



School: Bath School of Art

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Project Title: *Sanded Steps, Standing Over Stones*

UOA: 32: Art and Design

300-Word Statement

Sanded Steps, Standing Over Stones is a live art work that rethinks 'trace' and 'event' in aporias facing contemporary art, politics, and visual culture. The research investigates how a certain materialist event might collectively 'trace'—rather than mark or imprint—a certain 'point' of social, structural, and paradigmatic 'change' using live-art, experimental drawing, performance, writing, speech, and ephemera. The work evolved over two continents, England and Canada, between 2017 and 2018. Alongside other contexts, such as the Occupy movement, May '68—one of the most iconic examples of revolutionary 'event'—is a key reference; an iconic slogan from May '68, 'under the paving stones is the beach!' (*Sous les pavés la plage!*), is echoed throughout the work.

Methodologically, a form of self-effacing trace is posed through what is called 'exscription' (Nancy 2008). An exscribed trace is distinct from so-called marks or mark-making. Instead, this trace is something bodily yet self-effacing. This paradoxical act has led to a key finding: how a form of trace relates to an elemental 'point'. The 'point' challenges conventions of mark-making. In *Sanded Steps*, for instance, the point is highlighted by how footprints made in sand get progressively swept away; however, in a more complex way, the trace is shown through certain bodily exposures, or exscriptions, that appear in surroundings (e.g. public square, library), materials (brooms, sand), enunciations, and subjectivity. The work culminates in stasis and silence. From a question of resistance, do such events continue to happen today?

This research was shared through the exhibition and symposium *Embodied Cartographies* (Bath, UK, 2017) curated by Fay Stevens, and the live-art event *Resting, Walking, Place-making* (Montreal, Canada, 2018) curated by Victoria

Stanton; and has also resulted in the publication of writing (Luzar 2019) that contextualizes the project through philosophies calling for paradigmatic change.