

An Exhibition of Contemporary Art in Open Media

Private View: 25 October 6pm–8pm

Participation Saturday: 27 October 10am–4.30pm

A day of participatory events with the artists, curator and public

For more information and booking details please visit:

www.ires.org.uk/participation

An exploration of participation and where it begins – yourself

26–30 October 2007

10am–4.30pm

@ The Poly
Church Street
Falmouth
TR11 3EG



PARTICIPATION

Participate: *(verb)* to take part, be or become actively involved, or share (in)

Collins English Dictionary

This exhibition would like to invite you to explore the place where the process of participation begins – yourself.

Why do you engage intellectually and/or physically in any given situation, event, community or network? What do you take from it? What is produced through your act of participation? With participation and inclusion high on the political and social agenda, the question is: why do we decide to participate?

Participation, interaction and collaboration have all been important concepts in the art of the 20th century. Artist Marcel Duchamp was among those who expressed the idea that the work is made complete by the audience's interaction and their decision to participate. Connections between the artwork, the artist and the audience have also been explored in the work of groups like Fluxus and the art 'happenings' of the late '50s and early '60s. More recently, relational artists such as Rikrit Tirivaniija have attempted to explore social relations based on everyday activities such as cooking and eating within a gallery context.

Participation and collaboration are now increasingly part of our behaviour on the internet, with websites such as 'YouTube' and 'MySpace' giving millions of users the opportunity to publish their own videos, music and photos online. Similarly, user driven content is an integral part of sites such as 'Wikipedia' and the now ubiquitous phenomena of on-line diaries or 'blogs'. With this exhibition, the use of (new) media such as computer/ internet, as well as video and installation art, gives the public an opportunity to compare differences in participation between on-line and off-line approaches and explore different degrees of active engagement in the works on show.

We invite you to explore your personal decision to participate. Feel free to experiment with your own process of engagement or disengagement; explore the rules of participation proposed by the artists within each of the works and investigate the protocols involved.

Magdalena Tyżlik-Carver

Curator and Research Assistant for the iRes research cluster at University College Falmouth

AN INVITATION

This exhibition follows the development of participatory practice in contemporary art with selected works by artists based in and around University College Falmouth. The various works seek audience participation at different stages and in different forms.

Some works set up situations in which the activity performed or undertaken by the public completes the process, as in 'Apparatus' by Brendan Byrne or 'Return Journey' by Sarah Matthews.

A different model of participation is required in 'Bind', by Chantal Brooks, who invited people to work with her on creating a 3D installation from objects donated by friends and relatives. Likewise, the contribution of the audience is integral to 'Sacred and Mundane' by Jason Cleverly, who has created a stage in the form of a Victorian mantle clock to display objects brought in by the public – with an invitation to play and participate.

'Peepshow' by Susan Corke and the iterative video installation 'Vanishing Points: Person, Place, Mediation' by Jane Bailey, present a more traditional opportunity for contemplation of art by the viewer, with an invitation to participate by responding emotionally, intellectually or intuitively to the artwork.

Ana Carvalho's 'Diaries Book Volume 2' and 'Legend of King Arthur' by Jem Mackay both use the internet as a space to enable participation, either by using a blog (online diary) as a tool to develop the work or as a place to distribute the work and open it up to collaboration.

Technology plays an important part in two further pieces in the exhibition. 'Private View: The Nature of Visual Process' is a collaboration between an artist, Robin Hawes, and a scientist, Dr. Tim Hodgson, which has enabled participants to create their own unique versions of an artwork, simply by contemplating the original.

Ana Carvalho, Tim Shear and Pedro Lima have collaborated on 'Journeys Through Time & Space'. It is an audio-visual installation that allows the viewer to participate directly via a specially designed dance floor, forming a collective live audio-visual experience, previously only delivered by VJs and DJs confined to a booth or stage.

With this exhibition we hope to invite the audience to critically consider participation in the context of engagement and active involvement with the presented works.

