



**School: Bath School of Art**

**Researcher: Keith Harrison**

**Project Title: Joyride**

**UOA: 32**

## 300 Word Statement

A Jerwood Open Forest Commission in 2017, **Joyride** was a community-focused live event, bringing together personal and socio-economic narratives around the automotive industry in the West Midlands. The project used methods of intervention and deconstructed car assembly line processes to explore the legacy of industrial production, notions of labour and the relationship between car and community.

Harrison's research asks:

1. How can the event celebrate the outcomes of unheralded skilled labour as well as highlight its demise in industrial production?
2. How might contradictory elements of production and destruction, failure and predictability reconnect to offer new perspectives on material and social change?
3. How might this public event shed light on notions of collectivity and personal liberty, the demise of industrial production, and its impact on community?
4. Is there a moment to be found where the work can be poised between the tensions of recreation and recklessness, hope and abandonment, public spectacle and voyeurism?

On the original site of the Longridge plant, until its demise in 2005, Harrison worked with renowned car-modeller Anthony Tovey to construct a clay replica of the final classic Rover 75. In Cannock Chase Forest, a 20m ramp was built using repurposed forestry materials, in collaboration with local industry specialists onto which the clay replica was elevated at sunset and then released as the audience illuminated proceedings with their car headlights. The event was accompanied by a commissioned sound collage *requiem*40 simultaneously broadcast on Joyride FM.

Staged in the woodland margins, **Joyride** highlights the contradictions between car and community, of personal liberty and collective monotony, uncelebrated skilled labour and the impact of its decline. Informed by the artist's upbringing in the post-industrialised Black Country **Joyride** is part elegy, part plea to deconstruct what we know to forge new socio economic and political perspectives.