

University for the Creative Arts
Research Project Portfolios

Erasure

By Birgitta Hosea



Project Details

Name of Researcher:	Professor Birgitta Hosea
Name of Output:	<i>Erasure</i>
UCARO link/s:	<i>Erasure</i> : https://research.uca.ac.uk/5098/ 'Made by Hand': https://research.uca.ac.uk/5084/ 'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation': https://research.uca.ac.uk/5070/
Output Type:	T – other; multi-component output comprising solo exhibition with catalogue and 2 chapters in edited collections
Year and mode of dissemination:	2018, <i>Erasure</i> , solo exhibition / catalogue 2019, 'Made by Hand' in <i>The Crafty Animator: Handmade, Craft-Based Animation and Cultural Value</i> , ed. Caroline Ruddell and Paul Ward, Palgrave MacMillan 2019, 'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation' in <i>Expanded Animation: Mapping an Unlimited Landscape</i> , ed. Jürgen Hagler, Hatje Cantz
Key Words:	Invisibility of labour, hand-made, manual labour, time and motion studies, para-animation, dematerialisation of animation, performative research methods

Funding:

The practice component of this project was supported by in-kind funding from Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, Korea; Whelkboy Gallery, Folkestone, UK

Development of the research through dissemination and discussion at conferences was supported by invitations and travel grants from Beihang University, Beijing; SW Minzu University, Chengdu, China; Chengdu University, China; Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria; Seoul International Imagination Industry Forum, Korea; and Brunel University, UK

Additional Links:

Hanmi Gallery—

Exhibition information: <https://tinyurl.com/yb4kf3zp>

Video of the exhibition: <https://tinyurl.com/ybrdxzah>

Link to the film, *Erase* (2017): <https://vimeo.com/197415215>

Artist's website—

Exhibition: <https://tinyurl.com/yb2wh7tu>

Erase film: <https://tinyurl.com/yakpvucw>

Rosary Drawing XII: <https://tinyurl.com/y94znkca>

Scrubbed Clean: <https://tinyurl.com/y9pjqfv3>

Warping the Weft: <https://tinyurl.com/yb3yvfr8>

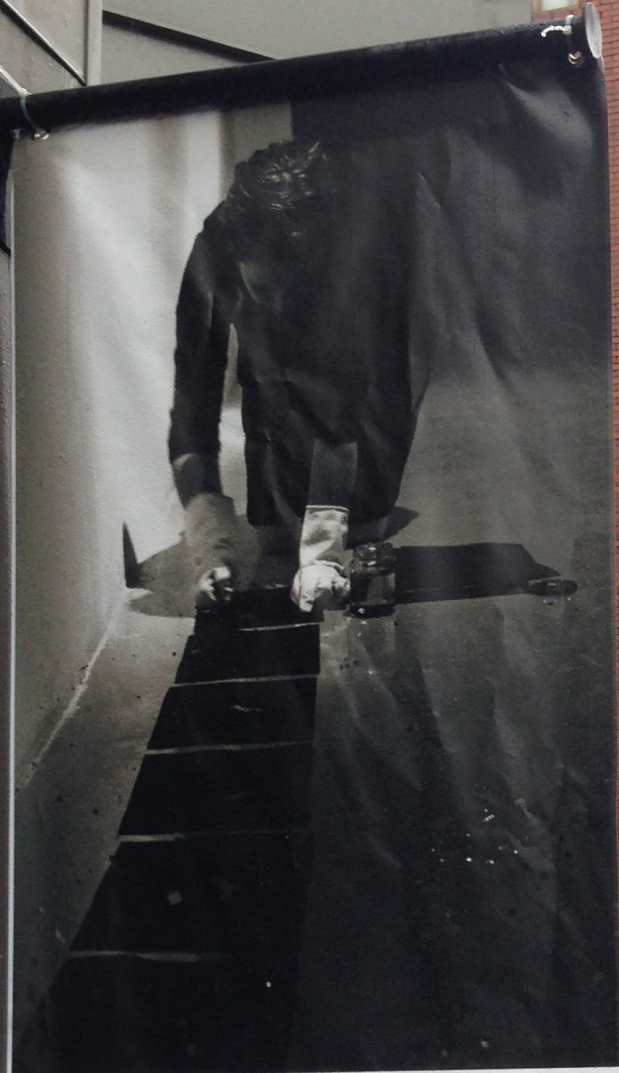
Synopsis

Erasure consists of an exhibition of artworks, a catalogue and two thematically-linked book chapters. Scouring, scrubbing, sweeping, bleaching, rinsing, brushing away – all these words refer to different ways of removing dirty marks during the act of cleaning. All of these processes were also used to make *Erasure*, a body of works brought together as a solo show at Hanmi Gallery, Seoul. The exhibits included a short film, installations of animation projected over wall-mounted objects, defaced books, photographic documentation and remnants from a performance that took place at the private view.

