

conjunction10

ESCAPE

Conjunction 10 Press Release

15 October Preview 6pm, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery

16 October – 27 November

Across Stoke on Trent City Centre

www.conjunction.org.uk

Artists

Behjat Abdulla, Fikret Atay, Michael Branthwaite, Emily Candela, Carl Gent, Adam James, Tim Long, Victoria Lucas, Susanne Ludwig, Juneau Projects, Paul Rooney, Amikam Toren, Freya Wright, Yoke and Zoom.

Conjunction 2010 is a Contemporary Art Biennial in Stoke-on-Trent. This year's Biennial has been formed from discussions around the idea of Escape. The key partners in Conjunction are AirSpace Gallery, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery Staffordshire University, Stoke on Trent City Council and Wren Park.

This year the Conjunction Biennial will features over **35 artists** and has commissioned **15 artists** to produce new work. The Biennial opens on the **15th October** and will open to the public on the **16th October**, with the bulk of the program running until the **27th November**. The work will be shown across three venues in the city centre, **AirSpace Gallery, Dazed Gallery, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery** and. The Biennial will also offer audiences a chance to attend talks that will be delivered by the artists, curators, other key organisations operating in the West Midlands and Scotland.

Conjunction10 takes the theme of "Escape"; The arts, in their broadest sense, have often been produced in relationship to escapism. Film-making and literary fiction is offered as a way of escaping the everyday, and particularly during bad times. It is often a dichotomy that this escapism also prevents us from dealing with the issues that need to be addressed (that, in a sense, have created the conditions for the need to escape) **Michael Branthwaite** and **Freya Wright** have explored these issues within their work, Stoke-on-Trent based artist **Michael Branthwaite** has produced an 8mm film entitled '*California Dreaming*' which provokes thoughts of how we interpret and decipher images, the viewer is invited to consider film within its location and contrast it with the utopian ideal the film portrays. **Wright** has produced an oil painting on linen entitled *Home Movie* will depicts a lonely figure in a washed out landscape, we are drawn to the romantic connotations with the painting and feel a sense of sadness within the work.

Escape in such forms allows us to not only escape from our thoughts and concerns but also to remove ourselves geographically from our immediate environment or location. This is the case within **Carl Gent's** work. Invited to create a multiple as part of the Conjunction Biennial, Gent has produced a number of Lenticular prints that show a map of Stoke on Trent and another image of *Stephan's Quintet*, the two images coming together at a certain angle. This piece is part of an ongoing project which attempts to twin *Stoke-on-Trent* with a galactic formation known as *Stephan's Quintet*.

In a gallery painted bright yellow, **The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery** looks at landscape as a form of escape, featuring both contemporary and historical images from the museum's collections. The exhibition includes works by artists as diverse as Amikam Toren, Joe Tilson and Walter Sickert. It runs until the **30th January**.

As part of the Conjunction Biennial there will also be a performance day on the **27th November**. This will feature artists working in the City Centre. Artist **Adam James** will be making a series of performance interventions as part of his *Vagabonds* series in which he will be mimicking people, in an exaggerated and extraordinary fashion. **Emily Candela** has invited a punk band to play as part of a performance called *bleed*, which features the band performing the music within a confined space within the **Dazed Gallery** at **Dazed clothing store**. Drew from dazed said he's 'delighted to be involved in a Contemporary Art event'.

Conjunction biennial will also feature a number of guest speakers, from Artists that have produced work on the specific theme of escape, such as **Paul Rooney** and **Juneau Projects** on the **30th October**. Other talks will feature speakers such as **Stephen Snoddy**, Director of **The New Art Gallery Walsall**. This will take place at **Newcastle Borough Museum & Art Gallery** on 12 November. He will be leading a talk around collecting and working with collections.

Conjunction sees its role as developing the contemporary visual arts within the city, by offering an audience contemporary art on a wide scale, but also encouraging the growth of contemporary art within the City, through the uses of non traditional white spaces and the development and engagement with the other organisations to consult and showcase their achievements. To this end the Conjunction team have invited speakers from **Wasps Studios**, **CCA**, and **Transmission** (Glasgow) and **Grand Union**, **Eastside projects** (Birmingham) to speak about their experience and how they have developed in their respective cities.

The project has been funded by Arts Council England, Stoke on Trent City Council and Staffordshire University, with collaborations from Newcastle Borough Council and The Borough Museum & Art Gallery as part of the New Generation Space Project.

Press Contact: email conjunction@airspacegallery.org

Conjunction c/o, AirSpace Gallery, 4 Broad St, City Centre
Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 4HL

Tel: +44 (0)1782 261221

Press Images: Michael Branthwaite, "*California Dreaming*" 2010, Video Still
Freya Wright, "*Home Movie*" 2010, Oil on Canvas
Juneau Projects, "*Formosa*", 2009, Audio-Video Installation