



Autumn 2005
8 October 2005 – 15 January 2006

Notes for Teachers

Contents

Introduction	3
Resources:	4
Websites	
Contacts	
Further Reading	
St Ives Artists	
Key Themes	6
Barbara Hepworth	8
Tacita Dean	10
Simon Carroll	12
Kerstin Kartscher	14
John Wood and Paul Harrison	16

Introduction

This Autumn focuses on three artists – Tacita Dean, Kerstin Kartscher and Simon Carroll. Also on show is a new Tate acquisition - the video work by John Wood and Paul Harrison, *Twenty six (Drawing and Falling Things)* 2001. A new display of works from the Tate Collection that highlights the story of modernism in St Ives is on display in Gallery one.

The displays present us with the following key points:

- An insight into the art of Tacita Dean
- An insight into the ceramics of Simon Carroll
- An insight into the work completed by Kerstin Kartscher during her residency
- An opportunity to see a Wood and Harrison's video acquired by Tate
- A display of artists associated with St Ives Modernism
- An exploration of the idea of a 'sense of place and time' in painting, drawing, sculpture, film and installation
- An exploration of the language of abstraction
- An exploration of architecture as social and political document or symbol
- An exploration of ideas about embellishment and decoration

There are many starting points appropriate to these displays (see Key Themes, page 6) that you could develop according to your group's needs and interests. Consider some of the following,

- Film and video art
- A sense of place
- Place, time and history
- Real and imaginary landscapes
- Space and the illusion of space
- Light
- Boundaries
- Contrasts
- Mark making and drawing
- Ceramics versus painting
- Ceramics versus sculpture
- Installation
- Painting versus sculpture, video and film
- Abstract art
- St Ives and St Ives artists

How to use this pack and structure your visit

The aim of this pack is to provide information about the exhibition, information about key works on display and suggestions of themes and issues to consider and discuss. The pack should help you create an introductory discussion about some of the issues raised by the current displays. The key works cards can be used to help focus work in small groups in the exhibition, and to follow up within the classroom.

Resources available in the Gallery

There is an **Exhibition Study Point** on Level three that has a selection of books relating to the exhibitions. You can access the **Tate Collection databases online** at this point. The **Tate shop** has a selection of books, catalogues, postcards and related materials.

Websites

Tate online www.tate.org.uk

Tate Learning www.tate.org.uk/learning

This site includes the Staff Room, a dedicated area for teachers and group leaders. Teacher resource notes for all major Tate exhibitions including Tate St Ives can be downloaded from the site.

Tate Tools www.tatetools.com is a growing library of teaching resources for Key Stages 2 & 3 of the National Curriculum. Tate tools offers high quality learning to support the art curriculum. Annual fee of £90 plus VAT.

Tate Teachers www.tate.org.uk/learning/teachers for continuing professional development.

Contacts

General enquires and group bookings

+44 (0) 1736 791114

tsi.education@tate.org.uk

Susan Lamb, Head of Education and Public Programmes

+44 (0) 1736 791116 susan.lamb@tate.org.uk

Kerry Rice, Education Officer

+44 (0) 1736 791114 kerry.rice@tate.org.uk

Joel Edwards, Education Officer

+44 (0) 1736 791113 joel.edwards@tate.org.uk

Further Reading

Tacita Dean

**Tacita Dean*, exhibition catalogue with essays by Sean Rainbird and Mark Godfrey, Tate St Ives 2005

**Tacita Dean, Recent films & other works*, Tate Gallery, 2001

Kerstin Kartscher

**Kerstin Kartscher*, exhibition publication with essays by Heike Munder & Jan Verwoert, Tate St Ives, 2005

Simon Carroll

**Simon Carroll*, exhibition publication with essay by Emmanuel Cooper, Tate St Ives, 2005

John Wood and Paul Harrison

**In Profile, John Wood and Paul Harrison*, DVD publication which includes a conversation between the artists and Richard Wentworth, an essay by Ian White and a selection of video works, drawings and photographs, In Profile, 2005

**John Wood and Paul Harrison, Twenty Six (Drawing and Falling Things)*, Picture This Moving Image, 2005

**John Wood and Paul Harrison*, with an essay by Charles Esche, Ellipsi Minigraph, 2000

Websites

www.firthstreetgallery.com/dean Frith Street Gallery represent Tacita Dean.

www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibition/tacitadean Tacita Dean's 2001 exhibition at Tate Britain

www.aber.ac.uk/ceramics/interviews/scinterview.htm Moira Vincentelli's interview with Simon Carroll.

www.aber.ac.uk/ceramics/link.htm Useful links to a range of websites associated with ceramic

