

**Lay of the Land (and other such myths)**

Output: Exhibition

Location: Airspace Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

Dates: 5th May - 3rd June 2017

Produced by Mark Devereux Projects

Funders: Arts Council England, Airspace Gallery and UCLan

Supported by HOME and Staffordshire University









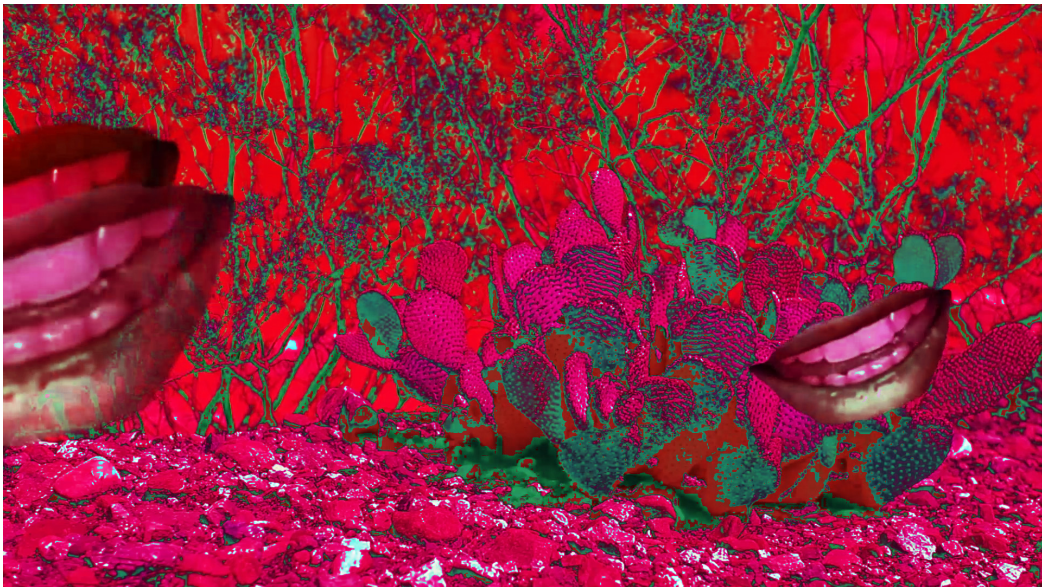




MEDIA INFORMATION

For Immediate Release

Imaginary Voice, Real Voice, Victoria Lucas, 2016  
still from video | image: courtesy of the artist



LAY OF THE LAND (AND OTHER SUCH MYTHS): VICTORIA LUCAS

AirSpace Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent | 6 May - 3 June 2017 | Preview: 5 May, 6-8pm

Lay of the Land (and other such myths) is an exhibition that seeks to challenge anti-progressive forms of power through an imaginary subversive place. Fictional island constructions cite cinematic, geographic and literary references to explore a scene in which radical representations of women control their own space, and their own bodies, on their own terms.

Stepping into the gallery reveals an otherworldly space that blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality. Using JG Ballard's 1974 novel *Concrete Island* as a starting point, Lucas has explored the Brownfield sites situated close to AirSpace Gallery to produce new sculptural, photographic and video works for the gallery installation. Interpreting these sites as 'deserts' and with references to real and fictional female characters throughout, this location is juxtaposed with Lucas's recent works inspired by the California Desert.



Punctuating the strong visual aesthetic of the exhibition is a new sound work developed by Lucas in collaboration with singers from across the region. Working from harmony to a chaotic, discordant sound, the all female choir individually and collectively fill the installation with their voices. Celebrating the launch of the exhibition on Friday 5 May, this specially assembled choir will be performing live within the gallery.

Signaling the conclusion of Victoria Lucas's successful touring project, which previously visited London Art Fair and HOME in Manchester, this exhibition brings together work made over the last 2-years. The Lay of the land (and other such myths) exhibition has been produced by Mark Devereux Projects in partnership with AirSpace Gallery.

Lay of the land (and other such myths) has been funded and/or supported by Arts Council England, University of Central Lancashire, HOME, AirSpace Gallery and Staffordshire University. Victoria Lucas is represented by Mark Devereux Projects.

For further details about Lay of the land (and other such myths), please visit [markdevereuxprojects.com](http://markdevereuxprojects.com)

- ENDS -

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#### ACCOMPANYING EVENTS:

##### Lay of the land (and other such myths): Public preview

Friday 5 May, 6-8pm

Join us for the public preview of this brand new solo exhibition, which will include a premiere performance of a site-responsive sound work, composed by Victoria Lucas, in collaboration with a group of locally based female singers. This sound work has been developed through a series of artist-led workshops, which focused on nearby brownfield sites and their potential as subversive places. Working from a harmony towards a chaotic, discordant sound, the group will fill the installation with their voices in a way that extends their presence away from the body in to the surrounding space.

##### The Artist Soup Kitchen

Reflections of Belongings and Becomings: Art, Maternity and Family Art Activism with Dr. Paula McCloskey

Saturday 20 May, 12-2pm

In 2016, the performance artist Marina Abramovic said that having children would have been 'a disaster for her work'. She went on to say that, 'In my opinion that's the reason why women aren't as successful as men in the art world. There's plenty of talented women. Why do men take over the important positions? It's simple. Love, family, children - a woman doesn't want to sacrifice all of that.'

Her words follow other female artists, such as Tracey Emin who, when interviewed in The Independent, said: 'There are good artists that have children. Of course there are. They are called men. Mothers are too "emotionally torn."'

Recently, there has been a proliferation of women artists who are exploring maternity in all its myriad forms. In this Soup Kitchen, Dr. Paula McCloskey will explore the challenges facing artists with young families. What does it mean to be an artist and a mother? How do you test and challenge the existing art structures and models of traditional art institutions? And, how do you juggle the demands of parenting young children alongside artistic and other paid labour, often with little or no support?

##### Lay of the land (and other such myths)

Victoria Lucas in conversation and tour with Dr. Paula McCloskey

Saturday 20 May, 2:30-3:30pm

In conversation with Dr. Paula McCloskey, Victoria Lucas will tour us around the exhibition, offering insights into and discussion points around this major new installation. Within the talk, Victoria will broaden out her thinking to include the feminist framework underpinning the work (see below). For more information on the Tour, including booking details, please visit the AirSpace Gallery website.

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#### EDITOR'S NOTES

Victoria Lucas | [victorialucas.co.uk](http://victorialucas.co.uk) | [markdevereuxprojects.com/artists/victoria-lucas](http://markdevereuxprojects.com/artists/victoria-lucas)

Victoria Lucas (b.1982) is a British artist based in Sheffield. She holds a BA in Fine Art Sculpture from Norwich School of Art (2004) and a MFA in Fine Art from The University of Leeds (2007). Her work has been exhibited internationally, including a solo exhibition at Grizzly Grizzly, Philadelphia and group shows at Shangri-la, Joshua Tree; Casa Maauad, Mexico City and Vapaan Taiteen Tila, Helsinki.

Recent commissions include a permanent touchscreen artwork for the NHS Wilberforce Health centre in Hull and a video artwork for the National Portrait Gallery in London. She has artist book works in the Tate Archive, the MOMA New York and the V&A collection amongst others. She has worked both independently and collaboratively on a number of curated projects and is currently board director at Bloc Projects in Sheffield. Lucas is a Fine Art Lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire and PhD Student at Sheffield Hallam University

Mark Devereux Projects | [markdevereuxprojects.com](http://markdevereuxprojects.com)

Mark Devereux Projects represents a new model of working with artists, with each individual's objectives at the core of our ambitions. Central to this ethos is bespoke artist development. This is reactive and responsive to each artist's requirements and can include strategic planning, mentoring programmes, critical engagement and production.

AirSpace Gallery | [airspacegallery.org](http://airspacegallery.org)

Fri 5 May – Fri 2 June 2017

4 Broad Street, City Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 4HL

Opening times: Thursday to Saturday 11:00am to 5:00pm | Tuesdays and Wednesdays by appointment

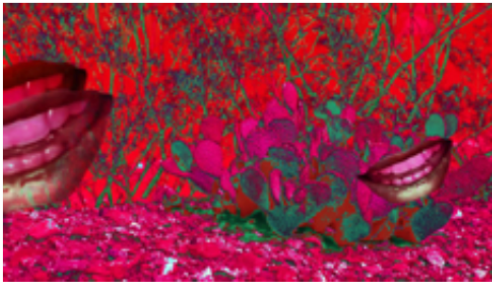
AirSpace Gallery is a collaborative, artist led project in Stoke-on-Trent, providing professional development opportunities, studio and exhibiting space and support for artists. Through a dynamic and evolving programme of exhibitions, events and activities AirSpace Gallery brings critical, high quality contemporary art to the region and provides opportunities for a broad range of artists.

