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**Conference or Workshop Item**

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# LAND/WATER

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## Land and the Metaphysical

The 2010 Land/Water Summer Symposium  
Land/Water and the Visual Arts  
University of Plymouth

Thursday 1st - Friday 2nd July 2010  
Room 018, Rolle Building, Plymouth Campus

### PROGRAMME

#### Thursday 1st July

10.45 registration/tea and coffee  
11.15 Introduction Liz Wells and Heidi Morstang  
11.30 David Williams: *NOT TWO*  
12.30 - 13.45 lunch  
13.45 Jo Love and Mike Evans in conversation: *From the Representation of Emptiness to the Emptiness of Representation* (A dialogue concerning the exhibition *Grey Matters* by Jo Love and Michael Evans)  
15.15 break  
15.30 David Rayson: *The Ship*  
16.30 Plenary  
17.15 Followed by a reception/drinks in Peninsula Arts Gallery  
Exhibition: *Leaving Earth*, Jane Grant  
Book launch: *Landscape and Beauty*, University of Plymouth Press  
19.00 Supper/evening out: venue to be confirmed

#### Friday 2nd July

10.15 tea and coffee  
10.45 Jane Grant: *Leaving Earth*  
12.00 Peter Cusack: *Sounds From Dangerous Places*  
13.00 - 14.45 lunch  
Open portfolio session: you are invited to bring work relating to the general theme of Land/Water: tables will be provided for books, laptops or portfolios  
14.45 Rick Dingus: *Photo Mediations: Navigating the Terrain between the Land and Us*  
15.45 Plenary  
16.15 ENDS

Symposium organised by Heidi Morstang and Professor Liz Wells [Land/Water and the Visual Arts](#) July 2010

### Current exhibitions in Plymouth

Jane Grant: [Leaving Earth](#) Peninsula Arts Gallery, Roland Levinsky Building, University of Plymouth  
Kurt Jackson: [River](#) Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery (opposite the University, on North Hill)  
Jeremy Millar: [Amongst Others](#) Plymouth Arts Centre, Looe Street  
Various artists: [The Purpose of Drawing](#) Cube Gallery, Portland Square, University of Plymouth

### SPEAKERS

#### Peter Cusack

Peter Cusack, (London), works as a sound artist, musician and environmental recordist with a special interest in acoustic ecology. Projects range from community arts to research into the role that sound plays in our sense of place. His project *Sounds From Dangerous Places* examines the soundscapes of sites of major environmental damage.

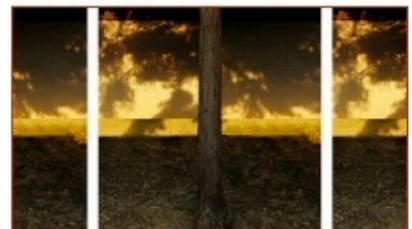
He produced *Vermilion Sounds* - the environmental sound program - for ResonanceFM Radio, London, lectures on Sound Arts and Design at the London College of Communication and was recently a Research Fellow on the multidisciplinary multi-university *Positive Soundscapes Project*. CDs include *Your Favourite London Sounds* (Resonance), *Baikal Ice* (ReR), *Favourite Sounds of Beijing* (Subjam).

#### Rick Dingus

Since the late 1970's, Rick Dingus' photographs have been widely exhibited, published, and included in many public and private collections such as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Getty Museum, Amon Carter Museum, Metropolitan Museum, Museum of Modern Art, Bibliotheque Nationale, Australian National Gallery of Art, Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.



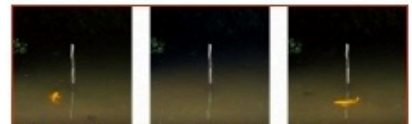
Rick Dingus: Rephotographic Survey Project (RSP) left: *Witches Rock #5, TH O'Sullivan 1869* right: *Witches Rock #5, Rick Dingus for the RSP 1978*



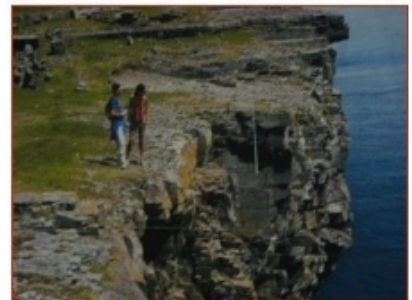
David Williams: *Tofuku-ji Zen Temple, Kyoto #5 2003*



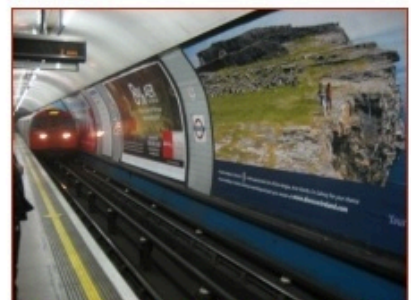
Rick Dingus: *Movie Theater, Mt. St. Helens Visitor Center, WA [Regarding Technology] 1998-1999*



