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Kayla Rose & John Strachan

*Concrete poetry had a moment. That is not to say that it has remained there, nor that the poetry has expired. On the contrary, given recent cultural and technological transformations on a global scale, concrete poetry seems more relevant than ever... Concrete poetry had a moment, and that moment is our moment, too.*  
 — Jamie Hilder, *Designed Words in a Designed World* (2016)

This symposium and the accompanying exhibition began with an interest here at Corsham Court in the work of John Furnival and others working at the intersection between word and image at Bath Academy of Art (BAA) in the 1960s, particularly Hansjörg Mayer and Tom Phillips. We decided to bring Concrete poetry back to Corsham for a symposium, perhaps one focused on the centre ground between literature and visual art. At that early stage, we had no real sense of what that might entail, and admittedly, I knew little about Concrete poetry. To me, it was an art form at the intersection between word and image, to say nothing of the actual poetry, so putting together an exhibition seemed essential. Concrete poetry could be the perfect vehicle for encouraging a culture of creative collaboration, which was at the heart of what we wanted to do, but who would come? Who was still interested in Concrete poetry, fifty years on?

It was around this time that Ian Gadd was generously gifted a nineteenth-century Albion printing press by Michael Turner, formerly Head of Conservation at the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford. As we organized the launch event for the press in January 2017, Concrete poetry remained firmly fixed in our future plans, inextricably tied to our hopes for the Albion. The afternoon brought together poets and writers, artists and designers, printers and typographers, scholars and readers to view a wonderful exhibition of beautifully printed books and works of art, to hear new poems from the great J.H. Prynne, to learn about the fizz of creative collaboration—and of course to print on the press.

Michael Pennie led a discussion between designer (and alumnus) Bridget Heal, artist Bruce McLean and poet John James, whose recent *livre d'artiste*, *On Reading J.H. Prynne's Sub Songs* (2016), showcased what an Albion press can produce. The group discussed their working relationships in creating the book, as well as the process of establishing a connection between printing, text and image. As Ian eloquently said, 'printing always makes an occasion of a text', and the arrival of the Michael Turner Albion Press at Corsham Court enabled

a celebration of poetry, art, and print, along with something more – there was a real buzz of interest in intersections between text and image, between poetry and art.

Keeping that buzz going was essential and Concrete poetry once again came to the forefront. In her seminal work, *Concrete Poetry: A World View*, Mary Ellen Solt wrote that ‘the visual poem is a word design in a designed world’ (1968, p. 60). Works of Concrete poetry are as much pieces of visual art made with words as they are poems and just as much poetry as they are designed objects. Employing language, space, sound and colour, they are made, rather than merely written – designed and made concrete through their form.

The International Concrete Poetry Movement that occurred in the 1950s and 1960s was both a poetic genre and a movement, driven by social, cultural, economic and political upheaval, emerging from a time when long-held traditions were fading and the world was changing at an ever-increasing pace. According to Emmett Williams, Concrete poetry ‘was born of the times, as a way of knowing and saying something about the world of now, with the techniques and insights of now’ (1967, p. vi). However, this was not the beginning of its ideas, for the term was used as early as 1906 in Ernest Fenollosa’s essay, ‘The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry’. Yet, as Jamie Hilder has written, ‘what was concrete poetry in 1906 is not the same as concrete poetry in 1955, or 2010’ (2016, p. 6). According to James P. Draper, it was ‘the creation of verbal artefacts which exploit the possibilities, not only of sound, sense and rhythm – the traditional fields of poetry – but also of space’ (1971, p. 329). The movement as it is today known was thus driven through the process of making.

Historically, Bath Spa University holds a key position in the field, with Bath Academy of Art having been at the forefront of the original Concrete poetry movement in the 1960s. It was Clifford Ellis, Head of BAA from 1937–72, who had the foresight to invite Hansjörg Mayer to teach on the design course at Corsham Court, which had a determinative impact on the development of Concrete poetry here. The influence of John Furnival, who taught here during the formative period in the 1960s and 70s, is also keenly felt. In 1964, he co-founded the press, ‘Openings’, with Dom Sylvester Houédard, working with artists and poets such as Tom Philips and Edwin Morgan in an early move to make Concrete poetry. He also collaborated with Ian Hamilton Finlay on the Wild Hawthorn Press and in 1965 participated in two key exhibitions: the ‘First International Exhibition of Experimental Poetry’ at Oxford and ‘Between Poetry and Painting’ at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in Dover Street, London. It was also fifty years ago that Stephen Bann’s pivotal work, *Concrete Poetry: An International Anthology* (1967), and Emmett Williams’ own anthology of Concrete poetry were published.