St Ives Artists

- **Homecoming The Pier Arts Centre Collection at Tate St Ives*, Essay by Andrew Dalton, 2003
- *Axten, Janet, *Gasworks to Gallery: The Story of St Ives*, Tate Gallery, 1995
- *Berlin, S *Alfred Wallis: Primitive*, London, 1949
- Cross, Tom, *St. Ives and British Modernism*, 1999.
- *Cross, Tom, *Painting the Warmth of the Sun, St Ives Artists, 1939-1975*, Alison Hodge, Penzance, 1984
- *Davies, Peter, *St Ives Revisited – Innovators and Followers*, Old Bakehouse Publications, 1994
- *Gale, M & Stephens C, *Barbara Hepworth: Works in the Tate Collection*, Tate Publishing 1999 Gardiner, M *Barbara Hepworth, a memoir*, Salamander Press, 1982
- *Hammacher, AH, *Barbara Hepworth*, Thames and Hudson, 1968 Revised Edition, 1987 *Barbara Hepworth, A Pictorial Biography*, Tate Publishing 1970. Reissued 1985
- *Mullins, E, *Alfred Wallis: Cornish Primitive*, London 1994
- Lax, Julian, *St. Ives. Eighty Years of Modernism*, 2001
- *Phillips M & Stephens C, *Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden*, Tate Publishing 2002
- Oldham, Alison, *Everyone was Working, Writers and Artists in Post War St Ives*, Tate St Ives/Falmouth College of Art, 2001
- *Rowe, Matthew, *John Wells*, Tate Gallery publication, 1988
- *Thislewood, D (Ed), *Barbara Hepworth Re-considered*, Liverpool University Press & Tate Liverpool, 1996
- *Val Baker, Denys, *Britain's Art Colony by the Sea*, Samson and Co, 1959
- *Whybrow, Marion, *St Ives: 1883-1993: Portrait of an Art Colony*, Antique Collectors Club, Woodbridge, 1994
- St Ives 1939-64, Twenty Five Years of Painting, Sculpture and Pottery*, Tate Gallery, 1985
- *The St Ives artists Series, Tate Publishing includes: *Terry Frost, Barbara Hepworth, Peter Lanyon, Patrick Heron, Bernard Leach, Alfred Wallis, Bryan Wynter and Christopher Wood*.

* Available in the shop at Tate St Ives

Tate publications have produced a series of **Key Work Cards for Teachers** including one on *Landscape and Environment*. For an order form call 01736 791114

The **St Ives Archive Study Centre** holds a range of material about artists associated with St Ives. Tel: +44 (0) 1736 796408, e-mail: archive@stivestrust.co.uk
www.stivestrust.co.uk/archivesite

Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden

Tel: +44 (0) 1736 796496

Barnoon Hill

St Ives, Cornwall, TR26 1AD

Group bookings: +44 (0) 1736 791114, tsi.education@tate.org.uk

KEY THEMES

The artists included in the Autumn displays at Tate St Ives are all very different and they explore a variety of subjects and media. However, exhibited together their works do share some common themes. Some of these key themes are listed below. For more detailed discussion of individual works please refer to the key work cards.

Film as art. Tacita Dean's exhibition raises many questions about the medium of film. Why are these films different to documentary or fictional film? What is it that makes them art? Dean pushes film to its limits; her slow wide pans and meditative shots seem to make more references to the art of painting than the history of film. Interesting comparisons can be made to painting, sculpture and ceramics on display at Tate St Ives to draw out precisely what it is that makes Dean's films so powerful.

Pushing the limits of painting. In very different ways, these artists push and challenge the boundaries between different art forms such as painting, sculpture, film and ceramics. All of them work with reference and knowledge of the language of painting. Dean's films are often described as if they are slow moving paintings. Wood and Harrison's create three-dimensional paintings with short video pieces using simple props and white studio space. Carroll loves to paint his ceramics, revelling in marks, splatters and changes in textures and surface. Many of the artists associated with St Ives (see gallery one) have been interested in challenging and redefining painting and sculpture, often developing an abstract language.

Space, light and movement. These artists explore and describe space in different ways. What space can a film or video describe? Why is this different to the space within a painting? What happens when you pass Patrick Heron's window or enter Kartscher's installation? What mood or atmosphere is created by the changes in light in Dean's films? Why do Wood and Harrison confine themselves to a simple studio space? How did artists such as Barbara Hepworth, Patrick Heron or Peter Lanyon celebrate the light and space of the Cornish landscape?

Gravity and the horizon. We are constantly reminded of our own sense of gravity and movement through space in this exhibition. Wood and Harrison make gravity the subject of their work. Carroll's ceramic creations lean this way and that, as if to defy their own weight and fragility. Dean uses broad horizons to focus our vision and contemplate the differences between internal and external spaces, while Kartscher's spaces have lost all sense of perspective and horizon, structures and objects come and go in a land free of gravity.