WORKSHOPS

Further ways to participate

During the exhibition we will be staging various workshops and participatory events which are open to the general public. For further information and booking details about these events, please visit:

www.ires.org.uk/participation

JANE BAILEY

Vanishing Points: Person, Place, Mediation

Vanishing Points is a video installation of semi-contrived interactions between person, place and camera. Jane uses video as a catalyst to creative interaction with places. In this work, points of separation and connection are drawn out, producing gaps in which the viewer can wander. Jane is interested in exploring the quieter, less visible forms of participation which may occur in these 'gaps' and 'spaces'.

Jane Bailey is a practising artist and lecturer who has recently completed an MA in Contemporary Visual Arts at University College Falmouth. Jane develops her work through collaboration and process-focused investigation. While collaboration remains central, her recent focus has been on a more personal exploration of the relations between person and place, and the potential of portable technology to shape them. Recent work includes LAND, a video commission by Croydon Clocktower, made in collaboration with Ze Tuba.

CHANTAL BROOKS

Bind

Bind is a structure based on the idea of a 'quilt' using deconstructed objects given by friends. Each object represents a person, experience or place. The binding represents the relationship or response to the person, place, etc. resulting in a construction of physical evidence of memory and complex relationships, be they transient or lasting.

Chantal is a practising artist who has exhibited her work at the Eden Project; County Hall Truro; the Salt Gallery, Hayle; Open Studios 2004 to 2007 and more recently as part of 'More Cornwall'. Chantal is also a BA Fine Art student at University College Falmouth.

BRENDAN BYRNE

Apparatus

Apparatus is the result of multiple determinants in the ideas Brendan has been researching and making for many years. These works explore the theory and praxis of power through the structured subjectivity of the viewer and of the artist himself. Exploring ideology from an ontological perspective, this is a construct of late Capitalist individuality and the amazing fact that, against all the odds, humans love to work together.

The work uses an Open Source authoring environment called Pure Data. Using multiple versions of the same work, users can compose imagery and sound together.

Brendan Byrne is a practising artist and academic at University College Falmouth. His current artwork combines his own individual practice, research and numerous collaborative projects with an international profile. Thematically his work questions relationships between technology and identity in Capitalism. Visit www.anotherday.org.uk and www.vjtheory.net

ANA CARVALHO

Diaries Book Volume 2

Diaries Book Volume 2 is a celebration of daily life, women's achievements, fictional biography and areas of knowledge where empiricism is as important as experimentalism.

Through this work, established rules and fiction are used in the construction of the author's daily life, within a certain time-frame. A made-up story, for instance, will become reality by living it, raising questions about truth(s). Self-hypnosis and numerology, as selected areas of knowledge, will be used as ways of knowing, understanding and possibly changing reality.

Diaries Book Volume 2 seeks active participation during the process of making the work as well as in its finished format at the exhibition. The rules are not fixed, the work changes itself as it unfolds and the outcomes are left open as much as possible. See www.diaries-book.org/volume2/

For Ana's biography see her collaborative project with Tim Shear below.

JASON CLEVERLY

Sacred and Mundane

An artefact in the form of a Victorian mantle clock is a stage via which visitors can select and display ephemera and small objects, perhaps of personal significance or of aesthetic value. The image of these objects in close-up, is revealed by the screen replacing clock's face via a camera installed inside. The artist thus attempts to render the mundane significant by its display on an ornamental domestic structure. The work however can only be accomplished through the contribution of the public.

Jason Cleverly is course leader of BA(Hons) Contemporary Crafts at University College Falmouth. Building upon his background in the applied arts, Jason has become increasingly interested in the design and development of site-specific, interactive installations. He has exhibited extensively at major international exhibitions and museums including S.O.F.A., Chicago (2001); the Hunt Museum, Limerick Ireland (2003); Shipley Art Gallery, Gateshead (2004) and The Museum of the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham (2006).

SUSAN CORKE

Peepshow

Susan's work is concerned with the dramatisation of space, the constructions and illusions of peepshows, stage magic and scenery. She is curious about the role of the imagination and the complicity of the audience in suspending disbelief.

In the 19th century many devices of popular and home entertainment like toy theatres and peepshows used printed illustrations to create representations of actual stage shows, exotic places and famous events. In these now antiquated enclosed spaces of entertainment, with their fixed viewpoints, Susan finds a mixture of enchantment, mystery and voyeurism. Though

looking through an aperture or lens emphasises the act of looking, are we always conscious of our crucial role in creating the vision before us?

