

PRESS RELEASE

Exhibition announcement: A Perverse Library

Saturday, 4 September to Sunday, 31 October 2010

The Laurence Sterne Trust and artist-publishers Information as Material are proud to announce a major exhibition of conceptual writing, featuring collections of work by an array of internationally renowned artists and writers including Kathy Acker, Jen Bervin, Christian Bök, Pavel Büchler, Craig Dworkin, Kenneth Goldsmith, James Joyce, On Kawara, Sherrie Levine, Ed Ruscha, and Klaus Scherübel; to be held at Shandy Hall, Coxwold, North Yorkshire between 4 September and 31 October 2010.

Conceived and curated by artist, teacher and founding editor of Information as Material, Dr Simon Morris, the exhibition will be the first of its kind in the UK. It will show works by a generation of artists who have sought a radical reconsideration of the relationship between literature and the visual arts.

Unfolding around Craig Dworkin's book collection of 2,427 titles, many of them pricelessly rare objects, displayed on *Invisible Bookshelves* designed by Canadian architect Michael Farion, the exhibition will include:

- 'A Bibliography of Ugly Cousins', for which Simon Morris has drawn together critical examples of appropriated writing, or 'rip-off's that expose the parasitic relationship between conceptual writing / writers and their histories;
- A collection of carbonised books contributed by artist and collector Greville Worthington, entitled 'The Black Library', from the remains of which vegetables are to be grown for consumption in the Shandy Hall Library;
- 'A Sonic Library' curated by poet Kenneth Goldsmith, founder of UbuWeb, the world's largest online archive of visual, concrete and sound poetry. UbuWeb Radio will be streamed live for the duration of the show;
- *Bouvard et Pécuchet's Invented Desk for Copying* by the young Canadian artist Gareth Long who, working with furniture maker and designer Wilf Williams, will present the copying desk as the latest in his series of sculptures pulled from the unfinished pages of Gustave Flaubert's last novel.
- The launch of six new works, including print editions, publications and a new documentary film.

A Perverse Library builds on a legacy of residencies and exhibitions co-organised by Information as Material and held at Shandy Hall, the former home of the celebrated 18th-century English writer Laurence Sterne, which is now a museum dedicated to exploring his astounding and continuing influence on the arts. "Through our exhibitions, and by hosting residency programmes, we are enabled to explore how contemporary artistic practice, whether text-based, visual, sonic or otherwise, can help visitors to the museum unlock the Trust's collection of 18th and 19th-century literature", says the museum's curator, Patrick Wildgust. "Our aim is to encourage an

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inventive exploration of Sterne's legacy and experimental spirit, in the context of the artefacts of his estate."

Recent Shandy Hall exhibitions have included The Black Page for which Wildgust commissioned 73 artists, including John Baldessari, Cornelia Parker and Rachel Whiteread, to re-produce the 73rd page of Sterne's monumental novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy: Gentleman*, in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the book's publication.

The next residency will be held during August, when American poets Kim Rosenfield and Rob Fitterman will spend a week as poets-in-residence at the hall. The outcome of their visit will be featured in the A Perverse Library exhibition.

Thanks to the generous support of Arts Council England and York College, a free bus service will run from York train station to the Shandy Hall site on 27 and 28 October 2010. Places on the service can be booked today by visiting <http://www.writingencounters.org>. Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

A Perverse Library is co-organised by Information as Material, The Laurence Sterne Trust and *In a word*. The exhibition is made possible thanks to the generous support of Arts Council England through their Grants for the arts programme, The Henry Moore Foundation and York College.

*****ENDS*****

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Information as Material

Information as Material was established by the English artist Simon Morris in 2002. Based in York (UK), iam operates as an independent imprint that publishes work by artists who use extant material — selecting it and reframing it to generate new meanings — and who, in doing so, disrupt the existing order of things. The imprint's

activities involve publishing, exhibiting, curating, web-based projects, and invited lectures. iam's editorial team is Craig Dworkin, Simon Morris and Nick Thurston.

<http://informationasmaterial.com>

Laurence Sterne Trust

The Laurence Sterne Trust was established as a registered charity in 1969 in order to promote the writings of Laurence Sterne, 18th century novelist and vicar of Coxwold. Shandy Hall is where he lived and wrote, 'The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman' and 'A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy'.

The Trust promotes Sterne's work and international reputation through exhibitions, events and public access to the property and its collection. Shandy Hall is situated 15 miles to the north of York in the beautiful surroundings of the North York Moors National Park.

<http://www.laurencesterne.org.uk>

In a word

In a word is a project that seeks to connect artists, writers, curators, publishers and others, who share an interest in the encounter between writing and performance. It is a partnership between Arts Council England and Writing Encounters.

<http://www.writingencounters.org>

Arts Council England

Arts Council England works to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives.

As the national development agency for the arts, we support a range of artistic activities from theatre to music, literature to dance, photography to digital art, carnival to crafts.

Great art inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better.

Between 2008 and 2011 we'll invest in excess of £1.6 billion of public money from the government and the National Lottery to create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>

The Henry Moore Foundation

The Henry Moore Foundation was established by Moore in 1977, and is now one of the UK's leading arts charities.

The Henry Moore Foundation Grants Programme has supported many hundreds of projects and exhibitions both in the UK and abroad. Last year alone it gave over £1 million in grants to projects that reflected the aims of the Foundation. The Grants Committee meets four times annually to consider applications.

<http://www.henry-moore.org/>

Six new works will be launched during the exhibition:

- *The Perverse Library*. A new bookwork by Craig Dworkin which works between traditional literary genres to present a bibliography of all the books the author owns (2,437); a supplementary bibliography of absent and imagined books; and an accompanying essay arguing that libraries are defined not by what they contain, but by what they exclude or fail to include. The essay also investigates the histories of libraries, makes a theoretical argument about the relation of historical canons to architectural space, and explores the psychology of collecting — including the pathology of bibliomania. ‘He had but one idea, one love, one passion: books. And this love, this passion burned within him, consuming his days, devouring his existence.’¹
- *Getting Inside Jack Kerouac’s Head*. A new bookwork by Simon Morris with an introductory essay by Kenneth Goldsmith.
- *making nothing happen*. Information as Material’s latest documentary film presenting the work of the internationally exhibited and widely acclaimed expatriate Czech artist Pavel Büchler. [duration: 43minutes, 30seconds.]
- *He Wore, He Might Find, & He Moved*. A new triptych of screenprints by Nick Thurston, which use grammatical analysis to re-read a specific set of the ingenious experiments performed by Samuel Beckett in his 1953 novel *Watt*.
- *clay the life, plaster the death, charcoal the revolution*. A new print edition by Greville Worthington that comes with a carbonised posy of wild flowers.
- *re-writing Freud*. i-Pad app version of Simon Morris’s 2005 writing machine, coded by Christine Morris.

All our partners in the Press are invited to join us for the Grand Vernissage to celebrate the opening of the exhibition (at the end, of course) on Saturday, 30 October 2010. If you would like to attend please RSVP to info@writingencounters.org

¹ Gustave Flaubert, *Bibliomania*, no trans. (London: The Rodale Press, 1954) 10.