

# MA Fine Art: Contemporary Practice | 2010

Ken Barrett

Andrew Cross

Karen Howse

Jain McKay

Julie Kim Rossiter

Agnes Toth

Veronica Vickery

# Ken Barrett

My practice blends traditional media (2D, 3D, video and performance) with opportunities for dialogue and participation. *The Formby Project*, like a lot of my work, plays with or perforates boundaries; between 'high' and 'low' culture, portraiture and portrayal, memory and nostalgia. The work also rails against the artificial categorisation placed on creativity by commerce, academics, and journalists – but only quietly so as not to upset anyone.

Ken Barrett was born and brought up in Blackburn, Lancashire but has since adopted the effete manner and attitudes of a Southerner. He posed as a mental health clinician in the NHS for 30 years, but defected to the art-world in 2008 before his cover was blown.

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# Andrew Cross

My practice aims to re-engage the individual with their environment through a combination of architecture and art. Using the idea of boundary as a tool, I create dialogue on a human scale between the individual and the building. I aim to re-interpret our relationship with architecture and propose a new way with which to view and inhabit space.

To do so I work on a 1:1 scale within the derelict buildings of Cornwall, using my knowledge and expertise to examine the very nature of these spaces and to relocate elements of them into the gallery space.

In my final project a cut is taken from an unknown building and then documented with photography. The product of the cut is laid as a floor piece for the viewer to walk on and decipher the disorientation provided by the documentation housed in the lightbox.

Andrew Cross previously trained and practiced within the field of Architecture as a 'CAD monkey', but escaped captivity and set about exploring our relationship with space. Working with theatre companies, artist co-operatives and festivals Andrew began to thrive in this exploratory role and now work towards a new understanding of space and our relationship with it.

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# Karen Howse

## Being in Place

I use art, drawing and photography as a particular way of engaging with the natural world. For my MA I have been working in one wood over two years.

Unlike the fixed point of traditional maps my work is concerned with shifting processes of time. It is a mapping of interrelations between things through repeated visits, writing, walking, detailed observation, and marking moments spent in place. Rather than an aerial view, this is an on-the-ground embedded view, an experiential personal geography.

In a traditional map the place does not have a voice. This however is a map of porous edges and overlays; the patina of place registered in the smudge of ink or weathering of paper. The work becomes a way of exploring the interrelations between the environment, self and the creative process; a way of navigating the spaces in between.

Karen Howse is an artist and mother of two, living in North Cornwall. Her background is in stitch, with a BA from Winchester. Karen has participated in a number of international touring Textile Art Exhibitions. A residency in a Swedish Animal Reserve (1997) and a Launceston Paper Factory (2000) expanded her ideas of where art can occur. Exploration of the relations of drawing, place and mind during the MA has led Karen to navigate new contexts for her process-led practice, from areas of health, meditation and wellbeing to ecology, and nature study.

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**Images:** Left: *Sound Map*, pen/ brush with chinese ink, 180x170cm, 2010 (Witherdon Woods). Right: *52 Ink Drawing – 42/52*, chinese ink on lining paper. 80x56cm, 2009–10.



# Jain McKay

## The Goya Relationship

The Goya Relationship is the first of four exhibitions and books to be based upon Jorge Luis Borges idea of there being only four stories that we retell over and over again in different guises.

*Siege of the City* is the title he gave to all stories that portray our gained strength caused by an attack on the self, family, town or planet by an outside force. It is the story that represents us finding our inner strength. Metaphorically it is the begging of a journey of self discovery which we only take because we are pushed on by suffering. The village has been raised to the ground. It is the time at which we become aware of the animal consciousness inside us and by becoming aware of the animal we can also become aware of the enlightened, the buddhahood, the God consciousness. It is a time of awakening. Using the imagery of Goya brings a new dimension to the work. Anchoring it in associations with war, freaks and suffering brings new connotations.

