

PRESS RELEASE INFORMATION – For immediate release

Dave Griffiths:

Babel Fiche

10 Aug to 16 Sept 2012



Dave Griffiths, *Babel Fiche*, HD video, (film still), 2012

For its re-launch, Castlefield Gallery is pleased to announce *Babel Fiche*, an exhibition of new work by artist Dave Griffiths for its annual solo exhibition *Review*. With the world in considerable political, economic and cultural flux and turmoil, there has been recent evidence of a return to interests in socio-political themes in contemporary visual art and the 3 main exhibitions for 2012/13 have been programmed under the overarching annual theme of *World In Transition* referencing these issues as points of departure.

The *Babel Fiche* exhibition features two ambitious new works by Griffiths, *Deep Field [The Photographic Universe]* and the film *Babel Fiche*, developed from a Film and Video Umbrella commission and co-produced with Castlefield Gallery. For the past few years Griffiths' work has involved the use of 'cue-dots', microdots and microfiche, exploring a fascination with what was conceived of as 'redundant' technology with the advent of the digital era. These newly commissioned works further develop his interest in this area.

Invented in Manchester in the 1850's and used as microdots in Victorian slide arrangements and religious trinkets, microfiche has been a valuable medium in World Wars, the Cold War, mass storage, engineering and image archives. It can be seen as a forerunner to the Internet before becoming a redundant medium in the 1990's with the emergence of the digital PDF, but since 2006 has re-emerged, particularly after Hurricane Katrina devastated public and corporate digital archives. As an analogue medium capable of lasting 500 years and requiring only light and a lens to reveal its contents, its longevity and simplicity compares favourably to contemporary electronic storage, where knowledge is vulnerable to technological migration and environmental factors.

Griffiths' *Babel Fiche* film explores the human urge to collect, categorise and remix images through a critical questioning of the future of digital image archives. Video fragments from personal and public archives were collected and re-presented from the compressed contents as still frames printed on an edition of unique colour microfiche plates. Making sense of the excess imagery littered on the internet as well as in our personal hoards of photographic images and film footage, the project imagines how future generations may perceive the current times. In the making of the film Griffiths involved a number of collaborators, to broaden the scope of response to the archive content; Applied Ethics writer Stefan Skrimshire and poet Gaia Holmes as scriptwriters, musician Graham Massey producing the soundtrack, and artist and filmmaker Joe Duffy as editor.

Representing open sourced film footage, transposing it to redundant analogue media and launching it into a fictitious, post-digital future to be scrutinised by prospective generations of researchers, Griffiths alters our seismic understanding of time and history. He orchestrates a disjuncture between the actual, its documentation, consequential archiving and concepts of time-shifting, treating them as malleable components to be expanded, shifted and contracted, radically reappraising the production and consumption of culture. In Griffiths' film the analogue image archive re-emerges as an object of scrutiny

for a future generation of archaeologists, with a mise-en-scène of Manchester's cityscape shot at the top of the iconic Beetham Tower skyscraper.

Deep Field [The Photographic Universe] also involved an element of collaboration as Griffiths worked with an astrophysicist to sample a 10-degree field of view in the southerly sky, mapping far-flung galaxies within the specific spatial coordinates of Castlefield Gallery's unique double-height space. Web sourced from community databases, printed as microdots, and viewable through a telescope, the piece applies the logic of an infinitely navigable Internet to the social and cultural context of microfilm.

The Babel Fiche online project (www.babelfiche.net) is one of a series of web-based artworks commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella, and was supported by North West Film Archive. The Babel Fiche film is co-produced by Castlefield Gallery and Film and Video Umbrella. The Babel Fiche exhibition is organised in association with Bureau, and supported by MIRIAD, Manchester School of Art. Dave Griffiths is represented by Bureau, Manchester.

www.fvu.co.uk www.nwfa.mmu.ac.uk www.bureaugallery.com

Artist's Biography:

Dave Griffiths practice incorporates video, celluloid, animation, photography, installation, printmaking, writing and social media. He tends to combine the digital and analogue, often blurring distinctions between moving and still images, or dead and alive technologies. Recent work dwells on the cinematic archive, attempting to activate the critical potential of moving images for narrative and spatial recombination, or as channels for cultural memory and social participation. Through his notion of *Cinema 4.0* Griffiths explores future possibilities of moving images as unique mutations of material, site, and social productive relations. He aims to question the archival instinct, and think about our human urge to hoard and remix media fragments. A long-term project *Griffiths Cue-Dot Observatory* is a series of filmworks examining the archaeology of movie changeovers, which have shown internationally in festivals, galleries and on the web.

Selected recent exhibitions and projects include: *Crocodiles With a Second Skin Thrash*, over+out, Lincoln; SWITCH/OVER, Wimbledon Space, London (2012); *The Manchester Contemporary*, with Bureau; *Enter a Small Room Arranged for this Purpose*, Untitled Gallery / Project Space Leeds; *Sorry For the Inconvenience*, Project Space Leeds; *Outcasting: A Century of Artists Film*, Oriel Mwldan, Cardigan, Wales; *Tonight We Go A-Gleaning*, London Short Film Festival; *Reinterpreting the Gothic*, Big Muddy Film Festival, Illinois, USA (2011); *Seer's Catalogue*, Bureau, Manchester (solo); *Appropriate*, Animate Projects [online]; *video_dumbo*, Dumbo Arts Center, Brooklyn; *Idleness & Industry*, Bureau at Rotate, Contemporary Art Society, London; *Semana del Cine Experimental*, Madrid; 13th Antimatter Film Festival, Victoria Island, British Columbia, Canada; *The Artfiction Phenomenon*, ExTV – School of the Art Institute of Chicago; *Analogue is the New Digital*, Abandon Normal Devices, Manchester; *Lichtspiel*, Kassel Documentary Film Festival, Germany; *Sugary Photographs With Tricks, Poses & Effects*, Time To Meet, Antwerp; *Signes de Nuit International Film Festival*, Paris; and *InCounter*, HBC, Berlin (2010).

His 2010 his acclaimed film *Seer's Catalogue* was awarded the *Premio Pablo del Amo, for Best Editing* at Madrid Experimental Film Week and *Best Film* at the Swedenborg Society Short Film Festival, London. His work has been profiled in numerous DVD compilations, and publications such as *Art Monthly*, *Corridor8*, *The Guardian*, *Flash Art*, *Aesthetica* and *AN*. In 2010 he was co-curator of *UnSpooling – Artists & Cinema*, a major exhibition for UK festival Abandon Normal Devices at Cornerhouse, Manchester. Griffiths gained MA Media Art from Manchester Metropolitan University in 2004. From 1997-2000, he was a member of rock/performance collective Whitecube. Griffiths teaches at Manchester School of Art and is represented by Bureau. www.davegriffiths.info

Exhibition:	<i>Babel Fiche:</i>
Artist:	Dave Griffiths
Preview:	Thurs 9 Aug 2012, 6-8pm
Exhibition Dates:	10 Aug to 16 Sept 2012
Venue:	Castlefield Gallery, 2 Hewitt Street, Manchester, M15 4GB, (behind Deansgate train station)
Tel:	0161 832 8034
Web:	www.castlefieldgallery.co.uk
Opening Times:	Wed to Sun 1pm – 6pm
Admission:	FREE. The gallery is fully accessible

For further information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact: Clarissa Corfe, Curator clarissa@castlefieldgallery.co.uk or Jennifer Dean, Communications Coordinator jennifer@castlefieldgallery.co.uk.
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