

Psychic Geography

Eric Bainbridge
Sophie Lisa Beresford
David Blandy
Dan Ford
Laura Lancaster
Mike Pratt
James Richards
Daniel Silver
Lara Viana



Preview: Friday 22nd January, 6-9pm
23rd January – 20th February 2010
Tuesday - Saturday, 11am -5pm (or by appointment)

*“...The psychic geographer specializes in spotting that place where humans and their environment meld and we can no longer speak of individual will as such, but only communal or sometimes corporate imperatives, the desires of the space as it speaks through the body politic that inhabits it” **

Workplace Gallery is pleased to present *Psychic Geography* a group exhibition of new and existing works by nine diverse artists. The exhibition includes collage, painting, photography, sculpture, and video that examines the interaction between spaces and people, places and identity.

In a new series of collages by **Eric Bainbridge**, base elements taken from interior design and fashion magazines are cleverly disguised through simple manipulation. Eyes, mouths, sinks, stairs are all hidden, replaced with abstracted patterned forms themselves cut from the same source to leave us with hybrid unsettling images that are both familiar and absurd. In *The First and Second Creation*, part of an ongoing series of intimate and revelatory ‘to camera’ videos, **Sophie Lisa Beresford** attempts to communicate her complex and unified world view whilst also exploring her own problematic and paradoxical relationship to making ‘Art’ and to ‘Being’. **David Blandy’s** work highlights the slippage and tension between fantasy and reality. In *The White and Black Minstrel Show* Blandy performs Syl Johnson’s underground soul classic ‘Is It Because I’m Black’ in an inverted “whiteface” version of the racist stereotype from American theatre of the 19th Century, popularised until 1978 in the BBC Television’s ‘The Black & White Minstrel Show’. Blandy’s film takes an alternative position; by appropriating the politically ‘correct’ and ‘incorrect’ he finds an antiheroic and morally ambiguous alter-ego that becomes archetypal and symbolic of Blandy’s quest for identity and cultural position. **Dan Ford’s** paintings and drawings examine the design industry aesthetics found in disparate pockets of visual culture such as knitting patterns, S & M magazines, sauna brochures and comic books. In *Sheet*, a page of dildos is the starting point for a small delicate painting in which shapes become merely motifs that expose the quality of the image against the artist’s sense of placement and appropriation. **Laura Lancaster’s** new series of 21 portrait paintings deconstruct the photographs they are copied from to such an extent that faces and features are obliterated with painterly gesture. These monochromatic works leave us guessing as to the period, class, and identity of the subjects. *Short Back And Sides* is a new sculpture by **Mike Pratt** in which 12 classic art school plaster busts are reduced to the role of plinth for an assemblage of furniture and found objects. Through a process of re-enacting, borrowing and re-appropriation Pratt comments upon the cycle of assimilation constantly evolving from an affecting voice or act into popular culture. **James Richards** uses the accumulation and reassembly of imagery as a devotional and elegiac process. In his looped video *Misty Boundaries Has Left the Room* he entices us with a quick fire sequence of brief vignettes: a puff of steam, a hand being held, soap bubbles, a blizzard, followed by a clip from a television programme about how to draw until a girl zones out in a classroom as the tutorial explains how to realistically depict an eye. **Daniel Silver’s** sculptural installation *Studies for Adam and Eve (1-3)* mixes found objects with small sculptures presented in a series of altar like cabinets. Silver’s works play with universal values and tradition presenting us with ambiguous figures that echo religious artifact, iconic sculpture, mutation, and disfigurement. For **Lara Viana** painting itself is a tool for transport. In her recent paintings we are taken to the tabletop aftermath of opulent dinner parties. The fluid marks symbolise an experience of these forms and subjects, dreamlike in their foggy depictions, and at the same time, as substantially real as the memory of a past experience.

To celebrate the opening of *Psychic Geography* there is an Afterparty at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art from 9pm onwards, with special guest DJs and drinks promotions.

