

And what it became is not what it is now,

Curated by Louise Hobson

Opens Friday 6 September, 6–9pm

Exhibition continues 6 September – 9 November 2019

Open Wednesday to Saturday, 12–5pm

GRAND UNION
19 Minerva Works
Fazeley Street
Birmingham B5 5RS

Tel. 0121 643 9079
info@grand-union.org.uk
www.grand-union.org.uk

PUBLIC PROGRAMME

Friday 6 September, 6–9pm
AND WHAT IT BECAME IS NOT
WHAT IT IS NOW,
Evening Opening & Publication
Launch

Wednesday 11 September, 6–8pm
SCREENING OF SNUFF 1976
+ Q&A WITH JOAQUÍN ARAS
at the Electric Cinema

Saturday 28 September, 1–4pm
CREATIVE TRANSLATION
WORKSHOP WITH JEN CALLEJA

Saturday 12 October, 3–5pm
WE ARE BOTH INVISIBLE –
LANGUAGE BETWEEN THE
SELF AND OTHER

Thursday 17 October, 6pm
MEMORY AS A CONTESTATORY
FORCE

Friday 1 November, 6–7pm
SCREENING OF DYFODIATH
+ Q&A WITH PAUL EASTWOOD

Check website for further details
on the public programme.

Details for a closing event will be
shared over the summer.

And what it became is not what it is now, is a reflection of wandering dialogues between people, practices and languages, beginning in studio visits with three Latin American artists - Joaquín Aras, María Agustina Fernández Raggio and Paola Monzillo - and particular bodies of research by each. *And what it became is not what it is now*, is an exhibition, publication and public programme with contributions from Federica Bueti, Jen Calleja, Paul Eastwood, Kim McAleese, Helen Nisbet, Lorraine Ryan and Sophie Williamson.

Showing in the UK for the first time, the exhibition presents *Entre recuerdos & remakes - Ejercicio de Memoria* (2018) by Joaquín Aras, *Cinco Retratos Digitales* (2016) by María Agustina Fernández Raggio and *El Cuerpo alegórico de America* (2017) by Paola Monzillo.

Entre recuerdos & remakes is a long term body of research centred on the history of Latin American cinema and the complexity of cultural memory in Argentina. Navigating the logic of distribution networks, associated patterns of translation and also archival practices, Aras searches for lost films, soundtracks and casts to explore the ways in which narrative experiences or events can unearth, interrupt and remake film histories. *Ejercicio de Memoria* is a two-channel video from this body of research, and it shows two retired actresses watching the 1962 Argentine film *El hombre de la esquina rosada*. As they watch, they discuss the actors they recognise and try to remember who they are, or were. Working together with a union, these women are naming individuals to enable as of yet uncredited cast members – or their families – to receive their due royalties. Reflecting on the notion of living with the absence of and nostalgia for another place, Aras challenges past omissions and absences, and proposes a reclaiming of hegemonic historical narratives.

Cinco Retratos Digitales is a five-channel video made in the homes, gardens and offices of the last five presidents of Uruguay - the individuals in power following the end of the civic-military dictatorship in 1985. Julio María Sanguinetti, Luis Alberto Lacalle, Jorge Batlle, José Mujica and Tabaré Vázquez (the current president of Uruguay) hold still as a handheld scanner circles them to produce three-dimensional digital scans. Fernández Raggio remains resolutely present in each film, inserting herself into the personal and political spaces of each. Her narrative moves between the conversations which take place and wider reflections, in one video drawing our attention to a Petrona Viera painting hanging in Julio María Sanguinetti's home. Petrona Viera is known as one of the first professional female artists in Uruguay. Full of anecdotal detail, *Cinco Retratos Digitales* is interwoven with the course of larger, geopolitical events and in this dualism Fernández

Raggio reflects on Uruguay's relationship with its political history, and how she can interrupt and open up political questioning, negotiating and enabling new narratives and forms.

El Cuerpo alegórico de America is a series of drawings based on engravings of the Americas distributed throughout Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries during colonial expansion and imperialism. The engravings formed part of a growing body of materials which mapped the Americas in relation to the beliefs and values within Europe at that time. Monzillo works from three engravings, copying the detail in its minutiae, but leaving blank the space once occupied by the human body. In one drawing, the original of which is in the collection of the British Museum, the outline of a female figure holds a bow, and a severed human leg. Reflecting on the legacy of colonialism in Latin America, the work investigates the legitimisation of hegemonic definitions of places and people. This work comes from Monzillo's wider investigation into the relationships between territory, history and cartography. A trained architect, Monzillo uses traditional cartographic conventions to create counter-cartographies and interrogate the patterns through which one culture speaks itself onto the land of another.

The publication and public programme will include contributions from Federica Bueti, Jen Calleja, Paul Eastwood, Kim McAleese, Helen Nisbet, Lorraine Ryan and Sophie Williamson. Details for a closing event will be shared over the summer.

This project is curated by Louise Hobson and supported by Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, Espacio de Arte Contemporáneo and British Council Uruguay. Graphic design by Cecilia Serefini.



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



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales

