

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS (EST. 2009)

APPLIED GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT RESEARCH INTERDISCIPLINARY / MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIO

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RESEARCH EFFORTS, INITIATIVES, AND EVENTS.

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS

Established in 2009, the **CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS** is a Canadian organization dedicated to the development of applied grief and bereavement research. Documented through the use of practice-based/led methods within art and comprised of work from an interdisciplinary network of creative and technical practitioners; the CENTRE is committed to the advancement of the arts and sciences; providing programming in support of education; public and professional engagement; and the development of field research in partnership with local, national, and international academic bodies, institutions, foundations, and non-profits.

RESIDENCY & PUBLIC PROGRAMMING:

As part of our effort to support the production of research and public programming; the month-long residency program encourages experimentation and the development of multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary studio work grounded in research within the field of grief and bereavement. The program aims to provide working artistic professionals with a platform for research, production, and supports emerging and established artistic professionals/researchers working in any discipline. The work can encompass and explore varying physical and emotional processes (or loss) that people undergo.

LONDON AUTUMN 2018

IN THE BIRD'S MOUTH

This Autumn 2018 the **CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS** is proud to host international interdisciplinary artists **Catherine Bell** (AU), **Tess Cassidy** (UK), **Kristen Roles** (US), **Diane Rosenblum** (US), **Elyssa Sykes-Smith** (AU), and **Lauren Altman** (US).

The artists in residence used this intensive period to navigate relationships of materiality and meaning, skimming surfaces and dwelling below them to map grieving processes mutably and mutually. In the Bird's Mouth is the culmination of this time and a point of pause in ongoing praxes.

In To Grieve, Will Daddario engages the metaphor of a Rumi poem to consider malleability and attentiveness in "allowing (oneself) to acquire a new shape" in the wake of loss. Daddario offers, "The answer tucked away here determines that we must let go of questions like how and embrace, instead, 'this is.' This is how it is...To scrutinize grief as one observes the bird on the minaret is to locate the secret in the bird's mouth...Acceptance is the hair that the bird carries." Emancipating private and communal reflection on ones' final resting place; Catherine Bell investigates death as a provocation for creative practice and creative practice as a provocation to discuss death. Through ritual visceral mark making, Tess Cassidy explores a deep embodied loss which cannot be said, and the memories which cannot be remembered; a process which ultimately grapples with the sharing of private, solitary emotions. The work is an act of allowing. In the translation of memories (infinite renegotiations of a finite archive), Kristen Roles is grappling with dissolution as an avenue of constant becoming, and becoming as a form of acceptance. Diane Rosenblum works through grief, replaying conversations with her mother and other family members in the abstract language of her ink brush drawings. Like distilled EKGs, the drawings map the striations of a now vanished territory, recording its reverberations in memory. Questioning the perception and psychology of place Elyssa Sykes-Smith enquires into dissociative experiences, linked to trauma and grief, by utilising sensory exploration and architectural metaphors. Lauren Altman is exploring emotional and physical sites of memory. She is developing new and ongoing insights into processes of loss and looking, finding meaning in active remembrance.

Collectively, through introspection and exchange, we peer into the bird's mouth.

Works installed and artists present.

CATHERINE BELL (AU)

Web: <http://www.suttongallery.com.au> (artists profile) | Contact: catherine.bell@acu.edu.au

Dr Catherine Bell is a multi-disciplinary artist and Associate Professor teaching visual art in the Faculty of Education and Arts, Australian Catholic University. She holds a BA (Art History & English Literature) from the University of Queensland, Bachelor of Visual Arts (Sculpture) from Queensland University of Technology, MFA (Sculpture) from RMIT University, DPhil (Fine Art) from Monash University, and was a research fellow at the Ruskin School of Fine Art, Oxford University (2001-02). Her creative-led research is focused on rendering the lived experience visible, the role of the artist in the archive and healthcare setting, art on the margins, socially-engaged, participatory and relational art practices, redefining the female in contemporary society and challenging taboos surrounding death and dying. Recent art in health projects involve implementing collaborative activities in community contexts that explore cultural responses to death and the dying. Concentrating on the nexus between art and social practice, Bell emphasises the role the site or location plays in the inception, creation, and execution of the communal creativity. She is represented by Sutton Gallery, Melbourne. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council its arts funding and advisory body.

