

insect, it is made up of wires, components and clips set into a fibre glass platform. Nearby is a radar-like dish. The sculpture looks like it might have a function. However, it is not a sleek, mass-produced object, (like the chairs used in Suspended Fall) with a purpose that is clear, but looks instead like the nightmarish biomorphic machines in science fiction novels and films. If intended for human or animal use, this could be an operating table, perhaps for some tortuous ritual or experiment. Or is it a model? A futuristic landscape for a toy train to drive through or the wreckage of a ravaged settlement or city? Like Julie Mehrutu and Haluk Akakçe's imagery, some of the forms seem familiar, but ascribing a specific meaning to them is always frustrated.

DARK STUDIO

In this room is a film installation by **Matthew Buckingham**, **Muhheakantuck – Everything has a Name**. The film was shot from a helicopter as it made its way up and then down the Hudson River from New York. An accompanying voiceover recounts events that took place there nearly 400 years ago when the river was first navigated by Henry Hudson, a Dutch explorer. Hudson and his crew soon came into contact with Leni-Lenape, the indigenous people, and in the next 40 years 23,000 Leni-Lenape died as a

result. The native name for the Hudson River is used in the title of this work and means 'river that flows both ways'. The hovering viewpoint is replicated in the suspended screen format of the work and the pink-tinged, faded-look to the image further emphasises the distance in time - as well as physical detachment - from most of the events talked about by the narrator. As with much of the work in this exhibition, this piece combines intimacy and detail with a cultural, social and global overview.

GALLERY 5

Norham Castle, Sunrise by **JMW Turner** is a very different kind of landscape from that in Buckingham's film. The painting was chosen as a tribute, a memorial to Arnolfini's first Director, Jeremy Rees, who died last year. The scene shows an unpeopled scene, a cow grazing in the morning mists. A timeless image, the castle is a ruin and the scene is quiet. The painting may have been produced by Turner from memory with the help of sketchbooks as this was a place he knew well. Unlike Jyll Bradley's hyperreal panorama, Julie Mehretu's stormy skies and Nobuko Tsuchiya's apocalyptic terrain, **Norham Castle, Sunrise**, appears as though after a storm. The dawn of a new day.

This sheet is intended as an introduction to the exhibition. Please speak to a steward or browse the Resource Area in the Reading Room on the second floor for further information.

Introduction to the exhibition

This storm is what we call progress
10 September - 23 October 2005

This storm is what we call progress explores ideas of the past and present, memory and history, change and progress. Taking the occasion of the re-opening of Arnolfini's spaces as its starting point, the exhibition can be seen as both celebration and commemoration.

In considering the nature of progress, it is clear from many works in this exhibition, that this also often involves trauma and a sense of loss as well as achievement.

Returning to a place once familiar, now changed, or imagining how a place will look before you get there often results in looking at things in the present, but remembering or imagining the past.

For many, a visit to the first exhibition in the reopened Arnolfini combines the experience of discovering new, forgotten and part-remembered aspects of the building with an exploration of paintings, sculpture, film, video and photographs.

GALLERY 1

Landscape with Flowers presents fifteen individual flower arrangements as a curved panorama, sweeping across the gallery. **Jyll Bradley**, the artist who has brought this work together involving hundreds of people in its making and re-making, considers each of the sections as miniature gardens. Arranged according to principles based on nature developed by Chinese Buddhist scholars (for example flowers should be placed to allow a butterfly to fly between each stem and alight on any flower), this work uses nature as a guide, but is far from natural-looking. Lighting and a grey/blue background create a vibrant landscape rich in colour and variety. At times, the fragrance matches the intensity of the colours.

Although artificially displayed, the flowers are real. As soon as they are picked (some locally, some from far away), the flowers can be considered dead. Water and cool conditions can keep them looking alive, but they soon fade, their beauty past its ideal. Every

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five days this work is recreated by local groups of people, all involved in some way with flowers. Remaining open to visitors, at this point the gallery becomes a social space as the groups create the arrangements, engaging in conversation and exchange.

In the lightbox work, **Portrait with Flowers**, Bradley's arrangement is made of pictures of people. Each is of a flower worker, some from the West Country, others from Colombia and China, engaged in an aspect of the global flower trade, be it growing, picking or selling flowers. If you would like to find out more about the individual portraits then please ask a steward.

