

# The Institute of Reminiscence



Olivia Punnett



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



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# The Institute of Reminiscence

Artcore in partnership with FORMAT/QUAD invited artists to apply for The Institute of Reminiscence, a two month residency that aimed to investigate relationships to memory association, repetition and reappearance, as well as forms of “active” remembering both in a private sphere and public sphere.

For two months, Artcore has become a think-tank to expand the boundaries of public debate about how the future of remembering is currently changing. The Institute of Reminiscence has been a hub tracing the transformation of memory archives from physical to digital information and the corresponding evolution of public and personal remembering through the artworks of two selected artists.

Contextualizing memory’s role in visual theory and aesthetic politics, the residency explored how perception of memory and its value has changed today alongside new understanding of reminiscence and its importance to understand the past to imagine the future.

The catalogue collects the outcomes of two months research and production which have been developed into The Institute of Reminiscence exhibition with artworks by two artists in residence Mariano Doronzo and Olivia Punnett.

The body of works in the show engages with ideas and possibilities which explore issues with memory embodied in material and spatial conditions, beside specific installations that reflect upon memory’s effects through time, and yet others that enlist the agency of remembrance or forgetting to work through aspects of the numerous pasts by which the present is always haunted.

For The Institute of Reminiscence, Mariano Doronzo presents Slides on a Light Box, a project aiming to light up and preserve some of the memories on the cusp of being lost forever.

Collecting memories and stories from local people, the artist has built up a new visual map of Derby by revisiting the places where they live/lived, work/worked and also spend their free time. Many of these places no longer exist but will either have been deserted or replaced with new stories and life.

Moreover Doronzo’s work documents how Derby has evolved, changed or stopped in time.

For The Institute of Reminiscence Olivia Punnett presents a body of work that responds in print, projection and sculpture to her personal interest in time & the remembered image, emotion of loss, moving closer to a sense of feeling that is time specific, a memory, a place, a moment; both concealment and revelation. Using photography as a starting point, the work also responds to the natural environment.

Elemental Symbolism is present in prints and projections from water.

This residency alongside the exhibition, which is part of FORMAT festival, critically plays with ideas of memory and loss and its effect on the dream of overcoming human memory's fallibility.

## The Art of Reminiscing by Peter Bonnell

On first inspection, this two-person exhibition at Artcore presented under the title The Institute of Reminiscence would appear to feature two artists with differing ideas and aesthetic approaches. To a certain extent the true can be said of the latter, but as for the former – the two artists, Olivia Punnett and Mariano Doronzo, have both conjured satisfyingly formed bodies of work that find interesting ways to complement each other and mine the notions of what it means to simply remember and to recollect.

Olivia Punnett's installation is an ephemeral approach to memories and remembered events/ experiences. Rather than a direct documentation and presentation of (sub-jective) fact her work suggests an experience, one that is highly personal. Mariano's Doronzo's project Slides on a Lightbox is the culmination of the artists brief (approximately two-months) yet exhaustive research into Derby residents and their singular and collective memories. Documentary in approach, this body of work is a fascinating snapshot of the city today.

Presented in collaboration with FORMAT International Photography festival The Institute of Reminiscence deftly references the 2019 festival theme of FOREVER// NOW – a theme that suggests a consideration of the present whilst at the same time addressing the past. It has been my pleasure to work on this project with the superb team at Artcore, and to mentor two artists of great skill. The support and mentoring to Midlands based artists that Artcore offers is exemplary.

**Peter Bonnell** is Senior Curator at QUAD, Derby. He has an MA in Contemporary Curating from the Royal College of Art and before taking up his position QUAD in 2012 was Exhibitions and Education Officer and then Curator at ArtSway, which was a small gallery based in the New Forest.

