?”

“No, I haven't. I wanted to wait for you.”

“Why? You know what I like.”

“No, Dad. I don’t.”

His father scanned through the menu. His face said nothing was quite good enough for his palate. Andrew saw the coming complaint about the choice of restaurant.

“You could have picked a classier place, Andrew.”

As if to strengthen his case, the wideboys opposite turned up the volume on the swearing and the shrieking laughter. To his father it must have seemed like he’d been invited to a stag night. He put his menu down, face contorted and eyes bulging.

“God, won’t those boys shut up.”

“Just ignore them, Dad.”

“No, I can’t even hear myself think with this noise. I’m going to have a word with them.”

“No, Dad. Please just leave it.”

His father had already left the table.

“Excuse me.”

The men stopped mid-track, startled and caught off guard.

“Would you mind keeping it down? I’m trying to have dinner with my son, and I can’t hear myself think with your incessant laughter.”

The men remained silent. Andrew couldn’t

tell if it was real, or if he imagined the scene. The whole restaurant seemed to hold its breath, anticipating further development.

They both broke into screams of laughter.

Andrew’s father leant over the table. Andrew couldn’t see his father’s face, but he knew the look it was capable of. It seemed the men knew it too, as the laughter slowly died.

His father was a barrister and took his job very seriously, as he did with everything else in his life. He often defended very high profile clients, such as the leader of a notorious East London gang known as The Adams. He was widely suspected of drug trafficking and numerous murders. He was being tried for involvement in a money laundering scheme, and was found not guilty.

He had defended all types of clients from alleged paedophiles to known terrorists. Andrew was ashamed when he thought of their likely guilt, and disgusted that men like that walked free because of his father. His father, on the other hand, had a typical lawyer’s attitude:

“If the jury says not guilty, then they are not guilty. It doesn’t matter what the client may or may not have confessed to me in confidence.”

He was one of the most successful and respected lawyers in the country. His personal life was less

of a success. Years of defending terrible people had left him emotionally detached, ruthlessly logical, and perhaps amoral.

Andrew's mother was the opposite; highly strung, passionate and emotionally intuitive. Once his parents argued for days about a murder trial. The alleged murderer awaited trial in prison. His mother believed the man innocent. His father couldn't determine guilt or innocence because he was not fully intimated with the evidence. She felt the impact of the case on all involved. He saw matters of legal truth and falsehood. They'd only read about the case in the newspaper over breakfast.

The waiter had arrived.

"I'll have the guinea fowl."

"And can I have the chicken, please?" asked Andrew.

The waiter smiled and pushed off.

Andrew's father began: "So, how's work?"

He hadn't even made eye contact with the question. It had all the appearance of good manners, but was just the motions. Andrew knew his father was disappointed in him. His grandfather was a lawyer, and his great grandfather was a lawyer. On his father's side a chain of lawyers back almost 150 years. Andrew was a set designer.

To be fair, he had tried to please his father; to do what was expected of him. He attended law school, but dropped out after two years. It just wasn't for him. Andrew was a visual thinker and a hands-on maker. Legal technicalities, test cases, and the like had no interest for him. His father had never seen any of the plays or television shows he had worked on.

"Yeah, it's alright Dad. Just working on a Russian period drama now. It's looking pretty good actually."

"Umm, that's nice. Oh, speaking of Russia, guess who I saw the other day."

"Who?" Andrew asked, unsure of the link.

"Peter, do you remember him?"

"Peter?"

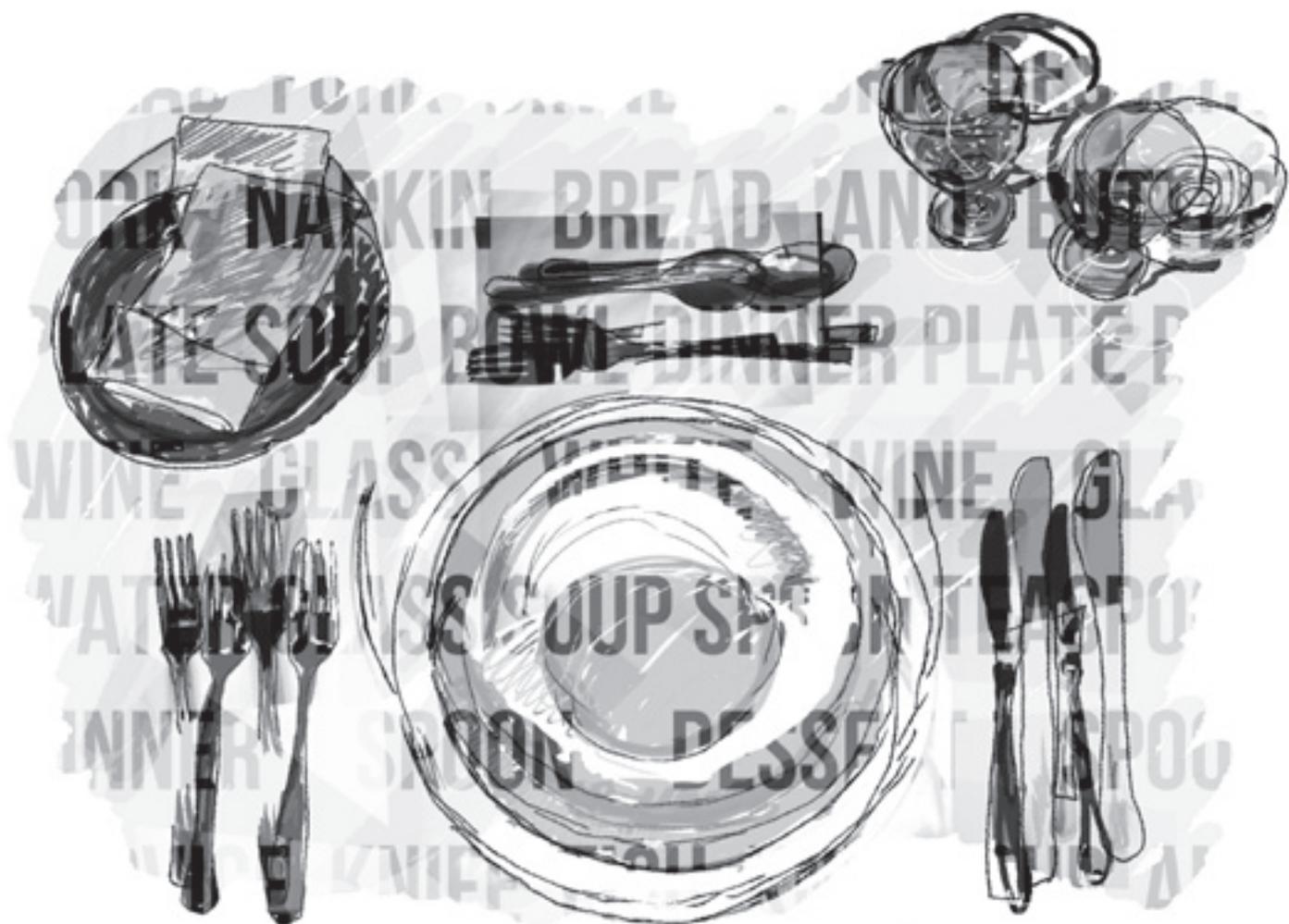
"Peter Smith. You went to school with him."

