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FIONA BANNER

Born 1966 Merseyside
Lives and works in London

EDUCATION

1986-1989 BA Fine Art, Kingston Polytechnic, London, UK
1991-1993 MA Fine Art, Goldsmiths College, London, UK

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *Fiona Banner aka The Vanity Press*, Barbara Thumm Gallery, Independent Art Fair, New York, NY
- 2018 *Bouys Boys*, Mission Gallery, Swansea, Wales
- 2017 *Runway (AW17)*, Museum De Pont, Tilburg, Netherlands
- 2016 *Buoys Boys*, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill, UK
Au Coeur des Ténèbres, mfc-michele didier, Paris, France
Fiona Banner, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
Fiona Banner, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
Scroll Down And Keep Scrolling, Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Germany
Study #13. Every Word Unmade, Fiona Banner, David Roberts Art Foundation, London, UK
- 2015 *Scroll Down And Keep Scrolling*, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK
FONT, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
- 2014 *Wp Wp Wp*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, UK
Mistah Kurtz – He Not Dead, PEER, London, UK
- 2013 *The Vanity Press*, Summerhall, Edinburgh, UK
- 2012 *Unboxing: The Greatest Film Never Made*, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
- 2011 *Snoopy vs The Red Baron*, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
- 2010 *The Naked Ear*, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Harrier & Jaguar, Duveen Commission 2010, Tate Britain, London, UK
Tornado, Co-commission by Locus+ and Great North Run Culture, Newcastle, UK

- All the World's Fighter Planes*, Musée d'art de Joliette, Québec, Canada
- 2007 *Peace on Earth*, Tate Britain, London, UK
Every Word Unmade, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
The Bastard Word, Power Plant, Toronto, Canada
- 2006 *All the World's Fighter Planes*, Printed Matter, New York, NY
Nude & Parade, Tracy Williams Ltd., New York, NY
Nude, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Fiona Banner, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
- 2004 *Arsenal*, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
- 2003 *Fiona Banner*, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
Fiona Banner, Murray Guy, New York, NY
- 2002 *Fiona Banner*, Frith Street, London, UK
Your Plinth is my Lap, Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen, Germany
Your Plinth is my Lap, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee, Scotland
- 2001 *Fiona Banner*, Murray Guy, New York, NY
Areswoman in Wonderland, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
Rainbow, 24/7, Hayward Gallery, London, UK
- 2000 *Souixante-Neuf*, Charles H. Scott Gallery, Emily Carr Institute, Vancouver, Canada
Fiona Banner, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
- 1999 *Fiona Banner*, Murray Guy, New York, NY
Statements, Basel Art Fair, Switzerland
Asterisk, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen, Germany
Don't Look Back, Brooke Alexander, New York, NY
The Nam and Related Material, Printed Matter, New York, NY
Stop, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
- 1998 *Art Now*, Tate Britain, London, UK
The Nam, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
Love Double, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
- 1997 *The Nam: 1000 page all text flick book*, London, UK
Only the Lonely, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
- 1995 *Viewing Room*, Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York, NY
- 1994 *Pushing Back The Edge Of The Envelope*, City Racing, London, UK

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 *Night at the Museum*, Glynn Vivian, Swansea, Wales
Laugharne Weekender, Laugharne, Wales
Double Negative, Darling Green, ChaShaMa, New York, NY
- 2018 *After Babel*, annexM Visual Arts Centre, Megaraon, Athens, Greece
Condo, The Breeder, Athens, Greece
Edge of Visibility, International Print Center, New York, NY
Good Grief, Charlie Brown!, Somerset House, London, UK
The Everyday and Extraordinary, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, UK
How to See (What Isn't There), Langen Foundation, Dusseldorf, Germany
She sees the Shadows, Mostyn, Llandudno, Wales
DRAFx: An Evening of Performance, o2 Forum Kentish Town, London, UK
Face to Face, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, Ireland
Dialogues With A Collective, Laure Genillard, London, UK
Summer Breeze: An Ensemble of Prints, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Transcript, Charlie Smith, London, UK
Journeys with the Waste Land, Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK
Break in Transmission, The Holden Gallery Manchester School of Art, Manchester, UK
- 2017 *Zwanzig*, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
Age of Terror: Art Since 9/11, Imperial War Museum, London, UK
Fiona Banner & Peter Voss-Knude, Last Tango, Zurich, Switzerland
Outspoken, Falmouth Art Gallery, Cornwall, UK
A New Region of the World, Bunkier Sztuki's Gallery of Contemporary Art, Krakow, Poland
ISelf Collection: The End of Love, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK
Turkish Tulips, The Bowes Museum, County Durham, UK
Summer Breeze, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Sunset Decor, Marian Goodman Gallery, New York, NY
Words Words Words, Gallery Sofie Van de Velde, Antwerp, Belgium
A Map they could all understand (The Hunting of the Snark, Lewis Carroll, 1876), Galerie Albert Baronian, Brussels, Belgium
Cinéma Mon Amour. Film in Art, Aargauer Kunsthhaus, Aarau, Switzerland
Artist Spaces, Weserburg Museum of Modern Art, Bremen, Germany
Murray Guy, Murray Guy, New York, NY
- 2016 Diana Thater and Fiona Banner, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
NEON: The Charged Line, Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool, UK
Never Judge a Book..., Richard Booth's Bookshop, Hay-on-Wye, UK
Found, Foundling Museum, London, UK
...and yet one more world, Kunsthhaus Hamburg, Germany
- 2015 *Walkers: Hollywood Afterlives in Art and Artifact*, Museum of the Moving Image, New York, NY
Periodic Tales: The Art of the Elements, Compton Verney, Warwickshire, UK
Dora, Stanley Picker Gallery, London, UK
Station to Station: A 30 Day Happening, Barbican Centre, London, UK
Void: There's Nothing More Left, But A Little Trace From Human Beings, Ginkgo Space, Beijing, China

