

Séminaires de Barnaby Drabble

28 et 29 novembre 2001

Barnaby Drabble, jeune commissaire et critique indépendant est à l'origine de l'ouvrage *Curating Degree Zero*, actes tirés d'un colloque de 3 jours sur les questions curatoriales.

Anglais d'origine et vivant à Zurich, il s'est investi dans divers projets en Allemagne, Grande-Bretagne et Suisse : rédaction d'articles, mises en place d'expositions, collaboration avec des artistes, symposiums...

Ses expériences furent la raison de sa venue et l'objet de sa première présentation.

La journée du 29 fut donc consacrée à celles-ci et à son point de vue sur la situation du commissaire aujourd'hui. Il débuta son discours avec la maxime " I'm more interested in artists than in artworks, more in process than in product. I prefer to work with artists than to work for them ". Sa position en matière curatoriale était clairement énoncée. Pour lui, l'intérêt de l'art ne réside pas dans des positions figées : l'art est en constante relation, en constante connexion avec le reste du monde. L'objet artistique ne peut être pris comme une entité autonome, décontextualisée du processus par lequel il a été réalisé. C'est pourquoi Barnaby Drabble a insisté sur l'importance de travailler en collaboration avec les artistes au cours du processus de création, au moment où les choses s'élaborent.

Afin d'illustrer son propos notre invité nous fit un bref résumé de quelques-unes de ses expériences professionnelles :

- La reconstitution d'un groupe de travail, Artist Placement Group, fondé en 1966 autour de la question de la place de l'artiste en tant que consultant dans le milieu industriel ;
- L'organisation du colloque *Curating Degree Zero*, qui avait pour but de réunir des artistes et des commissaires au sujet de leurs pratiques curatoriales ;
- L'exposition d'artistes s'intéressant au processus de création: *Szuper Gallery* ;
- Une collaboration avec l'artiste Ross Sinclair œuvrant à l'intérieur même de l'espace public, en l'occurrence un marché ;
- L'introduction dans le Musée National de la Marine de Londres, d'artistes contemporains ayant réalisés des pièces en rapport avec le milieu marin ;
- A l'APT Gallery, la mise en place de 3 expositions afin de faire revivre ce lieu en faillite (il propose de louer des parties de l'espace d'exposition à qui le souhaite) ;
- Et enfin la collaboration avec l'artiste post-conceptuel Heinrich Sachs.

Nous avons discuté avec Barnaby Drabble de notre " projet librairie ", sur lequel il donna de précieux conseils, en particulier sur les questions de " l'adresse " et de la réception du public.

Il fut également question de notre projet de lexique sur les pratiques curatoriales, ce à quoi il apporta quelques définitions et quelques mots clés qui lui paraissaient importants d'ajouter.

Ses prises de position sont très fortes et dénotent un parcours rythmé par des rencontres importantes (il évoque avec enthousiasme ses discussions avec Stella Rollig), qui ont su influencer la tournure de ses travaux.

Barnaby Drabble

8th October 2002

I am an independent curator and writer currently living in London and Zurich and working on projects in the two cities and further afield. My curatorial practice is based on an ongoing enquiry into the role of the artist in contemporary society, particularly in relation to non-art contexts.

In 1998 I co-organised the symposium Curating Degree Zero with Dorothee Richter, which sought to define curating as a critical practice in relation to art production and art theory. The key areas of practice discussed by invited participants were intervention, social critique, and art as service. We are now working together on a touring archive exhibition which will open in Basel in January 2003. The archive of 60 curatorial positions extends our interests of 1998 representing projects dealing with globalisation, the culture industry, feminism and new media.

For three years (98-2001) I worked with the remaining members of the group that began life in 1968 as the Artist Placement Group, in particular with John Latham and Barbara Steveni on the movement of the APG's archives to the Tate and on raising awareness of the group's methodology and approach. A discussion around John Latham's ideas formed part of the haphazard programme of screenings, performances, exhibitions and celebrations that my partner Anne Lorenz and I organised in 1999. The venue for these was a partially disused factory in SE London, where we lived and worked for a year.