Jain McKay illustrates stories, translating experience into pictures so that others can relate to those experiences. The knowledge of stories can bring wisdom and understanding of our human condition. The world is confusing, being human is confusing, and Jain makes art to understand it. She has a strong belief that no-one is truly individual, and that we can all be described in a few types. Therefore Jain represents many and by understanding herself can understand many, maybe even the whole.

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**Images:** Left: *Death*, ink on paper, 150x150cm. Right: *Death* (detail), ink on paper, 150x150cm



# Julie Kim Rossiter

## The Last Portrait

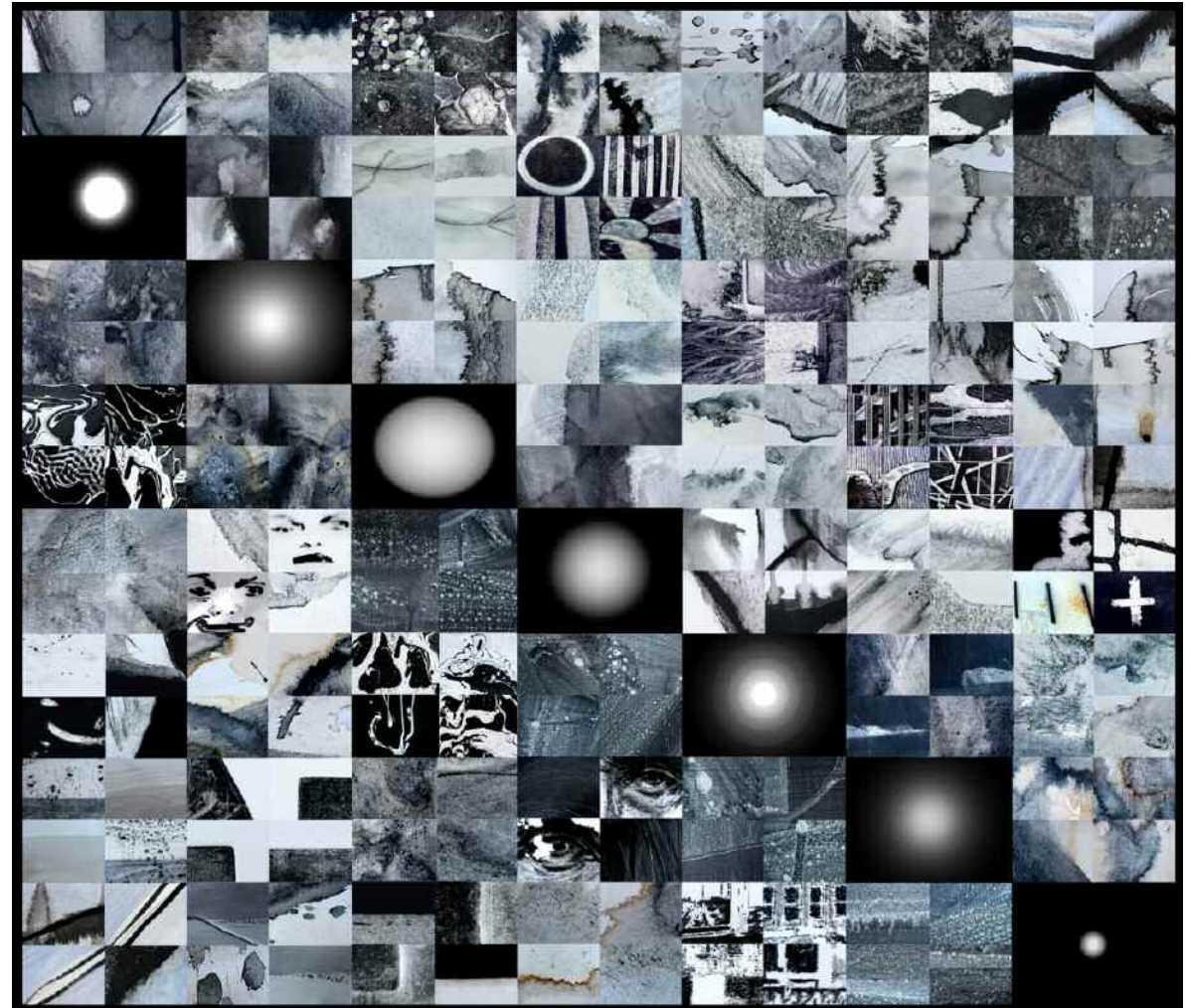
I sat alone in the Victorian classroom. On the left I felt the cold void of darkness yet the right of the room was lit by a shaft of light from the window. Two identical glass jars sat on the window sill containing hyacinths. The plant on the left withered and dying, the plant on the right a magnificent blue bulb – in full bloom. The teacher asked me a now forgotten question, I raised my hand to answer but noticed that the roots of each plant were gleaming white. I put down my hand and awoke from the dream. Three weeks later I was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour.

