

HOLE

MARGARET

SALMON

Exhibition Notes | Gallery 1 | Sat 8 December 2018 — Sun 24 February 2019

DCA

Dundee Contemporary Arts

152 Nethergate
Dundee, DD1 4DY

01382 432444

Scottish Charity No. SC026631

Open daily 10:00-18:00
Open late Thu 20:00

Admission free

www.dca.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

Might it be possible for film to transcribe something as ephemeral as human warmth? Affection? Presence, trust and submission? What about love? Can film bear witness to love? Express love? How can a lens invoke these very personal, subjective experiences? These are some of the questions posed by American artist Margaret Salmon in this newly commissioned work for DCA.

Hole is about our bodies and the intimate human connections we seek with others. In an immersive installation that uses light, heat and sound, Salmon seeks to create an atmosphere of warmth, comfort and radiance to step into over the cold winter months.

The exhibition begins with a literal hole in the wall, an architectural rupture of shattered plaster that has been deliberately crafted to hint at the new environment the artist has created beyond this threshold. Once through this new entrance viewers may then detect initial sensory shifts in the room by way of soft heat emanating from electric heaters on the floor. This simple gesture by Salmon enhances the immersive atmosphere of the gallery.

These heaters flank a new two-channel film work titled *I you me we us* that portrays particular visual representations of warmth, care, kinship and growth. It features the hands of lovers and family members, interspersed with texts, words, language and questions posed by the artist in the making of this wider body of work.

Accompanying *I you me we us* is a double-sided takeaway poster work, *Woman and Bird (Miró)*. One side depicts hands performing a mudra, which is a ritualistic or spiritual gesture in Hinduism and Buddhism. The particular gesture captured here evokes the shape of a womb, of a safe and nurturing space. The other side of the poster displays a photograph of a page from *Joan Miró, Sculptures: a catalogue* from a Royal Scottish Academy exhibition in 1992. This book forms part of Salmon's wider body of research relating to the female body in art, and she was drawn to a particularly poetic title, *The Caress of a Bird*, that seems to narrate an idea of the body as an imaginative and erotic space. This piece forms part of an ongoing series of ephemeral poster works by Salmon in which she generously gives some of her beautiful images away to audiences over the course of an exhibition.

As a filmmaker, Salmon is known for creating portraits that weave together poetry and ethnography. Often focusing on individual subjects, her work captures the minutiae of the everyday human experience, infusing it with a sense of poignancy and subtle grandeur. In speaking of her approach to documenting the world around her, she has said:

“It’s important for me to be both technically and emotionally skilled and prepared – to know the camera well enough to use it intuitively, without worry or distraction, so that I can respond to a person, place or situation with intelligence and care.”

Adapting techniques drawn from cinematic movements such as Cinema Vérité and the European avant-garde, Salmon’s orchestrations of sound and image introduce formal abstractions as well as environmental interventions into the tradition of realist film.

At the heart of this exhibition is a new 16mm film work titled *Two*, that uses a female erotic gaze to look for places where love might be found in contemporary life and to explore what might constitute supportive, loving relationships today. It documents three different couples in joyful acts of lovemaking, celebrating the ways in which bodies and people connect physically and emotionally to one another.

Salmon has said the following about *Two*:

“This is an attempt to trace a physical manifestation of love between committed partners, through the mediation of my camera. It’s a simple, intuitive account of the collaboration between myself and the people in the work, and is a celebration of connection and intimacy between caring bodies, as seen through a woman’s camera lens.”

Two acts in many ways as an antidote to dominant patriarchal visual culture and capitalistic representation of sex that are often entirely divorced from the reality of our bodies and the sexual relationships we cultivate with others.

A multi-channel sound work nearby titled *Your breath, so close*, uses some of the audio recorded whilst making *Two*, together with recordings of human breath and spoken excerpts from bell hooks’ book *All About Love* to build an aural soundscape for the exhibition. hooks is a renowned feminist theorist, cultural critic and writer and in this text she refutes an understanding of love as simple romance and instead offers a proactive and radical new ethic for intimacy, care and community in the 21st century.

Salmon’s project in its entirety is a timely look at ideas of love in our society, at a moment when we are exposed to so many images of violence, trauma and hate in the world around us. *Hole* offers up a space apart from all of this: creating nurturing, positive representations of human beings together.

GLOSSARY

16mm film is a type of analogue film stock introduced by Eastman Kodak in 1923. Although suitable for cinema presentation, it was also suitable for home viewing and was aimed at amateur filmmakers. Due to its versatility and affordability it increased in popularity and for much of the 20th century was used to produce a wide range of films from home movies, educational films and tv documentaries through to experimental and low-budget film works.

