

INVALUABLE

A retrospection by
APT artists of their work from
1970 to 2010



APT Gallery
6 Creekside
Deptford
London SE8 4SA

2 – 31 July 2011

INVALUABLE

Curated by Victoria Rance and Sheila Vollmer

The impetus for this show was a coincidence of two events: the valuation of my father-in-law's work for probate and being asked by the gallery committee if I would curate the APT members' show. Prompted by the experience of seeing the contents of his studio, with hundreds of drawings and paintings from over sixty years of working as an artist, my proposal was to ask members to think about a particularly precious work from their past. Sheila Vollmer agreed to curate with me, and together we thought of the title and a way to approach and choose work. We asked the artists to select one work which they held to be particularly important to them, a seminal artwork, or one which continued to inform their practice now.

We hoped (and we did experience this ourselves) that the act of looking back, remembering and thinking about which one work to choose, would act as a catalyst for reconsidering what we particularly value about our artworks when revisiting either in memory or in the physical archive. And we found (as the statements that follow show) that work was chosen for many reasons: it was the first step as a practitioner; it held an aspect that had not yet been fulfilled; it hinted at a potential development; it held a record of a deeply personal experience; it won prizes or particular recognition at the time; it was on a huge scale; or it represented a radical shift. Some of the works chosen had been destroyed or were performances or site specific, and we decided that these would be presented in the show through re-making, or through photographs, writing and other archival documentation.

What is interesting is the time from which we have all chosen work, which ranges in date from 1970 to 2010. Born in different years, places, even countries, and affected by different influences and art movements through this, and through who happened to teach us, we have chosen these particular works to show now.

Victoria Rance

Although I have worked with and known most of the APT artists for many years, requesting them to choose one of their important works and express why has been often surprising, intimate and more informative than I had expected. For some artists it was an immediate clear decision and reason and for others it was a studio visit looking through a few of their chosen works to discuss and decide. The process has been a very interesting experience.

I feel in presenting these art works, documentation of past artworks and statements, we have created an insightful and interesting exhibition celebrating both the diversity and common ground of APT artists over a 40 year time span. It has been a pleasure and honour helping to curate this APT artists' group exhibition Invaluable.

Sheila Vollmer



Clyde Hopkins
Vacant Centre Painting (Salt and Pepper)

1970, oil and spray paint on canvas with metal bar, 91 x 122cm

This piece of work was made over forty years ago, in 1970, soon after leaving the Fine Art course at the University of Reading. I can no longer remember in any detail quite why I made this awkward, crumbling and rather uncompromising painting. What remains a mystery to me is why I primed the canvas so badly and used such terrible paint. I'm frankly surprised that it still exists, a survivor of many moves and damp storage spaces – not so much invaluable as invulnerable.

Around this time I made some larger paintings – and screen prints – that often had repeated, patterned elements acting rather like a frame surrounding an 'empty' central space. As is the case with this, the composition, or format, was often wilfully dumb or nearly symmetrical.



Marilyn Hallam
Documentation for a play

1971, Post Graduate House, Redlands Road, Reading

This work constitutes the documentation of a series of actions lasting 45 minutes with alternative options for activity dependent on each participant's perceptions of unforeseen variations like the weather etc. The day before the event, individual participants surreptitiously synchronised their watches to a rather eccentric clock in the hall of the house. Each had been posted their own individual script to the minute but did not have access to anyone else's. Instructions as to how people should appear varied. Invited casual observers formed a participating audience. Their numbers were not crucial. A photographer, whose attendance was crucial, was asked to point a camera at a particular location at a given minute on his individual script. He had 60 seconds leeway each time, to photograph something or nothing very much.

After the event the participants felt that everyone else knew what they were doing except themselves. This, apparently, was rather exciting. It was 45 minutes of synchronised actions on the edge of chaotic collapse and can be seen as an example of pretentious megalomania or a truly innovative blah, blah, blah. In any event, it formed a part of the lion's share of Platform '72 at MOMA, Oxford, curated by Nicholas Serota, together with two large paintings and a couple of films and sound pieces. As can be seen, my career as an artist has taken an interesting trajectory ever since.

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Cover : Liz Harrison 24 days in the life of a papaver **1974**

"When I was younger I was greedy for a continual stream of fresh sights, of new things to be seen. For a long time now I have found happiness in seeing what I have seen before. For me seeing a place again means mingling the faded softness of memory with the spark of what is new – inserting the brilliance of fresh discovery into a resuscitated past. Things are almost never quite the same as my recollection of them; or if they are, then they show me a different aspect of themselves." Simone de Beauvoir

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Ekkehard Altenburger

Heather Burrell

Fran Cottell

Tim Cousins

Tony Daley

Jeff Dellow

Arnold Dobbs

Cath Ferguson

Nic Godbold

Marilyn Hallam

Liz Harrison

Margaret Higginson

Hideatsu Shiba

Clyde Hopkins

Catrin Huber

Stephen Jaques

Richard Lawrence

Stephen Lewis

Alix MacSweeney

Paul Malone

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