For most of her career Susan Corke has worked in the media within both the print and digital publishing industries. She's previously studied digital arts and this year graduated from the MA Illustration Authorial Practice at University College Falmouth.

ROBIN HAWES & DR TIM HODGSON

Private View: The Nature of Visual Process

Robin Hawes' recent art practice has revolved around the ways in which evolution and the human brain have shaped the nature of our internal experience; our understanding of the external world and the influence this has in determining a common notion of 'reality'.

In collaboration with Dr. Tim Hodgson, senior lecturer in Cognitive Neuroscience at the School of Psychology, University of Exeter, the project has combined knowledge and technology from the visual sciences with a series of photographic images produced as part of Robin's art practice.

This project aimed to look at a particular element of the human visual system, that of saccades – the staccato eye movements we each make whilst scanning and exploring the visual scene before us. In examining the processes undertaken by the eye in providing sensory data to the brain, the project highlights the internally constructive and idiosyncratic aspect of visual perception, and reveals the disparity between the visual information gathered by our eyes and the conscious picture of reality formed in our minds.

Robin Hawes' art practice is inspired by his fascination for psychology. He is a designer and artist; an MA graduate in Contemporary Visual Arts at Falmouth and works part-time as research assistant for RANE (Research in Art, Nature and Environment) at University College Falmouth.

JEM MACKAY

Legend of King Arthur

In an age of reproduction, most people are familiar with the idea of 'the complete story'. People buy stories, they buy books or watch films. They all have fixed beginnings, middles and endings. Before the age of print, however, stories were much more fluid. They largely existed in an environment of oral folklore where the story changed as often as the story was told and retold. With this piece, Jem explores the openness of a legend and how it can be applied to stories within our new technologies.

Jem Mackay is currently studying for a PhD at the University of the Arts, London. His practice enquires into the political structures of creative collaboration, particularly looking at the open source model from the field of computer programming and exploring its relevance to the practice of filmmaking.

SARAH MATTHEWS

Return Journey

Using the familiar format of a board game, **Return Journey** explores experiences of nationality and culture, and the possibility of finding a way home.

The board game represents the distance between Sarah's old home in Frankfurt, and her current home in the UK, and proposes that when other people play the game, their intention to win will help her to complete her journey. Will the collective willpower of the players be enough to take the playing pieces to the finish? Visitors are invited to make their own journey games, and leave them in the exhibition for others to play.

Sarah Matthews is currently studying for a BA in Fine Art at University College Falmouth. Her work relates to social constructs such as nationality and performed culture, often taking the form of participatory works, such as games.

ANA CARVALHO, TIM SHEAR & PEDRO LIMA

Journeys Through Time & Space

Journeys Through Time & Space is an audio-visual installation which requires input from the viewer. It will also exist as a performance during the private view of the exhibition.

This work reflects on the action of travelling where arrival and departure are irrelevant. Through the installation, visitors to the exhibition form a collective and ongoing live-jam session, by mixing audio composed by Pedro Lima with visuals by Ana Carvalho via a physical interface developed by Tim Shear. This interactive floor comprises nine tiles which trigger the audio, visual clips and effects. The audience interacts by impacting one or more tiles with their feet, hands or knees.

Ana Carvalho is a visual artist, performer, academic and web designer, born in Porto, Portugal and now living in the UK. She develops work that describes processes of interaction with other people while telling stories that are not entirely fiction or reality. She is co-editor of the project VJ Theory, www.vjtheory.net, and one of four members of Art in Hidden Places of Falmouth.

Ana's web design work can be seen at www.visual-agency.net

Tim Shear is a techie who works in creative environments. Currently working as research technologist for the iRes research cluster at University College Falmouth. His current technical explorations include physical interfaces and mixed reality interactions, while continuing to develop online products using open source technologies.