In the same year I worked with Ross Sinclair on a one-day event in which we attempted to sell 'Real Life' to the public. Manning a customised stall in a busy east-end street market we sold a range of products emblazoned with the logo 'I ♥ Real Life'.

In 1999 and 2000 I programmed and curated projects at the APT Gallery in Deptford, South London. For 2000 we launched 12 projects in 12 months, including exhibitions of work by David Mach, MA students at Goldsmith's college and Guy Bar Amotz. In addition I used the space to publish a version of Ross Sinclair's text 'Music can save your life, Art can save your life' and to show a range of work on video as part of the Greenwich Film Festival.

Since 1999 I have been programming artist's projects at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, London. To date this has involved working with Steven Pippin, Faisal Abdu Allah and collaborative artists Dalziel and Scullion. In 2002 I am working with Tim Brennan and Beth Derbyshire.

2001 saw independent projects with the artist s group 'Szuper Gallery', at the Kuenstlerhaus , Bremen, and a screening of the work of Ursula Biemann and Oliver Ressler at the Lux in London. In the meantime I continue to work on independent projects in London and further abroad. I am presently developing an exhibition concept with artist/curator Gavin Wade and curating an exhibition of photography for a new gallery space in Windsor, Florida.

In Zurich I am working on projects with Hinrich Sachs. Our first project TM Guerrilla opened this year as part of the Expo 02 in Switzerland. Our organisation Drabble+Sachs works without an exhibition space and aims to produce and implement critical projects examining and influencing cultural change in the city.

I am regularly asked to deliver talks at symposiums and conferences, I teach on post graduate courses in France, Switzerland and the UK and I write regularly for catalogues and magazines, most frequently for Flashart.

Barnaby Drabble

Born in Fareham, UK in 1971. Barnaby Drabble is a curator and critic living and working in London and Zurich. He holds a Ba in Literature (Edinburgh), a PgDip in Exhibition Interpretation and Design (Edinburgh) and an Ma in Curating (Goldsmiths, London).

He works as a curator on collaborative projects with artists, operating mainly in spaces outside the art context. He also writes for art magazines and catalogues and teaches on post-graduate courses in the UK, France and Switzerland.

Projects & Positions

2002

National Maritime Museum, London. (curator of contemporary art 1999-present)

Further development of contemporary art programme. New Visions of the Sea.

Projects 2002, (May- Oct)

Tim Brennan - *The Republic of Atlantis*

Beth Derbyshire - *You and I*

Expo 02, Arteplage Mobile De Jura, Switzerland (With Hinrich Sachs as Drabble+Sachs)

TM Guerrilla - A presentation of work from Artists and Activists

May 23 - June 9th.

2001

Critical Aesthetics, LUX, London. Curated screening and discussion, films by Ursula Biemann and Oliver Ressler.

Szuper Gallery, the new collection. Kuenstlerhaus, Bremen. Co-curator.

National Maritime Museum, London. New Visions of the Sea. Projects 2001 (May-Oct)

Faisal Abdu'Allah - *An Affair of Honour*

Dalziell & Scullion - *Another Place*

2000

The Following 5 projects were curated for the APT Gallery , Deptford, London.
(Gallery programme director. 1999-2000)

On the Rocks. Group exhibition of work by recent Goldsmith's College graduates.

Artists: Diann Bauer, Kirsten Glass, Helen Paterson, Lindsay Seers & Annie Whiles.

The Mild Bunch. Installation by London-based Scottish artist David Mach.