- Le Souffleur: Schürmann meets Ludwig*, Ludwig Forum for International Art, Aachen, Germany
Fiona Banner / Ann-Sofi Sidén, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
- 2014 *The Naked*s, De La Warr Pavillion, East Sussex
Stamp Out Photographie: Fiona Banner selects from the V-A-C Collection, Whitechapel Gallery, London
*The Naked*s, Drawing Room, London, UK
Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy, London, UK
Mirror, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Building Site, Hardwick Hall, Chesterfield, UK
Postscript: Writing after Conceptual Art, Broad Art Museum, East Lansing, MI
This Page Intentionally Left Blank, Akbank Art Center, Beyoglu, Istanbul
- 2013 *Knock Knock: Seven Artists in Hastings*, Jerwood Gallery, Hastings, UK
Words to be Spoken Aloud, Turner Contemporary, Margate, Kent, UK
Tracing the Century: Drawing as a Catalyst for Change, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, UK
Word.Image.Space, Gesellschaft fur Kunst und Gestaltung, Bonn, Germany
I Think It Rains Quadrilogy 2, Hong Kong, Burger Collection at Cattle Depot Artist Village, Hong Kong
Glasstress 2013, Palazzo Cavalli-Franchetti, Venice, Italy
Postscript: Writing after Conceptual Art, The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada
Viewfinder, Time Sheward Projects, London, UK
Exploding Utopia, Laure Genillard, London, UK
Invitation to a Beheading, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, USA
Signs and Messages II, Kate Macgarry, London, UK
Go! You Sure? Yeah., LUMA/Westbau, Zurich, Switzerland
The Dark World, Summerhall, Edinburgh, Scotland
- 2012 *Greetings from Los Angeles*, Starkwhite, Auckland, New Zealand
Tracing the Century: Drawing as a Catalyst for Change, Tate Liverpool, UK
Postscript, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, CO
HELP/LESS, Printed Matter, New York
Keywords and the Powers of Eloquence, Kunsthau Baselland, Basel, Switzerland
Graphology, The Drawing Room, London, UK; Art Exchange, University of Essex, Colchester
Text in Process, RH Gallery, New York, NY
So to Speak, BRIC Rotunda Gallery, New York, NY
Alice in Wonderland, Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Roverto, Italy; Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg
Neon, Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue? La Maison Rouge, Paris, France
La Petite Muerte, Drawers Gallery, London, UK
- 2011 *Alice in Wonderland*, Tate Liverpool, UK
Vis A Vis, Rossi Contemporary, Brussels, Belgium
Dance/Draw, ICA, Boston, MA
September 11, MoMA PS1, New York, NY
Friendship of The peoples, Simon Oldfield, London, UK
I Am Still Alive: Politics and Everyday Life in Contemporary Drawing, MoMA, New York, NY
God Made Me Hardcore, Proyectos/Sauna, Bogotá, Colombia
Women War Artists, Imperial War Museum, London, UK

- Everything in Time*, The Center for Book Arts, New York, NY
...avec Excoffon, IFF, Marseille, France
- 2010 *Everything in Time*, Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, NY
Fiona Banner, Marcus Becker, Diango Hernández, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
Let's Dance, Mac/Val, Paris, France
Musée Los Angeles, Musée Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA
DLA Pipe Series: This is Sculpture, Tate Liverpool, UK
Nothing is Forever, South London Gallery, London, UK
Behind the Green Door, Harris Lieberman, New York, NY
One Room, One Work, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
After the Volcano, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Sommerausstellung 2010, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
... But the Clouds ... History and what the Artists Think, The Musée de l'Appel de la liberté, Fontaine de Vaucluse, France
Emporte-Moi/Sweep me of my feet, Mac/Val, Paris, France
Echo... from the age that I was able to see it, Koraaleberg Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium
Peeping Tom, Vegas Gallery, London, UK
- 2009 *Session 7 Words*, Am Nuden Da, London, UK
Winter Light, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
Exquisite Trove, The New Art Gallery Walsall, UK
Punctuation Marks: Text and Language in Modern British Sculpture, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK
Send, Two Rooms Contemporary Art Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
Summer Show in April Weather, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
London Calling: Who Gets to Rule the World, Total Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, South Korea
Parades and Processions, Parasol Unit, London, UK
The Sculpture Show, V22, The Almond Building, London, UK
Inspired, Art Trust, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, Scotland
Diana and Actaeon: The Forbidden Glimpse of the Naked Body, Compton Verney, Warwick, UK
Just What Are They Saying, Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, New Orleans, LA
Mind The Step, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
- 2008 *Las Líneas de la Mano*, Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City, Mexico
Diana and Actaeon: The Forbidden Glimpse of the Naked Body, Museum Kunst Palast, Dusseldorf, Germany
More Than Words, Von Lintel Gallery, New York, NY
That Was Then... This Is Now, MOMA PS1, New York, NY
In the Society of London Ladies, a Dispari & Dispari Project, Reggio Emilia, Italy
Fiona Banner/Matt Mullican, Tracy Williams Ltd, The Armory Art Fair, New York, NY
Power, Foxy Production, New York, NY
Collection As Aleph, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Kunsthau Graz, Austria
In the Beginning, University Art Gallery at the University of California San Diego, CA
You Silently, University of Essex, Colchester, UK
2007 Neon, National Glass Centre, Sunderland, UK
Body Politicx, Witte de With, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
Signs and Messages from Modern Life, Kate MacGarry, London, UK
Presque Rien 1, Laure Genillard Gallery, London, UK

