

Professor Steve Swindells

Output number: 2 of 4

Year of Output: 2011

Type of Output: Installation/Exhibition

Title of Output: The Stag and Hound, portfolio submission of Dutton and Swindells collaboration.

Location: Project Space Leeds and Artist Book, Cornerhouse Publishers

Supporting Material:

- i. 'Unspeakable Engagements', The Art Centre, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand (2009)
- ii. Creative Practice/Creative Research Symposium, Unruly Objects, York St. John University (2010)
- iii. 'Summoning the Face of the Other' (2010) New Zealand Film Archive, NZ.
- iv. Animal Spirits' Sugarcube Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden, catalogue 'Sugarpress' ISBN: 978-91-979447 (2011)
- vi. Institute of Beasts, Cornerhouse Publishing, ISBN 978 1 899926 13 5 (2011)



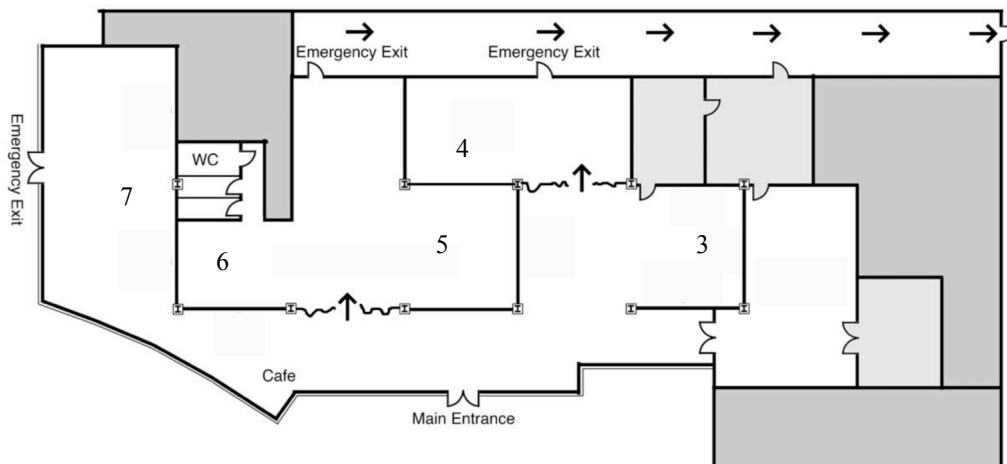
**PSL Gallery 5: Animations, Prints, Ceramics, Paintings, Photographs:
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**

Outline Description

The Stag and Hound exhibition continued to develop the line of enquiry of the 'Institute of Beasts' project, which emerged during a residency at Ssamzie Space Studio's, Seoul, South Korea in 2008. The 'institute' was initially designed as a means to house the 'errant' thoughts and wayward pathologies of Dutton and Swindells. The rationale for the

institute was not a means of deliberate obfuscation, but a reminder of what might be considered the mutability of knowledge.

The 'Stag and Hound' exhibition at PSL (Leeds) was a large installation, which incorporated five gallery spaces featuring over 63 objects. The Stag and Hound exhibition at PSL used all gallery space available in January to April 2011. The galleries used are listed as gallery 3, 3/4, 4/5, 6 and 7. The following is a brief description of some of the 'back-stories', which underpin the production of the work exhibited in each gallery:



PSL Gallery

Gallery 3: DV animation of 3D rotating mutant cyber-dog rotates 360 degree in deep space. The head (half dog, half flashing multi-coloured and multi-faceted sculptural object) is a contemporary creature; simultaneously animal and machine. The sound accompanying the animation is a computer 'reading' of a re-worked text, which was originally written for the Journal of Writing in Creative Practice. Not only is the space itself formed into some kind of collage but the spoken text is also a collision of different approaches and perspectives. A large photograph of Swindell's dog, 'Jack' wears a wolf mask, which sits opposite the pub sign of "The Stag and Hound", painted by Bristol based sign artist, Graeme Robbins.

Gallery 3/4: A wall text appropriates the text of spam e-mails selling 'Viagra'. In order to by-pass spam filters there are certain codes embedded in the text – presentation of the text using font Fette Fraktur on a florescent ground plays on its attempt to exploit issues of impotency. The text reads, *"Town the dust was falling and the great the mystical omomom of the dynamos in the Electriclight room with the housekeeper staring after her in over towards me that lay all wrapped up in an in an ecstasy of heroism that made her almost"* 'End of Ends' is an animation-projection that responds to the PSL architecture as well as to the Stag and Hound installation as a whole. The animation lists all that may end if the world was to come to an end. During the residency period visitors were invited to describe something that would come to an end, which was then incorporated into the animation.