The word ‘erasure’ has several possible interpretations that could refer to removing part of a drawing, cleaning away dirt, censorship or obliteration. Through animation, sequential works on paper and performance, processes of erasure are used to record the duration and actions of domestic labour. Inspired by Judith Butler’s notion of performativity, the works investigate how invisible labour can be made visible through

a physical and material approach rooted in auto-ethnography. Based on the artist’s experience of working as a domestic cleaner and memories of her grandmothers, these works use repetitive actions of scrubbing and scouring and the textures of ink, bleach and other cleaning products to reanimate household labour. Utilising a performative methodology, the artist employs and embodies the processes she investigates. Creating the practice was integral to the thinking behind two book chapters, written in parallel to development of the artworks. This writing shares the aims of the artworks to explore animation as material trace of labour, time and motion and proposes a new form – para-animation – in which the traditional notion of animation is dematerialised. The artworks appear as case studies in both chapters.

The portfolio of supporting information describes the contexts, aims, methods and insights, presents a visual record of the practice, and includes the two written components.



Birgitta Hosea

베르기타 호시아

erasure

2018. 08. 30 - 10. 19

목, 금, 토 2 - 7 pm

한미 갤러리 서울

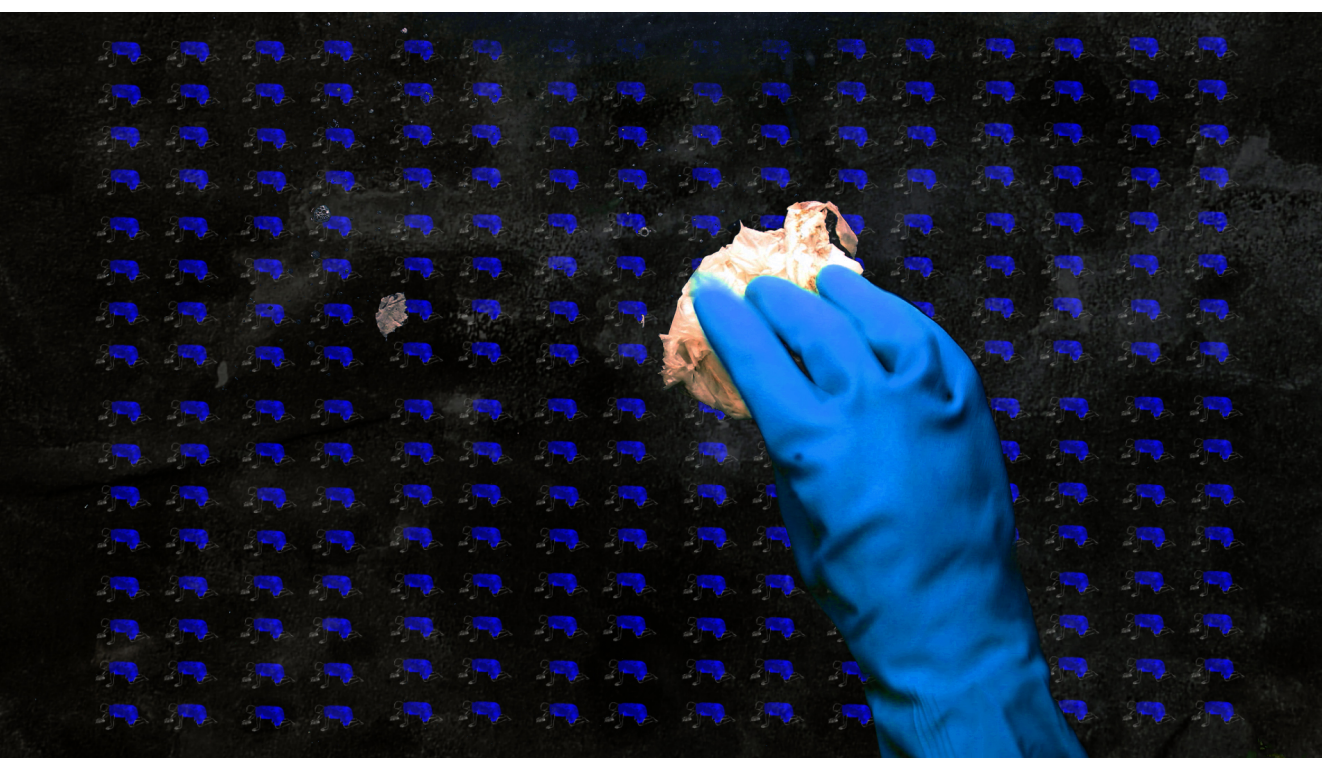
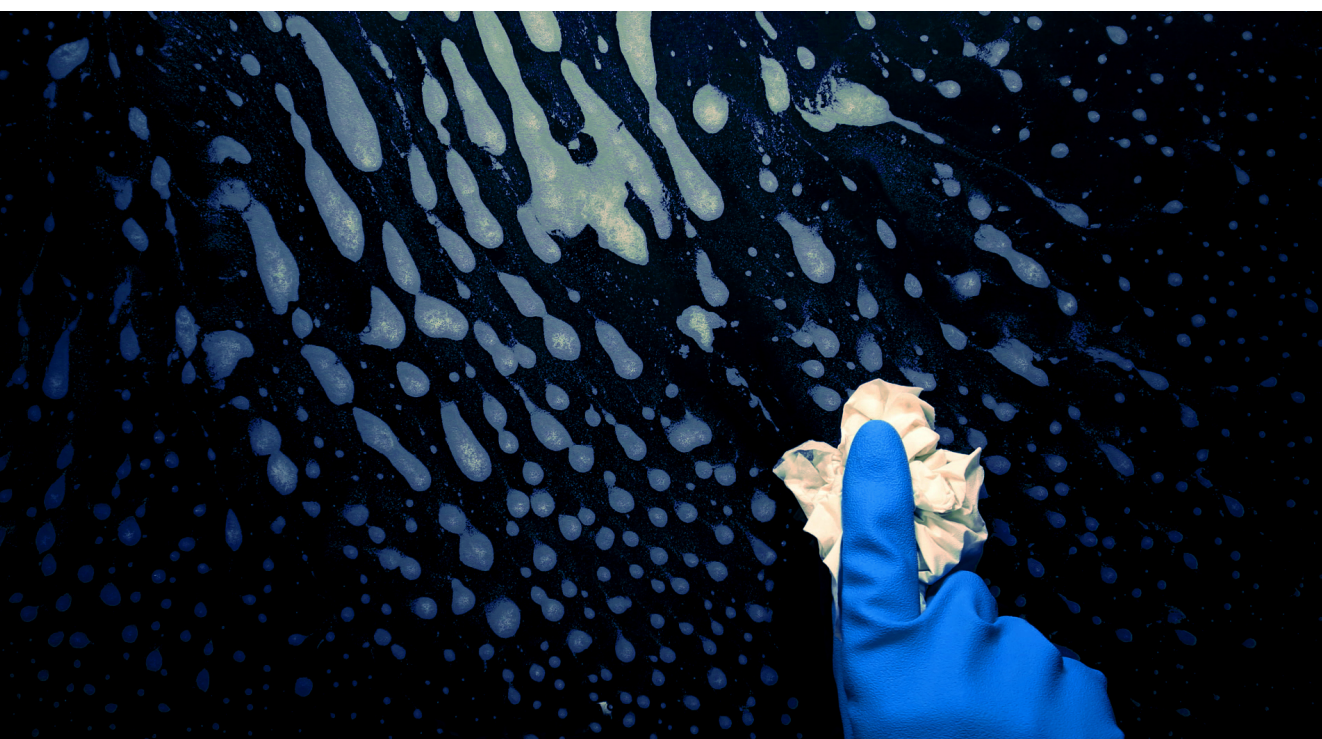
HANMI GALLERY
LONDON SEOUL



