



Inspirallondon Festival 2016

22-25 September

Bringing together four days of urban exploration, talks, dialogues, exchange, and artistic interventions on and about London's new spiraling pathway.

Schedule:

Thursday 22 September, 6.30-9pm
Deep Topographies at Swedenborg House

Friday 23 September, 10.30am-2pm
Park Life open-air roundtable discussion at Stave Hill Ecological Park

Saturday 24 September, all day
Day of Sound workshop at Greenwich University & Enderby Wharf
Day of Exploration and Walkie-Talkie with the Walking Artists Network and artwork along the Thames Pathway

Sunday 25 September, 11am-5pm
Walking Segment 18 of the Inspirallondon trail from Kew Bridge to Wimbledon

22 September – Deep Topographies

Deep Topographies began with walking the first part of the InspiralLondon trail, Segment 1, from the Henry Moore *Spindle* sculpture by Kings Cross station. The walk was followed by a stimulating evening of short talks introducing the public to the InspiralLondon trail, the themes of deep topography, and the pleasures of walking. Invited speakers investigated the role of artistic mapping, walking art, urban exploration, and the imaginal within urban and semi-urban metropolitan landscapes.

Festival Director Charlie Fox gave a brief overview of Inspiralling and the future trajectory of the programme in 2016-2017. James Wilson spoke about Emanuel Swedenborg's practices of walking, followed by a performative talk by William Rowlandson on walking and the imaginal. In a lecture titled *Against Oblivion*, Ken Worpole reflected on utopian intentional communities of Essex and how landscape embodies social memory.

Julie Demuer, Paul-Hervé Lavessière, and Baptiste Lanaspèze - three visiting artists from France - presented on the challenges faced in the creation of the national walking trail GR2013, through Marseille Provence. They introduced the 'Metropolitan Trails Charter', a manifesto for the future of metropolitan walking.

Finally, Anne Robinson reflected on *Over Time*, a project she curated in 2014 where eleven artists were stranded on the Thames foreshore with no temporal markers to respond to the tidal topography through experimental practice.

The talks were followed by a short panel discussion with questions from the audience, facilitated by Dr Cecilia Wee (RCA, Visual Communications).



23 September – Park Life

Park Life examined the overlaps between artistic practice, ecology, and urban planning with a number of artists, urban planners, and ecologists on evolving ideas of the ‘park’. Together we interrogated the visionary thinking and ideology that underpins the creation of landscape, a discussion built out from the examples of the Stave Hill Ecological Park born from the Surrey Docks ‘wasteland’, along with the Central Foresta and the GR2013 trail in Marseille.

Rebeka Clark gave a history of the Stave Hill Ecological Park and the challenges it has faced in recent years. Grant Smith presented on *soundcamp*, a project in recording and archiving interviews, birdsong, and the hyperlocal of Stave Hill. Alberto Duman screened *Music for Masterplanning*, a video re-visioning urban real estate development and advertising. Clare Qualmann introduced the collective work of Walking Artist Network. Sarah Spanton and Richard Sobey of Delve Associates spoke on their recent body of research, *Harlow Habitats*, which explores local urban planning and economic strategies in relation to new roles for the arts in Harlow New Town, a 1950’s development designed for residents to ‘live, work, and play’ in.

In the afternoon, participants were invited to cross the Thames via the Hilton ferry to Canary Wharf, walking a loop into Poplar along InspiralLondon Segment 13, back to Canary Wharf and down to Mudchute, crossing the river via the Greenwich foot tunnel.





24 September – Day of Sound & Day of Exploration

Day of Sound with Grant Smith & Ian Thompson

Looking at sound walking, field recording, and live audio streaming, we considered how actively listening to the soundscapes around us can enhance our awareness and understanding of the spaces in which we find ourselves, and how we can share them remotely in real time or archive as recordings. Participants then took a soundwalk along the Thames Path to Enderby’s Wharf, a space currently undergoing major transformation into a cruise ship terminal. We shared a picnic lunch and took the chance to record the local soundscape, creating a live audio stream via Locuscast during our visit. To round off the day, we uploaded our recordings to permanent archive at Radio Aporee.

Day of Exploration: 12-5pm, at low tide

Exploring the Thames foreshore with artistic interventions, walking art, and workshops along the path of Segment 12 of the trail, sharing in the spectacular views along North Greenwich while disrupting the dystopian vision of contemporary waterfront living by imagining other cities of the future past.

Clare Qualmann and Blake Morris of the Walking Artists Network led a Walkie-Talkie: an opportunity to come together and think and talk and walk, with no pre-defined content or agenda beyond the goals of connecting with fellow walkers and sharing ideas. The event began with a short identification of a range of themes and points for discussion - theoretical, philosophical, practical, experimental and argumentative (or any combination of these) - and then took those ideas out for a walk. Previous Walkie-Talkies held in London (2011) and Zutendaal, Belgium (2012) generated walks and discussions around micro-navigation, slowness, getting lost, dead-ends, and unpromising pathways.