My practice is to mediate dreams and nightmares with photographic image to develop self-portraiture. This dream was more vivid from others and on being told I might die from the tumour I decided to pick up my camera and produce four composite self portraits. I lost myself in denial and realised that self was no longer important to *The Last Portrait*.

*We Are, We See, We Think and We Fear* are evidence of the human condition, a reaction to each moment and emotive states present in each and every one of us.

Julie Kim Rossiter was born in Wiltshire and has been a surrealist photographer for twenty years. Her Surreal portraiture has been exhibited in major galleries in London and throughout Europe, Julie works only for charities and non profit making organisations to promote equality. Her work is now sponsored by the Snowdon Award.

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# Agnes Toth

## Entering Private and Personal

Being and nothingness, the there is and there is not. An existing but however in practice a non-experiencable coherence-system. A pursuit of certainty between visible and invisible, and experiencable and unexperiencable. The presence of something and on the contrary the absence of the thing is what signifies the structure of my concept formed about the world.

To recognize the context between the things, the matter of the essence, what is the hook that unifies and connects two things together. How silence is an integral part of noise, and how a form is at the same time a void space. To distil a visual-quintessence in painting that preserves the visible world's pure essence, as a perfume does the flower's scent. Let the man deal with the world so carefully and relentlessly as possible, as if it would be only an illusion and due to a bad move it would crack in his hands.

Agnes Toth's paintings capture fragments of the world. She works with forms, shapes, mass and with the interplay of their relations. Agnes is originally from Hungary, and her paintings have been exhibited in Venice, Prague, Budapest, Vienna, London and Berlin. Her works can be found in collections such as the Essl Collection in Austria and the Kovacs Gabor Collection in Hungary.

[www.agnestoth.eu](http://www.agnestoth.eu)



**Image:** *Remedy*, oil on canvas, 95x70cm, 2010

# Veronica Vickery

## Springs Farm

Through many conversations, I have become aware that people in West Cornwall often 'feel like they are living in a museum'. This led me to explore derelict houses up amongst the moors of West Penwith looking for a different story to the one of tin mines and bottled heritage. I found myself becoming absorbed by one particular site – Springs Farm, returning to it again and again, fascinated by the detritus of living that was strewn about the crumbling building.

Initially I approached the site through photography. Gradually however I was led back to painting - the materiality of the site demanding a visceral reworking or re-presentation that avoids the powerful gaze of the lens. The processes involved in painting, the life of the material itself have become a metaphor to deal with our shifting relationships to time and place, to those allusive memories that one moment we can catch and the next are gone only to re-emerge in some other shape at some other moment in time.

Life itself is a bit like that.

Veronica Vickery originally from Somerset is now based with her four children, in the far west of Cornwall. Her work has been included in exhibitions at Newlyn Art Gallery (The Exchange) 2009, The Bosigran Project 2008 and More Cornwall 2007. In 2008 she undertook a year-long residency with the National Trust and received an ACE research and development award. Currently she is co-director of BOSarts.

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**Images:** Top: *A Place for Day-dreaming...*, oil on canvas, triptych, each panel 120x160 cm, 2010. Bottom: *Long Gone*, oil on canvas, 150cmx190cm, 2010.