Cinema Vérité was a French film movement in the 1960s. This movement forced the film industry to pay more attention towards incorporating natural actions and authentic dialogue into film works, showing people's day to day lives and capturing real lived experiences and truths in the world at large.

Avant-garde is originally a French term, meaning in English vanguard or advance guard (the part of an army that goes forward ahead of the rest). Although the term was originally applied to innovative approaches to art making in the 19th and early 20th centuries, it is applicable to all art that pushes the boundaries of ideas and creativity, and is still used today to describe art that is radical or reflects originality of vision.

Realist film has designated two distinct modes of filmmaking and two approaches to cinematic imagery. In the first instance, cinematic realism refers to the believability of a film's characters and events. This realism is most evident in classical Hollywood cinema. The second instance of cinematic realism takes as its starting point the camera's mechanical reproduction of reality, and often ends up challenging the rules of Hollywood movie making.

The Female Gaze is a feminist film theoretical term representing the view of a female viewer. It is a response to feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey's term 'the male gaze', which represents not only the gaze of the male viewer but also the gaze of the male character and the male creator of a film. In contemporary usage, the female gaze has been used to refer to the perspective a female filmmaker brings to a film that would be different from a male view of the subject.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Margaret Salmon (b. 1975, New York) lives and works in Glasgow. She completed undergraduate studies at the School of Visual Arts, New York (1998), before going on to graduate from the MFA programme at the Royal College of Art, London (2003). Solo exhibitions of her work have been held at institutions including Staatsgalerie Stuttgart (2015); Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, USA (2011); Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam (2007); Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2007) and Collective Gallery, Edinburgh (2006). Her work has been featured in film festivals and major international survey exhibitions, including the Berlin Biennale (2010) and Venice Biennale (2007). In 2006 Salmon won the inaugural MaxMara Art Prize for Women. She is represented by Office Baroque, Brussels.

INFORMATION SPACE

Visit the Information Space next to the galleries to learn more about the exhibition. Here you'll find a video interview with Salmon, alongside a selection of books selected by the artist in relation to her practice by Alain Badiou, Anna Halprin, bell hooks, Krishnamurti, Audre Lorde and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

GALLERY 2 – LORNA MACINTYRE: PIECES OF YOU ARE HERE

Alongside *Hole*, we are showing the premiere of Scottish artist Lorna Macintyre's *Pieces of You Are Here* in Gallery 2.

TALKS AND EVENTS

For more information visit
www.dca.org.uk

Meet the Artists

Fri 7 December, 18:00 – 19:00
Gallery 2

Join Eoin Dara, Head of Exhibitions, for a conversation with both Lorna Macintyre and Margaret Salmon about their respective artistic practices and new work for our galleries at DCA.

Exhibition Tours

Daily at 11:00 and 15:00
Gallery 2 Entrance
Free, drop-in

Interested in knowing more about the exhibition? Join our friendly Visitor Assistants for daily guided tours.

In the Evening There is Feeling: Reading bell hooks

Mon 14 January, 18:00 – 19:30
Create Space
Free, but booking essential.

In the Evening There is Feeling is DCA's exhibitions reading group. It takes its name from Gertrude Stein's 1914 book *Tender Buttons* and focuses, in an informal and welcoming way, on feminist and/or queer texts within art and literature.

This session, set alongside Salmon's beautiful exploration of contemporary love and desire in Gallery 1, will introduce and discuss some of the ideas contained within bell hooks' remarkable work *All About Love*. First published in 2000, *All About Love* is hooks at her most provocative and

intensely personal. Throughout this book the acclaimed intellectual, feminist theorist, cultural critic and writer skewers our view of love as romance. In its place, she offers a proactive new ethic for a people and a society bereft with lovelessness.

Digital copies of selected texts will be sent out to participants.

The Loving Eye: A SUPERLUX Workshop with Margaret Salmon

Sat 19 January, 14:00 – 17:00
Meeting Room
Free for SUPERLUX members,
booking via Eventbrite link on website

Join Salmon for this workshop on an erotic or emotive approach to filmmaking, proposing the erotic gaze as a means to invoke intimate representations within poetic film practice.

One Shot Valentine Portraits with Margaret Salmon

Thu 14 February, 18:00 – 19:00
Create Space
Free, but please book in advance

On Valentine's Day, drop into DCA between 18:00 and 19:00 to have an analog portrait taken by Margaret Salmon. These portraits are intended to interpret and celebrate love in all its forms, so bring lovers, friends and family with you, or simply come as you are and celebrate yourself. Salmon will take one frame on a roll of 35mm film for each sitter/couple/group. The images will then be available as scans sent to each sitter via email. Spaces will be limited so please be sure to book in advance.