"Oh right, I remember him." Andrew wondered why some guy he hadn't seen for 15 years was being shoe-horned into the conversation.

"Yes, he's a solicitor now." It clicked. Andrew knew where this was going. And he thought he had figured out the tenuous Russia link: Russia, Peter, Peter the Great.

"Really? Well, he's doing well for himself, isn't he?"

The question was rhetorical but his father answered it anyway:



“Yes, that’s right, he is. But you know I always thought you were much sharper than him.”

Andrew sipped his glass of merlot, and momentarily pretended to read the label on the bottle.

“Well I don’t know, Dad. Everyone’s different, aren’t they?”

“Ha, you see. That’s exactly my point,” he exploded. Already three glasses of wine down, and still the meal hadn’t arrived.

“You’ve always been too modest. Forget about Peter; he’s just a solicitor. You could have been a fine barrister, like me, but you sell yourself short.”

Andrew sighed. He was about to speak, but didn’t. This conversation was inevitable. Whenever they met, he needed reminding about how he hadn’t fulfilled his potential. His father was stubborn and missed the point. Andrew was happy.

The food had arrived.

“How’s your chicken?”

“Nice. How’s your guinea fowl?”

“Overdone and under-seasoned, but never mind that. You must be wondering why I asked to meet you tonight.”

It was true; Andrew had wondered all night. He knew he didn’t invite him out for a chat.

“I just thought you wanted to have a chat, Dad.”

“Well, Andrew. There’s no easy way to say this.” He paused.

“What is it, Dad?”

“I have cancer.”

Andrew felt suddenly ripped out of his body. He looked down from the ceiling above, separated, watching himself and his father talking about something.

“What? When? I mean, how long have you known?”

“Not long. Only a few days really.”

“Why didn’t you tell me this before?”

He knew straight away it was a stupid question. It was going to take the poor bugger a few days to process this for himself.

“Well,” Andrew struggled for something to say. “How long do you have?”

He could have been more tactful.

“Not long. A matter of months. It’s spread far. It started in my colon, and is pretty much everywhere now.”

“Oh, fucking hell, Dad. How did you not discover this before? What about getting other tests? Maybe they got it wrong.”

“I can show you the scans. Trust me, they haven’t.”

“But Dad, you’re getting chemo, right? Radiation? We can get you the best care available.”

“No, Andrew. I don’t want to go through all of that. I know it’s hard for you to accept, but I’m not going to live for much longer. All I ask is that you look after your mum.”

Andrew couldn’t believe he was having this conversation. Look after his mum? What? He was expecting some sort of news from this rare meeting; but not this. There were a thousand thoughts to blurt out, but none came.

Andrew’s parents were divorced; his father and mother never saw each other anymore. His father’s parents were both dead, and his brother had married and moved to Paris. No one in the family really kept in touch. No friends, just associates. Andrew could see why his father didn’t want treatment.

“Andrew,” his father started, but never finished. “What is it, Dad?” He’s proud of me; he’s sorry; it doesn’t matter that I’m not a lawyer; he’s happy that I’m happy?

“I think I...”

“Yes, Dad?”

“I think I should get the bill.”

Andrew lowered his head.

The waiter arrived promptly, and Andrew’s father paid for everything. He waited while his father got a taxi, before hopping on the bus. The whole way back he thought of things he wanted to say, and things he wanted his father to say.

A man next to him read his paper, while a teenager in hoodie and cap listened to music on his iPhone. Everyone else was sitting silently in their own thoughts.

For the last ten or so years, Arden Redgrave’s life has taken different turns.

In College he did a Drama B-TEC diploma at Westminster Kingsway College, then completed an English Literature/ Creative Writing Joint Honours degree at Manchester Metropolitan University.

After this he undertook a short intensive CELTA course and have been teaching English as a Foreign Language for 3 years. This year he started writing again. After completing the story ‘Better Left Unsaid,’ he is now currently writing a play, which he hopes to put on next year. Arden is also an aspiring director and will be assisting Patrick Sanford in the new play ‘Bully Boy’ written by Sandy Toksvic starting April the 18th.

As a writer Arden tries to explore human relationships. Grief and loss have been a common theme in his recent work as it is something that has affected him personally. In his writing, Arden is constantly looking at ways in which people cope with this.



Interview

Geof Huth

Geof Huth is a US-based poet, writer and language artist. He will be appearing at the groundbreaking Text Festival in Bury later this month. A major UK festival celebrating language, linguistic art and dialogue, featuring exclusive appearances and commissions by international practitioners.

blankpages caught up with Geof ahead of his visit to Manchester to find out a little more about him, what he gets up to in his working life and his plans for the forthcoming months.

So, Geof, tell us a little bit about yourself, your background?