David Williams: *Carp Pond, Temple 68, Omuro Nina-ji Temples, Kyoto 2007*



David Rayson: *Dreaming of Getting Back to the Island #1*



David Rayson: *Dreaming of Getting Back to*



He is the author of the *Photographic Artifacts of Timothy O'Sullivan* (UNM Press, 1982), has worked on a variety of collaborative projects that include the *Rephotographic Survey Project*, *Marks in Place: Contemporary Responses to Rock Art*, *Dine'tah-Hajineel: Place of Emergence*, and *El Llano Estacado: Island in the Sky*. He helped establish the [Millennial Collection](#) archive at the [Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library](#) at Texas Tech University where he is a Professor of Photography in the [School of Art](#). For more information, see: <http://rickdingus.com/>

#### Mike Evans

Mike Evans is an artist working within a discipline of abstract painting, but exploring links between photography and digital technology. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at The University of Northampton and is scheduled to complete his PhD at London Metropolitan University this year.

#### Jane Grant

Jane Grant is an artist who works with sound, moving image and drawing. Her exhibition *Leaving Earth* draws on literary, filmic and scientific ideas concerning the formation of the Solar System. She has exhibited widely in both solo and group shows, including Chapter, Spacex Gallery and more recently ArtSway and the Sonic Arts Network Expo. Jane Grant is Reader in Digital Arts at University of Plymouth. Production for *Leaving Earth* was supported by MADr, the Research Centre for Media, Art and Design, University of Plymouth.

She is the winner alongside collaborators John Matthias and Nick Ryan of the PRS Foundation's New Music Award 2008, the most financially prestigious award made for music in the UK. The work, *The Fragmented Orchestra* was premiered at FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology) in Liverpool and 23 other venues including, The Roundhouse, National Portrait Gallery, Watershed and Newlyn Art Gallery from December 2008 to February 2009.

#### Jo Love

Jo Love is an artist working between the disciplines of Photography, Print and drawing. She is currently a lecturer in Fine Art and Photography at The University of Northampton and visiting Lecturer in Printmaking at Brighton and Anglia Ruskin University. She is currently studying a PhD at Chelsea College of Art and Design.

#### David Rayson

David Rayson's work stems from and deviates out from his on-going relationship to living in suburbia, with the advent of TV and the Internet we can go anywhere we like without having to move, so why go anywhere else, when somewhere else is always here?

His work has been exhibited widely in this country and internationally, and his work is included in many public and private collections. He is currently Professor of Painting, and Head of Fine Art at the Royal College of Art.

#### David Williams

Over recent years, Edinburgh-based photographer David Williams has spent time in Japan working intermittently on several projects including the extended body of work, *one taste: (n) ever-changing*, carried out at a variety of Buddhist temple sites. This project explores non-duality and considers resonances between Eastern Philosophy and contemporary Western visual art practice.

David Williams' work has been extensively exhibited and published internationally. Exhibitions include Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, Houston Fotofest, Ingleby Gallery, Osaka Contemporary Art Centre and The Photographers' Gallery. He is Head of Photography/Reader at Edinburgh College of Art.

#### ABSTRACTS

##### Peter Cusack

##### *Sounds From Dangerous Places*

Recent travels have brought me into contact with some difficult and potentially dangerous places. Most are sites of major environmental/ecological damage, but others include nuclear sites or the edges of military zones. The danger is not necessarily to a short-term visitor, but to the people who live there or through the location's role in geopolitical power structures. Some are areas where extreme and hostile conditions have been created, in others the danger has been hidden or absorbed into the local economy. In yet others regeneration is underway.

Such places include the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone, Ukraine; the Caspian Oil Fields near Baku, Azerbaijan; the Munzur River (a Euphrates tributary) valley in Kurdish Turkey where 19 very controversial dams are planned; Thetford Forest beside USAF air bases in the UK; North Wales in the areas where Chernobyl fallout will affect farming practice for years to come.

Many sound recordings were made at these sites. Photographic and other visual images were taken. Interviews and background research provide textual documents. It is noticeable that environmentally damaged sites can be both sonically and visually compelling, if not beautiful and atmospheric. There is, often, an extreme dichotomy between an aesthetic response and knowledge of the 'danger', whether it is pollution, social injustice, military or geopolitical.

the Island #2



David Rayson: *Dreaming of Getting Back to the Island #3*



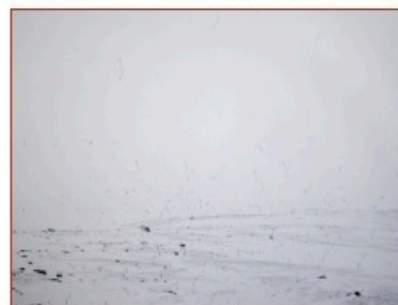
Peter Cusack: *Caspian Oil*



Rick Dingus: *Picnic Table, Badlands National Park, SD 2005-2007*



Jane Grant: *Leaving Earth*, digital film 2010



Jo Love: *Dasfestsetzen #1*





*Sounds From Dangerous Places* asks the questions, "What elements of the soundscape of a dangerous place are effected, changed, created or destroyed as a result of its 'dangerousness'?" and, "What insights can sound offer into the environmental, social and political contexts of a 'dangerous place'?" The project presents the field recordings as they are, in the belief that such recordings offer insights into the locations and issues that are different from, and complimentary to, those of visual images and texts.