- Das Buch*, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, Germany
Global Feminisms, Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY (touring exhibition)
Live/Work: Performance into Drawing, MOMA, New York, NY
Deep Inspiration, Jerwood Space, London, UK
- 2006 *Collage Effect*, 1301PE, Los Angeles, CA
Eye on Europe: Prints, Books & Multiples, MOMA, New York, NY
This is not for You, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna, Austria
Resonance, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Concrete Language, Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver, Canada
I Walk the Lines, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
Summer Exhibition, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Tina B, National Gallery, Prague, the Czech Republic
Speed, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
- 2005 *Body: New Art from the UK*, British Council touring exhibition
All the World's Fighter Planes, Artspace NZ, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand
Post No Bills, White Columns, New York, NY
Bonds of Love, John Connelly Presents, New York, NY
Horror, Science Fiction, Porn, Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, Canada
Critics Choice, FACT, Liverpool, UK
Traces Everywhere, Tracy Williams Ltd., New York, NY
Romance, Cristina Guerra Contemporary Art, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2004 *Voor ik vergeet*, Museum Jan Cunen, Oss, Netherlands
Daddy Pop (The Search for Art Parents), Anne Faggionoato, London
Entropy: On the Vanishing Work, ar/ge Kunst Galerie Museum, Bolzano, Italy
Entropy: Sometimes Making Something Leads to Nothing, Museion, Bolzano, Italy
- 2003 *Artlab Espcial*, Mobile Home Gallery, London, UK
ATTACK-Art and War in Times of Media, Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, Austria
Mars: Art and War, Museum Johannaum, Graz, Austria
Independence, South London Gallery, London, UK
Off, Murray Guy, New York, NY
The Sky's The Limit, Kunstverein Langenhagen, Germany
The Book Show, The Nunnery, London, UK
Plunder: Culture as Material, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Scotland
- 2002 *Nothing*, Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, UK
Inconoclash: Beyond the Image, Zentrum für Kunst und neue Medien, Karlsruhe, Germany
Viva la Republique! Paga Images of the Last Queen of the British Isles by her Indigenous Subjects, The Centre of Attention, London, UK
Prophets of Boom, Sammlung Schürmann, Staatliches Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden, Germany
The Green Room, Percy Miller Gallery, London, UK
Here, There and Elsewhere: Dialogues on Location and Mobility, London Print Studio Gallery, UK
Remix: Contemporary Art and Pop, Tate Liverpool, UK
Turner Prize exhibition, Tate Britain, London, UK
Summer Exhibition, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK

- 2001 *City Racing*, ICA, London, UK
Featherweight, Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto, Canada
Superman in Bed: Contemporary Art and Photography, The Gaby and Wilhelm Schürmann Collection, Museum am Ostwald, Dortmund, Germany
Drawings, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
Definition, Murray Guy, New York, NY
Nothing: Exploring Invisibilities, Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art, Sunderland, UK; Rooseum, Malmö, Sweden; CAC, Vilnius, Lithuania
Fiona Banner, Munro Galloway, Corey McCorkle, Murray Guy, New York, NY
 Berlin Biennale, curated by Saskia Bos, Berlin, Germany
The Multiple Store, The New Art Centre Sculpture Park and Gallery, Roche Court, Wiltshire, UK
Dévoler, Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne, France
Tattoo Show, Modern Art, London, UK
Total Object, Complete with Missing Parts, curated by Andrew Renton, Tramway 2, Glasgow, Scotland
American Tableaux, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN
A Pause for Breath, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
 CAB Gallery, curated by Paul Stolper and Jason Brown, London, UK
- 2000 *All You Need is Love*, Laznia Center of Contemporary Art, Gdansk, Poland
Ever get the feeling you've been... Cheated, A22 Projects, London, UK
Eine Munition unter Anderen, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany
Customized: Hot Rods, Low Riders and American Car Culture, ICA Boston, MA
Summer Show, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
 Murray Guy, New York, NY
The Living End, Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, CO
To Infinity and Beyond: Editions for the Year 2000, Brooke Alexander, New York, NY
- 1999 *Double Love*, Art Centre Walsall, UK
To Be Continued, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK
Cinema, Cinema, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands
Afterall Launch, The Wallace Collection, London, UK
0 to 60 in 10 Years, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
From Memory, Platform, London, UK
Story, AC Project Room, New York, NY
Babel, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK
True Stories, Barbara Gross Galerie, Munich, Germany
Let's get Lost, Saint Martin's School of Art, London, UK
100 Drawings, PS1 New York, NY
- 1998 *Dimensions Variable*, Britisk samtidskonst, Stockholm, Sweden
The Tarantino Syndrome, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany
Point Break, Project for Tate Magazine, commissioned by Tate Gallery, Liverpool, UK
Super Freaks: Post Pop and the New Generation, Part 1, GreeneNaftali, New York, NY
Narrative Urge, Uppsala Konstmuseum, Uppsala, Sweden
Disrupting the Scene, Cambridge Dark Room, Cambridge, UK
5th Avenue Project at Saks, New York, NY
In the Beginning, Murray Guy, New York, NY
Wrapped, Vestsjaellands Kunstmuseum, Vestsjaelland, Denmark
Slipstream, Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, Scotland