STATEMENT

The body of work speculates on the commemorative dimensions of death, as embodied in socially-engaged artistic processes and ephemeral materials. I use floral oasis foam because it is integral to making flower arrangements that commemorate the cycles of life, and celebratory milestones between birth and death. The body, like the floral oasis foam, presents the paradox of contained and container at once. On a miniature scale it is a souvenir of death, a signifier of our impending death, and a reminder of our bodies metaphorical associations to material objects. The art workshops organised in hospice settings with palliative care staff, are designed to promote meaningful reflection and healthy discussion about death and dying. The vessels produced are an abstraction of the body and amplify its signifying capacity. The body, like a vessel, is constantly filled and emptied. This metaphor resonates with a recent exhibition titled, Roman Dead at Museum of London where cremated remains of Roman Londoners, contained

in ceramic and glass urns, have been emptied out and displayed alongside excavated human skeletons, surrounded by numerous containers.

The construction of the vessel marks the transformation of meaning into materiality. The dust that accumulates during their creation is collected and re-configured. Or in the case of the workshops it is taken away, so the participant can reflect on their final resting place, go there, scatter the dust, and send me an image of this location. The ritualistic disposal of the dust, or miniature vessels in cemeteries, alongside marble urns decorating abandoned graves, reinforces temporality in everyday life.

Catherine Bell's work has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council (its arts funding and advisory body).



WORKS

Catherine Bell

Final Resting Place (Outcome of the 'Facing Death Creatively Participatory Workshop' at St Christopher's Hospice)

Biodegradable floral oasis foam

Dimensions Variable

2018

Cemetery Souvenirs

Florist oasis foam

Dimensions Variable

2018

Foam to Form

Florist oasis foam

Dimensions Variable

2018

Foam to Flesh

Florist oasis foam

Dimensions Variable

2018

TESS CASSIDY (UK)

Web: tesscassidy.co.uk | Contact: 19tess95@gmail.com

Tess Cassidy is a UK based interdisciplinary artist working predominately in silversmithing, location based making, writing and drawing. Recently graduated from Glasgow School of Art with a Masters in Research, her previous work, which embraces aspects of Art Therapy, is collaborative and participant focused. Exploring what it means to bring a physical and labour intensive process into a mutually inclusive conversation with loss, her practice involves creating symbolic jewellery for and with collaborators as a means by which to help one live with the inevitable highs and lows of loss. Rather than fighting to get over it.

The processes used, and the work created during the one month residency have allowed for self reflection and exploration. This marks a step away from her participant based work, and aims to challenge the ethos of communication design and social science research Tess has previously studied. The residency has offered a space by which to grow and explore undiscovered corners of her own practice.

STATEMENT

The work is a physical expression of the visceral experiences of living with an ungraspable loss. The works of emotive mark making and written work, embody the lack of comprehension and frayed memory of my mothers life, and the period surrounding her death when I was just eight years of age. Devising a process in which to sit with these deep bodily emotions has resulted in the production of two ritualistic scores which when read, provide a release of the unsayable, ineffable and unrepresentable aspects of a fragmented loss; they instigate an all encompassing, climatic release of built up emotion.

Initial line drawings produced while listening to emotive music express my physical reaction to grief; its tight knots of explosive pencil marks. These are then compiled together and traced as a mode by which to question what extent the process of working within the empty space around these marks is an act of learning. Learning of what to share about ones loss, and what to keep private. The time shared on the residency has become a way for me to learn to talk with others about my own loss, a dialogue I have previously denied.

WORKS

'Throb around it, because of it'

'Throb around it because of it: Score one'

Ink, paper, pen

280cm x 100cm

2018

'Throb around it, because of it: Score two'

Ink pen on paper

Dimensions Variable

2018

KRISTEN ROLES (US)

Web: kristenroles.com | Contact: kristen@kristenroles.com

Kristen Roles (b.1992, US) is currently coming to terms with constructive uncertainty in Columbia, SC after completing her MFA from the University of New Mexico in May, 2018. The pictures, words, and other vessels of her ongoing body The Same Impossible have been shared recently at Graft, Small Engine, and 516 Arts in Albuquerque; David Richard and Form & Concept in Santa Fe; and featured online and in print by Aint-Bad, Palm* Studios, The Skinned

Knee Collective, Don't Smile, Photo-Emphasis, Der Greif, Oranberg Press, and Lenscratch. She was a resident of CON/TEXT with the School of Making Thinking in NY in 2017 and Stormwater Studios in SC in 2018, a visiting artist at the Glasgow School of Art this October, and will be an instructor of photography/visual communication at the University of South Carolina in the spring.

She hopes you'll visit cargocollective.com/jaroslawstudencki to keep alive the work of a brilliant artist/human with whom she shared too little time in this world.