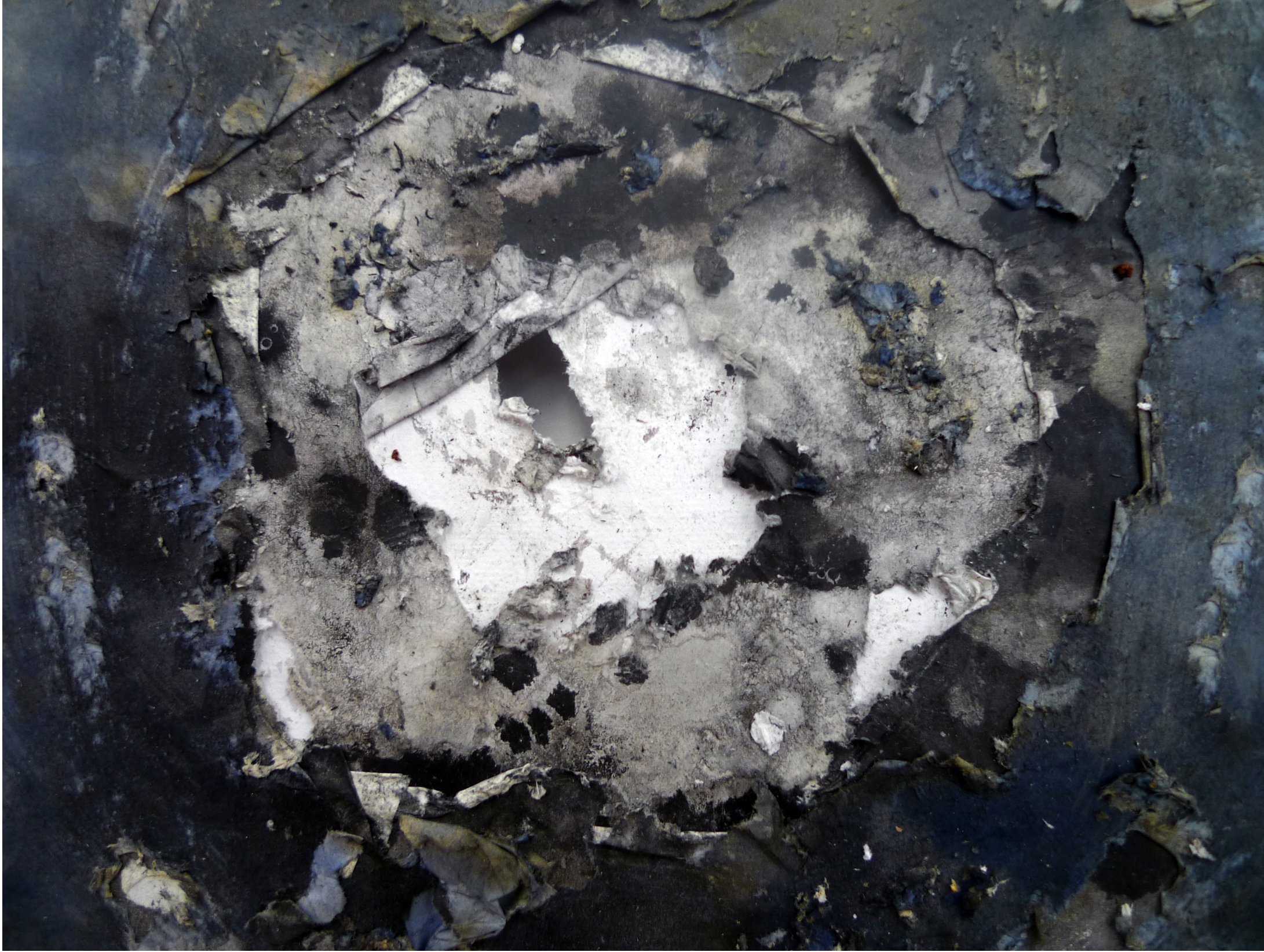
Erasure exhibition overview, Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, Korea



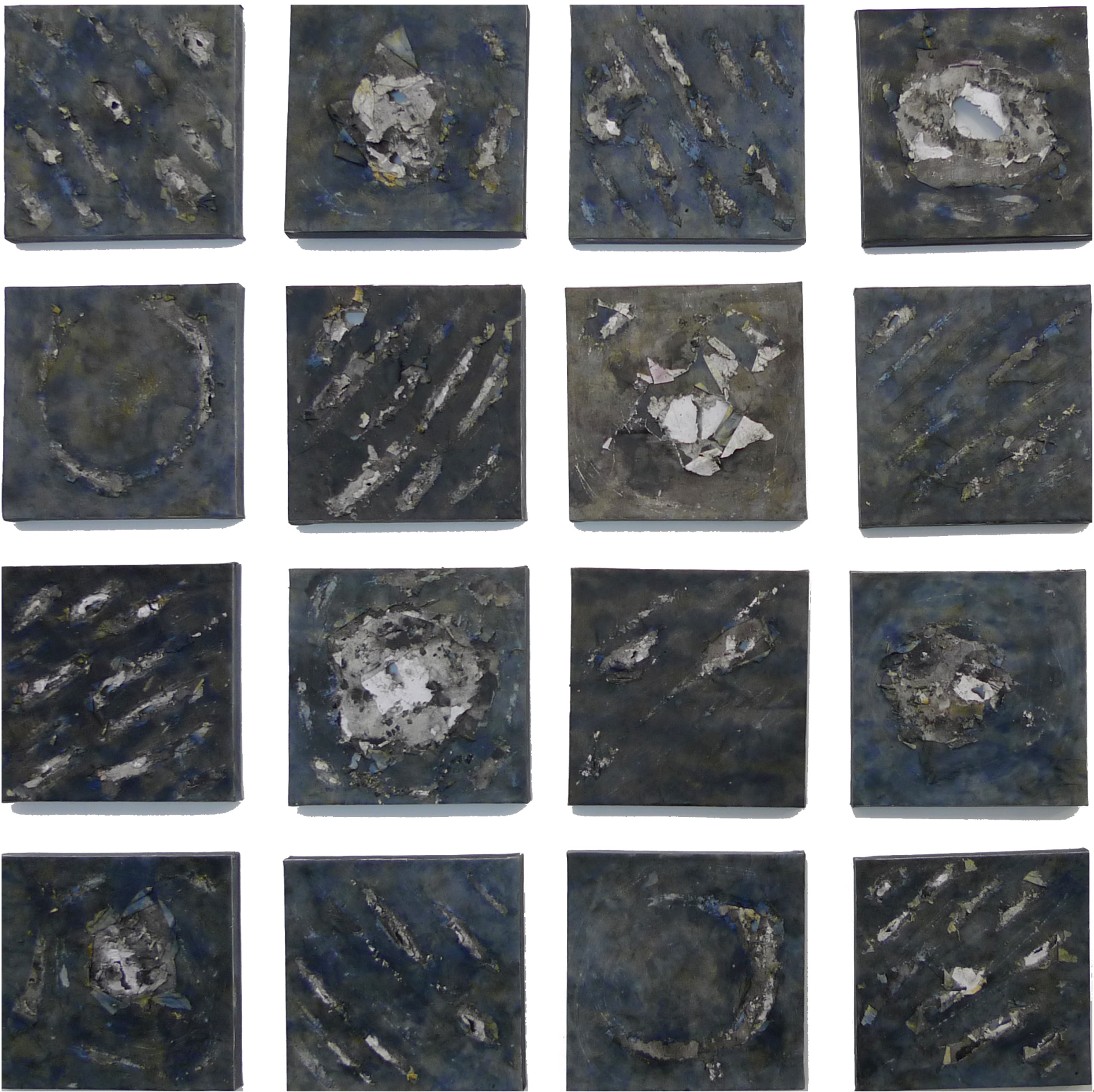
Scrubbed Clean (2018)
(installation of animation projected
over 112 scrubbed paper panels)
Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, 2018



Erasure (2017) film stills



Scoured I-XVI (2016), detail
Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, 2018



Scoured I-XVI (2016)
(block of 16 images, ink, bleach, paper
on canvas, 20cm x 20cm each)
Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, 2018



Rosary Drawing XII, 2015
Stills exhibited and live
performance at Hanmi
Gallery, Seoul, 2018

Linda dumps her purchases on the counter and the grumpy teenager starts tapping them into the till.