Senior Citizen Kane Gallery Tour and Workshop

Tue 19 February, 10:30 – 12:30

Gallery 2 and Create Space

Free, no need to book, just meet us at DCA Reception to start

Aged 60+? Join Senior Citizen Kane Gallery Tour and Workshop. We will explore the exhibition with one of our friendly Visitor Assistants, then there's the chance to take part in a creative workshop making work inspired by the exhibition. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be on hand to fuel your creativity and chat.

During this tour and workshop we will look at sensory art in relation to Salmon's work.

Curator's Tour

Wed 20 February, 18:00 – 19:00

Galleries

Free, but please book in advance

On the last week of both exhibitions, join our Head of Exhibitions Eoin Dara for a guided tour through the gallery spaces. Dara will discuss the development of these new works by Macintyre and Salmon for DCA's galleries.

Echo + Cicely Farrer

Thu 21 February, 18:00 – 20:00

Galleries

Free, but booking essential

Echo is an evening event of multidisciplinary presentations in response to Macintyre and Salmon's exhibitions, with invited guest Cicely Farrer.

A longstanding part of the exhibition programme at DCA, Echo is designed to throw new light on the works displayed in our galleries by inviting other artistic voices into the building to respond to each show.

As part of this instalment, we have invited writer and curator Cicely Farrer to respond to our current exhibitions. Farrer is currently experimenting in script-writing using recollections and re-imaginings of dialogues from previous art projects. Using these techniques, she will write and perform new work especially for Echo.

In advance of this response, there will be opportunities for other voices to present ideas. In past events, participants have presented a wide variety of new and existing works that they have made in response to, or think is relevant to, the work/themes in our exhibitions. These have included drawings, sculptures, short films, poetry, text readings, dance, music, and performance. If you would like to share your creative response to the work on show, please submit a short proposal (no more than 300 words) to exhibitions@dca.org.uk by Mon 4 February 2019.

ARTIST'S FILM SCREENING

Shore: How We See the Sea

Wed 23 January, 18:00 – 20:30
Cinema 2

Shore: How We See the Sea is a project curated by Invisible Dust aimed at raising a wider national awareness around the challenges of caring for our natural resources.

Shore brings filmmakers, curators and marine scientists together across Scotland to inspire, explore and share coastal communities' responses to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Invisible Dust has commissioned two new works from Margaret Salmon and Ed Webb-Ingall, shot on the west coast of Scotland.

Directed by Margaret Salmon and shot on 35mm, *Cladach* is an observational portrait of a place: the shoreline of the Wester Ross MPA, and the community bordering it in Ullapool. Following the shoreline as a point of meeting between worlds, Salmon seeks to connect nature and society mirroring the coastal town activities with underwater footage and lyrical sound recordings from above and below the water.

I walk there every day but never saw it that way, directed by Ed Webb-Ingall is a 'Fogo process' inspired community film that seeks to understand the role and impact of MPAs for those people who live near them and work with them.

FOR YOUNGER VISITORS AND FAMILIES

Family Art Lab: Art for the Senses

Sat 23 February, 13:00 – 15:00

Create Space

Suitable for ages 5+. An adult must accompany children at all times.
Free, drop in activity

Join our artists in Create Space for Art for the Senses: sight, sound, smell and touch inspired by artist, Margaret Salmon.

We'll chat about how the senses are used in art and then make art together! Bring an image or an object that means something to you from the past, and we will have artists on hand to support your making.

Please note that while the content of Margaret's exhibition may not be suitable for all younger viewers, this workshop draws on themes and ideas from the artist's practice. It does not explore the exhibition content or require attendees to have seen it, and is therefore suitable for anyone aged 5+.

The session lasts two hours but you don't have to stay the whole time.

Art Cart

Sat 8 December, Sat 12 January,
Sat 2 February, 13.00 – 15.00
Ground floor
An adult must accompany children at
all times.
Free, drop in.

Fun for all ages, Art Cart offers
creative ways of connecting with
themes in our exhibitions and
contemporary art ideas. Join our Art
Cart artist to make Festive and
seasonal crafts in December and to
explore drawing and make a memory
badge for the New Year.

Create Space

Open daily unless being used for a
workshop – *do phone ahead to check
if you are making a special trip.*
Free, drop in.

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

DCA Create Space is a wee gem; a
comfortable and imaginative space
right next to the gallery designed for
younger visitors and family groups to
pop in and enjoy on a visit. You can
have a go at DIY art activities, browse
our excellent children's art library and
make connections with the artists'
work in the exhibition. Take your
artwork home, leave it on display or
photograph and share it online using
#hellodca or #dcamakes – we love
seeing what you've made!