STATEMENT

Do overlapping echoes interrupt or make one another more whole? Since my former partner ended his own life in March of 2015, my practice has been centered about and from the places of measured breathing between preservation and adaptation. As I take these sometimes-too-careful, often under-observed breaths, I generate acts of interruption. Here, conversations between my now-self and the cobbled, fallible records of a then-self's memories are recontextualized via transcribing, freezing, breaking, melting, and the concurrent voices of others. As I pore over the insufficient archive of a life that irrevocably changed mine, I consider the affective potentialities of material as a scrim between protection and access. Here, I print iPhone photos on temporary tattoo paper, adhere them to and peel them from my skin, form them into pillows that will refuse to stay inflated, and (inevitably, futilely) continue to breathe. Do overlapping echoes interrupt or make one another more whole? Kristen invites you to participate in her process by taking an ice fragment, allowing it to melt in your hands, and transcribing its contents onto the blank sheet provided.

WORKS

I Don't Know a Thing About You (Suddenly You Are All I Ever Knew) ("Pillows" Iteration)
Inkjet prints on temporary tattoo paper adhered to and peeled from skin, inflated daily with breath
Each ~70cm x 40cm x 20cm inflated
2018

Stay Morning When Not (Residue, Generated)
Ink on soluble paper embedded in ice, audience participation
Dimensions variable
2018

Please help me make new meaning by allowing an ice fragment to melt in your hands and transcribing its contents onto the blank sheet provided

Stay Morning When Not (Residue, Translated)
Poem fragments recorded during previous reciprocal readings, epsom salt on tracing paper
60cm x 41cm
2018

I Enjoyed Reading Scripture with You Last Night ("Inhale" and "Sigh" process and mock-ups)
Graphite on washi paper, dowel, thread, paint, ice
Each 78cm x 52cm
2018

DIANE ROSENBLUM (US)

Web: dianerosenblum.com | **Contact:** diane@dianerosenblum.com

San Francisco Bay Area artist Diane Rosenblum's art is rigorous, beautiful and intellectually provocative. Her widely shown work in Northern California gallery, museum and design spaces includes five major series in the past decade. Diane was recently an artist in residence at the Takt Kunstprojektraum in Berlin and in the past was an artist in residence at Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, California. As part of the collaborative team R&D (Rosenblum and Doyle), she will be showing a ten meter wide photograph of a painter working, at Ian Stallings Gallery in San Francisco this winter. Other upcoming solo shows include a pop-up presentation of her Golden Drawings in Sun Valley, Idaho in December and an R&D show at St. Mary's College Museum of Art in Moraga, California in the summer of 2019. She graduated from Oberlin College with a B.A in History and Studio Art, and holds an M.S. degree from the Brooks Institute of Photography.

STATEMENT

My recent ink brush drawings are abstract works reflecting the process of transformation that I am now undergoing following the recent death of my mother. This style of drawing, with high contrast vertical lines and experimental brush strokes, arose spontaneously in September during an artist residency in Berlin. Initially I followed the ideas opened up in these drawings through a visual path, where elements of one drawing suggested my approach to the next. Since coming to this London residency, I am working with the same visual language in a different way, making drawings while remembering conversations with my mother and other family members. Fine lines of gold are woven into some of the drawings, while other incorporate thick lines of rich blue, red and green gouache. These works speak to Asian traditions such as Po' Mo (Chinese ink splash painting) and Sumi-e as well as to Process Art and the Bauhaus.

WORKS

Untitled
Ink and gouache on paper
34cm x 24cm (multiple works in series)
2018

ELYSSA SYKES-SMITH (AU)

Web: elyssasykes-smith.com | **Contact:** elyssasykessmith@gmail.com

Elyssa Sykes-Smith works across the fields of site-specific sculpture, installation, performance and public art. The intent to encourage empathy towards the plight of humanity forms the thematic orientation of her practice. Sykes-Smith is passionate about creating artworks in response to architectural and natural environments. Key objectives involve encouraging her audience to experience an environment from an altered perspective and connecting to an artwork through a visceral, embodied response. She approaches sculpture as a multisensory experience that incorporates many forms of media to explore issues of and experiences of humanity and to raise environmental sustainability awareness.

Sykes-Smith aims to pursue a public art practice and career that links Art, Psychology and Neuroscience both through the process of creating and display of artworks. Her practice is widening to include many different forms of immersive media and technology in the future such as sound, moving-image and VR.

STATEMENT

Mind Walk #3: During the residency program I have developed a project prototype for the future implementation of my Mind Walk project that focuses on processing and translating experiences of grief, bereavement and trauma. Mind Walks are sensory performances consisting of guided walking tours, visualisations and workshops with participants to facilitate intuitive interactions between the subject, myself, architectural locations, psychological states and artistic material prompts. Through sight deprivation subjects have an opportunity to experience their other senses in a heightened state (i.e. sound, touch, smell), explore their environment from an altered perspective and access their imagination.