'Do you want that nose too?' he asks, pointing his finger rudely into Linda's face.

'Yes, please. But I think I'll keep it on,' she says, backing away.

'That comes to twenty kroon for a nose!'

They've still got some of their shopping spree. So Linda treats them to a meal. They each sit on a plastic stool, eating in silence. Linda still has her clown nose on.

'Are you okay?' asks Maria. 'Apart from the fact that you've chosen the pistachio instead of the lemon sorbet?' Linda, scraping the bottom of her tub.

'Linda, I just wanted to be so scared at the swimming competition. I thought I was going to die.'

'So did I,' says Linda. 'I tried to throw her empty tub into the rubbish bin, but missed and had to put it in.'

'But seriously, Linda, I love you to bits.'

Linda turns towards her friend. Maria's barely touched her ice cream. And she's sitting there with tears in her eyes. Linda feels a dark clump growing in her chest. This isn't fun. Doesn't Maria realize that all this crying just makes things worse? Linda has to swallow back her own tears before answering.

'Please don't look so miserable. I survived, didn't I? And there's no point being miserable before I'm gone. You can cry

the faster it's released, the more acutely we sense that sugar 'rush' – the energy that courses through our bloodstream as we heed that has been carbs. Internally though, our bodies treat all carbs our small intestine, where millions of capillaries in large part the glucose, breads, and sport it into our liver and which we either burn or store as glycogen. Instant rice is also in our liver and which we either burn or store as glycogen. That means we eat potatoes, guzzled them downables. None of the food we eat one they tasted great, too. But faster anything more than a dose of tortilla chips and a ch you unstarved fuel by another that to a loss of self-control but blooded.

The job of the hypoglycaemia, cholesterol, and insulin, when with it. Had my friend had some insulin instead of the chemicals. It had some insulin instead of the chemicals. In the state of hypoglycaemia, insulin is the organ's to be dodged.

Want one in your body? Other yolk. Happens at various levels. Beans, index of quality, the less we force it, the better. Beans, daily life, the fabule. That's also good, the fruit, the alpha.

Without eating in there, it's the amount that the sugar approach. OUT MY MEDICINE CABINET TO THIS DIET.

Fortunate slice. Needed to be a bit of a bit. This conceals the major of sugars, a lot. The reason metabolized more slowly, we drink it, our blood, and than the.

This is a crucial difference, as far as obesity is still intact, and fast sugar is worse for you; slower is better. Here's why. When the sugars are in the blood, once in blood sugar is gradual and digested through your system; its

'I'm not coming, Linda. And I think you ought to go home too. Promise me. Please!'

Maria is whispering down the phone urgently, as though she's frightened she might be interrupted.

Linda doesn't answer.

'Linda?' 'Bloody hell, Maria, says Linda, hearing because she knows her friend hates her. 'You're such a coward!'

'Linda, stop it. You're in my bedroom with Anna and she'll notice if I'm here,' whispers Maria.

'But the real reason you're a coward and goody-goody. It might have been if you were the one who was going to die, seeing as you've got such great terms with God and stuff. You could have jumped into heaven!' yells Linda, and as the words tumble from her mouth, she knows it's an awful thing to say.

'You're being really stupid, Linda,' says Maria.

Linda can hear the phone's voice. 'Yes, just cry!' she says, stuffing the phone in her pocket. It's a wonder Maria doesn't puke at her own goodness.

No sooner has she put the phone away, than it rings again. She digs it out of her pocket. Surprise, surprise. It's Maria calling back. Linda feels like chucking the stupid thing at the wall, but satisfies herself with dismissing the incoming call.

'Let me guess; you're feeling angry?'

Linda swings round, with the mobile still in her hand. It's Zak. Of course it's Zak. Linda's almost got used to the way he keeps turning up. Nonetheless the hairs go up on the back of her neck.

Minus Me I, How Eating Makes You Hungry, Minus Me II (3 x found books, cleaning cloth, 13 x 20cm, 2018)
Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, 2018



Warping the Weft (2017)
(installation of animation
projected over string, nails)
Hanmi Gallery, Seoul, 2018

Context

Female artists have engaged with acts of cleaning that are performed and then documented, e.g. Sophie Calle (1981) and Mierle Laderman Ukeles (1973). Others have investigated the removal of surfaces, e.g. Naomi Uman (1999), Adrian Piper (2003) or an animated cleaning lady, Zilla Leutenegger (2010). *Erasure's* contribution is to employ the techniques, tools and materials of cleaning in order to directly record domestic and manual labour. This is intended to give a voice to the experience of working-class women, whose perspective is erased from society in general and rarely shown in the gallery context. The ideas have been further widened in the writing to reflect upon animation as manual practice that records a material trace of labour, time and motion.