Landscape and a sense of place. What is real and what is imaginary in landscape? Is nature always a construct? How do we describe a sense of place or history? How do we record the passing of time and its effects on a place? These are just some of the questions raised by the works on display. While Dean explores the history of Berlin, Kartscher takes us into the realm of fantasy and utopia. Many of the St Ives School of Moderns were interested in capturing their sensation or experience of place rather than a view of the landscape. Peter Lanyon described trying to paint 'placeness' and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham talked of the 'the total experience'. Many works demonstrate an emotive response to the colour, light, textures, surfaces and materials of the natural world.

Time. All art is preoccupied with time, but some of these artists are especially preoccupied with its passing. Consider how Dean's films slow down time as well as record the passage of time and its effects on buildings and places. Wood and Harrison produce tightly choreographed actions and events within short periods of time. Their videos focus on simple almost banal actions that become strange and comical precisely because they draw our attention to them. Kartscher invites us to experience imaginary time – a place where past, present and future merge.

Narrative and memory. These works are full of narratives. Kartscher invites us to enter her

dreamscapes where space and objects are transformed. It is as if we entering a world of fantasy and imagination where reality and dreams merge and space and time take on different dimensions. Dean is interested in the idea of obsolescence and the relationship between decay and memory. Her films explore the symbolism of buildings and objects and the stories they tell us about politics and social history. Carroll's ceramics teeter between strange vessels and bizarre, whimsical objects. They remind us of diverse images such as ploughed fields, sombreros and Elizabethan ruffles.

Mark making and expression. The displays embrace a wide range of materials and techniques. There is a great variety of mark making and texture. Look at how Dean uses fading light or Carroll builds up his painted surfaces. Look at the range of marks created by Kartscher or the way she combines objects and surfaces within her installation. Contrast with the work of artists such as Paul Feiler, Peter Lanyon and Roger Hilton in Gallery one.

Symbolic buildings. What do buildings tell us about the past as well as our own times? In what ways can they symbolise political, geographical and social history? Why and how do their meanings and functions change? These are some of the questions Dean's film raise about the city of Berlin. In contrast, Kartscher has her own agenda about buildings. For Kartscher, temporary structures are much more appropriate. Explore the variety of ways that architecture is challenged and questioned in these displays. Don't forget the gallery itself as a site where function and meaning are changing all the time.

Some questions to consider when looking at films

- What are your immediate reaction to the film?
- Is it colour or black and white?
- Is there a soundtrack? If so, how does it relate to the visual imagery?
- What sorts of film techniques does the artist use? (e.g. close up views, awkward angles, slowing down the frames, dramatic lighting).
- How long is the film?
- What do you think the film is about?
- What particular issues do the artist seemed concerned with?
- How does the work make you think about time?
- Do you feel part of the film or simply an observer?
- How does this particular film and gallery space make you feel?

Barbara Hepworth 1903-75

Pelagos 1946

part painted elm and strings on an oak base

430 x 460 x 385 cm

© Bowness, the Hepworth Estate

Background

Hepworth made the rounded form of *Pelagos* by hollowing out the middle of a piece of elm wood to make two spiralling arms. String has been used to span the space between the two arms and the inside has been painted blue.

Pelagos was inspired by the bay of St Ives in Cornwall where two arms of land enfold the sea from either side. Hepworth carved it in her studio in Carbis Bay which looked out onto the bay. The spiral formation also suggests a shell, wave or the roll of the hill. 'Pelagos' is the Greek word for 'open sea' thus reinforcing this connection with the landscape. Hepworth wrote, *I could see the whole bay of St Ives, and my response to this view was that of primitive who observes the curves of coast and horizon and experiences, as he faces the ocean, a sense of containment and security rather than of the dangers of an endless expanse of waters. So Pelagos represents not so much what I saw as what I felt* (1960 Edouard Roditi, *Dialogues on Art*).

Pelagos is one of Hepworth's most well known works. The sculpture demonstrates her preoccupation with carving into solid form to create interior spaces. The theme of enclosure or enfolding forms was also one she explored in a number of works. Here she deliberately painted the inside a matt blue to contrast with the polished wood surface.

Hepworth used strings in a number of her sculptures. It enabled her to explore space in different ways. String also suggested a link to musical instruments. Look at how the curve of the form, the contrasting surfaces and the use of string all add to the tension between interior and exterior space and the play of light.

Born and brought up in Yorkshire, **Hepworth** attended Leeds School of Art and the Royal College of Art in London. She first learnt to carve in stone during a visit to Italy in 1924. While in Italy she married the sculptor John Skeaping and her first son, Paul was born in 1929. In 1931 she met the painter Ben Nicholson who became her second husband. In 1934 she had triplets, Simon, Rachel and Sarah. From 1930 Hepworth's work became more abstract. She and Nicholson developed an art based on pure simplified forms and they became associated with many of the leading European avant-garde artists of the day. Hepworth moved to Cornwall with her family just before the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1949 she bought Trewyn Studio in St Ives where she lived and worked for the rest of her life. During the 1950s she began working in bronze and often on a larger scale. She was awarded many honours and her work is in many collections worldwide. Hepworth died in a fire at her studio in 1975. The following year the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden was opened at Trewyn.

