



(So many things can happen in one minute)

## Foreword

Nathalie de Briey's Residency at the Tasmanian School of Art at Hobart, University of Tasmania is the last in a series of highly successful residencies funded by the Scottish Arts Council over the past eight years. Initially the Residencies were of twelve months duration commencing with Kevin Henderson in (1993) and followed by Anne Morrison (1994-5), Claire Barclay (1995-6), and Stephen Hurrell (1997). Time spent in Australia was shared equally between Hobart and the Canberra School of Art. The arrangement then changed to two shorter residencies (3 or 6 months) each year — one at each institution. Mandy McIntosh (1999), Samantha Clark (2000), and Nathalie de Briey (2001) were the subsequent Hobart residents.

The artists were selected by the host institutions from a short list forwarded by the Scottish Arts Council. The Scottish Arts Council provided a generous stipend and travel allowance and the two schools provided accommodation and studio space. Importantly the Plimsoll Gallery at the Tasmanian School of Art also provided an exhibition opportunity for each resident on its annual public program — either as a solo show or as part of a curated group show developed around the practice of the resident. Morrison, Hurrell, McIntosh, Clark, and de Brie were solo shows, while Henderson participated in 'Instal X 4' (with Fiona Gunn, Peter Hill and Donna Marcus) and Barclay was in 'tangibility?' (with Stephen Bush/Jan Nelson and John R Neeson). Hurrell's installation 'Interface 2' coincided with the survey exhibition 'Out of the Analogue'. The Plimsoll Gallery published catalogues to accompany each of these exhibitions.

Beyond their involvement within the immediate art school environment, each artist made an impact upon the broader cultural life of Hobart either through CAST (Tasmania's Contemporary Art Space), Hobart's 'Summer Fringe Festival' or by participating in the activities of particular clubs and societies. All have made subsequent returns to Australia (and Tasmania) exhibiting in a range of venues and group exhibitions. There has also been a steady flow in the opposite direction, by both staff and students, boosted by contacts and institutional links established through the residencies. Scottish Arts Council funding priorities have now changed; essentially in response to a request for greater flexibility for Scottish artists choosing overseas destinations — they don't all want to come to Australia! But hopefully an informal exchange will continue to grow.

The program has had a fantastic impact upon the school and Hobart and Peter Hill's contribution in encouraging the Scottish Arts Council to initiate the program should be acknowledged.

Paul Zika  
Chair, Plimsoll Gallery Committee



Pink Terraces, 2001



## Testing the limits

Talking to Nathalie de Briey about her work and the process of making it made me think about certain games my sisters and I used to play as children. In the midst of a Melbourne heat wave we would put on as many of our clothes as possible, wrap ourselves in blankets and then see how long we could last in our sweltering cocoons. We would dare each other to eat the mouldiest, most rotten plum that had fallen from the plum tree, or drink a glass of vinegar or eat a bar of soap. We did these things to see just how far we could go — we were testing the limits, the extremes of our experience.

I watch Nathalie stretch rubber bands over hundreds of tiny sewing pins she has nailed into a wall. She's creating an image of a landscape that no longer exists — the Pink Terraces of New Zealand's North Island that were destroyed by a terrible volcanic eruption on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1886. The rubber bands are pulled taut. They threaten to spring from the tiny pins that literally hold the picture in place, making the image appear before us. We seem to be witnessing — in a state of permanently suspended tension — that extreme moment just prior to destruction. It's a moment in which anything could happen. "I'm pushing the material to the point where it nearly breaks and transforms," says Nathalie, "It's about that point of transition."

As Nathalie keeps nailing pins and stretching rubber bands, I hear her voice gasping for breath from another part of the gallery. It's a frantic gasping, a struggle to get rid of all the air from her lungs. Then she sings, gasps, then sings again. The notes are awful, flat, desperate. Sometimes she laughs, almost hysterically, but every now and then I recognise a phrase from Mozart's 'Marriage of Figaro'. "An opera singer is teaching me how to breathe from the diaphragm. I hold my breath for as long as possible and then exhale for as long as I can. The point is to go as close as possible to death to allow the voice to come out. It's about putting your complete trust in the person teaching you and learning to let go."

The opera singing is a strange see-saw between survival and perfection. It makes me think of another work in the exhibition, the ballroom dancing video, 'Moments', in which there is tremendous grace but it can only be achieved through extreme control. Nathalie says she is still trying to understand what the work is about. "I was interested at first in the hand movement of the dancers, but now I realise they don't really have any hand movement at all... everything is quite rigid and stylised... it's over-performance..." A kite loops the air on a second screen, echoing the grace of the ballroom dancers. I watch with fascination. Until I saw the string, I thought it was a seagull. "But it's also about being mesmerised," adds Nathalie, "...about watching and watching..."

We start to talk about the flipbooks, which contain small scenes from two 1950s films — Truffaut's 'The 400 blows' and Richardson's 'The loneliness of the long distance runner'. The books fit neatly into your hand as you flip through the black and white images. I recognise scenes from the Truffaut. So many things can happen in one minute. Nathalie says this work is about people being stuck. "I'm trying to capture a moment in which a decision has to be made. It's about that point before something becomes definite ... a sort of state of in-between where you are trying to prove yourself and you have to lie." I ask if the work is about destiny and whether or not we can control it. "Well yes, I'm interested in that but it's more about that point of transition — like the rubber bands..."