Video Lounge. Exhibition of video work from young international artists and film-makers. As part of the Greenwich Film Festival 2000.
Artists: Ekkehard Altenburger, Monica Biagioli, Marianne Bramsen, Lela Budde, Mirjam Buergin, Chris Cooke & Victor Malloy, Stuart Croft, Lisa Halsey Brown, Julian Lesage, Anne Lorenz, Christian Meyer, Vikaas Mistry, Jeroen Offerman, Graham Ramsay and John Beagles, Manuel Saiz, Elin Strand, Klaus Wehner, Lucinda Wells.

Burning Love, Installation by Guy Bar Amotz, text by Ross Sinclair.

Mind The Gap, Exhibition of the work of 5 Cuban artists. APT Gallery, London.

Artists: Sandra Ramos, Fernando & Francisco, Lazaro Saavedra, Luis Gomez, J A Vincench.

1999

I Love Real Life, Public Art Event, Hackney, London.
A project by Ross Sinclair
(curator)

Project Space, London,
One year programme of discussions, performances, screenings, celebrations and exhibitions in a disused factory.
(co-director of the space, with Anne Lorenz)

- Discussions:

The Incidental Person Today :
John Latham & Barbara Steveni lead discussion on the role of the artist.

- *Homeless: The possibility of a Post Autonomous art:*
David Goldenberg, JJ Charlesworth, Ute Kogelsberger, Anne Lorenz, Mark Currah.

- Performances:

Rob and Geli . *God are you there ? (in a scottish accent)*
Mark Wayman: *Slips*

- Screenings:

New work on 16mm : programmed by Miread Mclean
New work on Video : programmed by Ekkehard Altenburger

• Exhibitions:

Letting the days go by

Organised by Mota projects & Project Space

Artists: Philip Sanderson, Mark Kearey, Mark Hayward, John Workman, Nicky Coutts, Claire Carter, Patricia London Ante Paris.

Deptford X, Contemporary Art Festival, London.
(Co-Organiser)

1998 - 1999

Agency Contemporary Art, Shoreditch, London.
(Exhibition Coordinator)

Exhibitions:

Summer Guest, Kazuo Katase.

THE WHOLE Year INN, Jane Hilton, Tim Noble & Sue Webster.

Hamnavoe Free State (London Office), Ross Sinclair.

The Collection, Faisal Abdu'allah.

The Transvestism of Marcel Duchamp, Edwin David.

1998 - 2001

O+I, Organisation and Imagination (previously Artist Placement Group).

Working with Barbara Steveni and John Latham towards the furthering of the concept, started 1968.

(Curatorial Advisor)

1998 - 2000

APG Archive, Tate Gallery Archives, London. Artists include John Latham, Barbara Steveni, Stuart Brisley, Jeffrey Shaw, and Ian Breakwell.

(Researcher)

1998

Curating Degree Zero, 3 day International Curating Symposium, GAK Bremen. Co-curated with Dorothee Richter.

Invited speakers: Ute Meta Bauer, Ursula Biemann, Roger Buergel, Laura Cottingham, Olivier Kaeser, Simon Herbert, Moritz Kung, Jeanne Van Heeswijk, James Lingwood, Stella Rollig, Gertrud Sandquist, Annette Schindler & Hills Snyder.

1998

Packed Lunch, Old School Hoxton Square, London. Curator.

Site specific work in an abandoned school building.

Artists: Amanda Beech, Garth Bowden, Victoria Hall, Dimitri Launder, Anne Lorenz, Matthew Poole & Claire Usiskin.

1997

And Still the Ship is not in Sight, Lichthaus Bremen,
Curatorial Assistant.

Touring exhibition with artists from Greece, Italy, Germany &
the USA

Artists: Katerina Apostolidou, Vassilis Balatsos, Mimmo
Catania, Martina Goldbeck, Polidoros Kariofilis & Eva
Vretzaki, Renato Mambor, Ilias Papailiakis, Frank Riepe, Sarah
Sze, Costas Tsolis, Dimitris Tzamuranis, Stella Veciani,
Kerstin Weiberg & Richard Schutz, Ute Weiss-Leder, Stewart
Ziff.