For discussion

- Hepworth enjoyed experimenting with abstract and natural forms. Here she has linked the abstract curve of line and space with the natural sweep of the bay of St Ives. What forms associated with the sea or land does the sculpture make you think of?
- Hepworth was not just interested in looking at the landscape. She wanted to make sculptures that could express the feeling of being in the landscape. She once wrote, 'the strings were the tension I felt between myself and the sea, the wind or the hills'. What did she mean by this?
- Strings also suggest a link to musical instruments. Can you imagine what sorts of sounds you would hear from *Pelagos*?

- Hepworth frequently made circular, oval and enfolding forms. Pelagos reminds one of the inside of a shell, a cave and some people have compared it to a womb-like shape suggesting a sense of shelter or caring function of the mother. Can you think of your own examples?
- Pelagos is part of a display about art associated with St Ives. Can you see connections with other works in the room? Why not make a list.

Activities

Words about sculpture. What words would you use to describe this sculpture? Develop written work inspired by sculpture. This sculpture inspired the poet Miriam Bennett to:

Miriam Bennett - Pelagos – Barbara Hepworth (1)

*In the curve of the open ocean's wave,
In the sweep of the bay,
A copper sun is reflected
On the furred wing of the albatross.
Splashed with the glowing radiance,
Lulled and soothed by the lapping water
The bird can slumber on;
While we sit at the sea's rim
Dipping our toes in the warm ripples
And watching boats in full sail
Opening out into the wider world.*

(p.28 Hepworth: A Celebration, edited by David Wooley, Westwords Publications, Plymouth 1992)

The natural world: structure, form and colour. Develop work based on the direct observation of natural forms. Make use of a field trip or collect materials. Students could develop a series of drawings where they gradually simplify the forms and look for geometric shapes. This work could be developed into a collage, textile, digital or 3D project.

Sculpture and our environment. Explore sculpture in relation to the landscape and the environment. Ask students if they identify themselves, with a particular place and its history. Encourage students to research the place and use it as the focus for a piece of experimental work that might include sound, text, photography and digital imagery.

Alternatively students could design their own 3D work for a context giving careful consideration to its position and surroundings. Start by making a maquette to develop ideas.

Links

Pelagos is often paired with another sculpture by Hepworth called **Wave 1943-4** (Scottish National Gallery of Art, Edinburgh). Visit the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden in St Ives. Compare *Pelagos* to works such as *Landscape Sculpture 1944*, *Stringed figure (Curlew)*, *Version II 1956* or *Pierced Form (Epidaurus) 1960*.

See **Naum Gabo's Spiral Theme 1941**, on display in Gallery one at Tate St Ives. Gabo was one of the first to experiment with abstraction and explore new material to make sculpture. Gabo was friends with Hepworth and he spent time in Carbis Bay, Cornwall during the Second World War.

Compare Hepworth with other **artists associated with St Ives** on display in such as Paul Felier, Ben Nicholson, Peter Lanyon, Patrick Heron, Bryan Wynter, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Terry Frost or John Wells (see Gallery one). What do these artists have in common? Hepworth was inspired by the **landscape and natural world**. Look at other artists similarly inspired. Look also at artists who make work directly in the landscape. Extend to look at how people have used objects in the landscape past and present. Consider also artists such as Richard Long and Tacita Dean who explore the theme of landscape but in very different ways. Compare Hepworth's work with **contemporary sculptors** such as Anish Kapoor, Richard Deacon or Anthony Gormley.

For further information on Tate works see www.tate.org.uk.

Tacita Dean (b.1965)

***Fernsehturm* 2001**

Single screen projection, 16mm colour anamorphic film with optical sound
44 minutes, looped

Background

This film was made in the revolving restaurant of a television tower in Berlin. It records the comings and goings within the restaurant as day turns to night. *Fernsehturm* features the diners as they gradually arrive and take their places through the evening. They are locked into the continual roll of the restaurant as it slowly rotates. At a certain point music is played for the diners on an electric organ.

Fernsehturm is in Alexander Platz in the centre of Berlin in what was formerly the Eastern part of the city. A futuristic structure built in the late 1960s, the tower's revolving restaurant commands views across the entire city.

As for many of her films Dean used an anamorphic lens that literally stretches or expands the view. She also uses a static camera position. The stretched horizontality of the image and the stillness of the camera create conditions similar to a painting. For nearly three quarters of an hour we are invited to observe the unfolding of time; the film has an extraordinary atmosphere of mystery and melancholy.

Dean has been based in Berlin since 2001 and *Fernsehturm* was the first film she made about her adopted city. She first visited the city as a student in the 1980s and she has been fascinated by the way the city has changed since it has been reinstated as the capital of reunited Germany.

Dean is interested by the idea of obsolescence and the relationship between decay and a memory of a future that was once imagined but never realised. The Berlin TV tower, originally built as a monument to the future, symbolises this relationship. Now a tired and dated building, it stands testament to the city's changing fortunes and unrealised dreams.

Dean is an artist who explores film as a physical medium and who challenges and pushes it to its limits. A common feature in many of her films is the disappearance of the horizon. The horizon is that limit against which things appear and as it changes or disappears our orientation and perception are challenged. As daylight turns to darkness in *Fernsehturm*, and our eyes are drawn from the activities in the restaurant to the limitless horizon beyond you cannot help but reflect on the shifts in history and humanity within Berlin.

In 2005 Dean made *Palast* a film focusing on the now ruined landmark Palace of the Republic erected in the former German Democratic Republic and close to the television tower. Seen as a pair, *Fernsehturm* and *Palast* offer a powerful reflection on Berlin's divided history. *Palast* concludes with the television tower mirrored in the bronze façade of the derelict palace.

Tacita Dean was born in Kent in 1965. She studied at Falmouth School of Art, Supreme School of Fine Art in Athens and the Slade School of Art in London. In 1994 she received a Barclays Young Artist Award and in 1998 she was shortlisted for the Turner Prize, Tate Gallery in London. She has undertaken residencies in Bourges, Ohio and Berlin. Since 2001 she has lived and worked in Berlin. Dean is represented by the Frith Street Gallery in London.

For Discussion

- What role do the people play in this film? What role does sound play in this film? Why do you think there is no dramatic action or dialogue?
- Is there a story within this film? In what ways is Dean's film different to a documentary film?

- or drama?
- What happens to the horizon line in this film? Why do you think Tacita Dean chose to film the restaurant as daylight fell to darkness?
 - What does this film tell you about Berlin? Why do you think Dean chose the TV tower? Now look at some of Dean's other work about Berlin. What aspects of the city is she most interested in?
 - Dean is described as being 'obsessed with time' in all her films. How does she convey a sense of time here?
 - Compare *Fernsehturm* with other works by Dean in this exhibition. Are there any common themes or connections? Make a list.

Activities

Making films. This exhibition could be the starting point for a range of film making activities. Experiment with some of Dean's techniques such as slow fixed shots, wide horizontal views, collaged sounds and fading light.

Stories about places. Seen together Dean's films create an unfolding story about Berlin. Encourage students to develop their own work about a place they know well. Encourage them to create a narrative about these places, using film or photography, text and sound.

Filming light. Everyone has tried to capture that special sunset or full moon but how do you really capture changing light, weather and the passing of time? Students could develop work that contrasts painted and drawn records with film and photography.

Symbolic buildings. What do buildings tell us about past and present times? How does architecture speak to us about social, political and economic history? Develop project work based on the theme of symbolic buildings – students could use collage, photography and other mixed media.

Links

This exhibition focuses on the **artist's response to Berlin**. Compare *Fernsehturm* with *Palast* 2005 (see above). Look also at other works such as *Pie* 2003 based on the view from her studio, and the sound piece *Berlin Project* 2002 where Dean uses sounds she has recorded and interlaced sounds from the streets with radio and other commentaries.

See also Dean's newest Berlin work *Die Regementstochter* 2005, based on opera and theatre programmes of the 1930s and 1940s.

Link also to **Dean's earlier work preoccupied with land and sea** such as *Disappearance at Sea* 1996. This film features a lighthouse off the coast of Britain. Like *Fernsehturm*, the film records the fading evening light and the gradual shift from inside (the lighthouse) to outside (the vast expanse of sea).

Explore the **history of Berlin**. Look at work by other writers, film makers and artists. For example, Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, Stephen Barber's *Extreme Europe* or Joachim Schlör's *Nights in the Big City: Paris, Berlin, London 1840-1930* (1998). See also Christo and Jeanne-Claude's wrapping of the Reichstag, 1971-95 (see www.christojeanneclaude.net/).

Link to artists past and present who explore the **theme of landscape or a sense of place**. Interesting comparisons could be made to artists as diverse as John Constable, Peter Lanyon (see Gallery one at Tate St Ives) or Robert Smithson. Link also to artists such as Jeremy Dellar, Nathan Coley, Thomas Struth and Olafur Eliasson who all explore through a range of media the cultural and political heritage of particular places.

Further information on Tate works and can be found at www.tate.org.uk/collections.

Simon Carroll (b.1964)

Thrown Square Pot 2005

©: the Artist

Photo: Dave Clarke and Andrew Dunkley

Background

Simon Carroll's huge pot stands amidst a group of similar towering structures in the display case in upper gallery two at Tate St Ives. The smooth curvy glazed top contrasts with the square rougher textured bottom. Seen altogether these pots look like a selection of fanciful chimney stacks or exotic umbrella stands. As Moira Vincentelli writes, *'Simon Carroll's work breaks all the rules. Jugs list drunkenly, handles fly, glazes drip, walls crack, and nothing fits neatly, his ceramics are wild and wicked. The forms are made from sections that are thrown, pressed in moulds to give surface patterns and assembled together, often pushed and pummelled into eccentric shapes'* (Aberystwyth Arts Centre, 2004)

Carroll tends to work in batches, making a series of similar forms so that he can experiment with detail and decoration. He also tends to use a limited range of slips and glazes - a white opaque tin, a glossy clear lead and a red earth clay. As can be seen here, Carroll combines techniques such as moulding, joining slabs and throwing them on a wheel. He often contrasts the voluptuous rim or lips with a band of slip at the top with plainer unglazed lower parts.