Pedro Lima is a composer and works as a sound engineer at Centro Cultural de Vila Flor in Guimaraes, Portugal. You can listen to his work at www.myspace.com/perecording

iRes Research in Interactive Art & Design

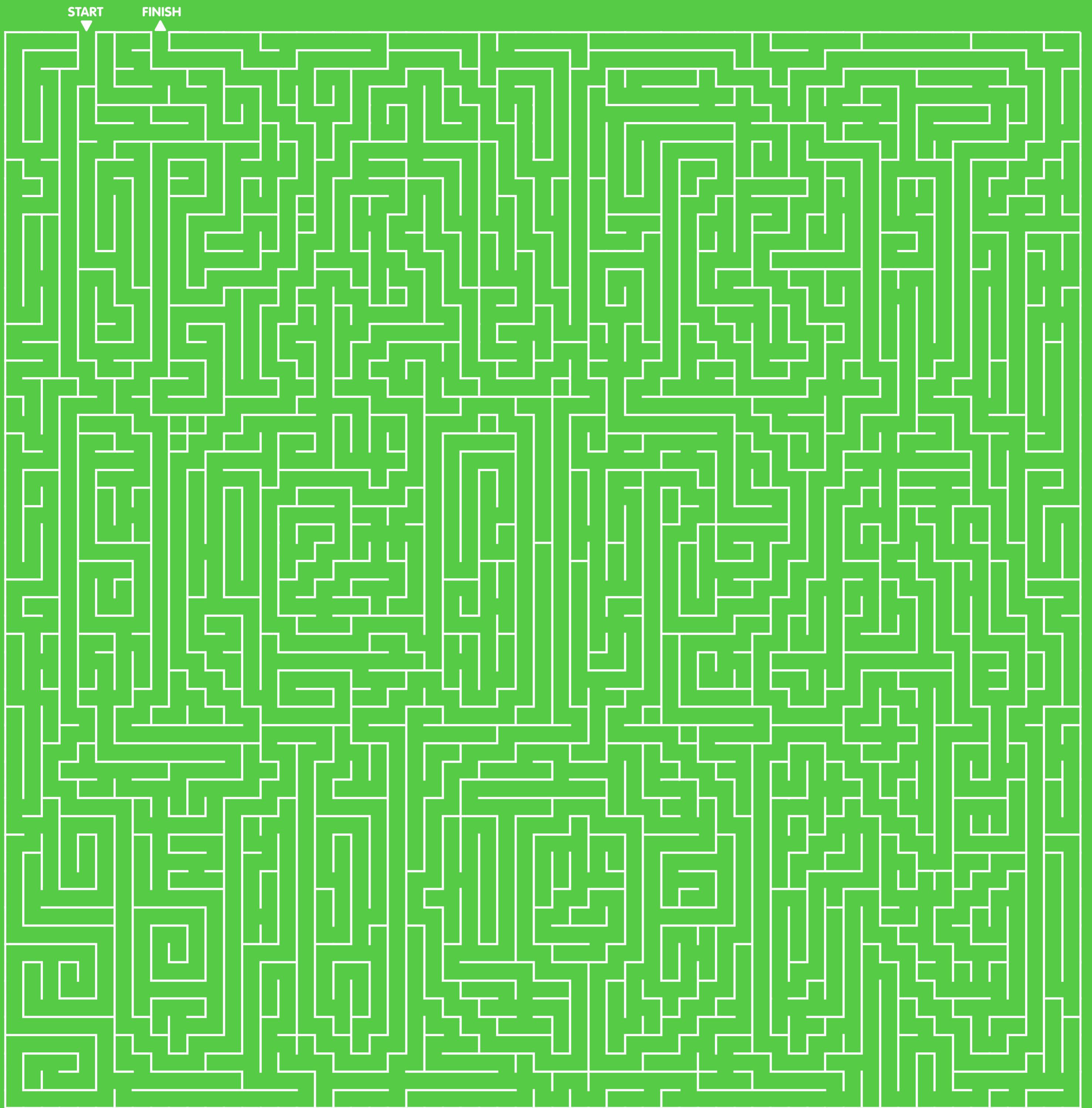
iRes is engaged in critical and interdisciplinary use of new media in researching the relationship between 'network' and 'art'. Participation is part of iRes' activities in the field of new media curating.

University College
FALMOUTH

www.falmouth.ac.uk



Concept & design by Robin Hawes: robin.hawes@mac.com



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