Our symposium and the accompanying exhibition celebrate fifty years of work, bringing together those who were a part of the original movement alongside the younger generation, capturing work created both in the UK and internationally. It is about the process of writing, making and designing Concrete poetry and other intersections between text, sound and the visual, between writing and making, and between close-reading and display. Thematically linked to Bath Spa University’s own specialisms in art, design and creative writing, the event is driven by our historic role in the movement and features talks by Stephen Bann, Thomas A Clark, Charles Verey, Ian Gadd, Mike Collier, Viviane Carvalho da Annuniação, Samantha Walton, Greg Thomas, Nick E Melville, Camilla Nelson, Lila Matsumoto, Nicola Simpson, Tim Fletcher, Conor Wilson and Leandro Maia. With works on display by Ian Hamilton Finlay, John Furnival, Hansjörg Mayer, Michael Pennie, Bridget Heal, Mike Collier, Conor Wilson, Tom Sowden, Stephen Dutton, John Strachan, Pete Kennedy, David Jury, Guy Bigland and a number of other artists and poets working at the intersection between word, image and sound, our symposium and exhibition tackle Concrete poetry in all its many forms – from text to image to display. Though his work has a prominent place in our exhibition, sadly John Furnival cannot join us, for health reasons, but he sends his greetings and felicitations. We all wish John well.

We are thrilled that Corsham Court once again has a part to play in Concrete poetry and celebrate its legacy here as we warmly welcome you to *Making Beyond Words* – the second event in our ‘Word & Image’ series. Concrete poetry is definitely having a moment – an international moment driven by the people here today. There has been a resurgence of interest in both the genre and the movement in the past couple of years. From the most recent exhibitions, ‘Concrete Poetry: Words and Sounds in Graphic Space’, held at the Getty Research Institute in California, and ‘From Concrete to Liquid to Spoken World to the Word’ at The Centre d’Art Contemporain Genève in Switzerland, to Chelsea College of Arts’ incredibly informative symposium, ‘Concrete Poetry: UK Networks and Connections’, the moment for Concrete poetry has returned. Though we have moved beyond the boundaries of Concrete poetry in both our symposium and exhibition, its influence is keenly felt. With its inextricable link between the past and the present, what the future holds for Concrete poetry is anyone’s guess. Concrete poetry had a moment, and that moment is memory. Concrete poetry has a moment, and that moment is now.

Dr. Kayla Rose is Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Corsham Court, Bath Spa University. Professor John Strachan is Vice-Provost for Research and Enterprise and Dean of Graduate College at Corsham Court, Bath Spa University.

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The Barn / Corsham Court  
Friday 16 / vi / 2017

- 6.00—6.15            Welcome, Professor John Strachan
- 6.15—7.15            Keynote Lecture by Professor Stephen Bann  
*Ian Hamilton Finlay: From Concrete Poetry to the Idea  
of Classical Landscape*
- 7.15—8.30            Wine Reception

Saturday 17 / vi

- 10.00—10.15            Registration
- 10.15—10.20            Welcome, Professor John Strachan
- 10.20—10.40            Opening Talk, Professor Ian Gadd
- 10.45—12.15            Panel 1 *Collaboration & Exchange*  
Professor Mike Collier (chair)
- Charles Verey *Concrete Poetry & the Spirit of Change*
- Dr. Viviane Carvalho da Annuniação *Brazilian & Scottish  
Exchanges in Concrete Poetry*
- Nicola Simpson *Free Interpretations of Ideas Suggested  
by Dom Silvester Houédard*
- Tim Fletcher *Hugh Davies & John Furnival Collaborations*
- 12.15—12.25            Introduction to Exhibition, Michael Pennie  
Invitation to John Furnival Exhibition, Stroud,  
Clive Adams, Centre for Contemporary Art &  
the Natural World (CCANW)
- 12.30—2.00            Lunch in the Main House with Bath Spa Library  
Viewing of *Making Beyond Words* exhibition in the Gallery  
& Albion Room

2.10—3.15	<p>Roundtable <i>Site, Spaces, Places, Bodies</i>  Dr. Samantha Walton (chair)  Dr. Lila Matsumoto, nick e-melville, Dr. Camilla Nelson  &amp; Dr. Greg Thomas</p>
3.20—4.30	<p>Panel 2 <i>Making Beyond Words</i>  Matthew Robertson (chair)</p> <p>Leandro Maia <i>Word-thing: Concrete Poetry Movement  in Brazil &amp; the Brazilian Popular Song</i></p> <p>Dr. Conor Wilson <i>nadadanada</i></p> <p>Professor Mike Collier <i>Singing the World</i></p>
4.35—5.15	<p>Closing Talk by Thomas A Clark  <i>Pages, Walls and Other Surfaces</i>  Dr. Kayla Rose (chair)</p>
5.15—5.25	<p>Vice Chancellor's Closing Remarks  Professor Christina Slade</p>
5.25—5.30	<p>Farewell &amp; Departure</p>