I like to say I'm from nowhere, or nowhere in particular. I was born just south of San Francisco on the western edge of North America, but I live just west of Albany, New York, at the other side of this continent. Between these two chronological extremes of my life, I have moved 46 times, living in four US states, the District of Columbia, in nine countries, on four continents, and in the Caribbean. My father was a diplomat, but even for a diplomatic family, we moved frequently and lived in a wide variety of places. Although I am American by birth and fact, my life has made me

an internationalist, and I yearn for movement to someplace new, for variety, for new experiences.

How did you discover poetry?

I have thought about this, but only very recently, within the last couple of weeks, and I have realized that poetry began for me in Bolivia. That is when I started writing poems, stories, essays, and even just interesting lists of words. Before then, I lived a life obsessed with words, with their sounds in the air, with their shapes on the page, with the meanings they magically bore forth into the world. I can't remember not being interested, with my entire body, in words. But in Bolivia, one of my English teachers made my class write poems of various kinds, and from that age on, I wrote poems and visual poems.

Where do you find inspiration?

I don't know quite how I invent the poems I write. I like to steal an idea from Jack Spicer and say that the Martians whisper all my poems to me. But I actually believe that inspiration comes simply from having a mind always in play. I am always reading, always traveling, always listening and looking, always thinking, sketching out words by shape, by sound, by the shape and sound of their meaning. So my

inspiration comes from living and reading and writing. Inspiration is one and the same as living. We don't need anything to write about in order to write. All we need is something to write with: words to give shape to thought, thought to give way to words, and our own bodies to put everything humbly into place. Inspiration is the word we use to refer to toning our minds to prepare them for the act of writing. This is how we create in ourselves the trained tendency to write. I abandoned writing poetry for about eight years of my life, and it took me, maybe, four years to train myself to write again with the facility I used to have. Now, writing is to me an act like breathing: daily, life-giving, and necessary.

How would you describe your style of poetry?

I've no idea. I'm identified, generally, as a certain kind of poet (usually as a visual poet or as a writer of pwoermds, or one-word poems), but I am as many kinds of a writer as I can be. Generally, I do write poetry with an experimental bent, but there are strong currents of lyric poetry in my work, too.

"I lived a life obsessed with words, with their sounds in the air, with their shapes on the page, with the meanings they magically bore forth into the world."

"I create poetry by singing, by inventing a song, sometimes wordless and sometimes filled with words and even rhyming, on the spot.."

I write light verse sometimes to entertain people. And I create poetry by singing, by inventing a song, sometimes wordless and sometimes filled with words and even rhyming, on the spot. I create poems that are performance events. This past weekend, I painted

sixteen poems. Many of my poems are calligraphic, and I'd estimate that over half my poems are wordless, made out of shapes or sounds that resemble words without actually being words. There is something that guides these works, though, and it is probably the pun, which I consider the highest form of literature, because it cannot be translated into another language.

Most of my poems have aural or visual puns in them, because poetry is play with language, always serious, sometimes fun.

What advice would you give to aspiring writers and poets out there?

I wrote such advice to a poet recently, so I'll repeat that simple advice here:

So here's my crazy writing advice: Read and write a lot. That's it. Read a lot of contemporary poetry, find something you like, and keep reading poetry like that. And write as you do all of this

reading. You'll be influenced by what you write, and the process of writing will cause you to think of new ways to do things, things only you can do.

If I were going to give you another piece of advice, I'd say, allow your mind to wander as you write a poem. Your poems are so centrally about making one specific point, but it's better if they're more expansive, which makes them more surprising and alluring. I see that you like description, which is fine, but don't focus so much on producing a poem about something; allow the poem to become something unexpected.

So Geof, you're performing at the Text Festival this year, what significance does something like this have for poets, writers and performers like yourself?

I'm going to the Text Festival this year primarily to see poets I rarely see, friends of mine who live on continents different from mine, and to meet poets I've never met but whom I've known for years. We can communicate electronically and through the mail, but there is something more real, more tangible, about meeting people, understanding their personalities, and learning from them in a more natural and organic

way. But another is that this festival focuses broadly on what poetry can be, visually, textually, sonically, and even in terms of performance. Events like this, which are quite rare, give life to the idea that there are many possible poetries, each with different values and opportunities.

One of my favorite readings ever was at the Text Festival in 2009. The audience at this event was large, appreciative, and overflowing, and I drew energy out of them. An event like the Text Festival gives a poet a chance to create a unique experience through the performance of a poem, something more real than only words on a page.

And finally, where can we catch you for the rest of the year?

I'll be traveling quite a bit for the rest of this year. At the end of March and then again at the beginning of April, I'll be in Brooklyn, New York, for an intermedia poetry workshop I'm involved with. Near the end of April, I'll travel to Helena, Montana, to give a workshop on electronic records and write a few poems. From the end of April until early May, of course, I'll be in Manchester for the Text Festival. A couple of days after that, I'll be in Alexandria, Virginia, giving another workshop on

electronic records, and writing some poetry. Near the end of August, I'll be in Chicago for the Society of American Archivists conference, and I'll be giving a poetry reading in that city. In mid-October, I'll be in Cheyenne, Wyoming, to give a workshop and write some poems, and the next week I'll be in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for a conference. Sometime this year, I'm also supposed to give a performance at the Poet's House in New York City, with the Be Blank Consort, a group of crazy and chaotic sound poets I am associated with.

For more information about Geof and his forthcoming appearance at the Text Festival:
<http://www.textfestival.com/events/search.php>

Geof Huth writes almost daily about poetry, visual and otherwise, at his blog, [dbqp: visualizing poetics](http://dbqp.com). His latest book is *ntst: the collected pwoermds of geof huth*, a book of 775 one-word poems, was published by if p then q, based in Manchester.

