

Mike Stubbs' internationally commissioned artwork encompasses film, video, mixed media installations, performance and curation.

Most recent productions includes a short dance film, Resistor (2000, BBC 2 / Arts Council) River, an installation presented at York City Screen, Donut (Channel 4, 2001), installation version formed the inaugural show for The Image Gallery in Bedford and recently shown at the Moving Image Centre, Auckland, and now at the CCA, Glasgow. A single screen version was transmitted by Channel 4 December 2001. Zero (Arts Catalyst 2001), completed recently is a film made using material shot during a parabolic flight at the Yuri Gagarin Training Centre, Moscow, with Gina Czarnecki, Netotchka Nezvanova and Kevin Henderson and Gerald Mair.

He has won more than a dozen major international awards including first prizes at Oberhausen & Graz (Homing YA/BFI 1995), Osnabruk (Gift, BBC2/Arts Council 1996) and a Golden Artronic at Locarno (Sweatlodge, 1992). In 1999 was invited to present a video retrospective at the Tate Gallery, London. Other award winning films include Man Act (BBC2/Arts Council 1995) and Contortions (Welsh Arts Council 1984). Video installations include Desert Island Dread (Video Positive 1989), Prontawipe (Projects UK/The Royal Festival Hall, 1991) and Bedtime Stories (Manchester City Art Gallery 1992)

Trained at Cardiff Art College and the Royal College of Art, Mike Stubbs is currently Senior Research Resident at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art (Dundee). Prior to this, his work at Hull Time Based Arts won him recognition as a primary promoter of new media. During his Directorship, he set up Time Base and developed Centre for Time Based Arts, (Hull's New Media Centre), AVIDLAB (a digital media lab) and EMARE (European Media Arts Residency Exchange). He also established strong collaborative links with prestigious European Art Organisations and launched the Root Festival and more recently in Scotland established the Burning Bush Festival.

Mike Stubbs was co-founder with Roland Denning of Metamedia, a Soho-based Production Company specialising in art and music. Highlights as a producer include commissioning the award-winning interactive installation Systems Maintenance for Perry Hoberman, regular commissioning for Granular Synthesis (featured at the 01 Venice Biennale and the curation of new media programmes for the Kiev International Media Art Festival in the Ukraine and the Microwave Festival in Hong Kong.

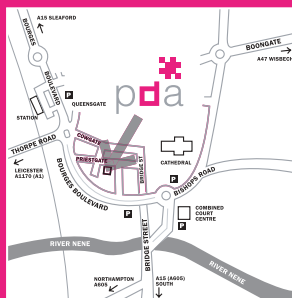
As a consultant, Mike Stubbs has worked with the Royal Academy of Arts, London and the Site Gallery, Sheffield. He is also an advisor to the Arts Council of England and NESTA. Recently he curated Freefall for Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery and was Programme Advisor to Burning Bush Festival. Currently he is working up new ideas towards artworks, City Strapline Industries for exhibition at the Baltic in Newcastle early next year and is about to take up post as Curatorial Manager for ACMI (the Australian Centre for Moving Image).



Curator: Giles Askham
Edit: Peter Jones
Sponsors: QED

Thanks to: Paul Wigfield, Tom Cullen, Tony Cook, all at RAF Wittering.

Graham Scrivens at Woolworths Peterborough and Anita Freeman at Multi-York furniture. Gina and the kids for all their love and support, Maggie Warren, Claire Foti and all the staff at Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery and PDA.



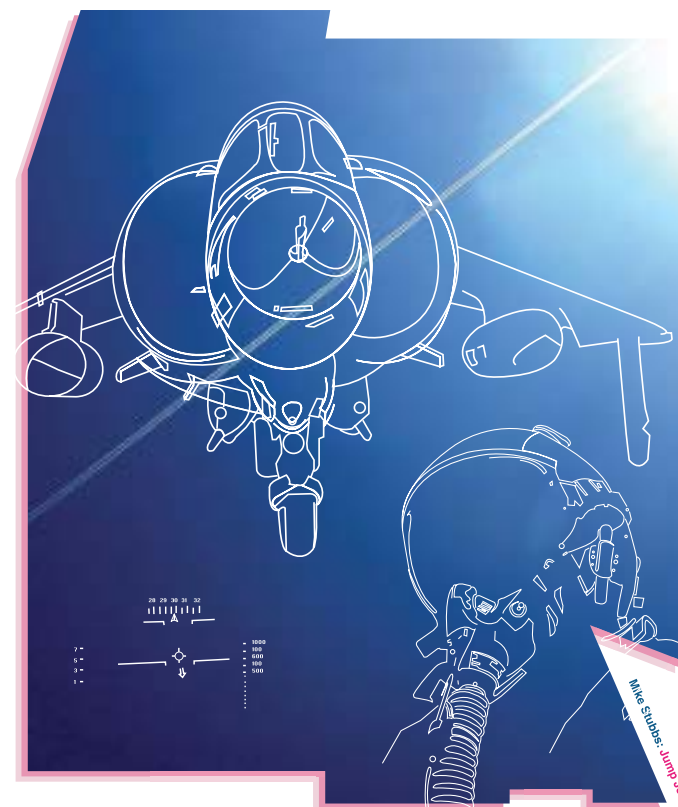
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Jump Jet