The artworks presented depict the outcomes derived from a series of Mind Walks. Disso-

ciative experiences and other psychological spaces are portrayed metaphorically through distorted architectural forms. The artworks invite the viewer to question the perception and psychology of place: Do people create place or places create people? Do places have to exist physically or can they be imaginary?

Mind Walk #3 is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW and Centre for the Study of Substructured Loss.

WORKS

Mind Walk #3 - Drawing Series
Ink on paper
14cm x 15cm (multiple works in series)
2018

Mind Walk #3 - Sculpture Series
Timber and ink
15cm x 15cm x 15cm (multiple works in series)
2018

Mind Walk #3 - Felt-space Installation
Duct tape
Dimensions Variable
2018

*The installation design portrays the result of a direct light being shone through the one of the sculptures displayed. The Duct tape, applied directly to the wall, records where the shadows fell during this process.

LAUREN ALTMAN (US)

Web: laurenaltmanstudio.com | **Contact:** lauren@laurenaltmanstudio.com

Lauren Altman (b. 1988) is an artist based in New York. Her projects explore sites, objects, materials, and archives of memory to address intimacy, attachment, and loss. Through interdisciplinary practice, Altman is interested in finding insights within processes of loss and looking, and finding meaning in active remembrance. Lauren completed her MFA in Interdisciplinary Studio Art from University of Pennsylvania, 2018; her MA in Contemporary Art from Sotheby's Institute of Art, 2011; and her BFA in Communication Design from Parsons School of Design, 2010. Former residencies include Node Center for Curatorial Studies, Berlin, 2011; Ox-Bow School of Art, Michigan, MI, 2016; and Chennai Artist Residency, Chennai, India, 2017. Recent group shows include From Miniscule to Monumental, LIC Arts Open Gallery at The Factory, New York, 2018; Parentheses, David Nolan Gallery New York, 2018; and BUILD/BUILD, Icebox Project Space, Philadelphia, PA, 2018.

STATEMENT

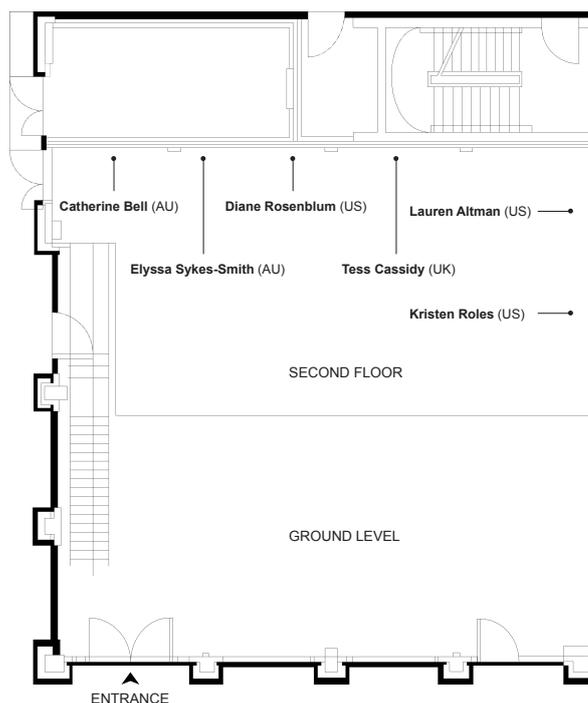
My mother's voice used to pour into the hallway outside her door as she dictated her notes for her legal cases. On many evenings, I would sit down in a chair at her desk to chat as she worked. Her room is now a time capsule, its contents left in the same place she put them before she died. This project explores emotional and physical sites of memory. Through my own work, I'm gaining insights into processes of loss and looking, seeking meaning in active remembrance. During this residency, I've begun to unpack these processes, carving pathways between research and visual documentation of sites that hold memory. What does it mean to write, to look, to speak, to record, to recollect, to remember? Where and what are the branches extending between these processes, and what lies there in that clarity that appears in a fleeting reflection, through an open window?

WORKS

It was one of our battles while I was growing up
Projection installation
Dimensions Variable
2018

LAYOUT

IN THE BIRD'S MOUTH



*Special thank you to CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS staff; Joss Taylor; Bow Arts artists and staff; RAW Labs staff; and residents Catherine Bell, Tess Cassidy, Kristen Roles, Diane Rosenblum, Elyssa Sykes-Smith, and Lauren Altman for their contributions and efforts.