101. Articles of Unusual Value and Small Compass

(to Elizabeth Bryant)

elegant diminutives [audient and virtuosity] her virtuous eyelash (descent into depths of scent, musk and melons) {divisions of revisions of excisions [what is left behind and changed and separated into parts]} breaking bread into loaves <she spoke without the sound of chewing> my hand filled with (red marbles of the least fruit: granite apple, granite apple) aswing in the boughs of the mulberry [the purple stain and ink] every scar counted on as a record of some forgotten pain {deliberations and exhumations} my little left broken finger typing the a but never a the (spontaneity of a last thought) there are no rules only consequences <she spoke in a whisper of an eyelash of a voice>

gasping for a word [tenderly and in the form of a fingertip's brush] off a diving board and into the temporary air (surrounded by air, surrounded by water) artichoke asparagus beets chard dill eggplant fennel {olfactory of pleasures} assignment of meaning is a delicate process [requiring discrimination of senses and scents] what we had sent away as if no longer valuable <she spoke extemporaneously as if surprised by her own voice> we own what's our own (pressure in the form of pleasure) certain our methods pertain [liquid like a letter's sound over the tongue] speaking, as if there were another way, in tongues {brace yourself} everything small and balanced and wrenching vestigial emotions from us (in front of the bus just before it moves) my sickle's compass

come [and gone, returned to waiting] abrasions and the thorns of the rose {symbols of music} the awning leaning out in stripes <she spoke in a voice taking the form of sleeping, taking the outlines of walking the floor in her stockinged feet asleep> clear and cold and harshly sweet like this grappa (though brief, the hand holding his throat awaiting breath [death comes in the palm of a hand and fingers squeezing the infant bird dead] I am a machine of poetry not a man of my word {a pleurisy of vowelette wheels} singing in a restroom to hear the exaggerated sound of a voice <she spoke reboant yet full of music> dibble into earth, dibble in the earth that the seed might grown (rain as big as water) garlic horseradish indian pea

jicama kale lettuce [what we chew when we don't nibble others] industry but not industrial <she spoke with certitude and an old man a bit bowed at the shoulders> the tension just before the tension's erased (how she holds onto it until that point) unto or onto or into the spirit of the love [twice in that same way but never thrice] in a {paltry desires but ones worth living for because the only ones he had} accordion virtues, violin sins <she spoke with the conviction of thieves> artificial breeze to erase the reality of heat through persistence of heat (water is vodka is grappa is eau de vie) the life we live separate from the life we've lived {the unusual taste of a stolen apple} recalcitrant intractable the land of woods and brambles all around us <she spoke like a wheel> mustard onion pea quash radish sorrel (bright flavors on the tongue, dull

flavors in the pot) counting the maples then counting the leaves of the maples then counting their points {a small popsicle stick emptied of its fruit} any reason to go outside into the sun (smiling) and smiling back {counter-intuitive thoughts} dust wet as mud [would that the rain could wash everything away] her dress hung on the line during the storm <she spoke of her desire to wear a wet dress close to her skin until it dried> wet or wed (the genital parentheses) caution considered the lowest form of humor {distraction as the strongest type of attraction} dromedary, dromedary, walking through my dream, to what far oasis do you travel <she spoke as if she wanted to explain what she love about the room and the man in it, but her words concerned the festooning of spider homes in two corners of that space> turnip ulluco

velvet bean watercress xanthous bean yam zucchini (an entire alphabet of taste and scent and sight and hearing and touch and warmth) her tendency not to do anything in the same manner [corollaries without the impediment of norms] an unprevailing wind {until the point of unexpected sleep overtook her consciousness} my my my <she spoke and I listened> desperate attention to unnecessary details (satisfied in the way an animal is after eating) considering if not embracing sleep {sheep as the counters she might place her dishes temporarily upon} hoping against the onslaught of reality [an audition in an auditorium] leaning carefully into sleep <she spoke in her sleep as she always did awake> a tremendous desire not even to care



"Exploding with mathy geek chic and raw energy,

[THIS MONTH'S MP3]

will have you bouncing around your room in the mid afternoon"

Yves

Yves seem to have everything going for them right now. They have a good grounding in musical influences that, as every good band should, vary between each member and are eclectic but, crucially, converge in the melting pot of group aims to produce something that they (and others!) are quickly realising is something rather special. Yves are shockingly good live! They're authentic, down-to-earth but cultured and have bags of integrity. Each one in the band has not a whiff of the pretentious attitude that seems to accompany some bands who embrace a scene before they've even learned how to play. These bands buy the clothes rather than the guitar first and Yves certainly aren't that kind of band.

Michael Glenister, frontman and guitarist, is quietly spoken and thoughtful, but give him a guitar and he'll fling it around mid-song not missing a note, with a 'who

cares' attitude. Aberdeenshire bass player, Paul Morrice, is your typical bass player, apart from the fact he's superb and links up with the drummer to create a rhythm section that is formidable in construction and execution. The drummer, Alan Wragg, who was actually missing his high-tom rack when BMC saw him, more than made up for it with dexterity and inventiveness in their absence whilst singing vocals for most of the set. Matt Smith, guitarist and vocalist, is intuitive throughout providing the songs with 'math-esque' elements understanding the songs inside out and responding instinctively to Mike's carefree attitude to chords. Together they surpass their own individual elements and add up to more than the sum of their parts. *blankpages* embarked on a few post-gig drinks with them to find out a little bit more about the band we're sure you'll be hearing of soon...we highly recommend seeing them live!

How did you all meet up?

Alan: Both myself and *Matt* had been in a previous band together, which was much more post-rock, for about a year and a half. That disbanded and we were keen to start up something new that was a bit more immediate. We found *Mike* though drownedinsound.com and we were on the same page as each other from the off. The struggle was finding a bassist! We went through a succession of them, from prog masters to punk upstarts, before we found *Paul*, who plays brilliantly and gels with us on a personal level, which is vital for us.

Musically, what goes into the pot?

Paul: We all have a really wide-range of influences and pretty eclectic tastes, so I suppose our surroundings and day-to-day lives are a big influence, as our songs are

usually based on personal experiences. But we do share some common influences, like At The Drive-In and Pavement, which probably tie our musical tastes together.

Alan: Er... I don't like At The Drive-In

Matt: Yeah, to be honest, neither do I really. I mean, they're alright...

Mike: Pavement aren't an influence on me.

Paul: [laughing] Ok, scratch that – we don't have any common influences then.