Gallery 5: A set of prints entitled 'Atrocities' re-work a set of photographs representing significant incidents of the 20th Century, including genocide, mass violence

and deprivation. The prints ask questions about the documentary representation of violence but also continue to ask questions about the nature of an image itself. Although the prints appear to represent simple graphic forms, the forms themselves are constructed by 'blanking out' the original image. Some of the prints show small glimpses of the primary image, or at least appear to show signs of a form of surface distress. Atrocities also incorporates a set of photographs of dahlia flower heads, which show a series of hybrids and 'refined' strains like the images themselves. The flower head, despite being in full bloom, is inverted and therefore looking towards the ground as opposed to the sun. The faceted and fractured forms extends to the animation and the broken glass frames may also echo some of the forms of the flowers themselves

An animation/projection of a multi-coloured multi-faceted notional 'head' on a field of a subtly changing spectrum of colours whilst being orbited by three spinning peanut-like satellites. The turning head animation is accompanied by the sound of 'birdsong' which is actually the script of 'The Exorcist', read by a computerized voice then speeded up to sound like a high pitch twitter. In the film 'The Exorcist' William Friedkin used the sound animals on a number of occasions to signify the demon 'Pazuzu'. As well as using the revolving head scene and other devices of inversion, Friedkin reverses animal sounds to signify all that may be unthinkable.

Gallery 5/6: Ceramic monkey-nuts represent equality between beasts as one may feel the same simian act in breaking one open. The monkey nut and the multi-faceted form become repeated elements within the Dutton and Swindells 'institute' project. The forms appear repeatedly in animations, prints and drawings and reflects an interest in complex, dense associations and concepts - which may change according to perspective and context. A sound piece entitled 'Death to the Fascist' repeats on a continuous loop accompanied with a charcoal drawing of the first page of the musical score. 'Death to the Fascist Insect that Preys on the Life of the People' was the revolutionary slogan of the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) of (1974). The sound piece reflects a period of modernist avant-garde and political upheaval. A laser-cut text drawing on organza fabric hangs next to the 'drawing' of the music – the text/drawing spells out the same slogan. A photograph of two almost identical paintings sit under two identical photographs of two love birds sitting on a perch in the studio.

Gallery 7: Two large neon texts, two walls, pink and yellow. What would a 'reverse exorcism' be? By working with light and text in this space the work fills the space with something, to 'summon' rather than 'cast out' and also to signal something to the train travellers across the canal. The neon words are also 'failing' however, being misspelt and incorrectly 'mirrored'.

A sound-piece (8 mins 7 sec /repeated every minute) is created entitled 'Three Word Chant'. The score is created by 'writing' onto a musical software programme, in this case 'three word chant', which then transcribes the texts into musical notation. This work used a political slogan as the 'base' text from which the sound-work is created. The slogan is the 'antichant' of the anti-globalisation movement, a chant which says nothing apart from 'Three Word Chant'. The 'music' drifts across the whole PSL installation without too much negative interference inject something unexpected into the whole project.

The exhibition was extended to last a total of 12 weeks; the first 4 weeks were spent 'in-residence' making the work in-situ and the following 8 weeks was a static exhibition. During the exhibition Dutton and Swindells launched their book 'Institute of Beasts' published by Cornerhouse Publishing, ISBN 978 1 899926 13 5.



**PSL Gallery 5/6: Ceramic Peanut, Sound Work, Textile Laser-Cut:
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



**PSL Gallery 7: Neon Text-Work, Sound-Piece, Textile Embroidery:
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



PSL Gallery 6: Clay-Head Sculpture: 'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011



PSL Café Corridor to Gallery 7: Drawings, Writings, Photographs: 'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011

Process

From the 20th January through to the 15th February Dutton and Swindells worked in-residence at PSL making much of the artwork specific and site-conditional for the space. The exhibition comprised over 63 objects of neon, photographs, paintings, sculptures, wall-texts, flash animations and sound works. Most of the work was made in Dutton and Swindells studio where different pieces of work evolved through the notion of collage and specific cross-reference to specific 'back-stories' and contexts. For example, the sound-piece 'birdsong' is composed of the entire film script of 'The Exorcist' (1973) read by a computerised voice, which is speeded-up 200 times – the result sounds like a small bird twittering.