## Now as I was by Olivia Punnett

*“Going forward to the past – not in order to recount what once was, but by way of re turning, turning it over and over again...*

*To address the past (and future), to speak with ghosts, is not to entertain or reconstruct some narrative of the way it was, but to respond, to be responsible, to take responsibility for that which we inherit (from the past and the future).” Karen Barad ‘Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together Apart’ Karen Barad, Parallax, Vol 20, No 3, (168-187) p.182*

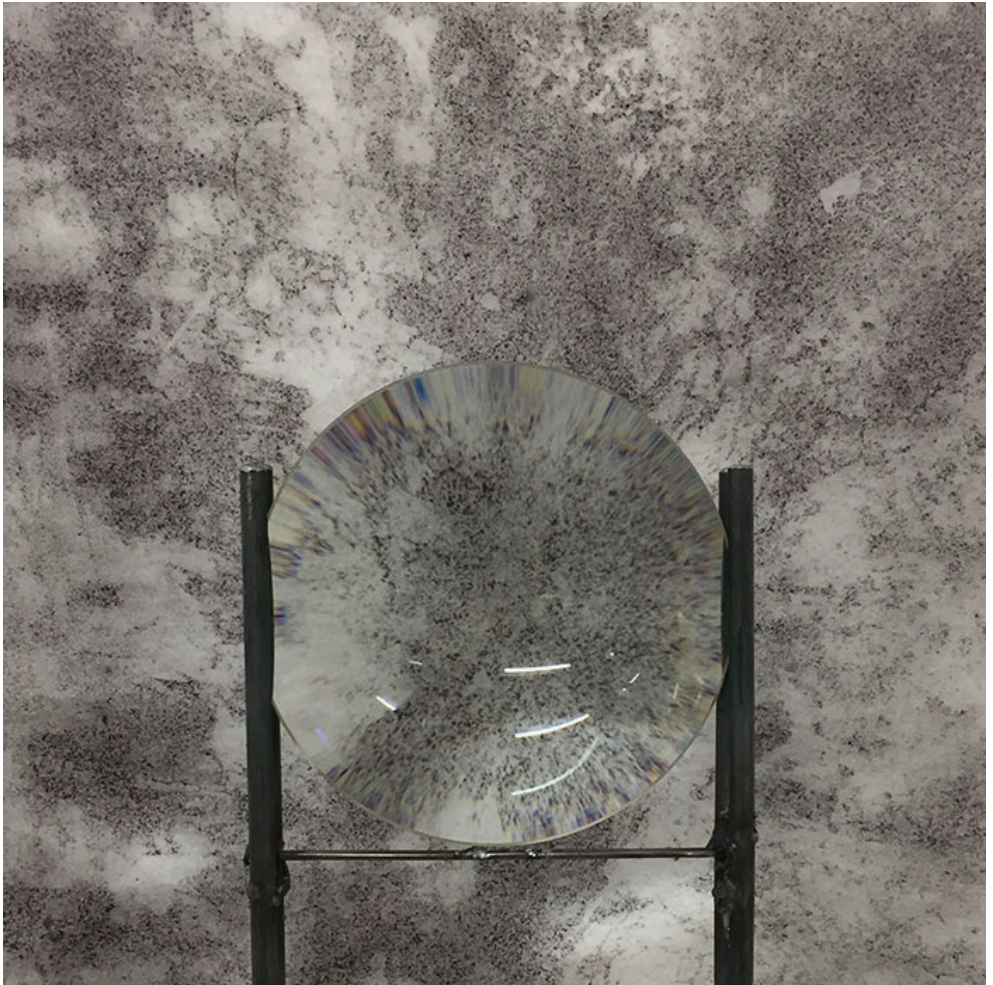
Exploration of the photochemical mark as a communication of ideas of time and memory are part of my practice as an artist. I use printmaking in both my process and resulting work, but cross into sculpture and installation, often using projection too. I am interested in Time & the remembered image, and how photography in printmaking can transmit these ideas. For this reason, a starting point is often 120mm film but distortion (bleed & blur) and the phenomenology of reflection are then used. Separation from the original is important and handmade glass or lenses add to this. This separation paradoxically connects me to the emotion of loss, but also moves closer to a sense of feeling that is time specific, a memory, a place, a moment; both concealment and revelation.

Photography is a starting point, but then images are pushed into ambivalence. In the same way that memories escape perfect recall, I want my images to dance on the edge, to not be easily accessible to the ‘reader’ to inhabit fiction as well as fact, fiction as a kind of time.