Alongside the Walkie-Talkie, there were a number of artistic interventions, participatory artworks, and artistic responses to search out along the Thames foreshore:

12-3pm – *Enderby's Whaling* by Calum F Kerr: Ballast Quay was haunted by the White Sperm Whale of Samuel Enderby and Hermann Melville, beckoned by spirits of the whalers and the destroyed industrial heritage of the wharf, challenging where cruise liners are due to depart in the streams of the whaling ships.

12.30pm – A walk led by Inspiral Director Charlie Fox, meeting outside Cutty Sark Pub to stroll along the Thames beach to Enderby Wharf.

12.30pm onward – Rachel Gomme created a durational performance using found materials to map the contingent presence of the foreshore, both present-day tidal shifts and past and potential future shorelines.

1-2pm – Anne Robinson presented *Quick Draw/Long Draw*, an experiment with perceived time in the landscape: How long is a minute? An hour? A day? Drawing out the moment, Anne Robinson led a graphic adventure on the foreshore: inviting participants to explore hand-eye time, mobile drawing and the altered state of the artist/recorder.

1-2.30pm, every 15 minutes (while the tide was low) – Richard Couzins screened a portable video work, exploring how the tangential drift of the Inspiral route changes expectations of walking, talking, presence, and place.

2-4pm – counterproductions unveiled and placed a new series of *AntiSigns* to join those remaining on the Thames foreshore from *Over Time* (autumn 2014).

2-4pm – Sarah Sparkes' participatory performance *Eels and Wormholes – Psychic Wandering* led a journey along the liminal shoreline of the Thames with a series of actions, dialogues, and immaterial mapping systems activating mental timelines, dream lines, and desire lines, creating a network of paths that invisibly intersects with the fabric of reality.

2.30-4pm – Screening at Enderby Wharf of *Over Time* (approx. 45 minutes).



25 September – Walking the InspiralLondon Trail, Segment 18

This was the final event of the 2016 InspiralLondon Festival, a celebratory day of walking. By walking along Segment 18, new participants were able to take part in the creation of the new metropolitan trail. The pathway began from Kew Bridge station, heading south through Richmond Park to end in Wimbledon. We stopped in Richmond Park for an informal discussion of the project and to consider future Inspiral ideas over a picnic lunch, along with a rousing game of 'Bird Bingo' with performance artist/ornithological investigator J.D. Swann.



Biographies of Participants

Speakers:

Julie Demuer is a writer, producer, and sound artist based in Marseille, working in the interactions between artistic practices, culture, and territories. She directed the cultural radio 'Radio Grenouille Marseille' and is a co-founder and active member of the 'Hotel du Nord'. Julie was a lead artist in the creation of the GR2013.

Charlie Fox is Director of the interdisciplinary art platform counterproductions, facilitating collaborative projects that generate new artistic culture through experimental performance and visual art practices. He is currently directing InspiralLondon (2015-18) and working on ideas for an Interdependent School of Art & Humanity.

Baptiste Lanaspeze is a writer and editor, and in 2008 founded the publishing house Wildproject, specialising in ecological thinking, nature writing, and place-making. He is the author of *Ville Sauvage – Marseille: Essays on Urban Ecology* (2012) and produced the walking trail GR2013 Marseille-Provence.

Paul-Hervé Lavessière is an urban planner and geographer based in Marseille and Paris. He is the creator and author of *La Révolution de Paris* (2012), launched in January 2014 at the Pavillon de l'Arsenal in the form of a travel narrative (Wildproject, 2014).

Anne Robinson's multidisciplinary practice focuses on the perception and politics of time, working with duration, frame, exposure, sound, and movement. She holds a practice-led PhD on temporality and painting. Recent artwork includes *Thrashing in the Static* and curatorial projects *Supernormal* (2013-16), *Over Time* (2014), and *One More Time* (2011).

William Rowlandson is Senior Lecturer in Hispanic Studies at the University of Kent. He is the author of *Imaginal Landscapes: Reflections on the Mystical Visions of Jorge Luis Borges and Emanuel Swedenborg* (Swedenborg Society, 2015) and *Borges, Swedenborg and Mysticism* (Peter Lang, 2013).

Cecilia Wee is a London-based curator, writer, and broadcaster who produces art projects that challenge existing models of audience engagement, particularly in the fields of experimental sound, performance, and visual art practices, in the UK and internationally. She is currently Lecturer in Visual Communication at the Royal College of Art.

James Wilson works as an editor and librarian at the Swedenborg Society. He is the author of *Three Bridges* (Neverland Publishing, 2014), a novel about chance encounters upon London's historic bridges, and the essay collection *Images of the Afterlife in Cinema* (2011).

Ken Worpole writes on architecture, landscape, and public policy. He collaborated with photographer Jason Orton on two books exploring the coastal landscape of the Thames Estuary and East Anglia: *350 Miles* (2005) & *The New English Landscape* (2013). His most recent book, *New Jerusalem: The Good City and the Good Society*, was published by the Swedenborg Society (2015).