The approach through the production of the work invokes moving through a dense forest of signs, from one approach or position to the next, which was manifested in unruly groupings and confluences of photographs, sculptures, wall-texts, flash animations and sound works. The process tacitly suggests a realm within which doubt, reticence and inconclusiveness may be privileged over certainty.

Whilst much of the work was made or immediately commissioned a few months prior to the exhibition, the mini-residency stage enabled the public and invited artists and makers to intervene and in some cases interact with the process of making the work. For example, visitors were requested to nominate a 'thing' that would come to an end if the world ended, the results were scripted into the animation entitled 'End of Ends'. Dutton and Swindells also worked closely with the curators of PSL during the production of the work, in particular during the introduction of non-human animals into the gallery and in colouring the gallery walls, which enabled making specific works site-conditional.

Throughout the process of making the exhibition Dutton and Swindells commissioned and collaborated on a number of pieces, which brought more 'members' into the 'institute'. For example, the neon was made in collaboration with a specialist neon technician, the monkey nuts and ceramic sculptures were made by three different ceramicists, Flash animations were made in collaboration with a technical animator, textile embroidery pieces and laser-cuts were made in collaboration with a textile technician and the 'Stag and Hound' pub sign was made by a specialist sign-writer. In all these examples Dutton and Swindells directed and authored all the design and compositional process, including all content, conceptual and contextual underpinning.

Collaboration enabled an interdisciplinary approach to the creative practice, facilitating an open-ended approach to the concept of 'making' in creative practice so there were no restrictions on media, contexts or technical application.