- 1997 *Die Arbeit des Zeichnens*, Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst, Bremen, Germany
Urban Legends: London, Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany
Ground Control, Beaconsfield, London, UK
Blueprint, De Appel, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
MUUten, Museum of Photography, Helsinki, Finland
Whisper & Streak, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
An Exhibition of Art from Britain, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia
City Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
Need for Speed, Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria
Oktober, Norwich Gallery, Norwich, UK
20/20, Kingsgate Gallery, London, UK
The Mule, National Newspaper published once on October 31, 1997 with internet access, UK
The Nam: 1000 page all text flick book, Galerie Barbara Thumm, Berlin, Germany
Gasser & Grunert, Cologne, Germany
Légende, Centre Regional D'Art Contemporain, Sète, France
- 1996 MacDonalD Stewart Art Center, Toronto, Canada
Moby Dick, John Hansard Gallery, Southampton, UK
Spellbound: Art and Film, Hayward Gallery, London, UK
into the void, Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK
Mais do que ver, Moagens Harmonia, Festival of Contemporary Art, Oporto, Portugal
Young British Artists, Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sydney, Australia
Found Footage, Klemems Gasser & Tanja Grunert, Cologne, Germany
Backpacker, The Chiang Mai Social Installation, 4th Festival of Art and Culture, Chiang Mai, Thailand
- 1995 *Four Projects*, Frith Street Gallery, London, UK
SuperStore Boutique, Sarah Staton, San Francisco, CA
General Release: Young British Artists, Scuola di St. Pasquale, Venice Biennale, Italy
Moby Dick, Arsenali Medicei, Pisa, Italy
Perfect Speed, curated by Catsou Roberts, USF Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa, FL
- 1994 *New Contemporaries*, Camden Arts Centre, London, UK and UK tour
Drawings, Laure Genillard Gallery, London, UK
The Antidote, 191 Gallery, Hammersmith, London, UK
The Event, 152c Brick Lane, London, UK
SuperStore Boutique, Sarah Staton, London, UK
Group Show, Laure Genillard Gallery, London, UK
Institute of Cultural Anxiety, ICA London, UK
Art Unlimited, Arts Council Collection, UK tour

COMMISSIONS

- 2013 *A Room for London*, with David Kohn Architects. Artangel, Living Architecture and Southbank Centre, London
- 2010 The Duveen Galleries Commission, Tate Britain, London, UK
- 2003 Full Stop Sculptures at More London, near Tower Bridge, London, UK

SELECTED ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

- 2018 Schwarz, Gabrielle. "Frieze Week Highlights: latex, terracotta and a Camden catwalk." *Apollo*. October
- 2017 Rosenmeyer, Aoife. "Fiona Banner and Peter Voss-Knude: Last Tango, Zürich 7 October – 2 December." *ArtReview*. December
- 2016 Diehl, Travis. "Fiona Banner, 1301PE." *Artforum* March
"Inflatable art with an English Channel setting." *Hastings Observer*. September
Louise, Dany. "A Q&A with Fiona Banner." *AN Artists' Newsletter* October
Gvero, Virva. "Fiona Banner: Our Contemporary Heart of Darkness." *Happening* November
Fitzherbert, Teresa. "Suspended Sentence." *Harpers Bazaar*. November
- 2015 Karmali, Sarah. "Women in Art." *Harpers Bazaar* November
Searle, Adrian. "Porn on the Fourth of July: Fiona Banner Rewrites the Art of War." *The Guardian* 13 October
Durrant, Nancy. "Fiona Banner: She Put a Plane in Tate Britain, Now She's Flying." *The Times* 12 October
Le Brun, Lily. "War and Words: Fiona Banner Mines Hollywood." *Conflict and Language.* *Modern Painters* October
- 2014 Jones, Jonathan. "Chinooks away: Fiona Banner's terrifying homage to a helicopter." *The Guardian* 18 September
Soin, Himali Singh. "Wp Wp Wp." *Artforum* Fall
Coomer, Martin. "Mistah Kurtz - He Not Dead." *Time Out* June
- 2013 Pollack, David. "Art of Darkness." *The List* Issue 714.
- 2012 Wood, Michael. "Over the Edge: Michael Wood on Fiona Banner's *Heart of Darkness*." *Artforum* Summer 2012: 81-82.
- 2010 Barnett, Laura. "Fight and Flight." *The Guardian*. 22 June.
Bickers, Patricia. "Tooth and Claw." *Art Monthly*. July.
Buck, Louisa. "Text Messages." *Art Quarterly*. Summer.
Dye, Natalie. "A Way with Words." *Kingston Review*. Spring/Summer.
Herbert, Martin. "Fighting Talk." *Tate Etc Magazine* issue 19. Summer.
Hickey, Dave. "Mother of Beauty." *Tate Publishing*
Muñoz-Alonso, Lorena. "Fiona Banner: Harrier and Jaguar." *This is Tomorrow*. 10 August
Searle, Adrian. "Fiona Banner's Toys for Boys are a Turn-On at Tate Britain." *The Guardian*. 28 June
- 2009 Banner, Fiona. "Art Stripped Bare – Fiona Banner on the Nude." *The Guardian* 8 April
Hutchinson, Jack. "Peep Show." *Twin* November
- 2008 Lack, Hannah. "Fiona Banner Delves into The Oxford English Dictionary." *Another Magazine* June
Lewis, Angharad. "Special Report." *Grafik* March
- 2007 Johnson, Ashley. "Fiona Banner, The Power Plant." *Canadian Art* Summer. p 90-91.

