

Debra Welch: *All Things Are Yours*

Private view: Tuesday 30 April, 6-8.30pm
Exhibition continues: 1 – 31 May 2019



Film still taken from 'All Things Are Yours' 2019 © Debra Welch

Chelsea Space is pleased to present a solo show by artist **Debra Welch**. This exhibition focuses on the closure of her old school in Portsmouth, King Richard School, previously Paulsgrove Secondary Modern Boys & Girls School. Situated on a large post-war council estate in Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, it served families who lived there for over 60 years, becoming a central pillar to the local community. Welch sensed a melancholy around this closure and in 2016 began a process of communicating with the school, the community and the local authorities, recording a collective memory. This evolving research culminated in the artist documenting the building in its last days before demolition in 2018.

'**All Things Are Yours**' (a motto taken from one of the school's emblems) brings together new video, sculptural and photographic works made over the duration of this project, while Welch spent time between London and Portsmouth.

'The film was approached in a very methodical way, documenting each room one after the other, and returning later for the bits I thought I might have missed. I felt a considerable amount of pressure to collect as much as I could. The new school building was being built on the same grounds at the time of filming and I knew very soon the old would be gone. I've driven past the site since and the school has gone, the land on which it once lived totally grown over as if it was never there to start.'

The new video piece, made for this exhibition, captures the school at rest. While still open at the time of filming, Welch visited the building after school hours, taking the opportunity to document the remnants of the daily activities and the architectural elements that would hardly be noticed when in use. Close up shots capture the splashed paint that covers the stage floors, the mismatched pieces replaced on the sprung wooden floors and the windows being taken over by nature, a hint to the school's imminent closure. There is a passiveness to the school's existence and loyalty in its standing. Window shots offer the only hints of movement, which carries naturally through to other works in the show, including a dual screen video work filmed at both the artists home in London and her childhood home in Portsmouth whilst staying with her parents.

The exhibition is curated by **Gaia Giacomelli**. The **Reading Room**, organised in conjunction with students from the Chelsea College of Arts **MA Curating and Collections** includes archive material kindly loaned by the Portsmouth Museum and ex-students of King Richard School as well as a collection of publications from Uniformbooks, an independent imprint for the visual and literary arts, cultural geography and history, music and bibliographic studies.

Debra Welch (b. Portsmouth, lives and works in London) works within video, printmaking and sculpture. Video works often materialise from a long period of collecting footage and whilst the subject matter itself presents the initial grounding for the work, the filming starts from an observational perspective with no pre-conceived ideas of its capture, script or outcome. This freedom within the capturing of footage allows for accidental elements to present themselves, offering new perspectives within the editing for both visual and audio.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to staff and students at King Richard School, especially Gareth Hughes, Arlene Gajdus and Dave Nutland and to everyone that provided their personal stories and photos of their time at the school. Thanks to the Director of Chelsea Space, Donald Smith, for his continued support and encouragement, Aspex Gallery for the opportunity of a residency to finalise the work, Katy Ball and Portsmouth Museums & Library Services, Bethany and Sarah (Capturing the Spirit, Portsmouth City Council), Chris Woods, Maureen Kinchin, Syd & Phylis Rapson and Colin Sackett of Uniformbooks.

A public programme event for this exhibition is planned, details to be announced. Please check our website www.chelseaspace.org for information.

Ends

Publication: Each exhibition at Chelsea Space is accompanied by a publication, published by Chelsea Space, available here: <http://www.chelseaspace.org/publication.html> .

Press Information: For further information, images or to discuss interviews please contact: Gaia Giacomelli or Cherie Silver at Chelsea Space via email info@chelseaspace.org or tel:020 7514 6983

Notes to Editors

- **Images and further information** are available upon request.
- **About: Chelsea Space** is a public exhibiting space, sited on the Millbank campus of Chelsea College of Arts, where invited art and design professionals are encouraged to work on experimental curatorial projects. See: www.chelseaspace.org
- In copy please refer to **Chelsea Space** and not 'The Chelsea space.'
- **Gallery opening times:** Tues - Fri: 11:00 – 17:00 and by appointment.
- **Private view:** Tuesday 30 April 2019, 6-8:30pm
- **Admission Free**

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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chelsea Space

- **Chelsea College of Arts** is one of the world's leading art and design institutions.
- Located at Millbank, next door to Tate Britain, Chelsea specialises in Fine Art, Graphic Design and Interior and Textiles Design. Since its origins in the 19th century, the College has produced many of the greatest names in the arts, including: Quentin Blake (illustrator and author) Ralph Fiennes (film and stage actor), Anish Kapoor (sculptor), Steve McQueen (artist), Chris Ofili (artist), Alan Rickman (film and stage actor), Alexei Sayle (comedian) and Gavin Turk (sculptor).

Operating at the heart of the world's creative capital, **University of the Arts London** is a vibrant international centre for innovative teaching and research in arts, design, fashion, communication and the performing arts. The University is made up of six Colleges: Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design, Chelsea College of Arts, London College of Communication, London College of Fashion and Wimbledon College of Art. Renowned names in the cultural and creative sectors produced by the University include 12 Turner prize winners and over half of all nominees, 10 out of 17 fashion designers named British Designer of the Year, more than half of the designers showcased in London Fashion Week and 12 out of 30 winners of the Jerwood Photography Award.