**Installation: Dutton and Swindells Studio,
Preparation for PSL, Paintings, Prints, Sculptures, 2010**



**Installation: Dutton and Swindells Studio.
Preparation for PSL, Paintings, Prints, Reliefs, 2010**



**Installation: Dutton and Swindells Studio.
Preparation for PSL, Paintings, Prints, 2010**



**Installation: Dutton and Swindells Studio.
Preparation for PSL, Photos, Prints, 2010**

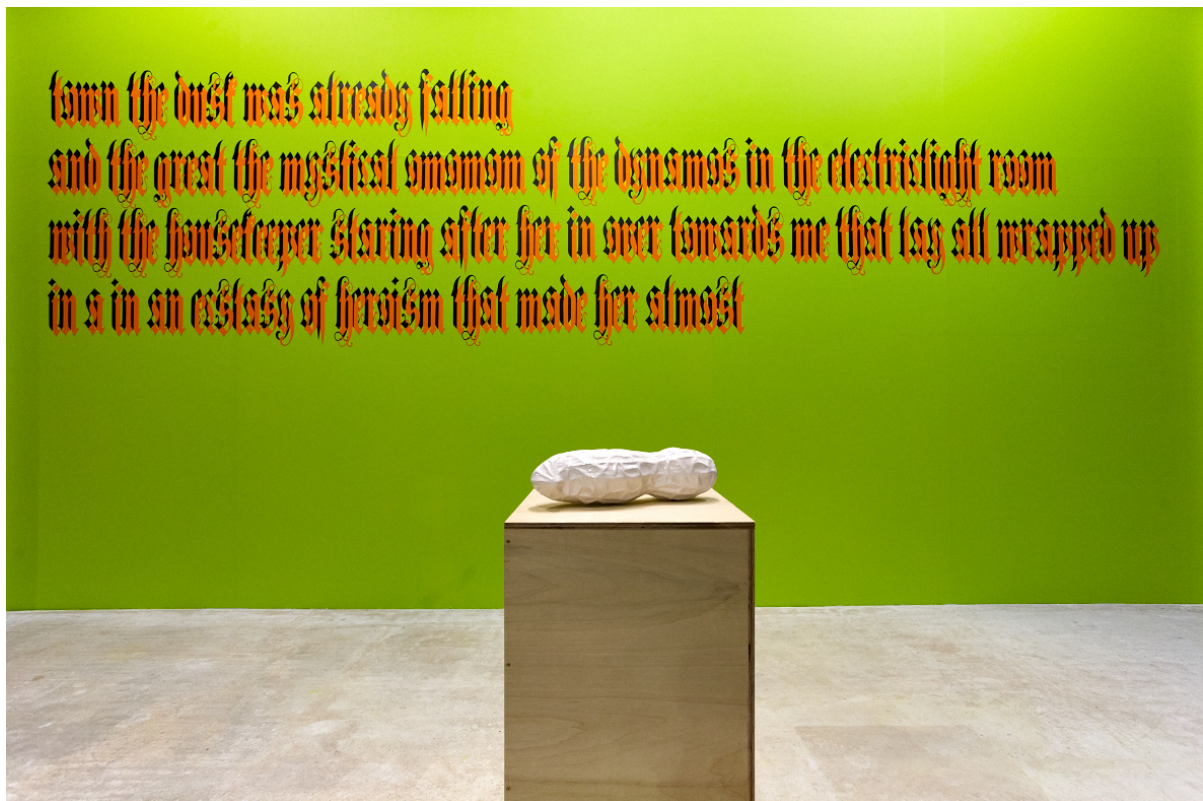
Originality

The exhibition title referenced the stag hunting tapestries in the Cluny Museum, Paris and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The exhibition forms a continuing engagement with the non-human animal, predominantly domestic pets. Though the production and reception of the artwork in the exhibition is likened to encountering a wild animal, with the intention of the artwork retaining its status as a significant Other. Within medieval tapestries hunting dogs symbolically represent human savagery (Helmut Nickel, Curator of Arms and Armour, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1984).

The resulting artwork and exhibition at PSL invoked moving through a dense metaphorical forest of signs, which became analogous to the medieval stag hunt tapestries, where the stag (representing the human condition) is hunted through the forest and killed by a pack of trained dogs. Each phase of the hunt is symbolic to the lifespan of a person, resulting in the death of the stag symbolising one's inevitable end.

In this respect 'The Stag and Hound' exhibition presented the world of the 'institute', its members and audience as living within the cultural excesses of late capitalism, itself a hazardous and unpredictable forest, where beings can function both as subjects who exercise power and objects upon which power is exercised. The politicised references are based on readings of subjectification and resistance (Foucault, 'History of Sexuality', Vol. I, p94-95) and freedom and identity gained through a process of ambivalent and temporal practices (Deleuze and Guattari, 'A Thousand Plateaus', 1980).

In the exhibition the real and symbolic animal of the 'institute' (which includes the artists, artwork and its audience) will only attain agency and avoid capture from the hunt by embodying something unclassifiable, a force of something else, 'a wild thing that has yet to be broken in, broken down or assimilated' ('Moves Toward the Incomprehensible Wild', Cocker 2010).

