

LIST OF WORKS

THE PLASTIC FANDANGOS, 2009 / THE LOST TWIN ORNAMENTS / PLASTIC RELICS, 2009 / KEBAB LAMP 'BLISS', 2009	COMMITTEE PRODUCT DESIGN	LINDA FLORENCE SURFACE TEXTILES	JULIA LOHMANN DESIGN	GEOFFREY MANN PRODUCT ART	THE UFO PROJECT ADMINISTRATION SERVICE, 2009	BLOOM, 2009	TIMELINE, 2009
SETTLEMENTS, 2009	FLIGHT TAKE-OFF, 2008 / FLIGHT LANDING, 2009 / NOCTURNE, LONG EXPOSURE SERIES, 2009	RACHAEL MATTHEWS KNITTING	CLAIRE NORCROSS LIGHTING	ISMINI SAMANIDOU WOVEN TEXTILES			

FOREWORD

It was with good fortune and a great deal of curiosity that I spent my very first day in my new role as Director with the selection panel of this year's Jerwood Contemporary Makers exhibition.

The mammoth task that day was to curate, from a long-list of 26 bold and exciting artists' proposals invited by the panel, an exhibition along the chosen theme of impact; our selectors' focus for this year's show.

It was fascinating to see the breadth of interpretations emerging from this wonderful collection of proposed works – some for existing pieces and some for ideas yet to be realised. The journey through each artist's thought processes revealed a diversity of understanding of the impact of concept, of context, of colour, material, process and of collaboration. Equally, to observe the diligence and excitement with which the panel negotiated their selection and rationale was impressive. I am thankful to the panel, Rebecca Earley (Chair), Andy Horn and Tomoko Azumi for the complementary expertise they brought to the process, for their time and for their ongoing support of the brilliant artists who are this year's Jerwood Contemporary Makers.

The Jerwood Contemporary Makers exhibition series was launched in 2008, as part of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation's commitment to creating meaningful and supportive opportunities for artists at key stages in their careers. In this, the second exhibition in a series of three, the selection panel have brought together talented artists and varied craft practices that question ideas of ownership and originality, interaction and industry, environment and responsibility. The resulting exhibition is, I hope, a playful space, a considerate space, and a space open to conversation.

I would like to thank everyone who has made this exhibition possible; most significantly each and every one of the artists, who have applied and committed themselves to the occasion with invention and an adventurous spirit. I would especially like to thank Colman Getty for their understanding and attention to detail in managing the project, Julia Ravenscroft for her specialist support and everyone at the Jerwood Space for hosting the series and making this show a success.

Shonagh Manson
 Director of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation

JERWOOD CONTEMPORARY MAKERS 2009

The selected artists in this year's exhibition create work by opening their studio doors, and their creative minds, to embrace collaborative practice and new technologies. They challenge the clichéd image of the garret-bound maker labouring away year after year in solitude, and instead show us radical, transformative, and highly sociable ways of making.

During the selection process the panel reviewed the work of 26 talented makers, who are all making an impact with their work, be that through technological endeavour, collaborative practice, or social engagement. Ultimately the makers that were selected do this, but they also challenge our perceptions and ideas about contemporary ways of making. They bring into question the relationship between the creative processes of designing and making; whether they develop and negotiate international industrial resources or work with both the amateur enthusiast and the brilliant scientist, they create extraordinary things in radical ways.

The work of Linda Florence has undeniable visual impact through her signature exploration of pattern and scale. Her site-specific works are beyond the realm for most surface textile designers, and her use of innovative print techniques and surfaces leads us to question our ideas about materials and their applications. All this, and she also wants us to be involved in the process!

Questions like 'What makes us make?' and 'How do we want to make?' are tackled in the exhibition by Claire Norcross and Committee. They represent our need as makers to change direction and explore new horizons. Norcross has travelled from textiles to lighting, and from Habitat to home; from mass-production to the exquisitely handmade. Committee's history includes fine art, cabinet-making and textiles, and their highly individual work reflects these transitions. Their relationship to making embraces hand-skills, discussion, and negotiation. Their journey has been the reverse of that of Norcross, as they constantly seek to find a way to make the handmade, factory produced. Currently the factory floor in Japan is as much a factor in their work as the desk in their studio.

SELECTION PANEL

Rebecca Earley (Chair)
 Reader in Textiles Environment Design (TED) at Chelsea, University of the Arts London and award-winning fashion textile designer.

Tomoko Azumi
 Award-winning furniture, product and exhibition designer and founder of t.n.a design studio in London.

Andy Horn
 Exhibitions Manager for Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery and Chair of the Touring Exhibitions Group.

Other makers in the show also enter into negotiation with factories, intervening in the processes that are often set up to cater to completely different market sectors. Weaver Ismini Samanidou quite literally places her physical self in the machine. For the work she is showing here, Samanidou found large-scale digital jacquard looms in North Carolina that could weave fabric three metres wide. She flew there twice during the making of this new work to perform her 'process' with the cloth – as the threads became fabric she stopped and steered the machines, interrupting the flow when her creative instincts told her change was needed. Geoffrey Mann's work is created in factories as a result of digital and virtual communication. Is it controversial for a maker to unpack a work at an exhibition, fresh from the factory, having never seen or laid hands on it himself before then? Or is this work the result of a different kind of creative process, a way of working with technology, people and materials that herald a new horizon for makers?

The idea that work can be created outside of the studio, even by another's hand, continues here with Rachael Matthews. Rachael's love of knitting is rooted in the social exchange that can take place as the making occurs – the quilt making tradition of the Deep South if you like – but here Matthews has moved with the times and what began as 'Cast Off' and a knitting circle has become a blog for knit aficionados the world over. The works she created for the show began as unfinished projects by amateurs, and came to her with stories and photographs.

Julia Lohmann moves her collaborations within another field, that of the natural sciences through partnerships with scientists. Her work explores our continued relationship and negotiation with the natural world, much of which is coloured by complex debates around sustainability. This new work questions the prerogative of making as unique to human-kind and enduring capacity of nature to inspire.

The selected makers in this year's exhibition are showing us a more interactive and collaborative future, where making is not only about the skill of the hand, but also about people and place, about communication and creative intervention.

Rebecca Earley