Work also responds to the natural environment. Elemental Symbolism is present in prints and projections from water. The ephemeral, the photochemical image, and the printed mark are all present in my work as well as imagery that mixes up different temporalities.



## Conversation with Olivia Punnett



**Where are you based?**

I am based in Haarlem Artspace in Wirksworth.

**How did your artwork start out?**

I started working site specifically around 2011. I had been in art education at various points before that, and had read 'The Poetics of Space' By Bechelard on my first degree, and this informed my responses to place. I don't work in this way now as much now but it was definitely my way in.



## **How do you get ideas for each piece of work?**

I have a set of central concerns, drawing inspiration from natural ephemera, and exploring the photochemical mark are two. I am a print maker and use photographs in that process often, taking medium format film photos myself and then choosing from the images I have which to take forward into printmaking processes.

I then have ideas about ways of presenting these images, and how I would like people to perceive the images. These often mimic reflection, or I try to achieve this, often with mirrors. I play with these set-ups until they form a good position.

## **How do you go about transforming an idea like that into a piece of art?**

Play is my main tool, I give myself lots of photos, prints or equipment to play with and test out different combinations of them. The blurred or washed over effect of an image that has passed through an imperfect lens translates, to me, to the recalled or remembered image. I'll try to set things up to present images in that way. Sometimes however, the light through the lens itself is enough without including the image I started with, so I'm quite flexible with ideas, they change and mutate as I go along.

## **How has your practice evolved over the years?**

As mentioned my practice was site specific at first, I really responded to the stories places have held and I love the history of them seeping through to the present. I started to realise however that time itself was what I was fascinated by, and our human experience of the world, the way that permeates it, and that each moment is an infinite multiplicity of experience if we see it through memory or different perspectives. So my practice is now no longer necessarily place based and I don't feel I have a formula, which is good!

## **What does your practice aim to say to your audience?**

I'd like for my work to feel like a glimpse into daydream or a reflecting experience, those moments when you feel outside of time. However if an audience experiences other things I don't mind, as it moves more into sculpture it may be more an experience of form, the phenomenology of reflection, or light.

## **What is the most challenging about your work?**

For me, it's to catch the tail of an idea and change it into material form before it slips away. For others I am not sure.

## **Where did you get your ideas from (what, if any, sources did you use)?**

Ideas start from my own medium format photos, looking at the work of other artists, and from reading fiction or poetry.



**How do you see The Institute of Reminiscence, as an experience, to support your career?**

I think my experience at The Institute of Reminiscence is fundamental to support my career. Being guided by a mentor is probably the best way to make my way of working more efficient and my work stronger. Furthermore, it will be a good opportunity to gain my artistic network meeting other artists and curators who work with the gallery.

**What's next for you in the future?**

I hope to make enough work in this part of the year to exhibit later on, and to pursue my own research.