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Friday 16 / vi / 2017 6.15—7.15 Keynote Lecture

*Ian Hamilton Finlay: From Concrete Poetry to the Idea of Classical Landscape*  
Professor Stephen Bann

Ian Hamilton Finlay became the pioneer of concrete poetry in Britain when he published his collection, *RAPEL*, in 1963. Yet within a few years, he was setting out on a trajectory, which took him far beyond the printed page. He soon aspired to work on a larger scale, inaugurating a series of 'Poem prints', and designing poetic works that seemed destined to find their fulfilment in a public and architectural setting. The first occasion on which he had opportunity to develop these possibilities was in 1965–66, when he moved with his wife, Sue, to a farmhouse in Northern Scotland, and constructed poems for both inside and outside settings. However it was only from the autumn of 1966, when the family moved to Stonypath in Lanarkshire, that this project could begin to develop towards fruition. Installations such as weathercocks and sundials began to occupy his thoughts, and the use of the water from a small burn facilitated the creation of a unique hillside garden. Besides continuing to produce publications through the Wild Hawthorn Press, he began to commission objects to set in the newly planted landscape. Collaborators such as Michael Harvey and Ron Costley enabled him to people it with stone carvings and inscriptions. This lecture traces the process by which Finlay's attachment to Concrete Art was finally subsumed in his espousal of the tradition of the Classical Landscape.

Stephen Bann is Emeritus Professor of History of Art and Senior Research Fellow at the University of Bristol. He was a student at King's College Cambridge, gaining his PhD in History in 1967. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1998, and appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire, for services to History of Art, in 2004. From 2000–04, he was President of the Comité International d'Histoire de l'Art. Among his books are *The Clothing of Clio: A Study of the Representation of History in Britain and France* (1984), *Under the Sign: John Bargrave as Collector, Traveler and Witness* (1994), *Paul Delaroche: History Painted* (1997), *Parallel Lines: French Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (2001), *Ways Around Modernism* (2007) and *Distinguished Images: Prints in the Visual Economy of Nineteenth-Century France* (2013). Among his recent curating projects have been an exhibition of nineteenth-century historical painting in Europe, *L'Invention du Passé* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon, 2014), and a show of his own collection of work by Ian Hamilton Finlay (*Kettle's Yard*, Cambridge, 2014–15). He edited the first British anthology of Concrete Poetry in 1967, and has recently published two volumes of his early correspondence with the concrete poet and artist Ian Hamilton Finlay: *Midway* (1964–69) in 2014 and *Stonypath Days* (1970–72) in 2016.

Dr. Greg Thomas has pointed to the social reconfiguration of the 1960s, giving evidence of the rise of a multi-centred creative culture. This network extended, in summer 1966 to an international exhibition of concrete and experimental poetry at Arlington Mill in the Cotswold village of Bibury, proposed by Dom Sylvester Houédard. Dom Sylvester already had a reputation as a formidable writer of letters and leading theorist of the concrete poetry movement, with international connections: but it was through the energy and enthusiasm of Ken Cox, combined with the artistic and logistical help of John Furnival, that Arlington-Una was launched. Through a series of apparently chance events I was also drawn in to help with publicity and to handle a list of more than 300 names to be invited.

To quote from a long letter that I received from DSH in the build-up to the exhibition: 'a poet... is someone [who] CREATES & whose ART MATTER (the stuff he works with) is LANGUAGE - & 'language' can be taken either in a strict sense or a wide sense: strictly it is to do with COMMUNICATION BY THE 'LANGUE', BY THE TONGUE - or broadly it is COMMUNICATION by ANY MEANS WHATSOEVER'.

But what is this poetry? How far can it reach? Is it still a poem if the I-subject that created it is abolished? Is it still a poem if the environment in which it appears is unadorned mind? I propose to turn to these questions, in a spirit of enquiry, in the context of Dom Sylvester's essay that he wrote in 1966 for the Arlington-una catalogue, and essay that he called: 'poetischesuntersuchungen in glosteshire'. And I will look at the interface between the spirit of change that drove the 1960s and how it is being heard today.