Alan: Obviously, some of us share bands that we love but we rarely reach a musical consensus.

Matt: Yeah, individually we share loves of certain bands but collectively I guess the main motivator is just to have fun making music and playing gigs. I mean, we're all pretty crap at sports and you have to have to do something with your spare time.

“...we don't
have any
common
influences...”



How does the writing process work for you? Math-Rock type stuff is obviously quite structured and bound, in a sense, by time signatures. Does this compromise creativity or do you think it allows for even more experimentation and fluidity?

Matt: To be honest, I think *Mike* characterised us best when he called us 'Math-Pop' – that's something we're pretty concerned with. I mean, it's nice to play in different time signatures and have intricate rhythms and melodies but we've always wanted there to be choruses and bits you can sing along with too. And it's important that the songs aren't too long; they shouldn't ever outstay their welcome.

In terms of writing it's pretty varied from song to song – we don't really tend to have any one format that we use. Sometimes, someone will bring in a riff and we'll work on it, other times we jam and it's like 'yeah, that was sweet' and we take it from there.

I think the general rule though is don't try to push it – if it's not happening then it's not right, move on. Oh, and try to keep it under four minutes.

Paul: I suppose we prefer to write quickly and keep things fresh instead of spending ages on a song because that can lead to losing the initial purpose of the song.

Alan: I think we've got a finely-tuned method down at the minute of get in the room, piss about for a while, get annoyed at each other, make up, and then get on with it. We try to work things down to their base qualities and then build up from there. But it's important to us that the songs sound immediate...that they hit you and then leave.

Mike: Yeah, the concept of immediacy is one I can say for sure we all agree on. For me, I want short, punchy songs that grab you but still contain aspects of 'Mathy-ness', i.e. changing time signatures and interesting instrumental interplay. With regards to

writing using different timings, I don't think rigidly in that sort of structure and I don't count when I'm playing... if I get bored of playing a certain chord I just change sooner, or at least play fairly randomly until a pattern emerges.

I think we're fortunate in that we all can jam together in what sometimes is a very abstract way... I guess that just comes from getting used to each other's ears. Anyway, the fundamental thing with Yves is that we are concerned exclusively with writing 'songs', not self-indulgent marathons. This sometimes comes from jams, sometimes not.

So how does that translate lyrically?

Alan: I think lyrically we are on a similar level too. We all tend to write our parts for songs separately but the words seem to come together unintentionally. I write about what Matters to me at that particular moment in time, and whilst there are all sorts of daily concerns that you can fill your

songs with, really when it comes down to it the only thing that Matters is how you feel about your missus.

Matt: Yeah, I'd agree with that. And that's the general theme of most 'Pop' really isn't it? But then, it's a universal concern so...

How does Manchester suit you for playing live? Is there, dare I say, a 'scene'? There seems to be an ethic of DIY approaches at present, concerning gigs and events.

Mike: I wouldn't say there's a 'scene' as such, or not one that we feel aligned with anyway. I think the concept of a scene is made by industry folk rather than bands. There's certainly a collection of promoters around and, increasingly, more people putting on free/DIY gigs. I mean, there are obviously some bands we play with that we feel we have more in common with but that's about as far as it goes.

"...when it comes down to it the only thing that Matters is how you feel about your missus...."

When you play with bands similar to you your friends become their fans and hopefully vice-versa. Promoters that we really respect are Carefully Planned, Bad Uncle, Underachievers Please Try Harderto name a few.

Matt: Manchester Scenewipe are pretty special; they've documented some totally awesome bands on their website and do some really good nights as well. They are definitely worth checking out. And Hairy Wolf Records been putting on some great nights too.

How do you see Yves evolving as a band?

Alan: Our hopes for the future? Keep busy! At the minute we're happy to be writing and playing although we're also keen to branch out from Manchester and play more gigs around the North. An EP should on the way at the end of April/start of May. I'd say we're proud of the songs we've got so far so I don't see us changing our setup anytime soon. We want to keep the songs vital and immediate, and to us that means the four of us in a room, doing what we know how.

How would you describe a gig of yours?

Paul: When we play we're more concerned with enjoying ourselves than anything else. I find if you're watching a band and they don't look like they're enjoying themselves then regardless of how good their songs are it still won't be a good gig. Equally a band can play music I wouldn't listen to at home but I'll love watching them because of the energy they show.

Alan: Yeah, but that can sometimes be taken to the extreme. You can often see gigs where the playing is totally precise, and that might sound perfect but if it's overdone it just ends up seeming stale. Or you'll see bands that are just caught up in the moment of it and are more shambolic, which can be exciting but if you don't take care it can just end up sounding a mess. I'd like to think we straddle somewhere in the middle.



What exciting things have you got planned for 2011? Gigs? Recording? Releases?

Alan: Well, at the minute we're looking to do more gigs in the satellites and play further afield into Sheffield and Leeds. We're aiming to release an EP for the start of summer, called 'The Joshua Twee'...

Mike: [laughing] That's not agreed. We're not calling it that... We have got a couple of great gigs coming up soon though. We're playing with Durham/Chapel Hill, North Carolina band Hammer No More the Fingers and Liverpool's Voon 21st April at Centro in Manchester. And then we're opening for Johnny Foreigner at the Night & Day 28 April – that's going to be amazing!

