

Public and Personal Archives: Creative Negotiations

Friday 4 April 11.00 – 5.30 pm

Creativity Zone, University of Sussex

Pevensey III, Room C7. Find it on the [Campus Map](#) or in [google maps](#).

This free workshop explores the relationship of public and personal in different life story projects which prioritize listening, sound and voice. Three presentations will discuss questions of politics, representation and aesthetics which arise in using life stories in creative works.

The aim of the event is to generate discussion around the work by allowing hour-long slots for each presentation. Students are especially welcome to attend.

The event includes a display of video, photography, and sound work by Suze Adams, Jacqueline Butler, Rosy Martin, Sally Waterman and Lizzie Thynne all artists associated with the Family Ties Network.

Presented by the *Family Ties Network* and [Centre for Life History and Life Writing Research](#), University of Sussex. Supported by the *Leverhulme Trust*.

THIS EVENT IS FREE BUT PLEASE REGISTER WITH ALEXANDRA LOSKE,
a.loske@sussex.ac.uk

Schedule

- 10.30am **Doors Open – Viewing of display of photography, video and sound work in Creativity Zone**
- 11.00am **Coffee and Welcome**
- 11.30am – 12.30pm
Standing By: The Ethics of Domestic Ethnography
[Melanie Friend, University of Sussex](#)

Standing By focuses on Friend's elderly parents and their daily routine of doing the 'Quick' crossword, undertaken partly to combat memory loss. Whilst the piece is sound-led, Friend will show work in progress on the interweaving of images with the 27-minute soundtrack. Friend uses a tightly edited range of her own photographs taken in the past decade, together with images from her parents' family album. The recordings of her parents' daily crossword routine, made between 2001 & 2007, make an engaging framework and device for exploring both their 60-year relationship, and, inevitably, Friend's own relationship with her parents. Friend's talk will range around questions of the everyday, representation and ethics.
<http://www.melaniefriend.com/>

- 12.30pm **Viewing of display of work in Creativity Zone**
- 1.00pm **LUNCH**

- 2.00 – 3.00pm
Voices in Movement
Lizzie Thynne, Ed Hughes and Margaretta Jolly, University of Sussex

Lizzie Thynne and Margaretta Jolly will discuss an experimental work in progress in choreographing voices and sound from *Sisterhood and After: the Women's Liberation Oral History Project*. A 15 minute extract from the work-in-progress, an installation entitled Voices in Movement will be shown in the Creativity Zone.

Sisterhood and After is a major oral history that has captured the life stories of sixty women who took part in the Women's Liberation Movement in Britain in the 1970s and 80s. Oral history focuses by its nature on individual stories but the Movement encouraged women to look at the common aspects of their experience, as well as their differences, and understand how the personal is political. This installation juxtaposes some of the voices from the project within a soundscape to explore what connections and counterpoints emerge and evoke some of the emotions behind the stories and the way they are told.

Voices in Movement is produced by Lizzie Thynne, Ed Hughes and Margaretta Jolly (all from the School of Media, Film and Music, University of Sussex).

Sisterhood and After was produced by the University of Sussex partnership with the British Library and The Women's Library. It was funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/sisterhood/about.html>

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/clhlwr/research/sisterhoodafter>

- 3.00pm **TEA**
- 3.30 – 4.30pm
Voyaging Voices: Reflections on a Glasgow Women's Library Residency
[Dr Nicky Bird, Glasgow School of Art](#)

Originally set up in 1991, the [Glasgow Women's Library](#) has a strong grassroots identity. During 2009-10, Nicky Bird was an artist-in-residence at a time when the Library was in a temporary location and about to move into Glasgow's *Mitchell Library*. Its archive was then made up of largely uncatalogued donations, often from individual women, in addition to housing other archives such as *The Lesbian Archive*.

It was no coincidence that listening became important throughout the residency; to the voices of women talking about familial objects that were important to them; to the voice of the library's Archivist talking about how to 'manage' desires and practicalities surrounding the *Glasgow Women's Library* archive. The site-specific sound work [Unsorted Donations](#) emerged from this. In a series of one-to-one recorded interviews, Bird asked ten women connected to the Library – its users, volunteers and staff – to bring in an object that was important to them and imagine they were donating it to the archive. The interviews were edited to very short extracts, installed as hidden sound pieces inside boxes and dispersed throughout the archive. Participants were then invited to make an appointment at the archive and to make their own way through it, following the sound of voices coming from the boxes. From the viewpoint of an artist, Bird's talk will attempt to navigate these voices, and reflect on the tensions between the public and private at a point when an archive is becoming more formally organized.

<http://womenslibrary.org.uk/>

- 4.30pm **Plenary**
- 5.00 – 6.00pm **DRINKS RECEPTION**

Work on display:

Suze Adams (University of the West of England):

***Bodies of Water* (2013)**

The Hebridean Isle of Mull was the home of Adams' maternal ancestors. Re-tracing their footsteps, she roams seashores and moorland walking over tracts of land they once farmed. *Bodies of Water* - three short video works and one sound piece - celebrates the place and the people, past and present. The constant presence of water on Mull (loch, burn, bog and sea) has penetrated the work and becomes a metaphor for the passing of time, the transience of the body.

<http://www.suzeadams.co.uk/home.html>

Jacqueline Butler (Manchester Metropolitan University):

***Recalling Touch* (3', 2014)**

Fifteen years ago, Butler began making a series of photographs with her mother titled *Various Properties*. Her mother performed, Butler photographed and listened. Her mother had terminal cancer. After her death, Butler continued the work with her own daughters – photographing them, and then they listened to her speaking about her mother.

The film focuses on fragments of photographs of Butler's mother taken from family albums (particularly her mother's wedding album) alongside 'performative' work made with her daughters.

The piece visualizes memories between the generations of women, reflecting on legacy and inheritance. <http://jacquelinebutler.blogspot.co.uk/>

Melanie Friend (University of Sussex)

Standing By

Details above

<http://www.melaniefriend.com/>

Rosy Martin:

***Stuff: All That Remains* (2014)**

Following on from Martin's previous works, *Too close to home?* and *The Sitting Room*, this new video looks at the task of emptying the family home of over seventy years of carefully collected stuff. Since Martin's parents were of the 'make do and mend' generation, this was a huge and poignant excavation of their roots and hers. The camera searches and lingers, as memories and associations arise, cut by the harshness of the finality of 'the end'. <http://www.rosymartin.co.uk/Hi.html>

Lizzie Thynne, Ed Hughes and Margaretta Jolly (University of Sussex)

***Voices in Movement* (Extract – sound installation)**

Details above

Sally Waterman (Ravensbourne):

***Wisdom* (1' 25, 2013) and *Against* (4' 55, 2014)**

Wisdom is a stop-frame animation sequence that documents Waterman's family relationships, together with the changing seasons, using digital snapshots taken over a three-year period from Easter 2010 to Easter 2013.

Against plays with perception and memory through repetitive gestures performed in response to projected images of the artist's grandmother, who passed away twenty years ago.

(Both works from the '[Translucence](#)' series with music by Donna McKeivitt) www.sallywaterman.com