The third work in this gallery is part of **Festival of Flowers**, most of which was presented in spaces throughout Arnolfini on the first few days of re-opening to the public. Like **Landscape with Flowers**, this single arrangement is changed every five days, each one a recreation of an arrangement of significance in the lives of an individual in Bristol or an incident from the life of the city.

Jyll Bradley has based these recreations on other peoples' anecdotes and recollections. Away from the place, time and people that made and cherished the original, these arrangements can be seen as an attempt to recapture something of the past. However, like faded photographs, they can only capture part of a moment and their portrayal of the past can be questioned.

More details are in the **Festival of Flowers** booklet available to pick up in Gallery 1.

CINEMA/THEATRE

The women in **Chen Chieh-jen's, Factory**, like the workers in Jyll Bradley's portraits, are subject to the changes in global trade. They are shown here returning to the place in Taiwan where they once worked, long since closed as the company moved abroad to take advantage of cheap labour. The cavernous interiors are desolate and as the women return to this place and time in their lives, they can be thought of as ghosts, trapped in tasks and situations from which they are meant to have long since departed.

Please note that **Factory** will close at 5.45pm daily.

GALLERY 2

On the first floor, the references to the past continue in **Martin Boyce's** work. **Ventilation Grills (Punching Through The Clouds)**, is a visionary remark about skyscrapers attributed to Mies van der Rohe, an architect responsible for designing and theorising many of the 20th century's tall buildings. Whilst originally intended to invoke the Utopian ideas of punching through the gloom to a brighter future, the associations between skyscrapers and clouds is now a very different one.

Suspended Fall, and **Phantom Limb (Undead Dreams)** use objects designed by other 20th century designers, Arne Jacobsen and Charles and Ray Eames. Both objects can be thought of as standing in for bodies not there – a limb, a seated figure – and a time when the future, the new, was associated in Europe and the United States with a optimism and hope.

GALLERY 3

The densely-layered collage of lines, cloud-forms, diagrams and shapes that make up **Julie Mehretu's** painting, **Renegade Delirium** are sealed in by the artist, layer by layer. The overall design appears as a suspended moment, but unlike Martin Boyce's gently rotating or swaying fragmented chairs, Mehretu's painting appears as a frozen explosion, or perhaps an implosion. What moment is it that has been captured? A mutating cell? A crashing car? A collapsing building? A city under bombardment? An exploding planet? The smaller framed works - etchings, drawings and watercolours - explore further the imagery of change and progression. These appear more like landscapes, but unlike the ordered **Landscape with Flowers** in Gallery 1, these depict turbulent, cloud-filled, places.

Like Julie Mehretu's painting, the black and white digital animation by **Haluk Akakçe** **Tomorrow is Another Day**, combines shapes and forms that appear to be from many different times and places. Some look like Art Nouveau designs, others are similar to hieroglyphics or pictograms. In one section a skull appears. The smooth emergence and disappearance of the images is precisely choreographed as forms combine and change; not frozen as in **Renegade Delirium**, but ever-shifting.

The other two works in this gallery also combine information from different sources – but use very different methods. **Lee Mingwei's The Letter Writing Project**, is made up of gallery visitors' letters to people alive, dead, real or fictional. Like Jyll Bradley's work in Gallery 1, it is the collecting together of individual responses that makes this

work, a gathering of different stories and responses.

Hand-writing a letter, now a rare act compared with the frequency of other forms of communication, is a reflexive, personal act. In Mingwei's work this takes place in the private space of the booths - or on the writing surface provided just outside of them - where the letters are also displayed and can be read if left unsealed. Reading letters intended for others can make us aware of our own unexpressed feelings and act as encouragement to write these down and share them. Lee Mingwei is interested in this 'chain of feelings' which he considers a reminder of the larger world of emotions in which we all participate.

The dated names, places and events encircling the room, like a frieze, is by **Felix Gonzalez-Torres**. **Untitled** is one of a series of 'portraits' he produced, depicting a life – in this case his own – as an accumulation of events and actions that produce and define a person. The artist died in 1996 and the events listed begin before he was born and continue after his death. As with any biography, the attempt to order and archive one person's life combines personal details, the significance of which may never be known, with wider cultural and social events. Like Jyll Bradley's **Landscape with Flowers** and **Portrait with Flowers**, and Lee Mingwei's **The Letter Writing Project**, this work also blurs the boundaries between the individual and the people and events that surround them.

GALLERY 4

Beyond Lee Mingwei's writing booths, is **Nobuko Tsuchiya's** sculpture **8 Legged Hypnotic Witness**. Squatting like an