'Made by Hand' considers how 'craftivist' opposition to mechanical, technological and digital techniques is validated in the independent animation sector through unexamined assumptions that haptic knowledge by skilled physical labour and the exploration of materiality, autographic mark-making and imperfection (Wabi-sabi) are guarantors of authenticity and individuality that can only be carried out by hand. Tracing connections between craft and activism since the Industrial Revolution, this chapter critically reflects on discourses of craft and the handmade through reference to Ruskin (1851), Morris (1892), Benjamin (1935), Thompson (1980), Hobsbawm (2000), Krauss (2000) and Takahashi (2005). Whereas the experimental animation community privileges analogue, handmade processes that appear to oppose and critique commercial animation production, building upon Warburton (2016) and Frayling (2017) it is argued here that this approach is underpinned by nostalgia and often faked.

'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation' draws upon a strand of expanded cinema - paracinema - as defined by film theorist Jonathan Walley, who uses the term in the sense of the dematerialisation of film into idea. Based on

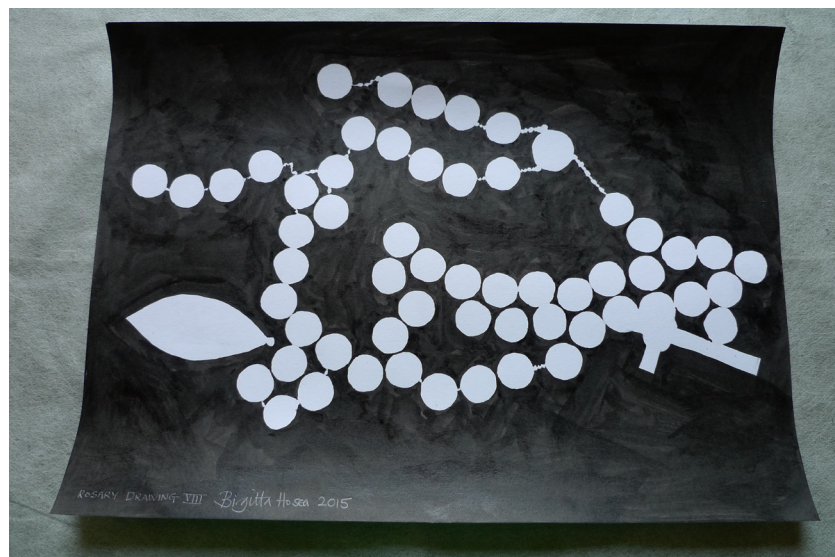
archival research and unpublished materials by VALIE EXPORT and Anthony McCall, examples of their expanded practice in paracinema are presented in which film becomes live event and thus questions the institution of cinema, its strategies of voyeurism and perception. Extending this idea and building upon animation theorist Alan Cholodenko's notion of animation as concept, the animated performance and installation work of contemporary artists Tingting Lu and Hosea's own practice are proposed as a form of para-animation. Working at the interface of live experience and recorded media, these works dematerialize animation and investigate the inscription of movement over time as concept rather than purely technique.

Key Texts:

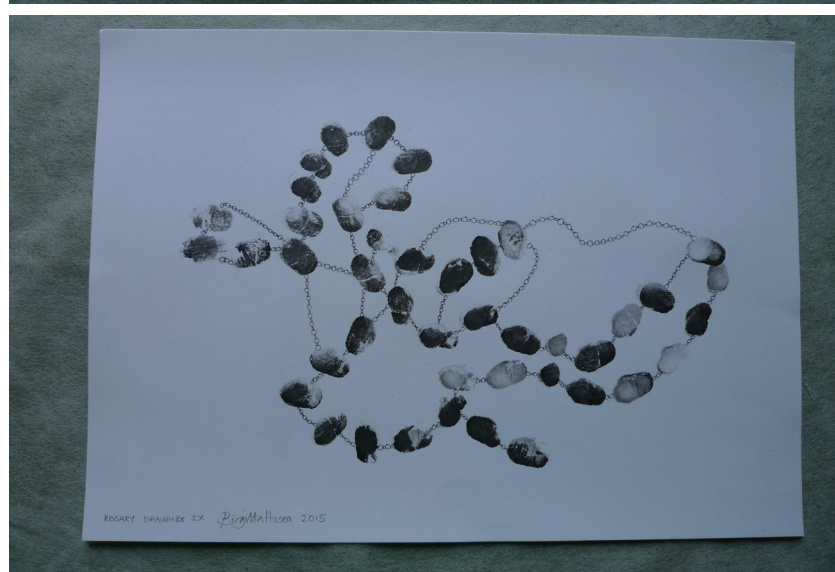
- Benjamin, W. (1969 [1935]) 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'
- Cholodenko, A. (1991) *The Illusion of Life: Essays on Animation* (Sydney: Power Publications)
- Frayling, C. (2017) *On Craftsmanship: Towards a New Bauhaus* (London: Oberon Books)
- Hobsbawm, E. (2000) 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)
- Krauss, R. (2000) "'The Rock": William Kentridge's Drawings for Projection', *October*, Spring 2000, no.92, pp.3-35
- Ruskin, J. (1892) *The Nature of Gothic: A Chapter of the Stones of Gothic* (London: George Allen)
- Takahashi, T. (2005) 'Meticulously, Recklessly Worked Upon: Direct Animation, the Auratic and the Index', in *The Sharpest Point: Animation at the End of Cinema*, edited by Chris Gehman and Steve Reinke (Toronto: YYZ Books)
- Thompson, E. P. (1980) *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin Books)
- Warburton, A. (2016) 'Spectacle, Speculation, Spam', in *Edges: An Animation Seminar*, Whitechapel Gallery: Edge of Frame, <https://vimeo.com/194963450>