Charles Verey (b. 1940) was at the Slade School of Fine Art in London for four years, leaving with a Dip. Fine Art in 1963. After time in Madrid teaching English, followed by part-time jobs teaching art in schools in London, he was introduced to Dom Sylvester by Bob Cobbing in 1965. He became art master at Sherborne School for boys in Dorset until the early 1970s, during which time he curated exhibitions at Arlington Mill, founded South Street Publications with Thomas A Clark and participated in *Experiments in Disintegrating Language*. He moved to Wales, restored a derelict farmhouse and did a 6-month government sponsored TOPS course in carpentry and joinery leading to a career as a furniture designer. Most recently, he has spent almost a decade gardening and working towards a biography of Dom Sylvester Houédard. He has been involved in the Beshara movement since the early 1970s.

The objective of this paper is to examine the dialogue between the Concrete Poets in Brazil and the United Kingdom. The term 'Concrete' is generally applied to a variety of artistic movements that followed the post-war frustration with traditional forms of art. Part of a collective search for new artistic materials, Concrete Poetry is the product of two traditions that emerged in the fifties, one of the Bolivian-born Swiss writer, Eugene Gomringer, and the other the Brazilian Noigandres group formed by Haroldo de Campos, Augusto de Campos and Décio Pignatari (Bann 7). Through a productive dialogue, Gomringer and Noigandres brought together these two distinctive artistic projects and disseminated the movement worldwide. Through the analysis of the private exchange of letters, journals, books and artistic objects between Brazilian and British Concrete Poets, more specifically Ian Hamilton Finlay and Edwin Morgan, I wish to shed some light on the cultural and artistic reception of the movement in the United Kingdom. I also wish to argue that this personal form of distribution generated major changes in the poetics of Concrete Poetry as a whole.

Dr. Viviane Carvalho da Annuniação holds a PhD in Literary Studies from the University of São Paulo, where she also received a joint degree in Portuguese and English Studies. She is the author of a book on Northern Irish poetry, *Exile, Home and City: The Poetic Architecture of Belfast* (Humanitas, USP). It was during her lectureship in English Language and Cultural Studies at the Federal University of Bahia (Brazil) that she started to examine more closely the portrayal of Brazil and Latin America in English-language poetry. In order to expand her research, Dr. Carvalho da Annuniação came to the Centre of Latin American Studies in April, 2014 as a visiting scholar and Portuguese teacher. In the course of the year, she helped to organize the exhibition 'a token of concrete affection'. This celebrated the fifty-year anniversary of the first concrete poetry exhibition at St. Catharine's College, Cambridge, which featured the Brazilian Noigandres group that was responsible for disseminating the movement in both the United Kingdom and Latin America. In April 2015, she was made a Teaching Associate at CLAS and a Senior Member at Robinson College and continues to research the Noigandres movement, tracing the intricate connections between Brazil, Latin America and Great Britain in Concrete Poetry. Her current research interests also include Brazilian and Latin American avant-garde, poetry and politics and new methodologies in language learning.



Dom Sylvester Houédard (1924–92) was a Benedictine monk and concrete poet based at Prinknash Abbey, in Gloucestershire. He had no studio there, unlike many of his contemporaries did not teach at an art school or have access to these facilities and often wrote about his difficulty in getting his ideas made.

This paper will focus on two occasions when Houédard did have an opportunity to collaborate with art school students and the processes involved in translating his ideas and designing concrete poems and kinetic poemobjects. The first: 'To Catch a Whiteman by His Manifestoe' (published by Openings Press, Corsham, Wiltshire, 1967–68) is a portfolio containing experimental typography and concrete poetry made by Houédard and ten students from Bath Academy of Art. The second: A collaboration with Malcolm Winton, Head of the Graphic School at the Royal College of Art and several graphic design students, for Houédard's 'visual poetries' exhibition, held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1971. This project was to realize some of Houédard's ideas for 3-D kinetic poemsculptures and machine poems. In particular this paper will focus on the work 'Polaroid Poem' that featured in the exhibition and was designed and constructed by Barry Jackson.

Based on a series of interviews with some of the former BAA and RCA students who were involved in these projects, and the scant documentary photographs and archive material available, the aim is to explore to what extent the students followed Houédard's instruction to have a 'free interpretation of ideas' and then consider his own subsequent reflection 'in what sense i shall be able to call them 'mine' i can't begin to think.'

Nicola Simpson is a curator and PhD student at Norwich University of the Arts, researching *right mind-minding: the transmission and practice of zen and vajrayana buddhist method practices in the poemobjects of dsh 1963–75*. Recent curatorial projects on the work of Dom Sylvester Houédard include: *Performing No Thingness, dsh, Ken Cox and Li Yuan Chia*, East Gallery, NUA, (2016), *The Cosmic Typewriter, The Life & Work of Dom Sylvester Houédard*, at The South London Gallery, (2012), *The Yoga of Concrete*, The Gallery, NUA, (2010). She is editor of *Dom Sylvester Houédard* (Riding House 2017), *The Cosmic Typewriter: The Life and Work of Dom Sylvester Houédard* (Occasional Papers 2012).

