

Jill Randall. "Place/Displace" .

Places have always fed my work. I have always liked odd and extreme environments. I like the 'abused' landscapes of Robert Smithson's Land Art, the peculiar and darkly beautiful volcanic landscapes of the Canary Islands, the "terrible beauty" of the toxic abandoned copper mine at Parys Mountain in Anglesey, industrial estates, power stations, chemical works, old farms, backstreets in working towns.

I have lived and worked in remote Western Australia on the margins of what we call 'civilisation', rural Portugal, industrial Cornwall and Barcelona .Closer to home, I love the Rossendale Valley, the "Valley of Stone", where the rich industrial past has shaped and formed the landscape itself.I am fascinated by the rural and industrial interfaces of these places, and the communities that have settled and inhabited them. As I drive around, I constantly notice architectural constructions within this landscape ,where the geography and topography determine settlement and building, especially the 'ad hoc' structures added on and improvised to accomodate this. I am intrigued by this conquering of geography and the assertion of 'territory'.

Jill Randall October 2013.

"Context is Half the Work".

APG (Artist Placement Group,1971) .

"Place/Displace" is an exhibition about the importance of context. It creates disjuncture as it removes a jigsaw piece from its place, forcing us to examine it ,and its place, anew. It is also an exhibition about the relationship of people to place, re-examining land and landscape, people and industry, the ethic of work, and its effect on our lives.

"Place/Displace" incorporates sculpture, prints, video and drawings, with commissioned new work specific to and in response to Rochdale and the north-west, enabling the viewer to scrutinize familiar places and buildings in new way.

Jill Randall's work is firmly rooted in contemporary sculpture practice, making and materiality, and comprises objects, installation, prints and drawings. Conceptually driven, the work exploits the qualities and associations of materials, currently metals and found objects, and often involves the recycling of materials invested with history and narrative through their past use. Jill Randall enjoys playing with, and subverting the conventions and values of modernist abstract sculpture, the 'truth to materials' and the autonomous art object. It questions notions of material value, and reveals an interest in the unfinished and incomplete, the broken and damaged. It celebrates the aesthetic of ugly and abject, improvised and 'ad hoc'.

.."It always surprises me but where art comes from is spiritually much closer to the dump and discard of the culture.....Provincialism or coarseness or unculture is greater for creating art than finesse or polish ."

"Perfection", David Smith by David Smith, Sculpture and Writings, Edited by Cleve Gray, Thames & Hudson.1988.

It often reveals the sublime and beautiful, the poetic and resonant in bleak and unpromising places, and involves making work with and from post-industrial, 'toxic', or 'spoiled' environments. Jill Randall is interested in the harnessing of this post-industrial

legacy to create artworks, and to use contemporary fine art as an alternative perspective on industrial heritage.

Jill Randall has created several interventions in industrial environments, going as an artist into non-art situations and responding to the place and the people, a process the artist describes as “slow burn”, often resulting in collaborative new works with the workforce and industrial processes. This work is often about reinventing and reinvesting the forgotten and neglected, revealing the underbelly of place and people.

In 2012, Jill Randall undertook a Research Residency at Tate Britain, studying the APG (Artist Placement Group) Archive. The maxim of the APG, “Context is Half the Work”, (one of the driving forces in the last 50 years in fine art practice), is also a concept which underpins Randall’s practice. The Residency enabled her to reflect on and contextualise her Artist-In-Industry Residencies within their art-historical and sociological frameworks.

“...Amongst other things the history of Art demonstrates the Art is never what it was or what people expect it to be. The time has arrived for the person usually known by the term ‘artist’ to take up a new relationship with the activities of the community and in particular with industry... Artists and students we have talked to are interested in spectator - involvement or participation, as part of the work - a new emphasis. Techniques, processes and materials available in Industry, present a fabulous mine of opportunity for Art-situations waiting to be developed, and require only courage and imagination.....”

From APG Outline. Tate Gallery Archive 20042/4/ 1-5 APG.1966.

From Jill Randall’s Research Residency, Tate Britain, 2012.

Jill Randall. Short Biography.

Jill Randall makes sculpture and installations and has exhibited her work extensively nationally and internationally. She recently completed a 3-month research residency at Tate Britain, studying the archive of the APG (Artists Placement Group), and instigated “The Open Brief”, a project at Flat Time House, London, aimed at restaging and retesting APG ideas in the 21st Century. Jill Randall was a guest speaker at the “Paradox” European Fine Art Forum in Granada Spain in Sept 2013, and is a Senior Lecturer on the B.A. Visual Arts Course at the University of Salford, and Leader of Contemporary Fine Art & Public Engagement Research Centre in the School of Arts & Media.

Jill Randall has been the recipient of many individual awards, including a Travel Scholarship to Barcelona from the McColl Arts Foundation, 4 Arts Council Awards to Artists, Foundation for Sport & The Arts and the National Lottery, a Royal Society of Arts “Art for Architecture” Award, and an ‘Artists At Work’ Award from Cywaith Cymru/Artworks Wales. Recent solo shows include “Golden Venture”, The National Waterfront Museum, Swansea. (2011), “Secrets and Lives”, the Yard Gallery, Nottingham, (2006), and “Light Matter”, the Lowry, Salford (2003) - a commission from the Lowry for new work produced from an Artist’s Residency at Magnesium Elektron, Salford.

Jill Randall was one of 2 sculptors selected in international competition to represent the UK in the European sculpture survey show, “European Sculpture - Difference & Diversity”, at the Nave Gallery, Parco Culturale Le Serre, Grugliasco, Turin, Italy, (2010), and spoke at the 1X International Sculpture Forum of the European Sculpture Network. Other group exhibitions include Artists Space, New York, Cornerhouse, Manchester, Castlefield Gallery, Manchester, Bluecoat Gallery, Liverpool, Galerie de Leones, Porto, Kunst Galerie, Bocholt, Germany, and Galerie de la Restaurao, Olhao, Portugal.

Residencies include a Grizedale Arts Residency (1999) and a major commission for the Irwell Sculpture Trail (2001), along with international residencies in Barcelona, Perth, Western Australia, and Portugal, and several artists residencies in industrial and heritage sites.

Jill Randall's work is in private collections in the USA, Spain, France, Portugal, Australia and the UK. Jill Randall has an important parallel practice working on major public art projects, 3 of which have won national awards. She is half of the "Dogs In Space" public art partnership with artist Alan Birch.

Jill Randall is a member of 'sculpture network', the European organisation for sculpture, and a founder member and Chair of SIGMA (Sculptors in Greater Manchester Association.) She lives and works in Rossendale Valley, Lancashire.

websites:

www.jillrandall.co.uk

<http://jillrandall.co.uk/tate-project/>

http://www.sculpture-network.org/no_cache/en/home/members/all-members/details.html

<http://www.axisweb.org/p/jillrandall>