



PRESS RELEASE – DRAFT

UPDATED: 15 August 2021

The Naming of Things

Curated by Bryony Dawson

ARTISTS: Sriwhana Spong / Charlie Godet Thomas / Jeanne Constantin / Sarah Tripp /
Jessica Higgins / Lydia Davies / Bryony Dawson

New exhibition dates: 1 September - 3 October 2021



Sriwhana Spong, castle-crystal (2019), video still. Image courtesy the artist and Michael Lett

If to *name* something is to attempt some ownership over it - some fixity or hold - to pinpoint some integral meaning or to assert a structure for experience - then it is destined to slip and miss, since the associated meaning of words is never identical between any two people.

Curated by Bryony Dawson, *The Naming of Things* explores the unfixed and mutable potential of language. Unhooked from the task to convey truth or objectivity, this slippery unreliability can instead be viewed as a generous invitation for fluid, speculative and plural perspectives.

The media of painting, sculpture, moving image and sound have a materiality, a tactile or spatial presence that language can only simulate. However, in this exhibition, it is precisely this immateriality that gives language the freedom to expand and mutate in virtual space - to construct imaginary architectures, give voices to intangible phenomena, and to inhabit multiple viewpoints at once. The selected artists use writing as a central tool within film, sculpture and sound works to explore topics including quantum physics, psychological space, and everyday encounters.

The exhibition welcomes the tensions between fixed identity and subjectivity as a way to interrogate the structures that name our experience. It invites inquiry into methods of knowledge production that are not reliant on fixed categories or objective structures. Instead, 'knowledge' might be conceived as a complex, woven and mutable network incorporating both acceptance of and resistance to these categories and structures that name us: a continuously shifting process of rethinking, rearranging, re-naming.

The Naming of Things was selected from proposals submitted by Castlefield Gallery Associates by guest selector, artist Ryan Gander OBE and Castlefield Gallery's Curator & Deputy Director, Matthew Pendergast.

Coinciding with *The Naming of Things* at Castlefield Gallery will be a presentation of *The Annotated Reader*; a publication-as-exhibition and exhibition-as-publication featuring creative personalities responding and remarking on a chosen piece of writing conceived by Ryan Gander and Jonathan P. Watts. Contemporary artists, designers, writers, institutional founders, musicians and more were invited to imagine they'd missed the last train. "Is there one piece of writing that you would want with you for company in the small hours?"

The impressive list of almost 300 contributors to the project include Marina Abramović, Rodney Graham, Saādane Afif, Holly Hendry, Cory Arcangel, Alistair Hudson, Rachel Ata, John Kaldor, Art & Language, Ragnar Kjartansson, David Batchelour, Sarah Lucas, John Bock, Jonathan Monk, Jim Broadbent, Alek O., Pavel Buchler, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Gregory Burke, Hannah Perry, Banu Ceenetoglu, Prem Sahib, Tony Chambers, Jerry Saltz, Paul Clinton, Rosemarie Trockel, Matt Darbyshire, Richard Wentworth, Richard Deacon, Shen Xin, Tom Godfrey, Bob and Roberta Smith, Sir Antony Gormley, and Nicholas Fox Weber.

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For further information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact: Jennifer Dean, Communications and Audience Development Coordinator at Castlefield Gallery, on jennifer@castlefieldgallery.co.uk / 07766046672

Notes to editors:

Bryony Dawson (b. 1996 / UK) is an artist, writer and curator who lives and works in Manchester. She graduated with a BA (Hons) Fine Art from Manchester School of Art in 2019. Her artistic practice incorporates moving image, sound, writing and installation. Her research is currently concerned with modes of (mis)translation between language, image and space, and the generative possibility of their slippages and failures. Selected from graduating students Dawson was awarded a Castlefield Gallery Mentee Award in 2019. She is a founding member of Soft Spot, an artist collective who curated a gallery space in the basement of PS Mirabel in Manchester. She is also an assistant curator at PINK, an exhibition and curatorial research space. Group exhibitions include: *Underground Manoeuvres*, Soft Spot (2020); *Picture Window*, Soft Spot Online (2020); *Manchester School of Art Degree Show* (2019); *Binary*, Partisan, Manchester (2019); *Manchester School of Art Fine Art Auction*, Holden Gallery, Manchester (2019); *Life Is Elsewhere*, The Old Bank, Manchester (2019); *Why Smash Atoms?* PS Mirabel, Manchester (2019); *A Christmas Show*, Grosvenor Gallery,

Manchester (2018). Curatorial projects include: *Underground Manoeuvres*, Soft Spot Online (2020); *Flat Instance*, Soft Spot (2020); *Picture Window*, Soft Spot Online (2020). *Pilot*, Soft Spot (2019); *Life Is Elsewhere*, The Old bank, Withington (2019).

At **Castlefield Gallery** (Est. 1984), we make new art possible. We are dedicated to the advancement of contemporary visual art. We are artist facing. We work with artists and creatives in Greater Manchester and beyond, at all career stages. We support them to develop their practice and careers, and to find ways not just to make art, but to make a living. We do this through: our gallery, and its free exhibitions and events that are open to all; through tailored career and practice development support; through our 200-strong artist Associates scheme; through the provision of low-cost studio and project space; through commissions and co-commissions; and through collaboration with universities, including annual graduate programmes that provide mentoring, coaching and more. For 35 years, we have supported young and older artists, new graduates right through to established artists, connecting them to each other, and to our international network of curators, arts organisations, artists and collectors. Castlefield Gallery's international work is focused on exchange between artists in the North West of England, and the rest of the world. We have an established track record in public art commissioning and public realm animation and activation. We are a female led organisation and a registered charity. Castlefield Gallery is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and Manchester City Council Cultural Partner. Our Artist Patron is the celebrated Ryan Gander, OBE.

Castlefield Gallery, 2 Hewitt Street, Manchester, M15 4GB

Admission is FREE

Visiting information including our covid-safe measures can be found [HERE](#)

castlefieldgallery.co.uk

info@castlefieldgallery.co.uk

Opening Times: Wed to Sun 12noon – 5.30pm

The gallery is fully wheelchair accessible, including provision of an accessible bathroom.

Special thanks to Castlefield Gallery Commissioning Patrons Allan & Jo Melzack.

***The Naming of Things* has been supported by Castlefield Gallery Commissioning Patrons Allan & Jo Melzack.**

Castlefield Gallery funders and supporters:



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