- Rabinowitz, Cay Sophie. "Work-In-Progress." *The Bastard Word: Fiona Banner*. Toronto: The Power Plant.
- Roberts, Rebecca. *MoMA, Highlights since 1980: 250 Works from the Museum of Modern Art*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- 2006 Coomer, Martin. "Fiona Banner." *Time Out*. 24 May. p 41.
 "Fiona Banner: NUDE/PARADE." *Wallpaper*. May.
 "Five Best Exhibitions, Fiona Banner." *The Independent*. June.
 Lack, Jessica. "Fiona Banner Preview." *Guardian Guide*. April.
 Mendelsohn, Adam. "Fiona Banner." *Time Out New York*. April.
 Princethal, Nancy. "The Body of the Text." *Art in America* no. 6 June-July. p 178-181.
 Ribas, Joao. "The AI Interview: Fiona Banner." *ARTINFO.COM*. March.
 Smith, Roberta. "Fiona Banner – Nude." *The New York Times* 14 April. E32.
 Walsh, Maria. "Fiona Banner." *Art Monthly*. June.
- 2005 LaFuente, Pablo. "Portaiture Stripped Bare." *Art Review*. April.
- 2004 McKee, Francis. "Beyond Words." *Parkett*. no. 6
- 2003 "Artnotes." *Art Monthly*. November. p 10.
 Gray, Emma and Pablo Lafuente. "You haven't taught until you see..." *Art Review*. July-August. p 44, 51.
- 2002 Jansen, Gregor. "My Plinth is Your Lap, Ein Interview mit Fiona Banner anlässlich ihrer Ausstellung in Aachen." *Kunstbulletin*. April.
- 2001 Herchenröder, Christian. "Mainstream und Monotonie." *Handelsblatt*. 27 April. G2.
 Kazanjian, Dodie. "People are talking about – Art – The painted word – Fiona Banner's work takes up everything from pornography to punctuation." *Vogue*. January. p 113.
 Lledó, Elena. "Fiona Banner – Galerie Barbara Thumm." *Lapiz 175*. July.
 Searle, Adrian. "Empty Promise." *The Guardian*. 24 April. p 12-13.
- 2000 Archer, Michael. "Fiona Banner – Frith Street Gallery." *Artforum*. January. p 123-124.
 Buck, Lousia. "And they don't use dead animals." *The Observer*. 18 March. p 28-29.
 "Culture shop." *The Sunday Times Magazine*. 5 November.
 Exley, Roy. "Fiona Banner – Frith Street." *Flash Art*. March-April. p 117.
 Glover, Izi. "Fiona Banner – Frith Street." *Time Out*. 5-12 January. p 49.
 Greenstreet, Rosanna. "The Questionnaire – Fiona Banner." *The Guardian Weekend 2* September. p 70.
 Male, Andrew. "Do Look Back." *Mojo*. January. p 16.
 Princenthal, Nancy. "Prolix – Fiona Banner's word works." *Art on Paper*. May/June. p 40-45
 Sheffield, Emily. "This Year's Most Wanted." *Evening Standard*. 10 January.
- 1999 A., C. "Fiona Banner: Stop." *Metro*. 18 November. p 21.
 Banner, Fiona. "Precious Memories." *The Guardian*. 4 December. p 5.
 Buck, Louisa. "UK Artist Q&A – Fiona Banner." *The Art Newspaper*. December. p 67.
 Cruz, Juan. "Disrupting the Scene." *Contemporary Visual Arts*. issue 21. p 76.
 "Diary." *Private Eye*. 23 July. p 24.
 "Fiona Banner." *The New Yorker*. 29 March.
 Humphrey, David. "New York E-mail." *Art Issues*. no. 58 Summer. p 43.
 Johnson, Ken. "Fiona Banner – Murray Guy." *New York Times*. 26 March.