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## IMAGES

For further information and press quality images please contact Jack Welsh at:

E: [admin@markdevereuxprojects.com](mailto:admin@markdevereuxprojects.com) | T: @MDP\_info

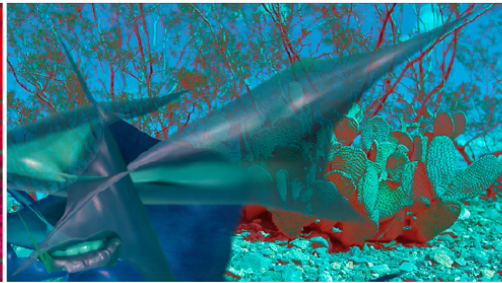


Imaginary Voice, Real Voice II

still from video

Victoria Lucas, 2016

Image: courtesy of the artist



Imaginary Voice, Real Voice I

still from video

Victoria Lucas, 2016

Image: courtesy of the artist



Lay of the land (and other such myths)

Installation view: London Art Fair 2017

Victoria Lucas, 2017

Image: Jules Lister Photography



Lay of the land (and other such myths)

Installation view: HOME, Manchester, 2017

Victoria Lucas, 2017

Image: Jules Lister Photography



Psychedelic Western #5  
digital photograph  
Victoria Lucas, 2015  
Image: courtesy of the artist



Psychedelic Western #13  
digital photograph  
Victoria Lucas, 2016  
Image: courtesy of the artist



Victoria Lucas  
Image: Jules Lister Photography

## Press:

Feature: <http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/conceptualised-topography/>

Article: <http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/victoria-lucas-lay-of-the-land>

Interview: <http://newartwestmidlands.co.uk/editorial/ga-with-victoria-lucas-on-lay-of-the-land-at-airspace-gallery/>

Interview: <http://airspacegallery.blogspot.co.uk/2017/05/lay-of-land-victoria-lucas-interview.html>

Interview: <http://airspacegallery.blogspot.co.uk/2017/05/lay-of-land-interview-mark-devereux.html>

## Art Monthly: June 2017 Issue Review



airspacegallery MDP

# LAY OF THE LAND

(AND OTHER SUCH MYTHS)

VICTORIA LUCAS

5 May to 3 June 2017



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



**HOME**



# LAY OF THE LAND (AND OTHER SUCH MYTHS)

5 May to 3 June 2017  
Public Preview: 5 May 2017 6.00 to 9.00pm

Seven years after first working with Victoria Lucas on the Lay of the Land (and other such myths) at the Victoria and Albert Museum, AirSpace Gallery is pleased to announce that we will be presenting Lay of the Land (and other such myths) in association with Mark Dewar's Projects, who have been working on the project since its inception.

Combining work made over the last two years, with brand new content specific to this Lay of the Land (and other such myths), seeks to challenge anti-progressive forms of power through an interdisciplinary suite of plans. Detailed, active sound constructions that manifest themselves as literary references to explore a sense in which radical representations of women control their own space, and their own bodies, on their own terms.

Stepping into the gallery reveals an otherworldly space that blurs the boundaries between a myth and reality. Using Jo Salem's 1974 novel *Concrete Island* as a starting point, Lucas has explored the dreamlike and surrealistic ideas to AirSpace Gallery to produce new mappings, producing the same role words for the gallery installation, incorporating these as an 'agenda' and with references to real world events and the historical context of the location as juxtaposed with Lucas's recent work inspired by the *Concrete Island*.

Presenting the strong visual quality of the exhibition as a new sound work developed in Lucas's collaboration with writers from across the region. Working from her own to a chaotic, discordant sound, she allures alter individually and collectively fill the installation with their voices, challenging the limits of the exhibition on Friday 5 May, this specially created story will be performing live with the gallery.