Like Yves? Click www.facebook.com/pages/Yves/186558641369389



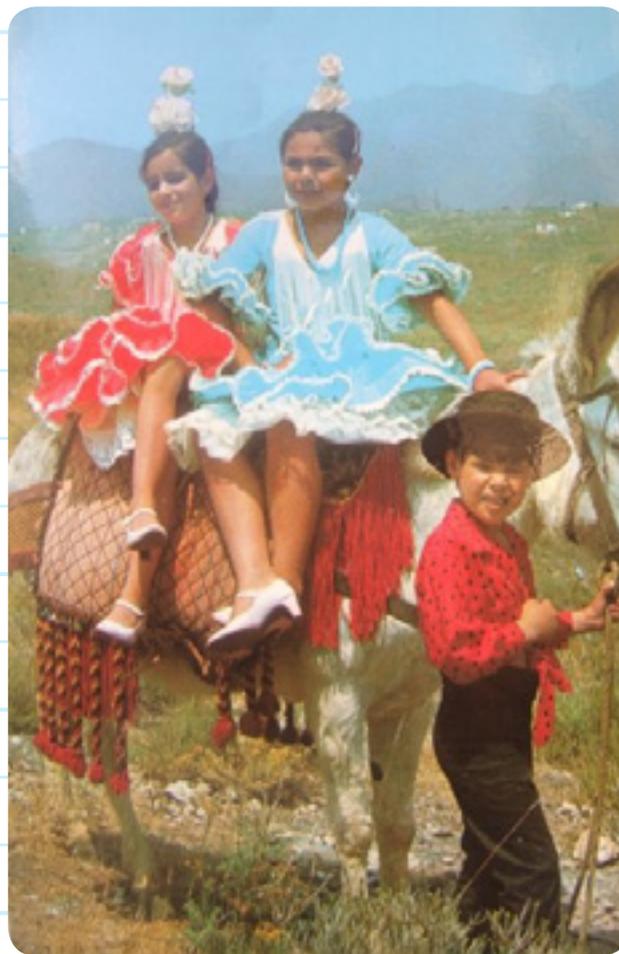
Shrieking Violets

Blog pick by Hayley Flynn

A few years ago I found a bag of postcards in my garden. I never really knew what to do with them but I noticed that it reignited my love of tangible mail and I started to send letters and cards to my friends more and more often. I loved how they inspired me to do this so it was only fair I shared them so that they might inspire others to put pen to paper.

To be honest, I didn't know how I could write about every single postcard in an engaging way and what would happen when it came to the end of the pile and I started a few blogs that were left to wallow in the draft folders until the end of the internet.

Eventually, probably after losing my job and fearing my brain would decay if I didn't write something, I decided on a magazine format which would host a range of regular features. Having the postcards series incorporated with different features has led to the blog hosting a mix of articles from the oddities of the Manchester skyline, the stories behind the lost post and a few new ideas I'm toying with, such as writing about the 1950s Astra Gazette newsreels as if they're short stories (I'm really excited about that one, especially the spaghetti eating contest).



Manchester, and the North West, is very central to what I write, although not exclusively so. I hope to explore the history and architecture of the city with the Skyliner feature and to open up the blog to the public, allowing them to share their own stories if they're spotted a hidden rooftop or found a love letter in an old library book.

I became encouraged to introduce this element of local history to the blog when I considered how much I value and enjoy the articles that Natalie Bradbury writes for her blog, Shrieking Violets (<http://the-shriekingviolets.blogspot.com/>). A bit of a stalwart on the bloggers' scene, the Shrieking Violet features are always crammed full of edifying tales about inspirational people or places in Greater Manchester and Salford and I've never come away from the blog without having learned something new.

In amongst blogging and editing the live submissions for a music site I also contribute to a variety of publications and provide copy for clients, short stories and poems for blogs, reviews for national music sites and articles for local zines.

I enjoy exploring the beautiful buildings of the city and dancing to The National in gloomy nightclubs. When I'm not doing any of the above I'm most likely to be found in The Deaf Institute, The Cornerhouse or racing home from the launderette so that I can make my bed whilst the freshly tumbled sheets are still warm.

www.hayleyflynn.tumblr.com

Forthcoming Events

IGLOOISM

Hive Gallery, Barnsley
Runs till May 8

Iglooism features the work of a group of young contemporary artists exploring methods of, quite literally, 'sculpting out' as well as exhibiting a fabricated environment from a base line level. Using the produce of the earth, traditionally associated to sculpture making, each artist enacts an immediate physical engagement with the gallery space by inhabiting it whilst working directly within its white walls.

www.hivegallery.co.uk

ON MEASURING UNCERTAINTY

Castlefield Gallery, Manchester
Runs till May 29

Castlefield Gallery is pleased to present On Measuring Uncertainty, consisting of new sculptural work by Kit Craig and Andrew Lim. The works use references that range from early computer programmers flow charts and a 16th Century hermits dwelling to a cryptic interpretation of Rembrandts Self Portrait With Two Circles. In part reliant on the laws of physics and mathematics, the works combine both a sense of geometry and natural form, deciphering the vernacular of traditional gallery display or rearticulating the use of materials that are indigenous to the gallery space.

www.castlefieldgallery.co.uk

AMBITIONS DREAM NOTHING

Untitled Gallery, Manchester
Runs till June 5

Ambitions Dream Nothing presents White Noise, a series of works produced from 2010 – 2011 by Manchester-based artist Jenny Core. In her current practice Core attempts to define empty space – what the artist refers to as the “impossible” – through experiments with chance and play. The White Noise series centres around the artist’s idea that a radio is a portal into the dimension of empty space, where the “impossible” exists as a cacophony of white noise. Using the radio, the artist is able to enter this “impossible” void by selecting words at random when switching between channels, extracting the white noise as a vicissitude of unintelligible words and sounds produce short incoherent narratives, such as Ambitions Dream Nothing and Great Cup I Night Happiness.

www.untitledgallerymanchester.com/



FUTURE EVERYTHING

Various Locations, Manchester

May 11 - May 14

futureeverything.org

FutureEverything is now in its 16th year and takes place across Manchester from 11-14 May 2011. It's the essential place to find out what's on the horizon in creative new technologies and digital culture, bringing the future into the present through art, music and ideas.

The two-day FutureEverything Conference at 4 Piccadilly Place will have cover everything from emotional computing, the digital self and to integration of digital technology within the city. Visionary guest speakers, including James Bridle, Kars Alfrink, Sue Thomas and Juha van't Zelfde, will explore how relationships between people and their environments are set to change in an increasingly digital world.

Headlining performances this year include Steve Reich, Das Racist, Beach House and Warpaint and live films scores realised by Rob da Bank (*King Kong*, 1933, PG) and 65daysofstatic (*Silent Running*, 1972 PG).