- Kino, Carol. "Fiona Banner at Murray Guy." *Art in America*. November. p 142.
 Maier, Anne. "Sophie Calle, Fiona Banner und Joseph Grigelyin der Galerie Gross." *Schweizer Kunst-Bulletin*. November. p 39.
 "Schriftbild." *Konrad* issue 12, December-January 1998-99.
- 1998 "Break Point." *The Art Magazine*. issue 14. Spring. p 59-64.
 Darwent, Charles. "These Little Dots have Lives of their Own." *The Independent on Sunday*. 23 August.
 Ellis, Michael. "Fiona Banner – Tate Gallery." *Art Monthly* issue 220 October. p 30-32.
 "Fiona Banner, The Nam." *Tate News Winter* 1997-98.
 Guha, Tania. "Fiona Banner – Tate." *Time Out*. 16-23 September.
 Müller, Ulrich. "Wortlandschaften, Text ohne Inhalt: Fiona Banner in der Galerie Barbara Thumm." *Zitty Kunst* 56. September.
 Nilsson, John Peter. "Uppsala Art Museum." *Art Press*. April-May. p 58-59.
 Shave, Stuart. "Word for Word." *I-D, The Adult Issue*. September. p 92.
 Staple, Polly. "Fiona Banner Talks to Polly Staple." *UNTITLED* no. 17. Autumn. p 4-6.
 Usherwood, Paul. "Martin – Waygood Gallery." *Art Monthly* issue 216 May. p 34-35.
 "Words of Art." *Times Metro* 29 August-4 September.
- 1997 Bury, Steven. "The Nam." *Art Monthly*. June. 1997. p 46.
 Collings, Matthew. "JUST A GLIMPSE of Meaning?" *Modern Painters*. Summer. p 69-71.
 Coomer, Martin. "Close Encounters." *Time Out* 28 May. p 47.
 Cruz, Juan. "Fiona Banner and Bridget Smith." *Art Monthly*. June. p 30-31.
 Feaver, William. "Are you going to take this sitting down?" *The Observer*. 18 May.
 Searle, Adrian. "Me, me, me, me." *The Guardian*. 22 April.
- 1996 Banner, Fiona. "A Brush with Genius." *The Guardian*. 27 May.
 Barrett, David. "Profile – Close Up." *Art Monthly* no. 194 March. p 20-21.
 Feaver, William. "Primal Screen." *The Observer*. 25 February.
 Kent, Sarah. "Reel to Real?" *Time Out*. 28 February.
 Mars-Jones, Adam. "Affairs of the Art." *The Independent*. 27 February.
 Sladen, Mark. "Moby Dick." *Art Monthly* no. 193. 29 February.
 Wilson, Andrew. "Spatialised Time, Unchecked Duration: Film and Video work by Contemporary British Artists." *Art & Design Magazine* no. 49. p 85-92.
- 1994 Dannatt, Adrian. "Exposure." *The Sunday Times Magazine*. 5 June.

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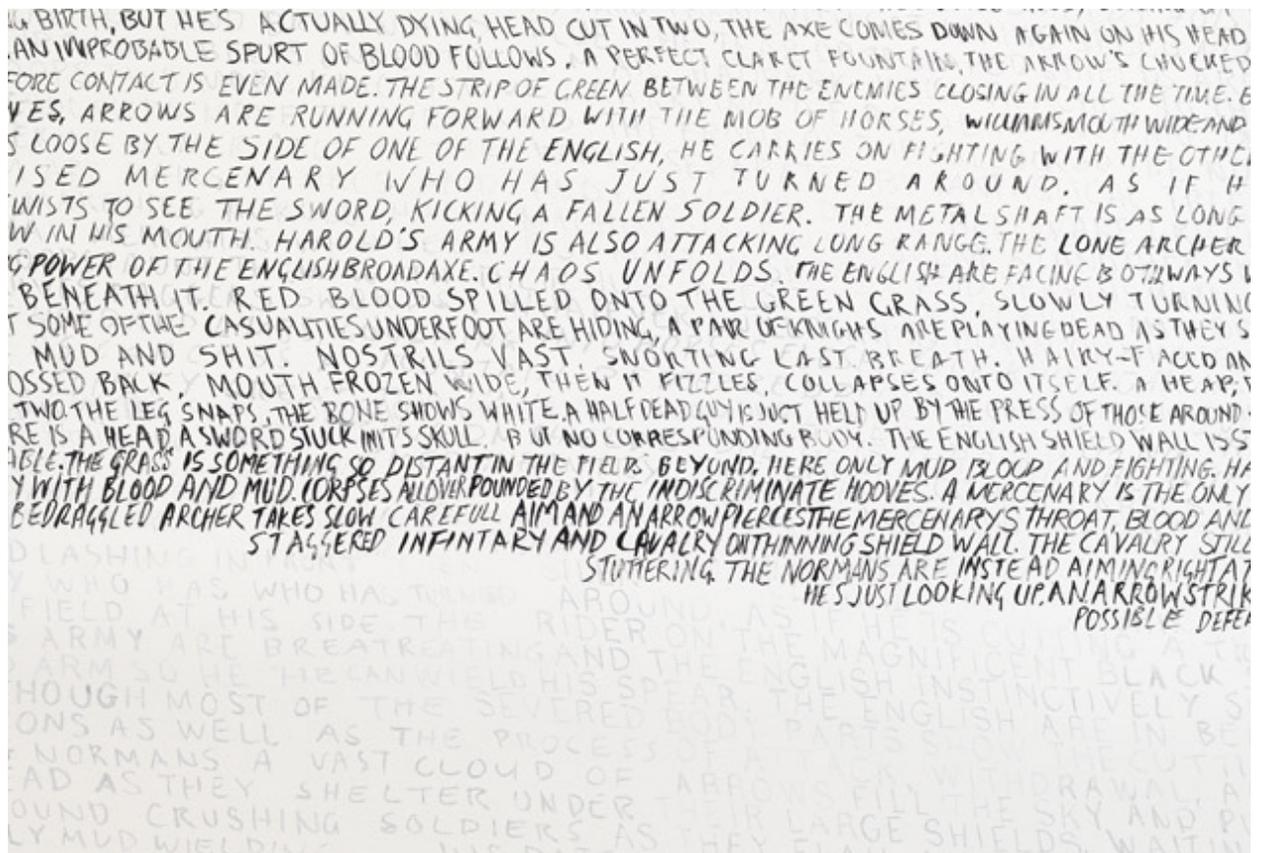
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Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven
Walker Art Gallery, Minneapolis, MN
Worcester Museum, MA