In the late 1960s & early 1970s the instrument maker / improviser / music historian / theorist Hugh Davies (1943–2005) & Concrete Poet / artist / teacher John Furnival (1933–) collaborated on work both as a duo and in the electro-acoustic group Gentle Fire. This paper will examine both the interactive 'Feelie Boxes' that they created as a duo and the creation / interpretation of a score Furnival made specifically for the group.

It has been noted that the UK arts departments of the 60s and 70s were a fundamentally more fertile and creative area for exploring the post Cageian musical avant-garde than the essentially more conservative music departments. This more open approach also encouraged an artistic engagement with non-musicians, students and children that both men actively encouraged. My aim is to examine these contentions using the example of the little mentioned Davies / Furnival connection.

I will also tangentially reference the visual / musical connections between the artists Tom Phillips & Ian Tyson with composers / musicians such as Gavin Bryars, John Tilbury, Christian Wolff, The Scratch Orchestra & also the nebulous area of graphic scores as 'art' in works such as Cornelius Cardew's 'Treatise' and Bob Cobbing's work with the group 'Birdyak'.

Tim Fletcher is an independent researcher based in Kent. He was born in the north east of England but moved to London in the mid-1990s and lived there for 20 years. During this time he recorded a huge archive of live music primarily within the context of the free improvisation scene. He is currently working with the Derek Bailey and Lol Coxhill archives. He is also involved with the linguistically innovative poetry scene and has recently published a bibliography of the American poet Asa Benveniste and his Trigram Press.



## Roundtable Site, Spaces, Places, Bodies

Dr. Lila Matsumoto / University of Nottingham

nick-e melville / University of Glasgow

Dr. Camilla Nelson / poet, researcher, artist

Dr. Greg Thomas / University of Edinburgh

Dr. Samantha Walton (chair) / Bath Spa University

This roundtable will bring together scholars and practitioners of concrete poetry to discuss the interconnected themes of sites, spaces, places and bodies. This includes consideration of the 'ideal space' for engagement with concrete poetry, and an evaluation of the international and local sites of innovation in international concrete poetics. Is concrete poetry more 'at home' in the library, archive and art gallery, or in more public spaces? How does concrete poetry reorganise our embodied experience of language, as readers / performers, both spatially and acoustically, and why does this matter? In considering the sites and spaces of concrete poetry, we will also address the geographies of the movement. Why did the movement developed conspicuously in the West Country, and in regional and non-metropolitan locations across Britain and Europe more generally in the 1950s–70s?

Against this regional backdrop, concrete poetry also responded to a post-war interest in developing transnational modes of communication, lending itself to collaboration and dissemination across borders and cultural boundaries. How do the categories of local and global apply in an evaluation of concrete poetics, and what roles did cultural, social and technological factors play in determining the locations of concrete poetics? Finally, in spite of the apparent openness of the movement, concrete notably excluded women writers in the 1950s–60s. Is the absence of women concrete poets to do with concrete poetry as a style, concrete poetry as a movement, and/or a whole set of broader contextual factors? What can writers and scholars interested in new concrete, and in innovative and conceptual writing at the present moment, learn about diversity and exclusion from the history of concrete poetry?

Dr. Lila Matsumoto Lila Matsumoto's publications include *Soft Troika* (If a Leaf Falls Press) and *Allegories from My Kitchen* (Sad Press). Lila's poetry and criticism have been published in a variety of journals and anthologies including *Jacket2*, *Tripwire*, and *Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry*; she is also a frequent performer of her work and have performed at places such as SoundEye Festival and Little Sparta garden of Ian Hamilton Finlay. Lila teaches creative writing at the University of Nottingham, where she convenes the Nottingham Poetry Series: [nottinghampoetryseries.wordpress.com](http://nottinghampoetryseries.wordpress.com).

nick-e melville makes found, visual, process and sometimes even 'proper' poetry. Since 2010 he has had eleven publications released, including a poster poem and a badge; his most recent books are *DOLE* (IR11 Publications, 2017) and *AB-BODIES* (sad press 2017) and he was anthologised in the international collection of visual poetry *The New Concrete* (Hayward Publishing, 2015). His work has also featured in several exhibitions, with a solo exhibition, 'DOLE,' at Interview Room 11 in 2013. He has taught creative writing in many settings for over ten years and from 2010–11 he was Writer (not) in Residence at HMP Edinburgh. From time to time he organises and co-hosts poetry events in Edinburgh, the current series is Second Space, poetry with videos. nick-e is pursuing an AHRC funded PhD at the University of Glasgow working on an epic post-conceptual book length poem-object, *The Imperative Commands*. The poem is composed entirely from found texts, harvested from the language of instruction in advertising, the media, etc., that assault and 'guide' everyone of us every day.