Carroll is no conventional potter – he loves to make expressive forms and surfaces. He enjoys the cracks and imperfections that develop across his painted and glazed surfaces. He explores and almost revels in his materials in a very direct and intuitive way. *Thrown Square Pot* combines swirls, lines and marks incised into the clay with painted sweeps and drips of paint and splodges of colour. The top seems to bulge and crack creating a sense of energy and movement.

Carroll admires the tradition of English slipware and particularly the traditional pancheon bowls (used for kneading bread) which are often covered with trails of slip and glaze. His early work was also inspired by saggars, the ceramic containers traditionally used by the ceramic industry to protect pots from the ash and grit of the coal-fired kiln. However, his sources and inspirations are wide ranging – from the agricultural environment surrounding his studio to the curl of paper peeled off wax crayons.

Carroll's experience of manual work such as boat building, garden maintenance and construction work have introduced him to new materials and techniques. Mark making of every kind fascinates Carroll and alongside his ceramics he also draws, paints, makes prints, and in recent years, undertakes giant beach drawings.

Simon Carroll (b.1964) studied Ceramics at Bristol University and completed a research fellowship at Bath Spa University. He has taught at the Royal National College for the Blind, Stroud College of Art and the Royal College of Art. Carroll set up his first workshop with the help of a Crafts Council Grant. In 2002 Carroll started to make regular visits to Cornwall particularly to the beaches around Padstow where he started to make giant beach drawings. In 2004 he transformed a disused Nissan hut on an old airfield near the village of St Merryn to use as his studio.

For Discussion

- How can a vase or pot be full of energy? Simon Carroll's work is often described as exuberant, wild and playful. Describe some of the ways in which his work displays these characteristics. Look closely at their shapes, sizes, positions, textures, marks, and colours.
- Carroll is inspired by many different ideas and sources. What do the works displayed here make you think of? Can you spot any common characteristics or themes?
- Pots or paintings? What are these objects that Carroll has made? Do you think they ever

get used? Look at the way Carroll treats the shapes and surfaces – it is almost as if he is painting in clay.

- Why do you think Carroll works in series. Look at the display here. What connections can you make between the pots? Why do you think he chose to paint the display case a deep red?

Activities

Expressive pots. Encourage students to experiment with the shape, scale and surfaces of their pots. Encourage them to 'feel' their pot emphasising touch rather than appearance. Carroll was inspired by watching the uninhibited way blind students handled clay, when he taught at the Royal National College for the Blind.

Mark making. Explore the way Carroll builds up surfaces that are richly painted or dripped with slips and glazes. Experiment using different materials, textures and media including simple mono-prints, collage and painting. Explore different ways to make marks such as incising, pressing, rubbing, scratching and smearing. If you have access to a kiln students could make 'ceramic paintings' by painting with slips and glazes onto ceramic tiles.

Beach drawings. Carroll likes to make large-scale beach drawings by raking the sand. Students could experiment making individual or group works on the beach using tools such as plastic rakes, spades and wooden spoons.

Links

Explore **traditions in English ceramics**, especially seventeenth century Staffordshire slipware associated with the Toft family (see The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent, www.200stoke.govt.uk/museum). Link also to the tradition of studio pottery associated with St Ives. Visit the Leach Pottery in St Ives, +44 (0) 1736 796398, www.leachpottery.com. Link to worldwide traditions in pottery and ceramics – from African pots to Antoni Gaudi's *Guell Park*.

Carroll has also been linked to the American expressionist ceramicist **Peter Voulkos** (see www.voulkos.com) and Robert Arneson who was associated with 'California Funk' (see www.artnet.com/artist/1649/robert-arneson.html).

Interesting comparisons can be made to painters such as **Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning**. Carroll's work has also been compared to the paintings of Jean Michel Basquiat. Compare also to the experimental ideas of the **CoBrA group** of artists. Paintings such as Karel Appel's *People, Birds and Sun* 1954, share a similar sense of energy and freedom. Make links to other artists who explore the boundaries between ceramics, painting and sculpture from **Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso to Gwyn Hanssen Pigott or Richard Deacon** (who recently showed his *Gap* 2005 series at Tate St Ives).