JUST ASK

Our friendly Visitor Assistants are
always happy to help with your
questions.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Keep up to date with the very latest
from DCA by visiting **www.dca.org.uk**
or by following us on Facebook,
Twitter or Instagram. Tweet us your
thoughts on the exhibition using
#helloDCA.

**Interested to know what's coming
up in DCA Galleries? Pick up one
of our Exhibitions brochures to find
out what's happening in our future
programme.**

UPCOMING EXHIBITION

David Austen

Underworld

Sat 23 March – Sun 9 June 2019

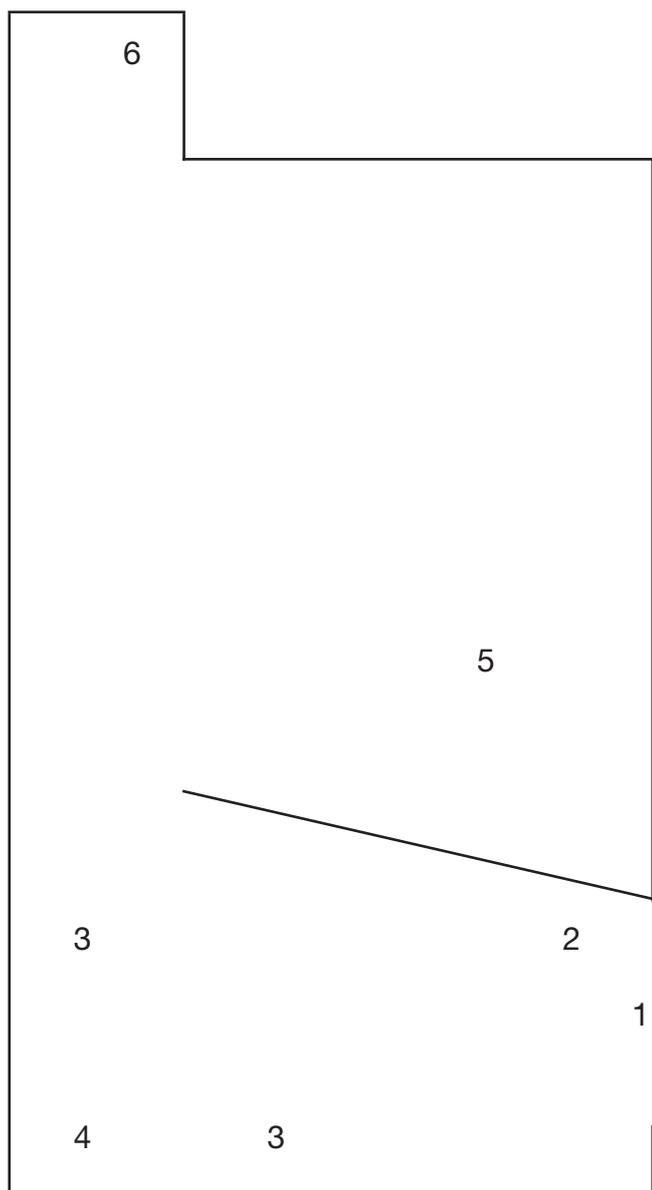
This exhibition will offer up a new constellation of work by British artist David Austen.

Since the 1980s Austen has worked as a painter, sculptor, printmaker and filmmaker. The stylistically diverse elements of his work come together to reveal an often dark yet endearing vision of the world. The artworks in this exhibition, from oil paintings on heavy flex canvas and delicate watercolour works on paper to suspended sculptural objects and cinematic film projects, create an otherworldly space inhabited by Austen's strange and lovelorn characters.

With sources as varied as 19th century literature, poetry, ancient myth and film noir, the impetus of Austen's work often derives from his immediate surroundings. There is a liveliness and generosity in his approach to art-making, a delicacy of touch, a delight in the unexpected, and a disarmingly nuanced understanding of complex human emotions.

Underworld seeks to create a mythical space for viewers to journey through, punctuated by the artist's poetic musings on the known world, the imagined world, the bright celestial heights above us and the shadowy, unknowable depths below.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION



1. *Hole*, 2018

Shattered plaster, doorway

2. *Woman and Bird (Miró)*, 2018

Black and white poster

3. *Your body, so warm*, 2018

Electric heaters

4. *I you me we us*, 2018

16mm film on 2 monitors

16 minutes, looped

5. *Two*, 2018 onwards

16mm film

27 minutes, looped

6. *Your breath, so close*, 2018

Sound

29 minutes, looped