## Lay of the Land The Artist's Framework

1. *Transversing Terrain de Louise Lipp*, 1989 theory that women are simultaneously absent and present in dominant culture. *Countrywomen* of white femininity, 'localable', 'displayed' on maps and not necessarily 'represented'. This exhibition aims to interrogate contemporary femininity, representation and the historical context of the location. How the space has been colonised by technology. 2. *Amalio Jones in the Void*, landscape as a site that is not a site, that the body now wanders into and is understood by an absence. *Art as an Inevitable Underworld*, respectively, as embodied. 3. *Utopian* the body from its image either one to objectively consider their potential beyond it, and that to risk the responsibility of the individual islands that the components inhabit as a site for the work. 4. *Phobos* God's weaving on the regulation of female sexuality or public and private space. *Concrete Island* as a site of walking on ground covered with contrasting women's sexuality. 5. *Concrete Island* as a site of the explorer who lives in their work to inhabit female behaviour and improve upon it. My work seeks to interrogate constructed place as a space distanced from these external expectations.

Victoria Lucas March 2017

1. Chastelain, S. (2009) *Feminist's Invention*. In ed. *London: I.B.Tauris*, pp. 143-150.
2. Jones, A. (2008) *Sell me this Technology*, *Representation and the Contemporary Subject*. New York: Routledge, pp. 24-32.
3. Sola, Rebecca, *Wunderkammer: A History of Wollongong's Great Exhibition*, *GAIA* pp. 214-227.
4. Brownell, N. (Ed) (2018) *De Deemed-Lose Association*, 2 (iv), p. 78.

## Victoria Lucas Lay of the Land: Landscape and Other Stories by Dr. Paula McCloskey

What happens when the other is absent in the structure of the world?  
Only the brutal opposition of sky and earth reigns with an insupportable light and an oblique abyss  
(Calves, 1994: 55)

Landscape, land, earth, soil, the ground, territory, displacement, mobility, conflict, power, landscape - that which is visible, that which can be captured by a single perspective. But surely this is a fiction? A landscape is always a re-imagining, an encounter from within a body, a located body itself constituted by multiple belongings, a collective of points that in any moment, more or less hang together.

The invisibility of the feminine is woven into the visibility of Lucas' landscape. What they are transformed into are places of feminine-becomings, rather than some notion of essential femininity.

This fictioning works to disrupt, offering a tacit understanding of our relationship to terrain of earth and air in relation to the known, producing a new kind of landscape. The forces and sensibility of this abused planet are ever present. As we go deeper the fantastical, mythical and psychedelic elements in the work transforms and disrupts the notion of landscape. As one moves across the room, Lucas' careful configuration of things, artefacts and happenings summon a necessary point of collapse. The push and pull of the different realities, the absence of earth, the barren juxtaposition of the different objects, all vibrating with sensorious affective antennae.

The sculptural and cinematic form, the creation of new myths through different viewpoints, a montage of forms in collage of spaces. These itself as a material as it moves across through and within the different the objects.

Lucas' work itself might be seen as a creative evolution to the questioning and tensions of space, time, perception and memory. This work isn't about a fixed vista, but attends to difference and multiplicity. These differences are inscribed in the materials and move across them as they move across. The different vibrations of each object, the large gold rocks, the films, the voices, the concrete, the paper is palpable.

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# LAY OF THE LAND (AND OTHER SUCH MYTHS)

VICTORIA LUCAS 5 May to 3 June 2017

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AirSpace Gallery is a collaborative, artist led project in Stoke-on-Trent, providing professional development opportunities, studio and exhibiting space and support for artists and curators.

Currently particularly concerned with issues surrounding collaboration and partnership working and a relational relevance with its location and the socio-political landscape, AirSpace Gallery brings critical, high quality contemporary art to the region through a dynamic and evolving programme of exhibitions, residencies and public realm activities.