Dr. Camilla Nelson is a British language artist. Her work explores intersections between human and other-than human organisms through page-based poetry, installation and performance. Her current focus is *Reading Movement*, a movement language solo whose script was long-listed for The Leslie Scalapino Award for Innovative Women Performance Writers in 2016. Her first poetry collection, *Apples & Other Languages* (Knives Forks and Spoons) was long-listed for the Melita Hume Poetry Prize in 2015 and is OUT NOW! Camilla is founding editor of Singing Apple Press, a small independent press that produces hand-crafted, limited edition poem-prints, books and other objects. Her ongoing practical enquiry investigates linguistic production as a nexus of embodied, environmental intra-action.

Dr. Greg Thomas is a British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Edinburgh (2014–17), undertaking a research project on the role of political commitment in the life and art of Ian Hamilton Finlay. His writing on concrete poetry has appeared most recently in *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, and he has also recently completed a monograph on the concrete poetry movement in Britain during the 1960s–70s.

Dr. Samantha Walton is Senior Lecturer in English Literature: Writing and Environment, at Bath Spa University. She co-runs Sad Press, a small press publisher of poetry pamphlets.

## Word-thing: Concrete Poetry Movement in Brazil & the Brazilian Popular Song

Leandro Maia / Bath Spa University

Despite being predominantly a poetic form linked to the visual arts, concrete poetry has great influence in the Brazilian popular song and the contemporary

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music in the country. As a reflective starting point, this performative paper presents the poem *Palavra não é Coisa que se Diga* [The word is not a thing to be said], by Ricardo Silvestrin (1963–), and musicalized as a *maracatu* by Leandro Maia (1979–). A version of the interactive work *Instrução 61* [Instruction 61], by Luiz Carlos Lessa Vinholes (1933–) is also performed with the audience's collaboration. This piece, created under the influence of Japanese music and the concrete poetry movement, is considered the first aleatory music score composed in the country.

Alongside practical examples, this presentation reflects upon the presence and influence of concrete poetry in the Brazilian popular music and its subsequent manifestations, such as the *Tropicália* movement (1968) represented through songs by Caetano Veloso (1942–) and the works by Paulo Leminsky (1944–89). A brief historical panorama about concrete poetry is designed since the launch of the review *Noigandres* (1952). Projections of significant works by Haroldo de Campos (1929–2003), Décio Pignatari (1927–2012) and Augusto de Campos (1931–), founders of the concrete poetry movement in Brazil, illustrate this presentation.

Leandro Maia is currently a PhD student at Bath Spa University funded by the CAPES Foundation, Ministry of Education, Brazil. He has a Masters in Brazilian Literature (UFRGS) and a Degree in Music Education (UFRGS). [www.leandro-maia.com.br](http://www.leandro-maia.com.br). While a singer-songwriter and senior lecturer at Universidade Federal de Pelotas (UFPel), Brazil, Maia released the albums *Palavreiro* (2008), *Mandinho* (2012) and *Suite Maria Bonita e Outras Veredas* (2014), and has written music for theatre, dance and movies. Awarded as the best singer in the *Premio Brasil-Sul de Música* (2013) and *Premio Açorianos de Música* (2015), Maia was granted with the first *Prêmio Ibero-músicas* for popular song composition, conceived by the Organization of Ibero-American States (2014–15). Maia has also published *Palavreiro – Poems* (2013) and has participated in the collections *Caetano e a Filosofia* [Caetano and the philosophy, 2010]; *O Carnaval e a Filosofia* [The carnival and the philosophy, 2016] and *O alcance da canção* [The reach of the song, 2016].

nadadanada

Dr. Conor Wilson / Bath Spa University

i come at concrete poetry obliquely, via a research project (*Writing\_Making: Object as body, language and material*, RCA, 2016) during which 'new' methods for bringing writing closer to making were developed; methods that explored the potential of making as a means of generating writing and of writing to generate, or to contaminate, making, influenced by Object Oriented Ontology, craft

making was considered as an intimate engagement with, or a form of contact with, another object; as an altered state that might afford privileged access to the 'inside' of an object, or a 'strange stranger', to follow Tim Morton.

can making function as a model, or a spur, for settling deeper into inter-object relations? what voices might emerge from such relations and how might the various objects [maker, material, image, language] that cohere around the activity of making be presented? how might maker, and audience, become an object among objects and access the subjectivity of the strange stranger?