Eric Bainbridge was born in 1955 in Consett, County Durham. Bainbridge has presented numerous solo exhibitions in museums and galleries including MIMA, Middlesbrough (2008), Galleria Caroline Salvatore Ala, Milan (2004) DELFINA, London (1997), The Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1989), ICA, Boston (1987) and Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis (1986). His work has also been shown as part of *Monologue/Dialogue* at Bangkok University Gallery, (2006), *Collage* at The Bloomberg Space, London (2004) and *Glad That Things Don't Talk* at Irish Museum of Modern Art (2003).

Sophie Lisa Beresford was born in Sunderland in 1986 and graduated from University of Sunderland in 2008. Recent exhibitions include *Dancing* and *Notes on a Return*, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne (2009). She lives and works in Sunderland.

David Blandy was born in London in 1976 and has studied at Chelsea College of Art and Slade School of Art. Recent projects include, *Crossroads*, Spike Island, Bristol, touring to Turner Contemporary, Margate, and 176 Project Space, London, *Fortress of Solitude*, Jerwood Platform for Artists, Cell Project Space, London and *The Barefoot Lone Pilgrim*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art.

Dan Ford lives and works in Devon. Recent exhibitions include *The Art Car Boot Fair*, Brick Lane, London, *Rotate: Moot*, The Contemporary Art Society, London and *Best in Show*, John Jones, London. Dan Ford is shown courtesy of the artist and Moot Gallery, Nottingham.

Laura Lancaster was born in Hartlepool in 1979 and studied Fine Art at Northumbria University. Recent exhibitions include *Ego Documents: The Autobiographical in Contemporary Art*, Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland, *Salon (The Cartin Collection)* Ars Libri, Hartford and Boston, USA, *Mediations*, Poznan Biennial, Poland, and *Micro Narratives*, Musee d'Art Moderne de Saint-Etienne.

Mike Pratt was born in Seaham, County Durham in 1987. He graduated from Northumbria University in 2009. He has exhibited at The Manchester Contemporary Art Fair (2009) as well as in *JAMBON*, Cobalt Studios, Newcastle upon Tyne (2009) and *Some People Deserve Everything They Get*, Royal Standard, Liverpool.

James Richards was born in Cardiff, in 1983 and lives and works in London. Recent solo projects include *Resolution* at Swallow Street, London and a film screening at Tramway, Glasgow. Recent group shows include *Nought To Sixty* at the ICA, London, *Generational: Younger Than Jesus* at the New Museum, New York and *A Song For Those In Search Of What They Came With*, at Bellwether Gallery, New York. His videos have been screened in curated programmes at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, Light Industry, New York and the Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne. James Richards is shown courtesy of the artist and Moot Gallery, Nottingham.

Daniel Silver was born in 1972 and lives and works in London. He completed his MA Fine Art Sculpture at the Royal College of Art in 2001. Solo exhibitions include *Frieze Art Fair (2009)*, *Cabinets #4: Daniel Silver*, SE8 (2009) *Making Something Your Own*, IBID PROJECTS (2008) *The Monks*, Ancient & Modern (2008) and *Heads*, Camden Arts Centre (2007). Group exhibitions include *Milestone*, Edinburgh College of Art, Edinburgh, and *Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2009)* and *Newspeak: British Art Now*, State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg (2009, forthcoming at Saatchi Gallery 2010). Daniel Silver is shown courtesy of the artist and IBID PROJECTS, London.

Lara Viana was born in Salvador, Brazil. She graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2007, was selected for *New Contemporaries* in 2008 and the *Whitechapel Gallery's East End Academy 2009 - The Painting Edition*, as well as a solo show at Phoenix Arts, Exeter. Viana's solo exhibition at DOMOBAAL runs from 29th January – 20th March.

Lara Viana is shown courtesy of DOMOBAAL, London.

* Extract from *A Brief Explanation of Psychic Geography* by Matthew Everett, published in *The Agenda*, Issue #15, 2006

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