Visit AirSpace Gallery  
4 Broad Street  
City Centre  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 4HL

Open during exhibitions  
Thursday to Saturday  
11.00am to 5.00pm  
Evenings and Wednesdays by appointment  
mail@airspacegallery.org  
+44(0)1827 26 12 21

Designed by  
phil@redwallwebpark.co.uk



A landscape in these terms knows sexual difference, sexual differentiating. Landscape is no longer captured or rendered as other. Instead, the landscape is used as a being place, as an emergent place. The literal piece of land or territory that one can see is freed from its fixed view from nowhere. This is the territory of Victoria Lucas' work where the landscape is continually being produced, as a site of co-production between the artist and the collaborator, a threshold for dreaming, for a radical imagining of new worlds to become. As we encounter the Lay of the Land, no longer do we privilege a single perspective but we open up to multiple trajectories and ways of becoming, as the ship now sets sail over, across, and to un-charted territories. As we travel we are invited to ask our own questions and make our own investigations.

This non-domestic landscape is a place of feminine difference, an urgent meeting with, and for, feminine-differentiating. Here the earth is vital, as being matter that was here long before humans populated and polluted it, and which will continue to live long after we are dirt and dust. But, for the time being at least, humans and the earth are intertwined. To invoke feminine difference here reminds us that the feminine is essential to all humans because, as Bracha Dineur argues, pregnancy is at time and space of co-becoming which is always with another. Through the contemplation of this particular feminine, the objects and their resonating effects create the potential of generative encounters for us all. The curiosity of objects, of the differing landscape, the actual and the virtual, the visual and silent landscape, multiple faces and voices, work together so we are reminded in no doubt that we are not in the realm of 1 and other but of multiple and transverging relations that moves in different directions and at different speeds. These are places of threshold, of co-affection and co-potency as we the viewers are invited to contemplate who and what we are as we enter this landscape, and importantly we are provoked to ask: who and what we are becoming? How do we co-exist and co-emerge with the earth, with other humans and non-humans?

Lucas' melancolic landscape constitutes an eerie encounter with time, with a time that has run out of time, and which is running across in all directions. They dazzle the eyes with colour vibrations, shake out the maps of memory of the too, easily forgotten recent past: of the West and 1960s Southern California, its rhythms and movements. The abstract, figurative, representational and anti-representational dance across and across for decades, denuded and dreamy, dreaming that they take the excesses of nature, the joining of the human body, the female human body, to the earth, and create a space for you to find a space of your own.

In Lucas' landscapes therefore, is the background meanings of the human impact on the earth, the quiet politics of difference is rendered both beautiful and inescapable; the very vibrations of the earth are summoned and recast as new sensations. The absence and presence of human bodies; tree bodies; animal bodies. The sweeping sunsets and the oblique obliquity. No longer, then, only landscape of surface or view, but with the Lay of the Land a sweeping mythic-landscape is created. These are events, happenings in the now of the world, the past and the future), outside of time, as we are asked to re-imagine the world as it is.

These carefully choreographed relations between each object generate a dance with those who choose to take a hand. This dance takes us away from the actual world and into the virtual. In this passage the work creates a meditation of a becoming world embodying past, present and future. Extraction, compression, metamorphosis. And when we return we are re-made. The careful juxtapositions of objects allows them to speak to one another, for some they literally call out, sing and speak up - whatever who sings and what they have much to say. They cry out for the earth; they really invite us in they talk in hushed tones about non-human chimeras; and they speak in hushed tones of an original feminine, Her mother's voice, the original transmission those sonorous murmurings that call us into being, into belongings, always becomings. These carefully choreographed relations between each object generate a dance with those who choose to take a hand. This dance takes us away from the actual world and into the virtual. In this passage the work creates a meditation of a becoming world embodying past, present and future. Extraction, compression, metamorphosis. And when we return we are re-made.

This exhibition was commissioned by AirSpace Gallery as part of our continuing commitment to the art of creative writing.

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# LAY OF THE LAND

(AND OTHER SUCH MYTHS)

VICTORIA LUCAS 5 May to 3 June 2017



# LAY OF THE LAND (and other such myths)

VICTORIA LUCAS

May 5th to June 3rd, 2017

Seven years after we first worked with Victoria Lucas, in Stoke-on-Trent's visual arts biennial *Conjunction 10: Escape*, AirSpace Gallery, in association with Mark Devereux Projects\*, welcomes Victoria back for a landmark solo exhibition.