during the project, i unconsciously repeated, then consciously adapted, some of the moves of concrete poetry. rules for the construction of a poem follow the actions required to hollow a block of clay. a word imposed on the making process conflates signifier and referent, resulting in the paradoxical obfuscation and clarification of the signified. an ongoing work, *A Game of JUG*, is influenced by the image-text-ground playground of concrete. instigated by Martin Heidegger's essay, 'The Thing', and the subsequent purchase of a jug made at Prinknash Abbey [home and workplace of dom sylvester houédard] working out the limits of this particular game is a form of speculation on the reality of a jug.

referring to this work [and that of dsh and Ian Hamilton Finlay], i will discuss the play between ideogram, pictogram, glyph and grapheme; the play between the fully-achieved concrete poem and the under-achieved concrete poem. in the former, form and content are isomorphic : form = content / content = form [Mary Ellen Solt on *pilot plan for concrete poetry*, the Noigandres group, 1958]. in the latter, perhaps metaphor sticks its nose in where it isn't wanted. latter, perhaps metaphor sticks its nose in where it isn't wanted.

Dr. Conor Wilson is currently Course Leader for MA Ceramics at Bath School of Art & Design. He studied ceramics in Bristol, Cardiff and London (PhD, RCA) and has been practising and teaching for over twenty-five years. Despite developing specialist knowledge and skills, he characterises his practice as a mix of craft and bricolage, veering between various processes and approaches that fall under the broad disciplinary umbrellas of art, craft and design. He was awarded a Jerwood Makers prize in 2010 and work is held in private and public collections around the world, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Wilson has developed a practice-research process that incorporates making [in 2 and 3-D], drawing, documenting, writing and existing objects/texts – the latter often included through 'guided chance'. He is working towards the publication of a book.

## *Singing the World*

Professor Mike Collier / University of Sunderland

*Linguistic meaning for Merleau-Ponty is rooted in the felt experience induced by specific sounds and sound-shapes as they echo and contrast with one another, each language a kind of song, a particular way of 'singing the world'.*

— David Abrams, *The Spell of the Sensuous*

*Words are like other creatures – they have inscapes beautiful in themselves*

— Gerard Manley Hopkins

In this short presentation about my work, I will examine the relationship between the meaning of linguistic and artistic expressions of the natural world. I will discuss an eclectic series of works that have influenced my art, including *The Lindisfarne Gospels*; the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins and the work of contemporary artists such as Ian Hamilton Finlay and Alec Finlay.

Much of my own artwork draws its inspiration from the simple act of walking through the world. It creatively explores the relationship between culture and nature through a detailed ecological study of local environments and our embodied engagement with landscape. The historical layering of landscape is often tied to an understanding of language 'spoken' through the names of places, flora and fauna. Many of these names have local, colloquial, derivations that refer back to our senses (sight, sound, taste, touch and smell).

A number of my earlier pieces were based on a study of bird names which present an 'unpredictable and haphazard richness' with names drawn from the very roots of our language. (*British Birds: Their Folklore, Names and Literature* by Francesca Geenoak). More recent work explores the relationship between the sounds of the world and a visual/textual presentation of these sounds. For example *The Song of the Curlew*, created following a four-day walk across the Durham Uplands or *The Birkdale Nightingale*. This is actually a colloquial name for the Natterjack Toad, a rare creature found along the Sefton Coast and the nosiest amphibian in Europe. Its loud mating call has brought it two local nicknames: the *Birkdale Nightingale* and the *Bootle Organ*. Another work (displayed for the conference) is called simply *Sixteen Birdsongs of the Durham Uplands*.

In the final part of this presentation, I will talk about a new body of work in which I am creating a series of layered neumes graphically 'representing' the sounds of a dawn chorus in Northumberland. Neumes suggest, to me, a more embodied form of musical or sound notation. 'Dating from early medieval times, the 'earliest neumes were inflective marks which indicated the general shape but not necessarily the exact notes or rhythms to be sung. Later developments included the use of heightened neumes which showed the relative

itches between neumes, and the creation of a four-line musical staff that identified particular pitches.' (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neume>; see also *Sung Birds: Music, Nature, and Poetry in the Later Middle Ages* by Elizabeth Leach)

Dr. Mike Collier is Professor of Visual Art at the University of Sunderland. He is a lecturer, writer, curator and artist. He studied Fine Art at Goldsmiths College, London. Much of his work is based around walking – through the city, the countryside and urban Edgelands. He has shown in the UK and abroad and his work is in a number of public and private collections. In 2010 he co-founded WALK (Walking, Art, Landskip and Knowledge), a research centre at the University of Sunderland which looks at the way we creatively engage with the world as we walk through it. As an artists and curator, he has been responsible for a number of high-profile exhibitions under the auspices of WALK including co-curating *Walk On: From Richard Long to Janet Cardiff – Forty Years of Art Walking*, an exhibition which toured the UK in 2013–14; *Wordsworth and Bashō: Walking Poets* (an exhibition of manuscripts by William & Dorothy Wordsworth and Matsuo Bashō shown alongside newly commissioned work by twenty-two leading contemporary artists from the UK and Japan, Dove Cottage 2014 and Kyoto, Japan in September 2016 (organised collaboratively with Bath Spa University). For more information see: [www.mike.collier.eu](http://www.mike.collier.eu) and [www.walk.uk.net](http://www.walk.uk.net)

## *Pages, Walls & Other Surfaces*

Thomas A Clark

The extreme reductionism of concrete poetry can be seen as an endgame or, on the contrary, as a ground from which to build a new poetry from basic linguistic materials. The talk will suggest some possibilities for poetry off and on the page.

The poet Thomas A Clark lives in a fishing village on the east coast of Scotland where, with the artist Laurie Clark, he runs Cairn Gallery, a space for minimal and conceptual art. After meeting Ian Hamilton Finlay in 1964, he was closely involved with concrete poetry as a poet, publisher and curator. For more information see: [www.cairngallery.space](http://www.cairngallery.space) and [www.thomasaclarkblog.blogspot.com](http://www.thomasaclarkblog.blogspot.com)

*Making Beyond Words: The Exhibition*  
Michael Pennie

This exhibition has a distinguished beginning, initially inspired by a video of Hansjörg Mayer telling of his first encounter with Clifford Ellis, the Founder and Principal of Bath Academy of Art (BAA), filmed in London, August 2014. In the interview by Artists Space for The Library Vaccine exhibition of artists' books in New York (25th September–16th November, 2014), Mayer discusses Concrete poetry and his interest in print, typography and technology, namely the processes of 'mechanical reproduction'. Mayer also describes his subsequent teaching at Corsham Court on the Visual Communications course, displaying examples of *Experiments in Typography*, a work that he and John Furnival made in collaboration with their students.

John Furnival was central to the international network of poets and image-makers located in Gloucestershire, particularly in Nailsworth, where he lived and worked while teaching at BAA. Nailsworth was also the home of the celebrated Cairn Gallery, set up by Thomas A. Clark and Laurie Clark in 1986.

Alongside the works by Furnival and Mayer is a selection of Fluxus Prints – *Situazione* (1967) – from Bath Spa University's collection. Other treasures on show are works by Ian Hamilton Finlay, generously on loan from Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, courtesy of Sophie Cummings, Curator, as well as *Inside The Earthen Vessel* by Pete Kennedy and David Jury, on loan from Josie Reed of Reed Contemporary Books.

Confirmation that work incorporating word and image is still flourishing is evident in the addition of pieces made especially for this event. Among the contributors are Stephen Bann, Thomas A. Clark, Conor Wilson and Steve Dutton, whose work brings the exhibition right up to date.

Grateful thanks go to all participants in the exhibition, in particular Julie Johnstone of Essence Press and Mike Collier, as well as to Fiona Cassidy and Hélène MacLellan.

Professor Michael Pennie is Resident Artist at Corsham Court.

*Library Exhibition*

Library and Learning Services' display of Concrete poetry-themed resources brings together items published during the 1960s and 1970s, when Concrete poetry and literary creativity was at its peak. Books charting the rise of the 'new concrete', and the role of visual poetry, contemporary artists and poets working at the intersection of visual art and literature in the post-digital age, are also presented in recognition of how 'many of concrete poetry's ideas about language's materiality have ended up being mirrored in our [21st century] computational systems and processes' (Bean & McCabe 2015, p. 14) Unique examples of Concrete poetry by John Furnival and Tom Phillips, selected from the Library's Artists' Books special collection, also feature.

Library exhibition curated by Bath Spa University's Library and Learning Services Team, with special thanks to Helen Rayner and Katie Rickard.

*Making Beyond Words* is a collaboration between the Corsham Court Campus, Bath Spa University, Making Books: Creativity, Print Culture and the Digital Research Centre, and Bath School of Art and Design. Convened by: Kayla Rose & John Strachan. Exhibition curated by Michael Pennie (with Fiona Cassidy). Special Thanks to: Ian Gadd, Mike Collier, Julie Johnstone, Hélène MacLellan, Marlene Pennie, Rose Rushmer, Josie Reed, Laura Brown, Library and Learning Services. Programme Designed by Matthew Robertson. Printed by Ripe Digital.

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Intersections Between Text, Image, Display : \_\_\_\_\_

Celebrating 50 Years of Concrete Poetry

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