FutureEverything is an ambitious art programme which includes the world premiere of a one-to-one, reality bending performance by Brighton film-art collective Me and The Machine. Interactive art features strongly in the programme once more with highlights including *Lit Tree* from Elliot Woods a small potted tree brought alive by Xbox Kinect controllers and an interactive arty project from Chris Milk & Aaron Koblin, which presents the streets of visitors' childhoods in the manner of a music video to Arcade Fire's *We Used to Wait*.

this month in **BLANK**MEDIA...

SWITCH CIRCUIT

BLANKSPACE, Manchester

May 7 - May 22,

Live Event: - May 7 6pm - May 8 6am

Switch Circuit, part of FutureEverything Festival 2011 will explore the possibilities of participation and interaction over a 12-hour period. Switch Circuit is an unpredictable experiment involving each participant's mobile-technological capabilities and looking at how intrusions and interruptions can take advantage of the trust we place in their potentially dangerous functionalities.

www.blankmediacollective.org/switch_circuit

WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?

Greenroom, Manchester

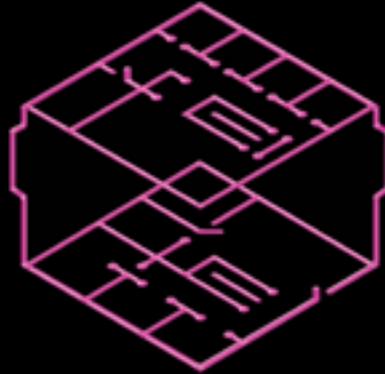
Runs till May 29

Playful, dramatic and disconcerting, Who's Laughing Now? brings together two artists from the Philippines and the North-West of England. Surreal portraiture explores the theme of guilt within the narrative of the work.

After greenroom's recent announcement regarding its closure to the public at the end of May, Who's Laughing Now? will be the final exhibition to take place at this much loved venue.

greenroom have shown unfaltering support to Blank Media Collective throughout our 2 year relationship and have been a big reason for the organisation's growing success.

We hope you will all show your support to what has been one of Manchester's leaders in the cultural landscape over the last 28 years.



**WOMEN IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY:
GET INTO BLOGGING WORKSHOP
WITH PROFESSIONAL BLOGGER AND
WRITER KATH HORWILL**

BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 11 6-8pm

Ever wanted to start that blog to promote your business, grand designs or just indulge in your passions - but you just didn't have the time or have the know how? Well, we have the answers for you!

Writer and professional blogger Kath Horwill, author of Parklover (www.parklover.wordpress.com), short-listed for Manchester blog awards will be revealing her top tips for getting started in blogging, how to create engaging content, get your blog noticed and how you can use it for business and marketing purposes and generate income.

**ROSS SUTHERLAND AT
BLANKSPACE IN_TUITION**

BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 10 6.30 - 8.30pm

Blank Media Collective are proud to present Ross Sutherland at BLANKSPACE; a special In_Tuition session, performing The Three Stigmata of Pacman followed by an open Q&A session with the artist himself. All for free.



In_Tuition is an open forum for creatives based in the North West. An opportunity for artists to talk about their work and inspire others through creative understanding, musing and action!

IN_TUITION (FINE ART)

BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 3 6.30-8.30pm

IN_TUITION (CREATIVE WRITING)

BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 10 6.30-8.30pm

IN_TUITION (MOVING IMAGE)

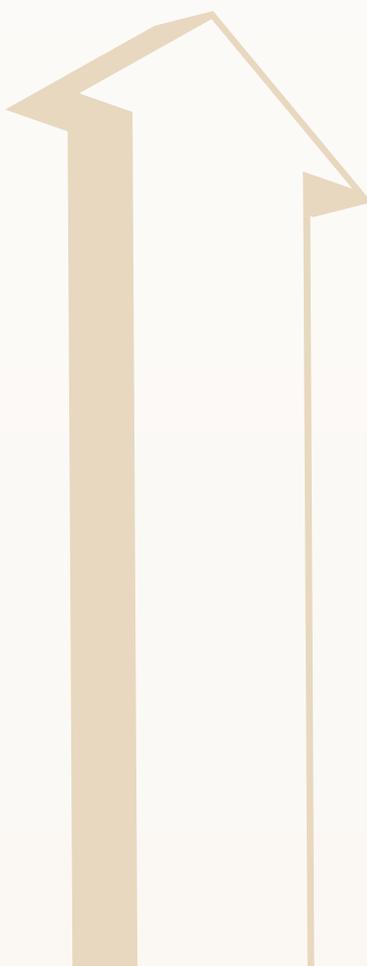
BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 17 6.30-8.30pm

IN_TUITION (PHOTOGRAPHY)

BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 24 6.30-8.30pm

IN_TUITION (FREE-STYLE)

BLANKSPACE, Manchester
May 31 6.30-8.30pm



Submissions Callout

blankpages is renewing its callout for contributions.

Every month we showcase writers, artists and musicians who deserve to share their work with the wider arts community and the public as a whole. An established literary and visual standard within both the digital and non web-based arts sphere, it is fast becoming a well respected and widely read publication with a dedicated following that grows with each edition.

Why submit work to blankpages?

We believe in support. Submitting to *blankpages* is more than getting your work published. We try to provide honest, creative and critical feedback when you submit, as well as any advice or information we can give you on how to market yourself as a writer - how to get your work noticed outside of *blankpages*, as well as within our large arts community.

We also work closely with several other organisations, venues and writers' collectives, so we can help support you and your work. If you're interested in performance poetry, we have our own space, and are always interested in working with talented performers.

blankpages is about supporting all artists, not just writers. If your work crosses genres, that's fine with us. As we're digital, we have the means to publish visual and sound based accompaniments to your work.

Each month our dedicated visual design team will work with your submission, creating bespoke illustrative accompaniments, all housed within our trademark unique and beautiful layout.

We're looking for talented creatives with a unique style and ability to produce interesting pieces. New works are preferred, but previously published pieces will be considered.

Proof reading is boring. We'd much rather spend time reading and enjoying your submissions. Please check work for spelling, grammar and punctuation errors before sending it in.

Please submit a short biography with your work so we can learn more about you.