Combining work made over the last two years, with brand new content specific to the city, *Lay of the Land (and other such myths)* seeks to challenge anti-progressive forms of power through an imaginary subversive place. Dissident, fictive island constructions cite cinematic, geographic and literary references to explore a scene in which radical representations of women control their own space, and their own bodies, on their own terms.

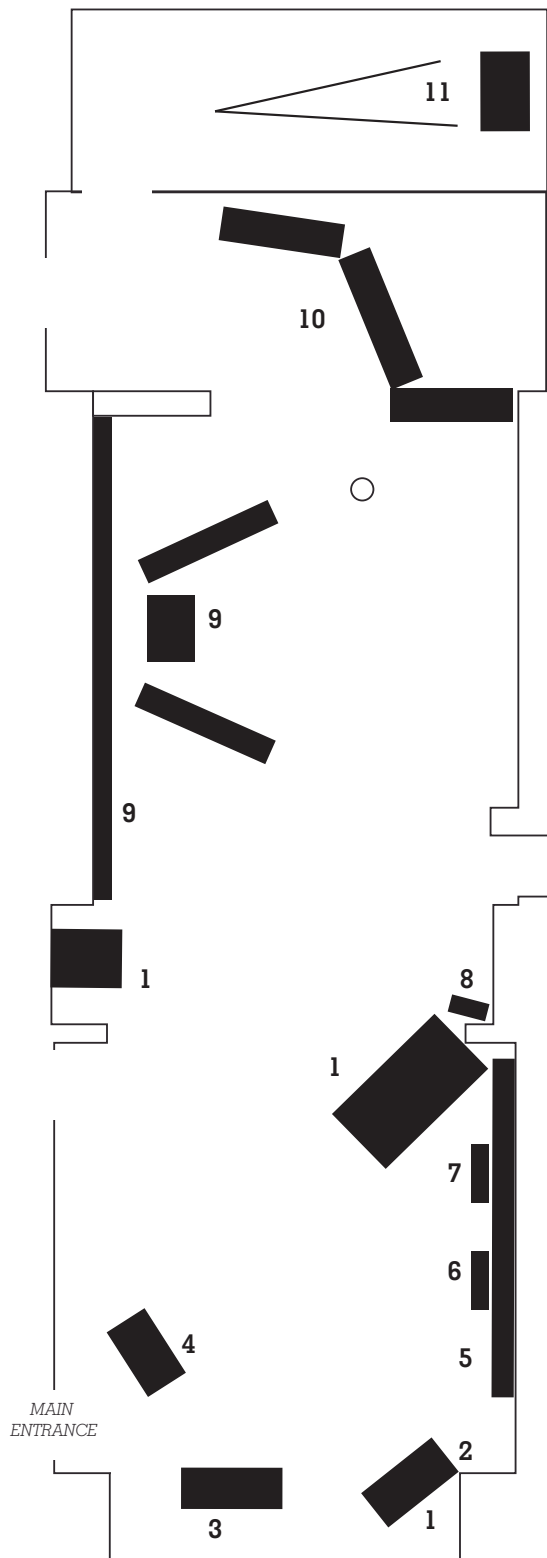
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\**Lay of the Land* is presented in association with Mark Devereux Projects as part of AirSpace Gallery's programme commitment to independent curatorial practice.

## List of Works

1. *Gold Boulder Series* (2016 - 17), dimensions variable, polystyrene, fibreglass, resin, jesmonite, gold paint
2. *Release* (2017), looped sound work, speakers (50:00)
3. *Psychedelic Western #3* (2015), digital photograph, framed, 101.6cm x 152.4cm
4. *Scenery II* (2017), digital photograph mounted on to wooden screens
5. *Psychedelic Western #14* (2016), wall sized digital photograph, dimensions variable
6. *Imaginary Voice, Real Voice #1* (2016), looped video
7. *Imaginary Voice, Real Voice #2* (2016), looped video
8. *Body / Image #1* (2016), looped video
9. *Concrete Island* (2017), wall sized digital photograph, concrete benches, looped sound, headphones, rubble
10. *Scenery I* (2015), digital photograph mounted on to wooden screens
11. *A Staging* (2017), video (10:00)



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