Associate Artists:

Richard Couzins works in single screen and video installation. Works include *Triologue* (UCA Farnham, 2013), *There Will Always Be More Things in a Closed than an Open Box* (Cultural Documents, 2013), *Unovercryable* (Archway Investigations and Responses, 2009), *Free Speech Bubble* (HICA, 2009), and *Otolith* (2003).

Alberto Duman's artistic and academic practice is framed by recent developments in urban development in the UK. His work spans a broad spatial critical practice of art, writing, collaboration, guiding walks and teaching across art, architecture, planning, and sociology.

Rachel Gomme is an artist working in performance and installation, with a focus on spaces and phenomena that are habitually overlooked, ignored, or perceived as empty. She has presented work, performed, and taught in the UK and internationally since 1998.

Calum F. Kerr is a multi-disciplinary artist with an emphasis on performance, sculpture, and sound. His research relates to reception of place, with characters such as J. D. Swann (ornithological investigator), Brian Guest (founder of the Society for the Preservation of Admirable Rubble), and Maurice the Dodo.

Clare Qualmann is an interdisciplinary artist teaching at University of East London and The Cass, and a founder of the Walking Artists Network. Recent projects include *Walkwalkwalk* (Bethnal Green Archive, 2010), *Perambulator* (Deveron Arts, 2014), *East End Jam* (LLDC, 2015), and *Walking Women* (Somerset House & Forest Fringe, 2016).

Sarah Sparkes is a multi-disciplinary London-based artist engaged with mythical narratives, visualising anomalies, and the metaphor of the portal, exploring the intersection of science and magic. She won the MERU Art*Science award in 2015 and runs the arts/research project GHost. Recent exhibitions include *English Magic* (New Art Projects), *Atlante della immagini e della form* (GAMEC), and *Gothic Pleasures* (Eagle Gallery).

Ian Thompson is Programme Leader of BA Digital Arts Practice at University of Greenwich. His recent work includes *Arrival Time*, a digital composition based on TfL data. He performs as a cellist and founded the Hackney Secular Singers choir in 2008. He has produced online features for BBC radio and played with the Mike Flowers Pops group.

Other Partners:

Georgia Muenster completed an MA in Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art in 2015, focusing on installation and psychogeographic practice. Projects include *Going Places*, *Doing Stuff* (Flux Factory, 2008-11), *Concert Hall* (Palais de Tokyo, 2013), and *Black Box Formula* (RCA, 2015).

Richard Sobey works across the cultural, heritage, urban planning, and land management sectors. He collaborates across platforms in initiating programmes and strategies that draw on socially engaged artistic practice, urban development, and tactical place-making.

Figures

Day 1:

For the walking tour in the afternoon, we were joined by six artists/producers, including Baptiste Lanaspeze and Paul-Hervé Lavessière from Marseille, and 10 festival-goers. The talks in the evening were over sold out at 120 audience members, with four volunteers and 15 festival artists (nine of whom contributed to the evening's programme).

Day 2:

There were 31 participants and contributors for the day, with 12 artists presenting, two Stave Hill staff, and 17 festival-goers. After lunch, 12 participants stayed for the walking workshop. In the evening, members of the Inspirallondon steering group visited an exhibition opening in Southwark and conducted informal discussion.

Day 3:

The Day of Sound workshop had booked 18 participants, with 12 in attendance, while the Walkie-Talkie had 22 participants booked in, with 18 in attendance. 25+ visitors joined the Inspirallondon exploratory walk along the Thames pathway. There were four volunteers, seven workshop leaders, and 24 artists. Six new artworks were created for the events. 100+ members of the public were engaged in the project.

Day 4:

The Sunday Inspirall walk had two workshop leaders and 25 participants (over 50% artists). All events were free.

Other exchange:

Festival website visitors totalled 818; views 1,612.

142 sign-ups via Eventbrite

Facebook reach: 1,009 views

Total festival participants, including artist contributions: 366

Total number of artists engaged in project: 71

Total audience numbers for festival, including online exchange: approximately 850

Comments & Praise

'Thank you for a great few days... really interesting set of conversations and possibilities. Congratulations!' – Richard Sobey, artist

'It has been a great pleasure [...] it was a great success, and you have been brilliant at organising.' – Anne Robinson, artist and curator

'The festival staged a series of such high quality events — too many highlights to mention here but I loved Ken Worpole's uncovering of hidden utopian villages.' – Richard Couzins, artist

'Thanks for a great weekend of events that was *inspiralling*. Met some great people, especially the one who organised the Marseille trail.' – Tim Flitcroft, Occupy activist

'A very generous and creative event — many thanks for the invitation to be part of it.' – Grant Smith, artist

'It was a really positive space in which to meet people and try stuff out!' – Clare Qualmann, artist

'I enjoyed the evening and am very impressed by what our French friends are doing' – Ken Worpole, author

'Thanks so much for the brilliant InspiraLondon Festival!' – Rachel Gomme, artist