How to Submit

We constantly check the online portfolios, and this is a great way to be seen. Just create a profile on the Blank Media Collective website, upload up to ten pieces of work, click on the option to include your work in *blankpages* and/or email us a link and we will consider your work for future issues.

SUBMISSION

Alternatively you can send your work for consideration by the relevant content editor by emailing:
editor@blankmediacollective.org

Visual Artists

All our featured artists are sourced through the Blank Media Collective portfolios. To be considered, upload at least 4 high resolution images (minimum 300dpi) and bear in mind that we may want to feature you as the cover artist. Please include your pieces' names and any information you feel is relevant to each image.

Poets

All lengths and forms are welcome, as are varying stylistic approaches. Word limit is down to you, but we'd ask that you discuss any works longer than 30 lines each with the editor. We're looking for no more than 3 – 4 medium length poems; 2 maximum if larger in length.

Prose Fiction Writers

Stories should be between 1000 and 2500 words (although shorter or longer works may be considered). All styles and themes are accepted, and we are looking for originality, insight and wit.

Musicians

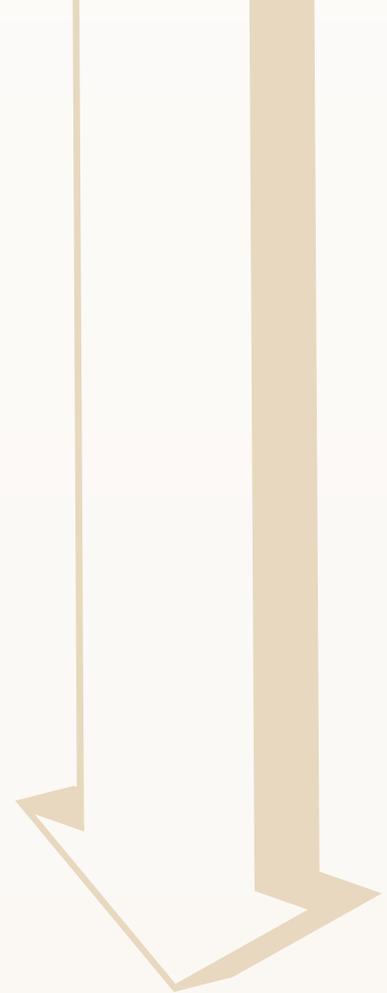
We welcome musical submissions from any genre, providing the recording is of a suitable industry standard. If your submission is selected for publication you will be asked to provide at least one high resolution image (minimum 300dpi) that you feel represents you as well as possible. The image can be of you/your band or can be abstract in nature. Please supply a .wav, .mp3 or .aiff formatted file, at a minimum bitrate of 320kb/s.

blankpages is dedicated to giving a high quality platform to share your work – we love reading your submissions and will always try to respond with feedback.

If you'd like to discuss your work or would like some feedback before submitting, please feel free to get in touch – email editor@blankmediacollective.org, for the attention of the relevant content editor.

Please note; if email submissions are unavailable, mail submissions will be accepted. If you wish your work to be returned, please include a SAE. Mail submissions should be sent to blankpages Editorial, BLANKSPACE, 43 Hulme Street, Manchester, M19 2GS

GUIDELINES



Michael Vincent Manalo &
Shona Harrison

Who's Laughing Now?

greenroom, Manchester

www.blankmediacollective.org/whoslaughingnow

BLANK
MEDIA
COLLECTIVE

21 April - 18 June 2011

Public Preview:
20 April [6-9pm]

Free entry



Fragility, Shona Harrison @ Shona Harrison

greenroom



Imploding

INEVITABLE FESTIVAL 2011

10/11 June: Fellfoot Wood

Newby Bridge, Ulverston, Lake District

HANNAH PEEL LIZ GREEN DAVID THOMAS BROUGHTON
AVITAL RAZ JOHN THE BAPTIST & THE SECOND COMING
JOHN FAIRHURST RICHARD O'FLYNN SAMSON & DELILAH WE ARE WILLOW
ASS - ANDREAS SÖDERSTRÖM THE SHOOK-UPS! MIDWICH ASSEMBLY
JOHN STAMMERS KATHRYN EDWARDS SOPHIE'S PIGEONS STEALING SHEEP

POETS

In Association with Blank Media Collective, The Golden Aubergine presents:
Helen Mort | Matt Panesh (Monkey Poet) | John Leyland | Louise Fazackerly | Annette Cookson
PICO (Puppetual Motion) | Lynn Myint-Muang | Yusra Warsama | Tuheen Huda + more tbc

Static Caravan & Wowie Zowie DJ's (Mel & Goff)



← Scan this into your phone... it's magic!



myspace®

<http://www.theiifestival.co.uk>

<http://www.stubmatic.com/TheIIFestival>



Blank Media Collective Team:

Director: Mark Devereux
Co-Director: John Leyland
Financial Administrator: Martin Dale
Strategic Development Consultant: Chris Maloney
Development Coordinators: Dwight Clarke, Elaine Mateer & Jez Dolan
Community Arts & Learning Coordinators: Chris Leyland & Jo Foxall
Communications Coordinators: Stephanie Graham, Shahram Agha-Kasiri & Dan English
Information Manager: Sylvia Coates
Volunteer Coordinator: Matt Hughes
Website Designer: Simon Mills & Henry Roberts
Exhibition Curators: Mark Devereux, Jamie Hyde, Marcelle Holt, Taneesha Ahmed, Kate Charlton, Peter Fallon, Beth Kwant, Sophie Barnes & Rose Barraclough
Moving Image Curator: Christina Millare
Documentary Filmmakers: Charalampos Politakis & Insa Langhorst
BlankMarket Coordinator: Michael Valks
Official Photographers: Gareth Hacking & Iain Goodyear

blankpages Team:

Editor: John Leyland
Editorial Assistant: Catherine Teague
Fiction Editor: Kevin Bradshaw
Poetry Editor: Abigail Ledger-Lomas
Music Editor: Baz Wilkinson
Visual Editors / Designers: Henry Roberts & Michael Thorp