#### **Rick Dingus**

##### ***Photo Mediations: Navigating the Terrain between the Land and Us***

The photographs in this presentation are from a series of related projects undertaken during the last three decades. A larger selection of this work will form a travelling retrospective exhibition that is scheduled to open in 2012 at the Museum of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX.

By photographing different kinds of places in various ways, I've explored an evolving and expanding definition of Landscape that includes any situation where the confluences of time, place, culture, and nature are visible. My subjects include wilderness and rural locations, vernacular byways, urban environments, ancient and contemporary ruins, pilgrimage sites, scientific and technological research facilities, as well as folk and institutional museum displays. I look for traces of the countless individual and collective responses, understandings, and relationships to the same world and larger context that we share. By continually shifting frames of reference, I've searched for insights hidden behind the details that are in plain view with the awareness that photographs are artifacts, reflectors of intent, and catalysts for shared musings beyond what is depicted.

#### **Jo Love and Mike Evans**

##### ***From the Representation of Emptiness to the Emptiness of Representation***

(A dialogue concerning the exhibition *Grey Matters* by Jo Love and Michael Evans)

"If absence is the most compelling form of presence, then emptiness is pregnant with fullness." (Paul.W.Ashton, Spring Journal Inc, 2007 back cover)

This presentation takes the form of a dialogue in response to our exhibition *Grey Matters* held at Aqffin Gallery (London) in 2009. The exhibition consisted of digital photographs from Jo Love and paintings by Michael Evans. A number of similarities between our works became apparent from the beginning while others continue to grow with the emergence of deeper and more resonant forms of dialogue (still unfolding), which we seek to explore here.

Within our work we both exhibit forms of emptiness. It is in defining this emptiness that similarities and differences between our works emerge. We both work with certain types of absences, the absence of colour and the absence of form, and a problematic notion of representation.

Michael Evans removes any specific sense of place via abstraction whilst Jo Love becomes interested in images, which are at the very point of invisibility. Surprisingly it is Michael Evans who has worked his way out of a landscape tradition, and although he still feels connected to this in some ways he no longer sees representation as a useable option. However, in the work of Jo Love, the landscape is the starting point for a problematic of representation itself and provides a way of investigating the authenticity of the photographic as an indexical mark of the real.

#### **Jane Grant**

##### ***Leaving Earth***

In this talk I will be discussing the new works, *Soft Moon* and *Leaving Earth*, both of which are being exhibited at the Peninsula Arts Gallery. I will discuss the process of making the works drawing on the research I have undertaken of current and historical influences in astrophysics with particular reference to the formation of the Earth-Moon System. I will also discuss literary works by Italo Calvino and Stanislaw Lem and the interpretation of scientific ideas in the moving image.

#### **David Rayson**

##### ***The Ship***

Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe longed to go to sea, not it seems to aspire to get to somewhere else, but out of a strong and somewhat irrational compulsion to simply be at sea. David Nobb's Reginald Perrin became so eroded by the routine and daily grind of work and suburban life that one day made a neat pile of his 9 'til 5 clothes on a beach and walked out in to the sea.

As a stowaway I have willed these fictions into a reality, I dream of the sea air on my face with the wind on my back heading ever outwards towards the horizon. It seems like an age since I have felt this free, purposely journeying into the unknown. As the pages turn in a novel and countless commuter train stations blur passed the train window, I begin my plans to explore unknown waters and inhabit far away islands through my drawings and painting, where the studio becomes *The Ship*.

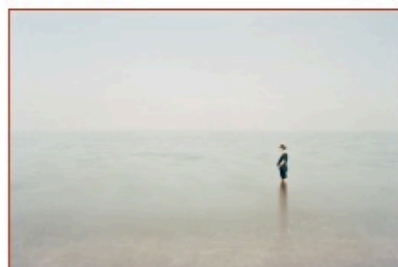
#### **David Williams**

##### ***NOT TWO***

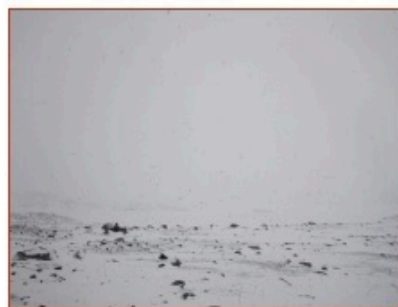
In this presentation, related notions of time, space, self and transcendence will be addressed within the context of photography's capacity to reconcile and integrate apparent opposites. David Williams will explore the metaphysical implications of a range of strategies in his landscape-related work with emphasis on his recent output, made in Japan.



Mike Evans: *Abstract painting #1*, acrylic and oil on canvas



David Williams: *Stillness and Occurrence #1* 2000



Jo Love: *Dasfestsetzen #2*



Peter Cusak: *Sunken Boats, Chernobyl*



David Rayson: *First Signs of Winter*, acrylic on panel 2010