Kerstin Kartscher (b.1966)

Private War 2005

Background

Hide Out Capital 2005 is a detail from Kerstin Kartscher's new work *Private War 2005*. This work combines drawings, found objects and pieces of furniture. As you enter the space to the right are a series of drawings hung on a curtain against the wall. In front is a bed with mattress and folded sheets. To the left is an architectural structure shaped like a tent that include, ceramic floor tiles, a metal washstand with different bottles and glasses and a giant pharmacy bottle.

Private War explores ideas about a sanctuary, shelter or field hospital. It is ambiguous as to whether this is a refuge or a prison, a place that saves you from pain or a place that is isolated and highlights that pain. The artist describes it as a 'place you pass through' which is neither within nor outside society.

Private War combines many features of Kartscher's earlier work within it. For example, there are a series of drawings of imaginary landscapes as well as an extraordinary architectural construction that looks a bit like a beach tent made of canvas and wood. Like much of her work, this is a female world where the protagonists are women and the atmosphere extraordinarily feminine. It is as if the ideas for her drawings have evolved into a three-dimensional world.

As with her drawings, a strange convoluted narrative unfolds from flowing graphic lines, adorned surfaces, fabricated and painted objects and temporary structures. We literally step into a strange world of changing moods, which combines a sense of past, present and future. Kartscher revels in contrasting surfaces and textures such as glass, wood, ceramic, canvas and crystal. Alluring materials are combined with some that are more menacing, such as barbed wire and netting.

Kartscher is interested in visionary worlds and like much of her work, *Private War* portrays an imaginary place in order to probe ideas about contemporary freedom. This installation hints at social, emotional and psychological constraints. Could this be a room in a sanatorium? A place where someone retreats to recover or meditate? Or is it something more oppressive? Are we visitors to a room which bears witness to an aging and impoverished lifestyle? Described as a place of endless possibilities *Private War* is both intensely seductive and deeply uncertain.

Kerstin Kartscher (b. 1966) was born in Nuremberg, Germany but lives in London. She studied Fine Art in Nuremberg and Hamburg completing her masters in 1996. She has exhibited widely in Europe. Kartscher is Tate St Ives Artist in Residence 2004-5. She is the third artist to participate in this residency programme based at the historic Porthmeor Studios in St Ives.

For Discussion

- Describe your experience of this installation. What do you notice first? How do you move through the space?
- What objects, furniture and decorations can you see? Where do you think the artist found these different items?
- Describe Kartscher's style of drawing. What materials does she use to make her drawings? Why do you think they have been described as doodles?
- Why do you think the artist chose to hang her drawings on a curtain rather than the wall?
- In what ways could *Private War* be described as an 'imaginary dreamscape'? Is there a narrative within this work? What sorts of stories do Kartscher's images tell us?

- Why do you think this work has been described as ‘encapsulating femininity’? Women are often included in Kartscher’s work. What roles do they play and what references to women can be found here?
- What is a utopia? Do you think Kartscher has created some sort of utopia?
- Architecture is a subject that Kartscher has explored in a number of works. What does this work say about buildings (notice the drawings on the tent like structure)? Why do you think Kartscher is more interested in temporary structures than grand monuments?

Activities

Doodles and drawings. Look at Kartscher’s drawing techniques. Experiment with different materials such as pencil, crayon, marker pens and paint to create a range of marks. Encourage students to combine representational imagery with patterns and doodles.

Dreamscapes. Invite students to develop project work in a range of media that explore the theme of imaginary landscapes or dreamscapes. Encourage them to combine materials and techniques such as collage, textiles, print making and photography.

Fantastic maps. Students could create their own fantastic maps or diagrams that explain their own idea of an imaginary place. Explores ideas about past, present and future and also scale, perspective, close-up and detail.

Architectural structures. Look at the history of architecture. Discuss the idea of symbolic buildings. Invite students to choose examples of architecture that interest them or in some way symbolise something personal to them.

Links

Link to the history of drawing and graphic art. Kartscher herself makes direct references to the great draughtsman of her home town **Albrech Dürer**. Link also the sinuous lines of **Aubrey Beardley’s** illustrations, the romantic drawings of **Gustave Doré** or ‘automatic’ drawings of Surrealist artists such as **André Masson**. Look also at the history of cartoon, print and animation. Kartscher’s images suggest links as diverse as traditional steel engravings to contemporary manga comics.

Look at **fantasy and surreal landscapes**. Compare, for example, the work of Dorothea Tanning or Ithel Colquoun. See Colquoun’s *Scylla* 1938.

Look at other **artists who make installations**. Links could be made to for example, the work of artists such as Louise Bourgeois (see *Cell (Eyes and Mirrors) 1989-93*), Mona Hatoum, Rachel Whiteread, Cornelia Parker and Rebecca Horn. Contrast Kartscher’s installation to Jan de Cock and his team’s installations and sculptures, *Denkmal 53*, recently assembled at Tate Modern.

Further information on Tate works and can be found at www.tate.org.uk/collections.