1996

Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh.
(Interpretation and Education Assistant)

Exhibitions:

- *British Art Show 4*. Mark Wallinger, Steve McQueen, Sam Taylor-Wood.
- *Reckoning with the Past: Contemporary Chinese Painting*.
- *InConclusive States*: Ariane Lopez-Huici, Pierrick Sorin, Olivier Zabat.
- Lisa Milroy, *Travel Paintings* & Yoko Terauchi, *Air Castle*.
- Louise Cattrell, *Paintings 1989-96*.

Selected Published Material:

Catalogue Essay, *There's no history like the present* about
Barbara Steveni, for exhibition *Potential*. Ed. Anna Harding,
John Hansard Gallery (June 2002)

Hinrich Sachs, Catalogue essay, *Conversations in a White Room*
Kunsthalle Basel. (April. 2002)

Trading Places: Art and Global Economics. Flashart (Oct.
2001)

Profile: Guy Bar Amotz, Flashart, January 2001

Public Art is Dead, Long Live Real Life, Ross Sinclair,
Fruitmarket Gallery,
Edinburgh, 2001

Curating Degree Zero, GAK Bremen and Verlag fuer Moderne
Kunst, Nuernberg,
Introductory Essay, 1999

In search of Real Life and Miracles, Engage Magazine, Issue 1,
1999

play, pause, rewind, fast forward, stop, eject, "Degrees of
Zero",

Goldsmiths Curatorial Projects, London, 1998

It is the Little differences that count, Kunstfruehling '98,
Catalogue, BBK
Bremen, 1998

Site specificity in Bremen: Rainer Krausers's Seven Dwarfs,
TAZ, Bremen,
1997

Longing/Belonging, Ekkehard Altenburger Catalogue, Edinburgh,
Scotland, 1996

The Artist as Shaman, Anne Lorenz Catalogue, Kunstverein
Ganderkesee, 1996

(Unpublished Academic Theses)

MA:

'We have artist-curators, why can't we have curator-artists?'

PGdip:

A Question of Interpretation:

Are current trends in funding suppressing variety and
promoting a closed view of art ?

Curating Degree Zero Archive

Touring Exhibition
2003 - 2004

Concept: Dorothee Richter and Barnaby Drabble

Background:

The Archive is part of the ongoing project Curating Degree Zero, which began with the international curating symposium (Bremen, 1998) and related publication (Verlag f_r moderne Kunst, Nuremberg). The project was founded by curators Dorothee Richter and Barnaby Drabble and set out to discuss new curatorial ideas and experiments, in 1998 it focused particularly on the themes of art and its context, socially engaged practice, art as service and art in the urban space.

Curating and making exhibitions has over the last decades developed into an identifiable cultural practice, on the one hand concerned with presenting, reflecting upon and interpreting art-production and on the other with actively producing meaning. The archive take place against a backdrop of interest in the traditionally obscure role of the curator, and the professionalisation of the field as witnessed by the growth of curating courses in Europe and the USA. For the organisers of the project 'Curating' is to be understood as a cultural practice in relation to others, most notably art production and critical theory. They see the discursive formation of these practices together and their dealings with each other as describing what we currently describe as *contemporary art*. With these relationships in continual flux Curating Degree Zero aims to map changes in the field, form networks between those involved in critical curatorial practice and share their findings with both general and specific publics.

The Archive:

The archive takes the form of a participatory exhibition presenting the work of 60 curators / groups currently working within the critical spectrum that specifically interests Curating Degree Zero. The exhibition will consist of material (catalogues, videos, CD's and web sites) coupled with a specifically designed framework that makes the material easy to index, cross-reference and view or listen to. Design for both the archive and a related web-site is being developed in collaboration with Plug-in and the graphic design group Elektrosmog (Z_rich).