5th Sept - 16th Nov

**Peterborough Digital Arts -
Projecting in central Peterborough.**

Like its feathered namesake the Harrier Jump Jet was designed to hover in addition to fly.

Hovering is about controlling oppositional forces...

This is about some of those contradictions.

Introduction

Outside

A military jet hovers like a ghost over the city, a silent sentinel in the night sky, but what is it doing here in Peterborough? Is its mission to protect or to destroy? If it is protecting us, enveloping us in its tiny wingspan, then what do we shelter from? What if its mission is to raze this place, how do we survive?

Are we proud that we are able to create such a technical marvel, a machine, which seems to defy the force of gravity, or are we cowed into submission by its brutal superiority?

Inside

Dehumanised and emasculated by the pilots' helmet he struggles against the suffocating constriction, what is he saying? Misunderstandings at a cultural level lead to armed conflict, with the onset of war any meaningful communication is ended.

Modern armies claim to require people who can use their own initiative, to think on their feet, yet they still operate within traditional command and control structures. Which military organization is more effective, the battalion or the cell?

History

Peterborough has enjoyed a long relationship with the military, surrounded by air bases and until recently actually having an active base within the heart of the city.

RAF Wittering dates from 1916 and is home to historic and heroic squadrons of Spitfires, Hurricanes and during the cold war era, nuclear weapon carrying Canberra's. RAF Wittering is now 'the home of the Harrier' the worlds first vertical take off and landing (VTOL) aircraft, £25 million ground attack weapon that is 42 years old, yet which still sees active duty, as witnessed in the recent war in Iraq.

The aircraft itself is a bundle of contradictions, beautiful and deadly, a potent symbol of national pride and a tool of destruction. The sharply swept back wing and tailplane, and the large air intakes of the Pegasus engine make the Harrier very distinctive. The cockpit glazing is large and pronounced making it appear almost life-like.

Stubbs questions our relationship with the act of killing, removing us from the comfort of our armchairs... Hovering is about controlling opposing forces... this work seeks to construct a dialogue where previously there was little.

Giles Askham



JUMP JET

Artists Statement – *Mike Stubbs*

Encompassing film, video, installation and performance work, my artistic output has focussed on movement, independence, sexuality and power. Often adopting a documentary style, creating social observations in films such as 'River', 'Little England', 'Doughnut' and 'Homing'.

Combined with my work as an organiser and curator my practice is increasingly hybrid. At this point the relationships between those activities traditionally defined as producer or artist, making objects (be they made of fine particles of light or architectural space), with processes of social intervention and politics interests me most. The notion of network and infrastructure builder is appealing as is the term 'professional interferer'. Artists can play in that 'un-comfort zone' and as an 'arts professional' I have been afforded access to people, language and systems that have I hope, made real change happen: artistically, socially and economically.

Gaining permission (trust) to film at RAF Wittering is in itself part of the process of influence. Those in the military in turn negotiate a relationship with an artist working from both a celebratory and a critical position. I enjoy that contradiction. To then manifest the work through public projection and gallery installation is significant in bringing the image of the Harrier into the heart of the City, which has a long standing relationship to the aircraft.

I too have a personal link to the plane, having marvelled at vertical lift offs at air-shows throughout my childhood in Bedford, surrounded by airbases during the cold war. When I was younger, I had a fascination with power and speed, this now turns into an ambivalent attitude towards the masculine fetishisation of technology. In this instance the jump jet, an effective killing machine, beautiful in its innovative design, organic and curvaceous in its lines.

Further complexity then lies in attempts to reconcile issues of national security and economic gain in times of war. How do we feel about our own quality of life in a global environment? During the latest conflict in the Gulf I felt powerless in the face of mediated 'truths' and a hegemonic government apparently ignoring protest. Living in Scotland I heard the roar of planes from nearby Leuchars air base in the build up to war. This sound continues to ring in my ears.