John Wood (b.1969) and Paul Harrison (b.1966) ***Twenty Six (Drawing and Falling Things) 2002***

Video

Courtesy the artists and fa projects

Background

In this video John Wood and Paul Harrison explore the theme of irresistible forces acting on the body in a series of short performed actions and dramas. Seen together they form a compendium of pointless scenarios.

The works in *Twenty Six* are randomly displayed on a loop using six video monitors. Each piece records an experiment in human size, scale and movement in relation to a devised architectural environment. They vary in length from thirty seconds to three minutes. The props are basic and they range from simple actions such as swinging a plastic bag, bouncing a ball, throwing a chair, dropping a breeze-block to sliding down a tube in a life jacket and turning upside down in a boat. Humour, absurdity, melancholy, endurance, fear and trust are all explored as their actions highlight the effects of gravity and the vulnerability of the human body.

At what point does motion induced by physical action take over? At what point does the human body lose control of its own weighted position? Can weightlessness be induced? What happens when things are turned upside down or pushed to the limit? The image of the two artists wobbling around on an office chair inside the back of a van in *Twenty Six: Luton* asks all these questions. Absurdity moves to something darker. At times the deadpan stance of the artists wavers – their vulnerability against the motion is quite shocking.

Wood and Harrison have been working together in video for over ten years combining elements of performance and sculpture. Their work, often using deadpan humour, explores how the human body can be used as a tool to explore spatial boundaries. They use their own bodies and a combination of made and everyday objects within simple architectural settings.

All their work starts from drawings that they describe as instructions or diagrams. These drawings enable them to work out ideas together and develop possible solutions. It seems significant that their initial experiments with physics and geometry are on paper before they move to a blank three-dimensional studio space to carry out their controlled performances. Much of their video work seems to test the boundaries of painting and sculpture.

John Wood (b.1969) and Paul Harrison (b.1966) have been working together since 1993. They have exhibited their video work internationally since and in 2001 they collaborated with Picture This, Bristol to tour *Twenty-Six (Drawing and Falling Things)*. This work has since been acquired by the Tate Collection. Wood and Harrison are represented by fa projects. John Wood has worked for the Open University for many years and is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Art History.

For Discussion

- For all twenty six pieces Wood and Harrison use a still camera with no panning or zooming. Why do you think they chose to create a simple rectangular field of vision?
- Do you think these video pieces could be described as three-dimensional paintings?
- Where does the action take place? Describe the space and consider how the horizon line works in these video pieces. What viewpoints do they use?
- What sorts of props do these artists use and why? Describe how they use colour.
- Which pieces do you find funny? Why do you think they use humour and how would you describe the type of humour they use?
- Why do you think Wood and Harrison always remain deadpan and passive in their video pieces?

- Why do you think *Twenty Six* is shown on more than one screen?
- Why *twenty six*? The artists also produced a publication for which they invited twenty six writers to respond to one video each. They seem to be playing to a format or some internal logic, even suggesting a lexicon, yet at the same time proving that this is impossible.
- At what point does an ordinary action become strange? Why is gravity absurd?
- Wood and Harrison have used the boat as a prop in many of their works (see *Twenty Six: Boat 2*). What role does this boat play and how does it help the artists to demonstrate the effect of gravity?

Activities

Three-dimensional paintings. Use simple props and limited colours to create your own three-dimensional paintings. If possible film these 'paintings' to make a group video piece.

Visual theatre. Look at the way Wood and Harrison use their own bodies within their work. How do they choreograph their actions within these constructed spaces? Develop performance work exploring ideas about physical and visual theatre.

Experiments with gravity. Develop your own gravity-defying experiments to explore the forces of nature.

Word games. *Twenty Six* suggests some sort of encyclopaedia of actions or events. Invite students to find words to describe each video piece. Use their words to compile a dictionary to define gravity.

Links

Wood and Harrison's video pieces bring to mind the many **double acts** from popular entertainment and art history such as Laurel & Hardy, Morecombe & Wise, Vic Reeves & Bob Mortimer or Gilbert & George. Their slapstick humour also links to Monty Python.

Their works link to early **performance, body and video art as well as Conceptual art.**

Compare their work to that of artists such as Yvonne Rainer, Bruce Nauman, Carl Andre, Chris Burden, Robert Morris, Sol Lewitt, Richard Serra and Yves Klein.

Consider their work in relation to traditions in **twentieth century British sculpture.**

Comparisons can be made to sculptors such as **Richard Wentworth** who takes everyday objects and transforms them by assembling them in unfamiliar relationships. See examples of Wentworth's work in the Tate collection such as *Siege* 1983-4, *Shower* 1984 or *35°, 32° 18'* 1985.

Some interesting links can also be made to the **relief constructions and assemblages** of Ben Nicholson, Kenneth Martin, Victor Pasmore and Mary Martin currently on display in Gallery one at Tate St Ives.

Further information on Tate works and can be found at www.tate.org.uk/collections.

Further information on art terms can be found at www.tate.org.uk/collections/glossary