# NOW AS I WAS



Olivia Punnett, Circle memory, 12cmx15cm, Steel and medium format photo, 2019





Olivia Punnett, Garden, medium format film photo, 25cmx25cm, 2019

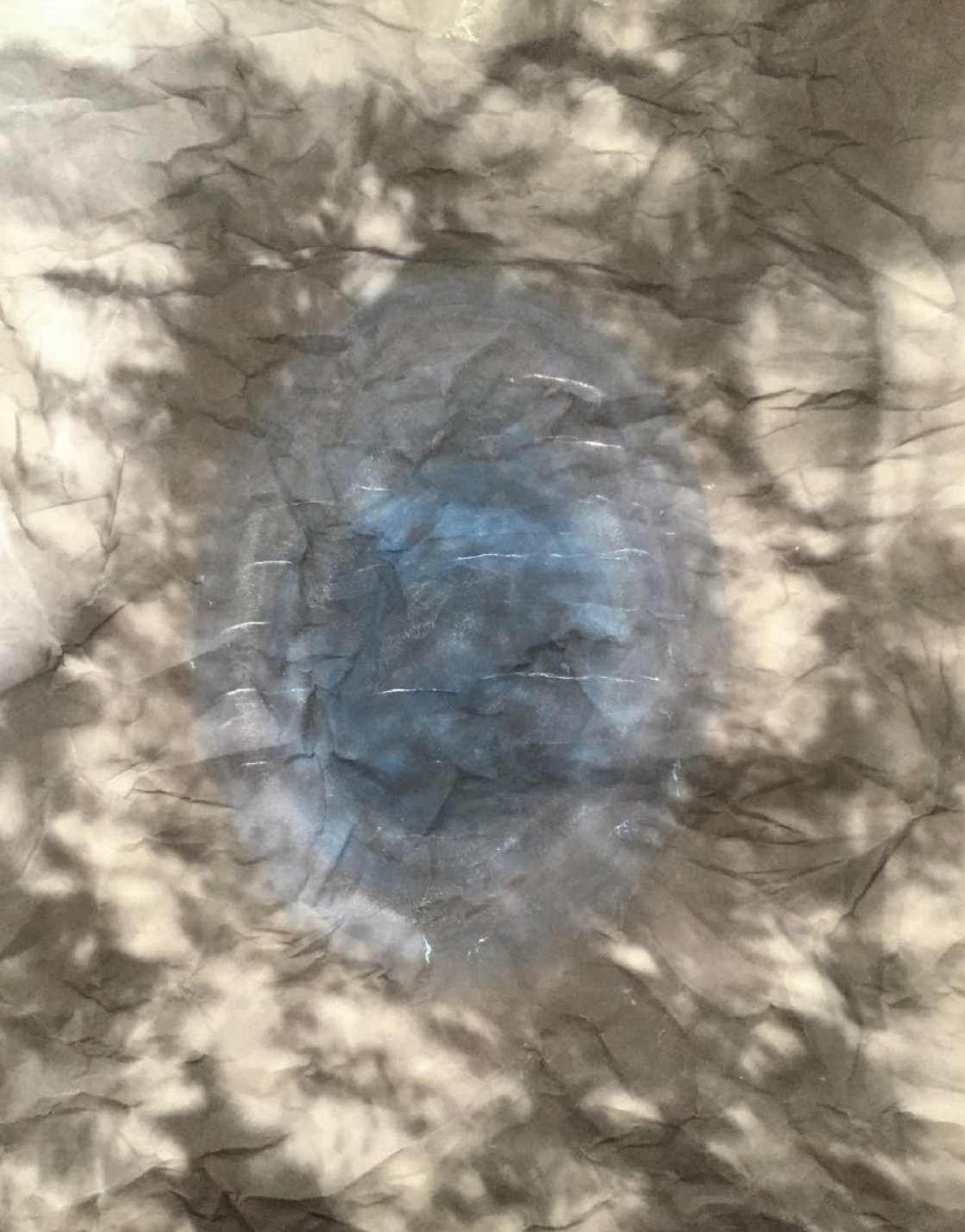


Olivia Punnett, Lightmarks, 25cmx25cm, medium format photo, 2019





Olivia Punnett, Harborough stones, 25cmx25cm, medium format photo, 2019



Olivia Punnett, Swimming clouds, a2, digital print and water color, 2019



Olivia Punnett, Imbolc moon, 25cmx25cm, medium format photo, 2019



Olivia Punnett, Imbolc moon, 25cmx25cm, medium format photo, 2019





# Artist biography

*'Livvy tackles some quite emotionally affecting subjects with a subtlety that is quite moving. There is an evocative atmosphere to the best work that is almost poetic in its visual lyricism. Most particularly Livvy has managed to avoid expressive cliché's and arrive at images that are intriguingly suggestive and at times enigmatic.'*

Robert Clark, arts writer for the Guardian

## Exhibitions

13/12/2018- 17/01/2019 Rituals and Rites Artcore Derby

12-14/10/2018 Manchester Contemporary

2/07 - 17/07/18 In Residence Derby University

19/05/2018 - 23/06/2018, Every Point in the Universe is Also the Centre PAPER Gallery Manchester, Solo Show

10/11 - 17/12 2017 Outpost Members Show, selected by Andy Holden

09/2016 Nature Here and Now, Wirksworth Festival curated Programme

2/11/2016 -01/2017 Print and Works on Paper, with Bronwen Sleigh, Joan Ainley, Beth Bowie and Geoff Diego Litherland

