

Press Release

SECOND NATURE

19 April – 21 May 2010

OPENING Thursday 22 April, 5.00 – 7.30pm

SECOND NATURE brings together the work of Vicki Kerr and Matthew Smith, which explores human kind's relationship to and philosophical distance from nature. Both artists reject the idea of one all encompassing original 'nature' in favour of infinite interpretations, copies, and inventions of the natural. Their practice explores, reveals and navigates a way through these myriad natures.

Vicki Kerr has taken two found texts, which describe two differing encounters with zoos one in China and one in England and re-made them in relief using the mutable and corporeal material of sugar paste. In a second work she uses the image of a wall depicted in a press photograph documenting a zoo in China. Isolating this ruined structure from the rest of the image and reconstructing it in three dimensions by casting the individual bricks and re-constructing the broken down wall.

Matthew Smith has removed a rock from the foreground of a picturesque view in the Lake District National Park. A mould was made from it, which was used to create concrete copies of the rock. One of these concrete copies was taken back to the location and placed within the scene in exactly the same spot from which the original was removed. Multiple copies of the rock are randomly distributed around the gallery creating a cloned artificial /natural environment which the viewer can wander through.

Nature is created or simulated for our visual consumption, whether it be in the themed environments and enclosures of a zoo or the confines of a national park. These encounters with the natural world are carefully ordered to favour the visual consumption of something rather than any real time physical interaction with it.

The exhibition focuses on the way the natural world is represented photographically and textually, re-presenting, re-telling, re-casting and disrupting these images. The works on show re-create an element of nature from some cultural source, a photograph, a newspaper article and a designated view in a National Park. In the re-telling or translating of these works the original becomes slightly skewed. In the copy of a given situation there is a decline a loss of some sort both in the materiality and the perception of the original, the stand-in is in the end a sad indication of an event missed. These three works together create an environment of duplications, which the viewer can navigate both physically and conceptually.

Vicki Kerr was born in Auckland New Zealand. She studied at Camberwell College of Art & Design (1991), Chelsea School of Art & Design (1992) and at the University of Auckland, New Zealand (1995). She has taken part in the Artists Access to Art Colleges scheme hosted by Central St Martins School of Art & Design and was recently artist in residence at the Aberystwyth Arts Centre in Wales. She has exhibited in the UK and New Zealand as well as internationally, including at *Auckland City Art Gallery*, *Waikato Museum of Art & History*, *Test Strip Gallery*, Auckland, *Turf Gallery*, London, *Singapore Art Museum*, *Artspace*, Auckland. She is currently engaged in a practice based Mphil/Phd at Goldsmiths College London. She lives and works in London.

Matthew Smith was born in 1976 in Wakefield, West Yorkshire. He studied at Wakefield College (1992-94), University of Northumbria, Newcastle (1994-97) and at The Slade School of Fine Art, London (1997-99). He has undertaken artist residencies at Wohnmaschine, Berlin and at Artgene, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. He has exhibited widely in this country and abroad, including at, *Jerwood Space*, London, *Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art*, Sunderland, *Wohnmaschine*, Berlin, *Fa Projects*, London, *Art Sway*, Hampshire, *Bloc projects*, Sheffield. He is currently working on a site-specific commission for re;place in Derbyshire. He has lived and worked in London since 1997.

This exhibition is part of *Shaping Sculpture 2010*. www.shapingsculpture.com

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2010

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Opening times: Monday to Friday 9am - 8pm
Free entrance

Notes to Editors

1. For further information and images, contact: Tatjana Gretschnann on email t.gretschnann@camberwell.arts.ac.uk.
2. **Camberwell Space** is one of Camberwell College of Arts' public exhibition spaces showcasing work by invited arts and design professionals. We present a diverse programme of free exhibitions and educational events that supports the college curriculum by reflecting current practice within arts and design industry.
3. **Camberwell College of Arts** is one of the world's foremost art and design institutions. Since 1898, it has had an international reputation for educating artists, designers and conservators to the highest levels, many of whom have become acclaimed practitioners including Cathy de Monchaux, Mike Leigh, Howard Hodgkin, Maggi Hambling, John Keane, Ewan Henderson, Humphrey Lyttleton, Gillian Ayres, Sarah Raphael and Tim Roth. www.camberwell.arts.ac.uk It is one of the six colleges of University of the Arts London, which is Europe's largest University for arts, design, fashion, communication and performing arts. www.arts.ac.uk