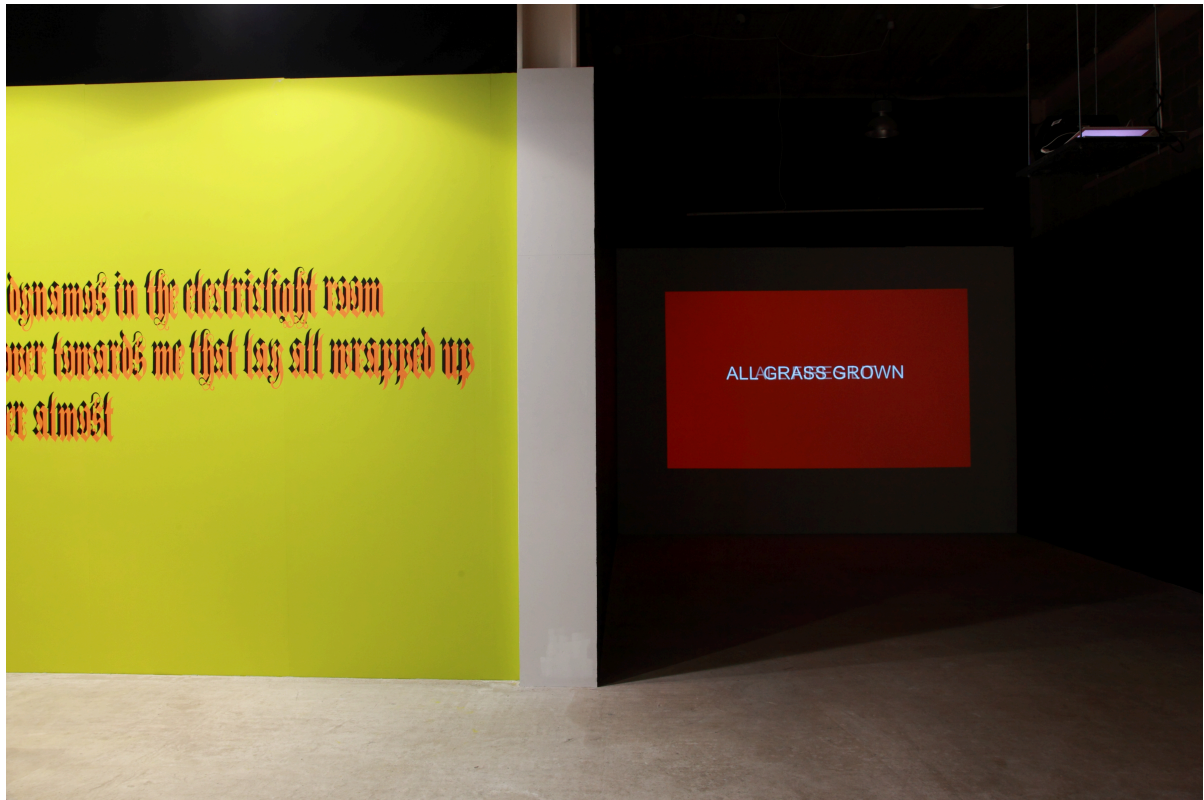


**PSL Gallery 3: Wall Drawing, Ceramic Peanut
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**

Rigour

The catalyst for this research commenced in 2009 during the exhibition 'Unspeakable Engagements', The Art Centre, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand. Following this exhibition Dutton and Swindells presented a peer reviewed conference paper at 'Creative Practice / Creative Research Symposium, York St. John University in 2010 under the stream for 'Unruly Objects II' chaired by Professor Steve Baker (The Postmodern Animal, 2000). Within this conference paper the artists highlighted their encounter and co-existence within the studio with non-human animals, in particular reference was made to Derrida's essay, 'The Animal That Therefore I Am' (1997), in which he proposed animals have the capacity to interrupt one's sense of existence and have the capacity to inaugurate ethical and political encounters.

During 2010 Dutton and Swindells engaged in the continued production and preparation of artwork for The Stag and Hound, which involved readings of a number of publications to underpin conceptual development; publications included 'When Species Meet', Donna Harroway, 2008 and 'Why Look at Animals' in *About Looking*, John Berger, 1980. The significance of the theories and sensibilities radically tested within the studio provoked unexpected intensities and new formations in the gallery installation; it is this respect that the process and reception of the artwork in the exhibition is akin to encountering a wild animal, standing as something alien to human consciousness.



**PSL Gallery 3/4: Wall Text, Text Animation
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**

In addition, as a process of developing and furthering the concepts for the Stag and Hound, Swindells was represented as a solo artist in two group exhibitions: the first exhibition entitled 'Summoning the Face of the Other' at New Zealand Film Archive, Auckland, NZ (12th March to 17th April 2010). The second exhibition entitled 'Animal Spirit' was at Sugarcube Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden (7th January to 6th February 2011). In both these exhibitions Swindells continued with the theories and line of enquiry of the 'Institute of Beasts' project but created all the artwork as a solo artist. The Animal Spirit exhibition was also accompanied by a one-day symposium at The Royal Institute of Art Stockholm in which Swindells gave a paper on 'The Question of the Animal in Contemporary Art'.



PSL Gallery 4: Text Animation
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011



PSL Gallery 3: Photograph
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011



**PSL Gallery 3: Photograph, Animation, Sound Piece, Pub Sign,
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



**PSL Gallery 3: Animation, Sound Piece,
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



Artists Talk, 10TH March, 'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011



**Gallery 6: Wall Text, Clay-Head Sculptures
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



**Gallery 6: Clay-Head Sculpture
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



**Gallery 5: Ceramic Peanuts
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



**Gallery 5/6: Laser-cut textile, Drawing, Sound Piece, Ceramic Peanut
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



**Gallery 7: Neon Text (detail)
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011**



Gallery 7: Neon Text
'Stag and Hound', Project Space Leeds, 2011

Significance

Following the exhibition Dutton and Swindells were long-listed for The Northern Art Prize in 2011 and their work was reviewed by Emma Cocker, in *Art + Research Journal*, Vol 4. No. 1. Summer 2011, ISSN 1752-6388. The exhibition also featured in *Guardian Guide*, by Robert Clarke, *Guardian Newspaper*, Saturday 26th February and *A-N Magazine*, March 2011. Dutton and Swindells were also represented on 'Meet the Artists', *axis: the online resource* (www.axisweb.org). Swindells also presented the work of Dutton and Swindells at 'Pavel Buchler's Tuesday Talk', 1st February 2011, at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester.