19-27th/08/2016 States of Uncertainty Sheffield Institute of the Arts

25 – 29th/04/16 Platform 16 The Millennium Gallery, Sheffield, touring to:  
Gage Gallery - 16th - 21st May 2016  
Bank Street Arts - 8th - 11th June 2016  
SIA Gallery - 5th - 9th September 2016

10-13/09/2015 The London Artists Book Fair, Whitechapel Gallery

6/2015 At The still Point, AGC Gallery

04/2015 Are You A Doctor Sir, A sound work in collaboration with Sharon Kivland, SOMA GALLERY, Liegnitzer str. 34,10999, Berlin

07/06 2014 Stone and Water Exhibition, Matlock Bath Pump Room, The Grand Pavilion. (As featured in The Guardian and Artists Newsletter)



03/2014 AGC Gallery, Sheffield, I knew nothing but shadows

09/2013 Harrington Mill Studios, Mote

2/2013 The Old Lock Up, Salon 3 & 12/2012 The Old Lock Up, Salon 2

13/09 - 28/10 2012 Neo Print Prize Bolton

## **Curation**

1-24th/09/2017 Internal Nebular Haarlem Artspace Exhibition, Guardian Guide Editors Pick

15/09/2017, and programme of talks and seminar - 02/2018

“Internal Nebular, Haarlem Artspace nr Matlock. To coincide with the Wirksworth festival, Dorothy Cross, Alastair Mackie and Liz Orton summon evocative reveries from the mysterious accretions of geological time.” Guardian Guide

19-27th/08/2016 States of Uncertainty Sheffield Institute of the Arts

06/2015 At The still Point, AGC Gallery

2014 Stone and Water Exhibition, a Site Specific group show based on and showed in Matlock Bath's Grand Pavilion

2013 Wirksworth Festival Graduate Selection

## **Residencies**

2-13/07/18 Summer Lodge Nottingham Trent University

1/01/2018- 10/02/2018 Exploring Paper PAPER Gallery Residency

2017-2018 AA2A Artists Residency at Derby University

2015 Work on the Line, METAL, Edge Hill Railway Station, Liverpool

2011-13 Engaged Practice Program, Yorkshire Artspace

April- May 2012 The Learning Zone, Parson Cross Library

02/2012 Factory Nights, Crab Tree Society event



## About Artcore

Artcore is a contemporary arts space that celebrates the Derby, East midlands and beyond cultural richness and diversity. The venue presents an ever-changing programme of art exhibitions, creative activities for adults and young people, film screenings, artist residencies, talks, and festivals. With our statement “together we stand” we want to engage and connect with diverse range of communities in Derby. Our key objective is to use art as a tool to strengthen community cohesion and engage with a wide range of audience, educate, raise awareness and provide a space to build self-confidence and mutual trust and respect.

We engage with society’s most disadvantaged and vulnerable people, by offering inspiring and motivating programmes in areas where there is a lack in provision and engagement with the arts is minimal. Our mission is to become a place where talent and creativity is nurtured and where art and culture are accessible to all. We aim to bring positivity and shine in people lives providing a platform to encourage dialogue between people of all ages, abilities, diverse cultural background through creative activities, skills sharing and development.

Artcore offers a contemporary gallery, workshop and artist studio promoting distinctive art and culture. Through a vibrant programme of events, exhibitions, residencies, art talks, screenings we provide a platform to showcase significant art locally, nationally and internationally by supporting early, mid-career artists and established artists.

At Artcore , education in general is fundamental to the work we do. We develop and strengthen the education role in a non-formal education approach. Our main objective is to engage young in learning experiences to enhance their curiosity and interest on their art skills, developing their uniqueness and progression as individual, also through volunteering and work experience.

We believe art acts as a learning tool, breaking down barriers and contribute in the production of knowledge and dialogue as a vehicle of analysis and growth. Moreover we engage with our audience through creative, imaginative and meaningful activities, offering the individuals the opportunity to experiment with creativity, enhance learning and broaden career prospects.

Graphic design: Chiara Dellerba

Artcore



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