The archive is conceived as a touring project, suited to spaces and institutions that have an interest in critical practice or run a curatorial programme. The exhibition will be open to the public at each venue for a period of 4-6 weeks. The archive will travel to Künstlerhaus Bremen, and the organisers are in discussion with other potential venues in Linz, London and Oslo.

During the tour, the archive will be developed, updated and adapted in collaboration with the hosting venues.

Related Activities:

Web-Site

In relation to the Archive the organisers are developing a web-site again in collaboration with Plug-in and Elektrosmog. The function of the web-site is to afford world-wide access to the proposed data-bank of material on critical curatorial practice, made up of elements of both the archive and past and future symposiums. In the future it is hoped that the web-site will provide a platform for exchange between an international network of curators and practitioners from this particular field.

Archive participants: Provisional Selection

This provisional list will be developed, and edited in relation to the touring venues, who we will invite to put forward interesting practitioners. The 18 key participants (in italics) will definitely be included:

Dorothee Richter
Barnaby Drabble
Annette Schindler
Rosanne Altstatt
Ute Meta Bauer
Lionel Bovier
Roger Bürgel, / Ruth Noack
Clementine Deliss
Yvonne Volkart
Sabine Dreher
Fredderikke Hansen
Frank Larcade
Beatrice von Bismarck
Catherine Queloz
Stella Rollig
Lisette Smits
TNC Network
Gavin Wade

Kathrin Rhomberg (A)
Moritz Kung (B)
Hedwig Saxenhuber /Georg Schöllhammer (A)
Fareed Armaly (D)
John Hypolito (USA)
Eva Schmidt D
Hans Ulrich Obrist (D/F)

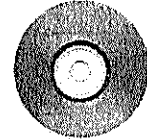
Gregory Sholette (USA)
Nina Möntmann (D)
Bettina von Diezembowski (D)
Andrea Siekmann & Alice Creischer (D)
Szuper Gallery (UK/D)
Chus Martinez (E)
Inventory (UK)
David Goldenberg (UK)
Verena Kuni (D)
Kent Hansen (Dk)
Catherine David (F)
Hou Han Rou (F)
Heike Munder (D/CH)
Berndt Milla (D)
Yvonne Volkart (CH)
Jorge Ribalta (E)
Maria Lind (D)
Jeanne Van Heeswijk (NI)
Olivier Kaeser / Jean Paul Felley (Ch)
Charles Esche (Uk)
Jeremy Deller (Uk)
Matthew Higgs (Uk/Usa)
Octavian Esanu (Moldavia)
Ursula Biemann (CH)
Alexis Vaillant (F)
Christof Keller (D)
Reinhard Stoerz (CH)
Yukiko (JP)
Mark Tribe
Maria Riskova
Annika Blunk
Trinity Session (SA)
Crumb (UK)
Florian Zeyfang
Astrid Vege

Barnaby Drabble
Seminar and Discussion
2/3rd December 2002

presentation topics:

1. transitions in contemporary curatorial practice
case study: curating degree zero

¥hybridisation of roles and convergence of artist and curator
¥artist / curator, curator / artist : from hierarchies to networks
¥cultural , art historical and economic context to these shifts



2. non-art contexts and social engagement
case study: Real Life Market with Ross Sinclair

¥outside the art paradigm
¥autonomy in relation to criticality
¥compromising autonomy for effectiveness
¥indoor language / outdoor language
¥public, publics, public space and the corporate public



3. archives and the act of documentation.
case studies: The Artist Placement Group
and Curating Degree Zero Archive

¥institutionalisation and
historicisation of ongoing radical practice
¥documentation and the construction of oeuvre
¥the real archive and the online database
¥the touring exhibition as mapping tool



4. art and activism.
case study: TM guerilla, Expo 02, Switzerland

¥cross-discourse production
¥propaganda and the critical imperative
¥institutional critique / societal critique
¥cultural pessimism or urgency
¥structures for approaching cultural change