The development of this research resulted in exhibitions in the UK and overseas, presenting a context between human and non-human animal as a creative co-existence. The interactivity included affect, alliance and contagion between beings that are normally distinguished as being either 'human' or 'animal', but within the 'institute' and the making of *The Stag and Hound*, practice and life required a method in which all beings are not approached in familiar anthropocentric terms.

The international basis of *The Stag and Hound* highlights different terms and contexts for understanding common anxieties. Overall theories and sensibilities developed in one part of the world were radically tested in another, provoking unexpected intensities and new formations in a continued line of enquiry. In the making of the work the continued co-habitation with domestic non-human animals ('pets') enabled what Mark Rowlands

describes as an existential flexible space ('The Philosopher and the Wolf: Lessons from the Wild on Love, Death and Happiness', Rowlands, Granta, 2008), in which humans and non-human animals co-exist and evolve through interactive pathologies.

Invite Card



Media Features



Guardian Guide, by Robert Clarke
Guardian Newspaper, Saturday 26th February

www.theagencygallery.co.uk
www.chisenhale.org.uk
www.contemporaryartsociety.org

www.projectsaceleeds.org.uk
www.kettlesyard.co.uk
www.ngca.co.uk
www.airspacegallery.org



- 1 Ant Macari, *Ruach HaShem*, Installation shot from Zoo, 2009.
- 2 Dutton and Swindells, *Faculty*, 90x65cm, photograph mounted on acrylic sheet, 2010.
- 3 David Blandy, *Duels and Dualities – Battle of the Soul*, computer game on arcade machine, 2011. Courtesy: the artist, Seventeen Galleru, London.

www.southsquarecentre.co.uk



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UNSPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

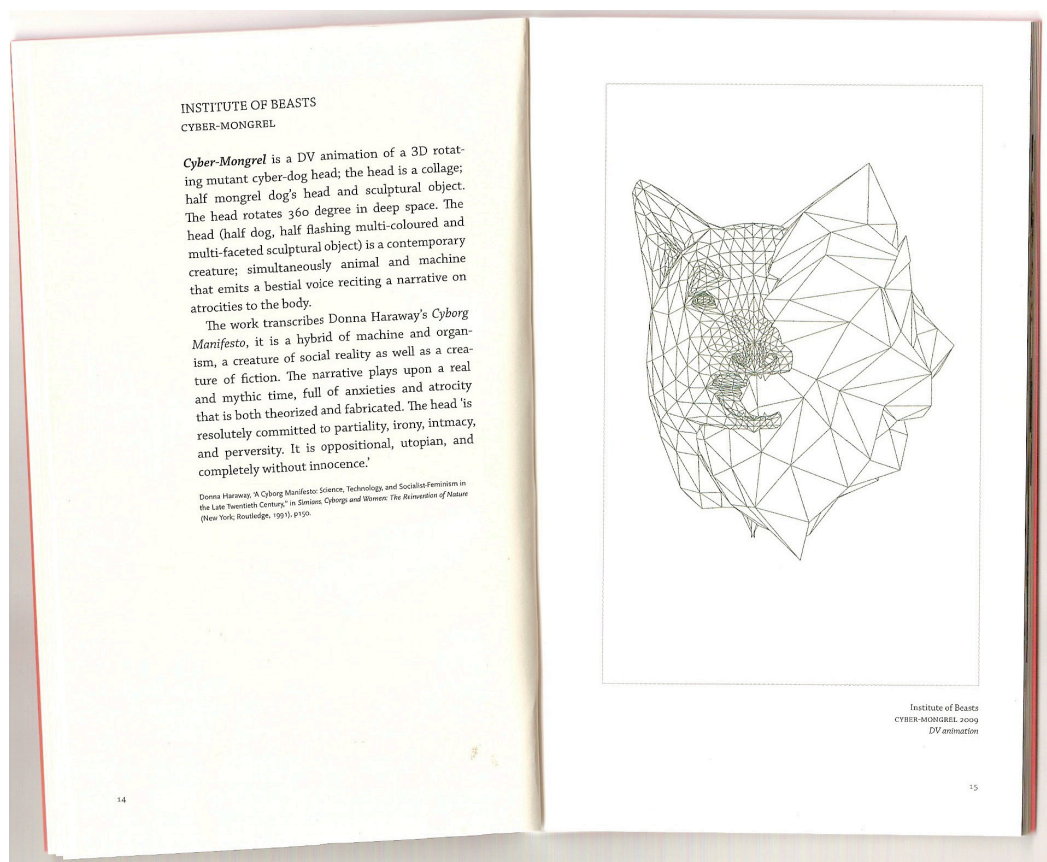
The Art Center of Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. August 27th – September 26th 2009