Ink drawings from the making of
the film *Erasure* (2016)
(ink, bleach, series of 9,
20.7 × 20.7 cm)



Residency 1
Rosary Drawings I - XIV
Series of drawings based on
the artist's Grandmother's
rosary beads and processes
of domestic labour.
Atina Asilo, Italy 2015





Residency 2:
Aschenputel II
(ash on paper, 42x59.4cm)
Series of process-based drawings based
on the materials and gestures used to
clean out the peat stove.
Cill Rialaig, Ireland, 2016



Residency 3
Projecting animation over the existing collection of paintings.
Whelkboy Gallery, Folkestone,



Residency 3
Cleaning I and II
(20 × 31.8cm, papercut)
Experimenting with absence and presence - cut out silhouettes from photographed performance of cleaning the gallery windows, Whelkboy Gallery, Folkestone,

Aims, Questions and Methods

Research aims:

To use performative research methods to make visible the invisible processes of manual labour.

Research questions:

How can the gestures, effort and duration of women's physical labour be captured in a non-photographic form?

Can this be done through sequential mark-making processes and repetitive loops of animation displayed in an expanded context?

Can personal memories of haptic processes inform a mark-making process?

Are sequential images that record time and motion a form of animation?

Research methods:

Auto-ethnography: starting with an evocative object as memory trigger that was subsequently explored through drawing in a range of different media (Hosea's recently deceased grandmother's broken rosary beads), the research developed into performative reenactments of the domestic labour that working women perform, recorded through traces of time and motion marked by cleaning products and scouring actions.

Practice-based investigation through sequential drawing: undertaken at three residencies in Atina Asilo, Italy; Cill Rialaig, Ireland; Whelkboy Gallery, Folkestone.

Iterative development: showing work-in-progress as part of festivals, group exhibitions and conference papers and then responding to feedback.

Contextual review: developed in tandem with the two book chapters, the thinking behind the artworks drew upon literature review on materiality, craft, performativity and expanded cinema.

Research Insights and Contribution

Enacting the subject of the research through performative mark-making enabled a record of the time, actions and materials of domestic labour to be traced on paper. The labour of the artist invites comparison with ephemeral marks made by cleaning work and is a reflection on the invisible efforts of domestic workers and cleaning staff in homes, galleries and art colleges: what opportunities are there for working-class women to have time to labour on their own creativity?

The insight that a set of rosary beads records time and a set of potential actions (a prayer for each bead), like a strip of film, led to the process of capturing time and motion through sequential still images that are created and performed in

real-time. These are conceptualised like a series of frames to be viewed side-by-side rather than consecutively in a film strip. This process further developed Hosea's previous thinking about 'live animation' into a new theory of 'para-animation': a form of conceptual practice that investigates the dematerialisation of animation.

Working with evocative objects as memory triggers and auto-ethnographic material gave the artist a sense of the nostalgia that is associated with working with hand-made aesthetics. Consequently, she went on to develop a critique of the privileging of handmade aesthetics in independent animation circles, which she argues is a form of populist nostalgia for the 'good-old-days' prior to the introduction of digital technology.



erasure

a film by
Birgitta Hosea
sound design by
José Macabra



Erasure film poster, 2017

Research Dissemination and Recognition

Dissemination:

Solo exhibition: *Erasure* (Hanmi Gallery: Seoul, 2018)

Catalogue: *Erasure*, artist's catalogue (edition of 500, Hanmi Gallery: Seoul, 2018)

Book chapters:

'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation' by Birgitta Hosea in *Expanded Animation: Mapping an Unlimited Landscape*, eds Jürgen Hagler, Michael Lankes, Alexander Wilhelm (Ars Electronica in association with Hatje Cantz: Berlin, 2019). This book is a collection of the best presentations at the Expanded Animation section of Ars Electronica 2011-18.

'Made by Hand' by Birgitta Hosea in *The Crafty Animator: Handmade, Craft-based Animation and Cultural Value*, eds. Caroline Ruddell, Paul Ward, (Palgrave MacMillan, 2019)

Follow-on-activities:

Film distribution: (short film *Erasure*)

2018, signed distribution agreement with Fabulosis Film for screenings and distribution via their on-demand Vimeo channel

2019, Shorts TV purchased broadcast rights for EMEA, North US, South America and South Asia territories for screening on Netherlands (Ziggo – Channel 125); Netherlands (YoufoneTV – Channel 301); Netherlands (T-Mobile – Channel 321); Netherlands (Delta – Channel 312); Belgium (Telenet – Channel 314 Flanders and 334 Brussels); Serbia (SBB – Channel 175); USA - DirecTV (Channel 573), AT&T U-Verse (Channel 1789), Google Fiber (Channel 603), Frontier Communications (Channel 1789), CenturyLink (Channel 1789), US Sonet (Channel 292), Blue Ridge Cable Technologies; Argentina (DIRECTV – Channel 1521); Chile (DIRECTV – Channel 1521); Colombia (DIRECTV – Channel 1521); Ecuador (DIRECTV – Channel 1521); Peru (DIRECTV – Channel 1521); Uruguay (DIRECTV – Channel 1521); Tata Sky channel HD 112 and channel SD 113.

