



Press Release

Melanie Manchot

The Gift

8th October – 19th December 2015

Private view: 7th October, 6-8pm

Bloomberg SPACE, London EC2



Hi, and welcome to the show. I'm Miranda Sawyer and we'll be talking about material culture, how objects disappear and appear and how they change over time...

In the television studio of financial data and media organisation Bloomberg, a roundtable debate is in progress. Hosted by writer and broadcaster Miranda Sawyer the debate takes place between Deyan Sudjic, Director of the Design Museum; Susanne Kuechler, Professor of Anthropology and Material Culture at University College London; and Roger Robson, Forensic Advisor and Managing Director of Forensic Access. On a conveyor belt in front of them an assortment of objects move past - plants, watering cans, a bird's nest, string, gloves, roller skates, a vinyl record, headphones, violin strings, a circuit board, reels of yarn, thimbles, scissors, needles, buttons, an iron – the tools and materials of the gardeners, musicians and tailors who work in the nearby City of London. Under discussion is the role and significance of material culture in contemporary life, contrasting the unexpected occupations, and the hidden labour and objects of the City with the intense abstractions of Square Mile trading.

The Gift is a new installation for Bloomberg SPACE comprising a four-channel video, photography and a set of objects on plinths by **Melanie Manchot**. *The Gift* is the final commission for the 2015 series *The Homecoming*, a programme of four projects at Bloomberg SPACE that explore and respond to the history and architecture of the City of London. The work draws inspiration from the communities who are intrinsic to the City but are also outside its dominant narrative: gardeners from The Friends of City Gardens, students majoring in electronic music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the bespoke tailors of Couch and Hoskin.

The Gift is presented in two spaces: the first replicates a television studio, where visitors become the studio audience, watching a split screen film of the debate as three monitors showing the conveyor belt of objects, moves game-show style like an endless ticker tape. The debate is punctuated by sonic portraits of the City composed by the Guildhall musicians. The second environment is a museum-like space presenting a selection of the objects, low lit like painterly still lifes. On a nearby wall, arranged in rows, black and white portraits of the gardeners, musicians and tailors of the City, resemble the head shots of actors or employees.

Melanie Manchot's project is a fitting conclusion to *The Homecoming* series. Responding to the archaeological, architectural and societal histories of the City of London, and drawing on diverse interpretations of value, *The Gift* is a multi-layered exploration of the taxonomy of one of the world's most crucial centres for exchange in terms of real and symbolic currencies and information.

Melanie Manchot is a London based visual artist who works with photography, film, video and installation as part of a performative and participatory practice. Her projects often explore specific sites and public spaces in order to locate notions of individual and collective identities, investigating particular gestures and forms of movement or activities that become the marker of a group or community. Manchot's work has been widely exhibited in galleries, museums and film festivals internationally including at Whitechapel Gallery and The Photographers' Gallery, London; MOCAK Museum of Contemporary Art, Krakow; GoMA, Glasgow; and Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Oregon. *Twelve*, her multi-channel video installation exploring the intimate stories, rituals, repetitions and ruptures of lives spent in addiction and recovery is currently touring the UK until 2016.

For further information, images and interview requests please contact Janette Scott Arts PR on janettescottartspr@gmail.com or +44(0)7966 486156, Natalie Harland, Bloomberg on nharland1@bloomberg.net or +44(0)7881 250570.

Listings information

Melanie Manchot, *The Gift*, 8th October – 19th December 2015

Private view: 7th October, 6-8pm

Bloomberg SPACE
50 Finsbury Square,
London, EC2A1HD

Open Monday – Saturday-11:00 – 18:00

Admission Free

Tel: +44 (0)20 7330 7950

www.bloombergspace.com

Melanie Manchot studied at the Royal College of Art, London and New York University, USA. Recent solo shows include *Twelve*, Peckham Platform, London; *Tracer*, BALTIC 39, Newcastle and Oriel Davies, Newtown, Wales (2014); *Leap after The Great Ecstasy*, Carslaw St* Lukes, London (2013); *The Continuous Still* for Contact Toronto Photography Festival, (2012) and *Celebration (Cyprus Street)*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, (2010). Recent group shows include *The Rhythm is...*, Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany (2014), *When the Grid goes Soft*, MOT, London, UK (2013); *Videonale 14*, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany (2013); *Situations*, MAC/VAL Musee d'art contemporaine, Paris, France (2012) as well as *Shave* at 52nd La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy.

www.melaniemanchot.net

Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Department of Electronic Music is one of the world's leading conservatoires and drama schools, offering in 2015 over 800 musicians, actors, stage managers and theatre technicians an inspiring environment in which to develop as artists and professionals. Electronic Music is offered as an undergraduate Principal Study and follows a broad curriculum that explores the full spectrum of styles and genres inherent in the field.

The Friends of City Gardens are a group of volunteers who love the green spaces in the Square Mile. They work closely with the City of London Corporation's Gardens team to help make these gardens greener and more accessible for everyone. The City has over 200 gardens, churchyards and green spaces tucked away between the office tower blocks.

Couch & Hoskin are a family firm located at 40 Eastcheap which has offered bespoke or made-to-measure tailoring in the City of London for 100 years.

About Bloomberg's commissioning programme

The Bloomberg SPACE commissioning programme reflects Bloomberg's philanthropic passion to support exciting talent and to commission new works. Since 2002, Bloomberg SPACE has worked with more than 470 artists and has commissioned over 120 new works.

www.bloombergspace.com

About Bloomberg

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Images: stills and photograph from *The Gift*, video 2015 by Melanie Manchot