&

Lanchester Gallery, School of Art and Design, Coventry University, UK
February 1st – March 3rd 2010

Within this exhibition Dutton and Swindells featured under the pseudonym of the 'Institute of Beasts'. In this exhibition Dutton and Swindells created the first prototype DV animation of 3D rotating mutant cyber-dog head that rotates 360 degree in deep space. The head (half dog, half flashing multi-coloured and multi-faceted sculptural object) is a contemporary creature; simultaneously animal and machine like.

Unspeakable Engagements explored the processes of physical and/or durational engagement as a means of constituting an artwork. The work addressed the awareness of a body in relation to time and space. At issue were questions of how such awareness can be cultivated, felt, represented and ultimately proliferated through the work of art. Overall the exhibition proposes a detailed understanding of major questions within international contemporary art practices - *who does what, how, when, and to whom* – and consequently links theoretical debates about the intersection of performance and performativity to more recent critical issues of relational or participatory art.



Exhibition publication featuring the prototype drawing for 'Cyborg-Mongrel' DV animation.

**Summoning the Face of the Other, New Zealand Film Archive,
Auckland, NZ. 12th March to 17th April 2010**

THE FILM ARCHIVE

Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua The New Zealand Film Archive

February 18, 2010

Dr Steve Swindells
Reader in Creative Practice, Research Leader
School of Art, Design and Architecture
University of Huddersfield
Queensgate
HD1 3DH

Dear Steve,

This letter is to confirm you have been invited to exhibit your work at New Zealand Film Archive in the exhibition, *Summoning the Face of the Other and the Excellence Experiment*.

The exhibition also features the work of Amanda Newall.

The dates of the exhibition are 12th March to 17th April 2010. The private view is on Thursday 11th March 2010.

The gallery will cover the following costs: exhibition text, signage, publicity, marketing, private view night refreshments, invigilation and gallery on-costs.

The artists are responsible for the following: material and production costs for artworks, transport of artworks for exhibition set-up (incl. travel insurance) and technical equipment hire for the display of the artworks.

We look forward to the exhibition and working with you.

Yours sincerely

Siobhán Garrett
Auckland Operations

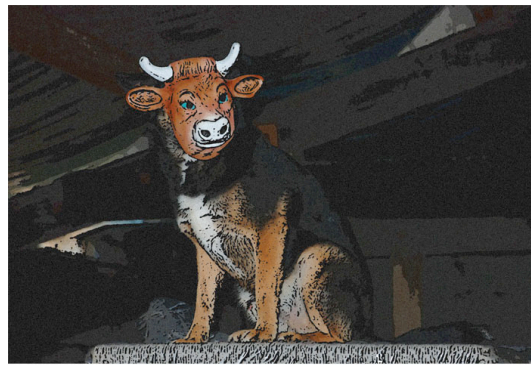
Siobhan@iprolink.co.nz / +64 09 379 0628

Outline Description

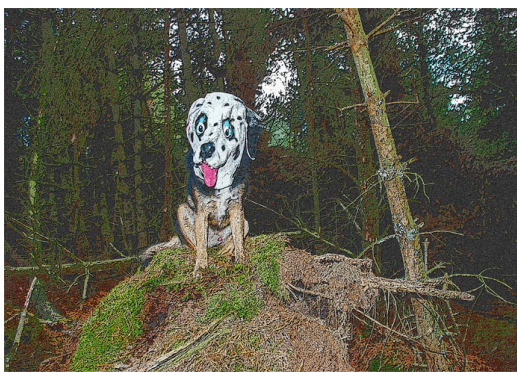
The exhibition featured Swindells and Amanda Newall. Swindells presented a series of 10 lithographic-style prints of a dog with different collaged heads. The series represents an open-ended narrative of a dog wandering through a forest, oscillating between being pursued and in-pursuit of something unknown. Each mask provides a different emotion and/or representation of the dog. It was during the production of this work that the interest in the stag hunt tapestries in Paris and New York started to emerge. The following is an example of four of the prints; each print was framed and measured 21 x 30cm, which included the caption in Frette Fraktur.