Fiona Banner, Frith Street Gallery, London

An index of military aircraft is a cenotaph, the Bayeaux Tapestry a brutal essay, in a muscular show about writing

[Reviewed by Charles Darwent](#)

Sunday 21 November 2010 01:00



Easily overlooked, the key to Fiona Banner's art is pasted up in a corner of her new show, *The Naked Ear*.

It is, or purports to be, the copy of a letter of reply from the artist to something called the Legal Deposit Office, concerning the registering of her work for an

ISBN. This in itself is odd, since Banner is an artist and ISBN stands for International Standard Book Number. But then the work in this space is all printed – Banner has a small publishing house, The Vanity Press, in her home town of Rye – and is printed with ISBNs.

These numbers are mostly on paper and in poster format, some portrait, some landscape, in a variety of fonts and sizes, on different-coloured backgrounds and in different layouts: some like eye-test charts, others the pedestrian word-walks of Richard Long. One poster is deckle-edged, another corrugated. Some are framed, most are not. In one memorable case, the ISBN has been carved in stone and propped against a wall. The point is variety. Each work is unique, with its own name – Chair, Sunburn, Poem Two – and yet all are the same, word-pictures or picture-words. They are collective testimony to man's need for order, for reading one assemblage of brushmarks as a nude and another as a bowl of fruit, three abstract squiggles as C-A-T and another three as D-O-G.

Banner's art has always concerned itself with systems, and this new work is no exception. In particular, it is about the separation of words and images. "Ut pictura poesis," said Horace – roughly, let writing and pictures be the same – and yet they are seen as different, in some way inimical to each other. Not so to Banner.

She has, in the past, blown up Times New Roman commas into waist-high bronze sculptures. Upstairs at her new show, a piece called 1066 re-enacts the Bayeux Tapestry in words: "The guy's down on the ground, arrow in the side of his face. Another takes one in the hand, cries like a beast as he pulls it out." Banner's mural both describes the Battle of Hastings and depicts it, one army of words overprinting the other. History, as Orwell said, is written by winners. Words may be pictorial, they may even be beautiful, but they can never be neutral.

You can see why ISBNs might intrigue Banner. At heart, they are an attempt to control words by systematising them. From the aforementioned letter on the wall, the Legal Deposit Office has ordered the artist to register her ISBNs for

ISBNs, counting all printed matter as verbal rather than visual. In witty response, she has had the 30 or so works, each a depiction of its own ISBN, bound into a book with a meta-ISBN. But unlike many word-based artists, Banner is more than just clever. The key to her brilliance – that is not, I think, too strong a word – is a feel for the formal qualities of words, not just what they say but how they look.

Bound up in this, too, is a sense of what they portend. Words make sense of life, ISBNs make sense of words. And yet the idea that anything can be made sense of, that there is a single truth to be told, is only ever an illusion. To Banner, words are always mythologies.