Follow-on-activities
(continued):

Items from the series in group exhibitions:

2019, Empire II: VOID, 58th Venice Biennale UK Collateral exhibition: 'Erased'

2019, Empire II: After Extinction, Oaxaca Museum of Contemporary Art, Mexico: 'Erasure', 'Erased'

2019, Metamorphosis, Red Square Museum, Shenzhen, China: 'Erasure', 'Rosary Drawing XII'

2018, Empire II: Playing God, Haus Gallery, Tallinn Art Week, Estonia: 'Erasure',

2017, Longitude and Latitude, Chengdu Museum of Contemporary Art, China: 'Warping the Weft'

2017, Empire II: Age of Anxiety, 57th Venice Biennale UK Collateral exhibition; Brussels Art Week; Unit 1 Gallery, London; SPEKTRUM, Berlin: 'Erasure'

2017, Holland Animated Film festival, Utrecht; Strangelove Film Festival, Folkestone; Canterbury AniFest, UK; AnimFest, Athens; Mzansi Women's Film Festival, Johannesburg, South Africa; Libo International Animation and Comics Festival, Guizhou, China; Les Femmes Underground Film Festival, Los Angeles; Eye Myth Festival, Vancouver; AntiMatter, Victoria, Canada; AFC Global Fest, Kolkata, India; Locomocion, Mexico; Visionaria, Italy: 'Erasure'

2017, 51% Remember Her, Elements Gallery, London: 'Rosary Drawing XII', 'Erasure'

2016, Beyond Noumenon, New Media Arts Centre, Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Chongqing, China: 'Rosary Drawing XII', 'Scoured I-XVI', 'Cleaning I-II'

2016, Kicking an Elephant Through a Catflap, Royal College of Art: 'Cleaning I-II'

2016, Erased, Whelkboy Gallery, Folkestone: 'Scoured I-XVI'

Follow-on-activities
(continued):

Conference papers:

2019, 'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation', Society for Animation Studies 31st Annual Conference: Animation is a Place, Universidade Lusofona de Lisboa, Portugal

2018, 'The Impact of Things: Object Analysis as Memory Trigger', 3rd Annual Animation Studies Conference of China, Chengdu University, China

2018, 'Setting the Stage: Theatrical Techniques for Creative Animation Education', 56 Moon West China Universities Animation Festival Conference, SW Minzu University and Xihua University, Chengdu

2018, 'Setting the Stage: Theatrical Techniques for Creative Animation Education', Opportunities and Challenges: Symposium of Contemporary Animation Creation and Teaching, Beihang University, Beijing, China

2018, 'On Paracinema and the Dematerialisation of Animation', Expanded Animation Symposium, Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria

2018, 'Made by Hand', Seoul International Imagination Industry Forum, Korea

2018, 'Made by Hand', Edge of Frame Animation Symposium, BFI

2017, 'Erasure', Documentary Discourses symposium, UCA Farnham

2017, 'Erasure', 56 Moon West China Universities Animation Festival Conference, SW Minzu University, Chengdu, China

2017, Keynote: 'Made by Hand', The Crafty Animator, Rich Mix, London

Influence of the Research:

Reviews: Exhibition

‘Erasure, Manifest’ by Dr Lilly Husbands in *Erasure*, artist’s catalogue (Hanmi Gallery: Seoul, 2018) (catalogue appended)

‘Birgitta Hosea: Erasure at Hanmi Gallery Seoul’ interview by M K Palomar, Studio International, 2018: <https://tinyurl.com/ybnkfcwf>

‘Eye Myth In Profile: Birgitta Hosea: Erasure’ by Daniel Fishbayn, Eye Myth blog (Canada, 2017): <https://tinyurl.com/ybu3vrj7>

Reviews: ‘Made By Hand’

‘Scratching the Surface: Handmade Cinema in the Digital Age’ by Holly Willis, LA Review of Books, April 17 2020: <https://tinyurl.com/ycdwpq2z>

‘Crafty Fingers and Imperfect Frames’ by Laura-Beth Cowley, Animation Studies 2.0, January 6 2020: <https://tinyurl.com/yb4y6t67>

Invitations:

Prix Ars Electronica Judge (Computer Animation) 2019, 2020, Linz, Austria

Invited speaker on behalf of the Prix Ars Electronica jury and panel moderator, 2019, Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria

Co-organiser, 2020, Expanded Animation, *Synaesthetic Syntax: Sounding Animation / Visualising Audio* symposium, Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria

Advisory Panel member, 2019/20, Creative Media Research Centre, St Pölten University of Applied Sciences, Vienna, Austria

Keynote lecture, 2019, ‘Live Animation: From Lightning Sketch to Lasers’, International Conference of Creative Media Technology, St Pölten University of Applied Sciences, Vienna

Influence of the Research
(continued):

Citations: 'Made By Hand'

Petter, T. (2019) 'Sponsored Silhouettes: Lotte Reiniger's 'Useful' Films in Britain' in Cook, M. and Thompson, K.M. (eds), *Animation and Advertising*, London: Palgrave

Gilbert, R. (2020) 'The Concrete Zoetrope: engaging students in pre-cinema with an eye towards the future', in *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 18(6):1-14



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