Institute of Beasts fig. 1



Institute of Beasts fig. 3

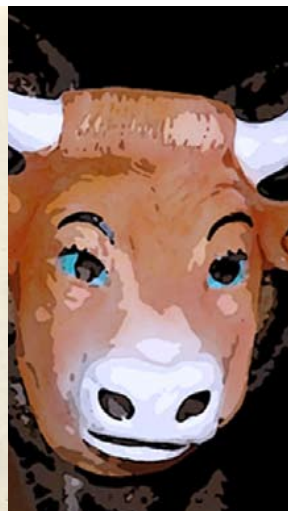


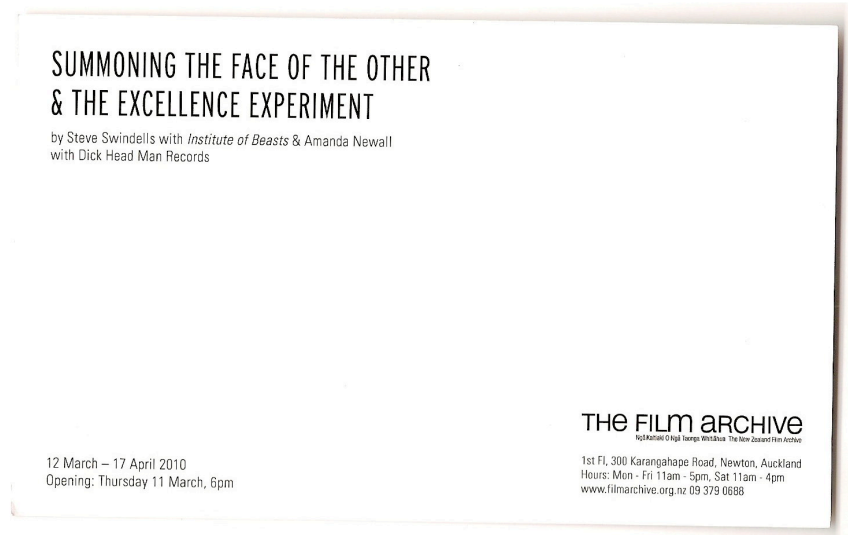
Institute of Beasts fig. 6



Institute of Beasts fig. 9

Summoning the Face of the Other - Invite Card



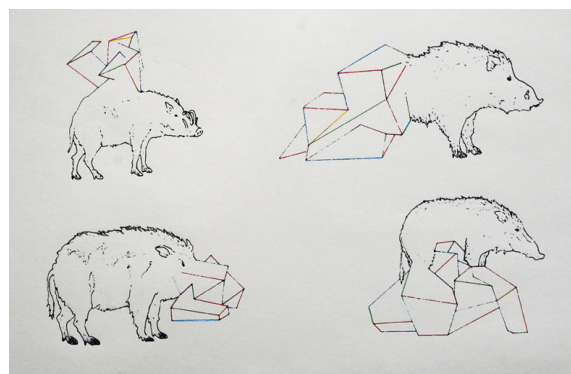


Summoning the Face of the Other - Invite Card

Animal Spirits, Sugarcube Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden, 7th January to 6th February 2011

Outline Description

The exhibition featured two framed collaged-drawings incorporating a number of prints, drawings, texts, textile and photographs. The drawings compose different elements of ritual/performance, reliquary/votive object to summon or encounter an 'animal spirit'. In themselves the two drawings are also reminiscent of a mini-installation, involving different ideas, contexts and materials clashing and cross-referencing each other. Each drawing was framed and measured 24 x 32cm.



Preparatory drawings for the final two collaged drawings



Two framed drawings measuring 24 x 32cm.



Animal Spirits I, (Group exhibition)
Sugarcube Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden



Sugarcube Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden 2011
Animal Spirits, (Group exhibition)