

Shadders

11 artists connecting with Russell Hoban's novel *Riddley Walker*

An exhibition at Project 78, 78 Norman Rd, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN38 0EJ

Opening event: Saturday 18th January, 6.30 – 9pm

Closing event: A book discussion on Saturday 1st February at 3pm

Exhibition dates: 19th January to 1st February 2025

Gallery opening hours: Wednesday to Saturday 11.00 – 17.00

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Exhibiting artists: Andrew Ekins | Feral Practice | Jane Millar | Sara Trillo
| Sinéid Codd | Marianne Walker | Sarah Sparkes | Julia Ellen Lancaster | Peter
Hofer | Kim L Pace | Lex Shute

Curated by Jane Millar



Lex Shute



Marianne Walker

Shadders are the white nuclear shadows in the speculative future world of Russell Hoban's 1982 novel *Riddley Walker*.

Shadders, in the context of the work made by the artists coming together for this exhibition, are human traces of a forgotten event, representing a traumatic loss of environment, relationships, technologies and meaning. Buried memory and objects are disinterred to create new meanings, new translations, figures and mythology; a search for reconnection. This exhibition is not a direct interpretation of the book, but draws together artists whose work is connected with its place, mystery and materiality.

Featured works include film, painting, glass, sculpture, textiles, drawing, and ceramics.

Details of the artists work:

Andrew Ekins explores an imaginative topography of trash revealing the lustre and grime of the imprint we etch into the landscape we inhabit. He gives us a crumpled, puckered landscape of the influence of the carelessness human presence.

Feral Practice's film *Sum Tyms Bytin Sum Tyms Bit* draws resonance between themes of power, fragility and exploitation in Kent's landscapes, and the tangled forces at work in *Riddley Walker*. Alongside behemoths like Dungeness Power Station and Thanet Earth, the film lingers on the rare species and marginalized lifeworlds that tremble in their shadow.

Jane Millar's wall-based ceramics can be understood as a repurposing of remnants of objects and mythologies, taking place in a workshop with no instructions, unrecovered memories, and where narratives are created with an urgent desire for meaning.



Sara Trillo *Widders Dump* is a series of sculptures referencing the geological, archaeological, and mythological histories embedded within the Kent Downs landscape at Withersdane (Widders Dump).

Sinéid Codd derives her work from found objects that connect with themes of loss, longing and hope; her making process, through assemblage or sculpture becomes an act of transformative repair.

Marianne Walker makes three-dimensional drawings by hand in order to escape the rectangular page. Her works evidence her interest in animism and devotional sculpture as she seeks to give form to non-human avatars.

Kim L Pace's *Tree Spirits* series (2020–22) seem to occupy a world both ancient and futuristic, interweaving art history, folklore, and contemporary fiction to explore trees and forests as symbols of transformation and the dark, hidden depths of the subconscious.

Left: Kim L Pace

Lex Shute Using materials that have inherently transporting properties and ancient and futuristic resonances, the Ocular

Devices are a metaphor for the search for meaning. My practice explores the entanglement between trans-historical belief systems, cognitive archaeology and the mythic imagination, making reference to alternative societies, storytelling and Utopian narratives.

Sarah Sparkes Drawing as a process to excavate the unconscious, uncovering imagined pasts and futures.

Julia Ellen Lancaster Just as palaeontologists revisited long-held assumptions about fossilized tube structures to uncover profound evolutionary links between humans, sea stars, and worms, Hoban's post-apocalyptic narrative emphasizes, as does Lancaster's work, the fragility of knowledge over time. The fossil's reinterpretation reflects the novel's misinterpretation of history, where humanity struggles to piece together its origins and understand its place in the broader web of life.

Below left: Sara Trillo, right: Sarah Sparkes

Peter Hofer's works span a link to the central plot in *Riddley Walker* in which characters seek to recreate gunpowder, a destructive technology from the past, which is part blamed to have caused the end of the world.