Nathalie keeps hammering the pins into the wall and stretching rubber bands over them. Her work is about extremes — but not quite the sort of extremes to which my sisters and I used to subject ourselves. Nathalie's work takes us along a delicate path that hovers between perfection and tension, between a moment of decision and a moment of transformation, between being in control and being totally out of control. It is about all the possibilities and all the limitations that exist in just one minute.

Brigita Ozolins, Hobart 2001



Moments, 2001





## How do you frame a minute

The artist enters the frame — Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 2001 — she already knows how many things can happen in one minute but also perhaps that one minute can be the same as the next, or one as good as another — a preciseness of vision that suspends time in manageable segments — I understand that, she might conclude, but may not understand it in the same way for the next minute. This is the moment to lock down the frame. Frame it, freeze it and then you can be free! I will write about that frame, I offered — you can have 300 words she replied.

If you are at full speed maybe it's 1 transition every 8 frames, that's 3 per PAL second with a catch up every three seconds, a bit like a leap year but that's to do with 4. Most generic transitions prefer 25 frames to render but going manual one can do better. Personally I prefer to cut and fade. These are enough options for my minute. Transitions inter-country require more A / B cross dissolves, be they additive or subtractive, than intra-country. The artist/traveller from Europe engages in rendered cultural cross dissolves with slow fades across time-zones, histories, and personal securities while other more practical things involving borders, timetables, currency etc., demand the insert edit. A favourite teddy bear is better packed in your luggage than carried as a screen saver. Once this is understood you are ready. It goes like this;

wipe a memory across the frame of what is previously known —  
cut to an observed incident to extend the narrative.

Render a  
picture in picture with the

fade to black and introduce a  
reverse shot with a slow  
fade up from black.

Jump cut the previous thought with the next — open the frame with a  
reveal to highlight narrative progress,  
mix long, medium and close up shots for clear communication of the visual information,  
re-set the context with the  
extreme long shot,  
insert edit a trip to the supermarket,  
cross fade dinner preparation,  
wipe your eyes,  
dissolve an aspirin,  
add gin to your tonic,  
cut the wood,  
fade the lights,  
pan fry a selection of local sea-food,  
tilt your head attentively,  
project your personality,  
shift your point of view,  
beam a smile,  
cutaway when conversation becomes difficult,  
focus your thoughts,  
clean your hands, hug your  
dolly and hang on.

So many things can happen in one minute — lock down the tripod and steady the frame —  
this is no time for fiction; Art is truth, and travellers seek fiction, or is it the other way  
around?

Leigh Hobba, Hobart 2001



Flipbooks, 2000-ongoing



# Biography

Born in Brussels, Belgium 1970  
Currently lives and works in Glasgow, Scotland

ndebriley@aol.com

## Education

1994-96

MFA, (Multi-disciplinary Master of Fine Art)  
Glasgow School of Art, Scotland

1991- 94

BA Hons Fine Art: Sculpture  
University of the West of England, Bristol

## Group Exhibitions

2000

**Sum of Parts**, Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh  
**Museum Ma Gogo**, PB Gallery,  
University of Swinburne, Melbourne  
**Anxious words**, Waterstones-Piccadilly, London

1999

**Flop**, Institut Francais, Edinburgh  
**Museum Ma Gogo**, Glasgow Project Room  
**Say Nothing, Be Silent**,  
Intermedia Gallery, Glasgow

1997

**Speel**, Artis Gallery, s'Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands in collaboration with the Collective Gallery, Edinburgh

**Art in the Square**, Glasgow Art Fair

**Made in Glasgow**, De Markten, Brussels

**37 Rue St Bernard**, Collectors House, Brussels

**Plaid**, Multiples show, Galerie Bortier, Brussels

**European Couples, and Others**, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow

### Solo Exhibitions

2001

**Work in Progress (So many things can happen in one minute)**, Plimsoll Gallery, University of Tasmania, Hobart

1996

**Impressions**, The Assembly Room, Glasgow

### Commissions/Residencies

2001

**Scottish Arts Council Residency**, Australia Residency, 3 months at the Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart

2000

**Artists' Book** for Scotland Year of the Artist, Scottish Cultural Enterprise

**Year of the Artist Residency**, project based on the island of St Kilda, in collaboration with Anthea Haddow (Composer/Cellist), Eurudike De Beul (Opera singer)

1997/98

**Artist Residency**, Master of Fine Art, 5 months in the Fibre/Ceramics/Sculpture department,

Nathalie de Briey's three-month Residency at the Tasmanian School of Art at Hobart was funded by the Scottish Arts Council.

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Plimsoll Gallery Co-ordinator: Pat Brassington

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"Work in progress (So many things can happen in one minute) – Nathalie de Briey"

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Tasmanian School of Art  
Centre for the Arts  
Hunter Street, Hobart



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA