

(in)commensurable

School maths classes work at the level of “taking problems literally”, fixing meanings and binding them in time, specifically to avoid the recurrence of the Real, the ambiguous, the messy space of living. The desire to solve or dissolve the problem without allowing a space for play involves shutting down the space to think mathematically, to struggle with the ambiguities of the Real, to have patience and courage, and to know as a mathematician that no problem is ever more than provisionally solved. - Susan Gerofsky, Mathematics Pedagogy, University of British Columbia

The image of mathematics as a closed, impenetrable place is first born in our school experience of completing many exercises that have particular answers, a repetitive, intimidating experience in which a series of answers are either wrong, a failing, or right, an end to the exploration. In a sense, this experience fails us; mathematics is one of the most mysterious constructions that our species has created, not least for its remarkable effectiveness in facilitating our interactions with our environment through physics, probabilistic models and the new technologies now transforming it.

The contemporary world of mathematics is unbelievably complex, so much so that very few people will fully understand the work completed at the cutting edge of a particular specialism, and yet we assign to it a value that must have more to do with its cognitive excellence than its practical use. It's given us incredible concepts such as irrational numbers, imaginary numbers and fuzzy logic, and prompted more than one revolution in the way that we philosophise about our world.

Each of the five artists has a dramatically different relationship with mathematics. Karl M. V. Waugh is the only trained mathematician, but here the mathematics defines a long-form piece of ambient sound that will play for 56 years, but only in a virtual realm; the app allows you to drop into it along the way. Certain Cicada species have prime number of gestation years to avoid collision with others, and here the prime numbers up to 23 are combined as the lengths of various samples, manipulated systematically over time.

Sequences and systems crop up in different forms in many of Jon Adams' artistic outputs. Here he's presenting a sound piece from fMRI machine noise alongside his visual work, and the private view sees Jon giving a short talk about his relationship with numbers; he experiences a form of personification synaesthesia in which numbers are known to him as friends. Rather than characters, James W. Hedges becomes familiar with mathematical forms as spatial realms, imagining impossible spaces that exist not in physical reality but the topology of mathematical functions.

The notion of proof is the subject of Rebecca E. Davies' sound piece, two agents in dialogue attempting to 'prove' the superiority of their particular personal taste, generating their own purpose-built notations as they go. In contrast, Katie McCallum's sculptural work is a diagram of an experience of reading familiar notation, expressions readily slotting in to expected forms so that the relevant features become prominent and manifest.

Our hope with this exhibition is to propose alternative viewpoints from which to survey mathematics, viewing it not necessarily through the prism of 'truth' and correct answers, but perhaps instead as a fantastical construction filled with aphorisms and beautiful abstractions.

Please contact katiemccallum@live.co.uk for images and further information
10th-12th December at Gallery 40, 40 Gloucester Rd, North Laine, Brighton

Opening event on the 11th December, 5pm-8pm

incommensurable.org

Jon Adams works cross platform referencing his synaesthesia/aspergers, weaving in fragments of autobiography, science and hidden metaphor. The result is a unique visual perspective of recording and systemizing history, time and place.

After leaving University, having studied Geology, working as a book Illustrator his attention to detail/skill as a draftsman earned him a reputation for quality work. Combining these abilities has led to diverse projects, digital maps of train conversations, daily noting of his engagement with the Cultural Olympiad as a 'geological map', Leverhulme and Wellcome trust awards have seen him creating soundscapes from Supernovae with The institute of Cosmology & Gravitation and from 'fMRI machines' with Professor Simon Baron Cohen. His London 2012 national arts engagement project, 'Dysarticulate' won Inspire marks resulting in thousands of paper flags planted for Open Weekends and Torch Relay. He was also sought to actively support International director Sir Peter Brook with autobiographical research for the play 'The Valley of Astonishment' premiering in Paris 2014. Most recently Democracy Street, a Speakers Art Fund commission and performing his own work 'Games with the water Horse' at Venice Biennale 2015.

Jon is also an autism access consultant. He has worked with high profile museums and galleries, including The Natural History Museum's Darwin Centre and the Imperial War Museum's First World War Galleries. He actively feeds into Arts policy and debate around neuro-diversity and digital inclusivity.

<http://m.soundcloud.com/fieldoffragments>

http://www.artspace.co.uk/artist.php?artist=71&page_id=21

<http://vimeo.com/m/75207361>

Rebecca E Davies is an artist working in the UK with sound and performance. She graduated from University of Brighton with a BA in Digital Music and Sound Art, and an MA in Sound Art from London College of Communication.

Recent work was presented at ICA London ([Re-materialising Feminism [italix]]) and [Sound::Gender::Feminism::Activism [italix]] conference, London.

She performed and released work with Christian Marclay and Thurston Moore at White Cube Gallery, and David Toop and Rie Nakajima as part of [Sculpture [italix]] at Hepworth Gallery.

rebeccaedavies.com

James W. Hedges studied painting at the University Of Brighton. He lives and works in Hong Kong. He is the co-editor of *living in the future*, a journal about science fiction and art.

jameswhedges.com

Katie McCallum is engaged in a research project using sculpture to explore the role of physicality in mathematics communication. She 's been looking at discourse in mathematics from the perspective of an artist explorer, examining metaphorical language and gesture to learn something about the experience of doing mathematics. Working as an outsider fascinated by mathematics, she uses observation of interactions between experts in a field to overcome the language barrier and open up some of the strange wonder of mathematics to a new audience.

infiltratemathematics.wordpress.com/

katiemccallum.net

Karl M V Waugh is a multi-media artist from Brighton, working primarily with sound but also with film, poetry, and software with interests in drone and noise, abstract colour and motion, generative processes and destructively manipulating source material. He has a PhD in Mathematics and works as a software engineer.

Recent works have appeared at Supernormal Art Festival, Brighton Fringe Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, London Poetry Festival and Usurp Zone 5 Film Festival. He performs with groups Binnsclagg, The Zero Map, Chemical Bbrench, Plurals as well as under his own name.

karlmvwaugh.wordpress.com