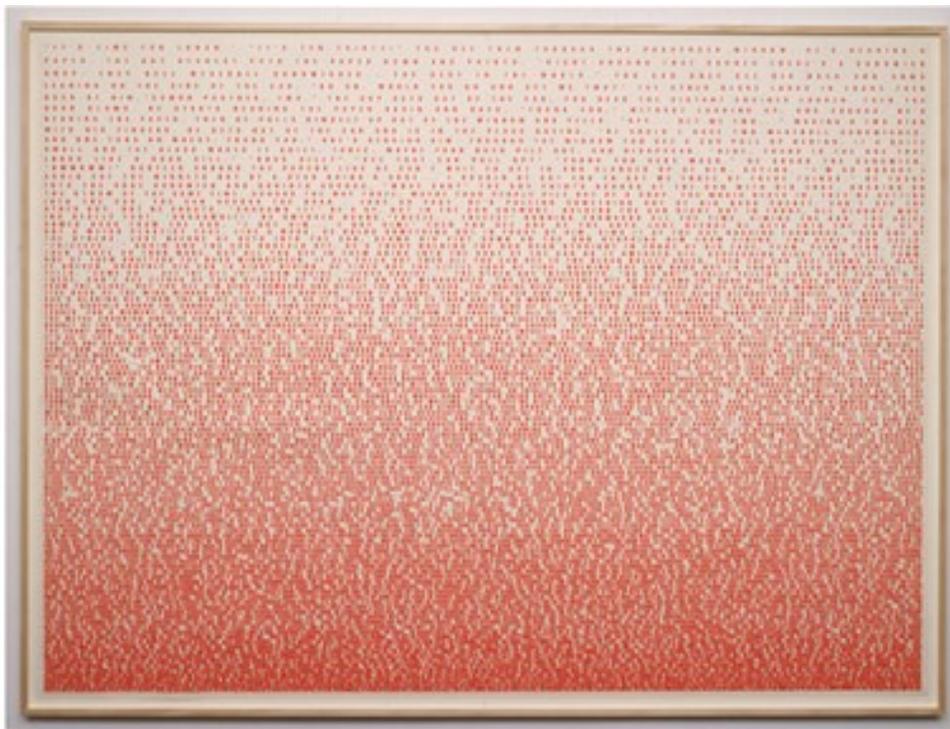
In the upper gallery is a four-metre menhir of Jane's *All the World's Aircraft*. Banner's book-stack, called 1909-2011, has the air of a monument, a cenotaph perhaps. In recording a century's worth of military aircraft, it elides cause and effect: it is, as it were, a memorial to itself. Two of the fighters listed in it are currently at Tate Britain, in an installation called *Harrier and Jaguar*. Another, *Tornado* (serial number ZE728), is across the way from Banner's book-obelisk, melted down and cast as a huge bell.

At first, this calls to mind swords and ploughshares, although swinging *Tornado's* clapper reminds you instead of Donne's line on not sending to know for whom bells toll. We live in a day when the inadequacy of words as a cause for war – remember weapons of mass destruction? – has again been vividly exposed. Read the news any day of the week, though, and you'll see how that revelation goes unheeded. Any chance that David Cameron will visit this show? Probably not. But at least next year's Turner Prize judges may at last recognise Banner's brilliance, and give her the recognition she deserves.

To 15 Jan (020-7494 1550)

British artist Fiona Banner wins US art vote

A work by Fiona Banner, one of the original Young British Artists, has won a vote by the American public and will now be shown in an exhibition at the prestigious Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.



British artist Fiona Banner's 'Break Point', which was given the most votes by the US public in a competition to decide which artworks should be included in a new exhibition

By Sean O'Hare

4:36PM GMT 15 Dec 2010

Invited to view 183 images of art from the Walker's expansive collection, the public cast nearly 250,000 votes indicating whether the artworks should "definitely" or "maybe not" be included in the **50/50:**

Audience and Experts Curate the Paper Collection exhibition.

Receiving the highest majority public vote, Banner's *Break Point* will now be shown alongside other favourites chosen by the public as well as work selected by chief curator Darsie Alexander, sparking a

range of questions about the dynamics between expert and audience, or between curatorial practise and mass taste.

Chief curator Alexander, whose job it was to consider and select artists whose work represents important art historical moments captured by the **Walker** collection as well as some recent purchases that foreshadow areas of possible growth, said: "I was interested in enabling a public vote and taking advantage of the natural impulse people have when encountering art to form an opinion."

Best known for making hand-written and printed text "wordscapes" or "still films", that retell in her own words entire feature films or sequences of events, Banner's 1998 *Break Point* is based on the chase scene in Kathryn Bigelow's cult film *Point Break* (1991).

Banner transforms and contains the nail-biting and seemingly endless chase into an arresting landscape of words. As the distance between pursuer and pursued closes, the space between the letters and lines of text stencilled on to the canvas in hazard red correspondingly collapses, until the climax of the chase ends in a crash of words at the bottom of the canvas. But significantly, the chase does not reach completion - when the pursuer finally catches his human quarry, he lets him get away.

Born in Merseyside in 1966, Banner is one of the key names along with Jake and Dinos Chapman, Gary Hume, Sam Taylor-Wood, Tacita Dean and Douglas Gordon of the Young British Artists. Short-listed for the Turner Prize in 2002, she currently has her work (a Sea Harrier jet hanging from the ceiling and an RAF Jaguar displayed belly-up on the floor) displayed at **Tate Britain's** grand neo-classical Duveen sculpture galleries.

Banner has also just published a new work in book form called **ISBN 978-1-907118-99-9**, inspired by the British Library's request for a copy of each of the works she has published herself her Vanity Press imprint to be deposited with the Library, along with its ISBN number, in accordance with the Legal Deposit Libraries Act of 2003.

This presented Banner with a problem. "I have registered myself as an ISBN," she writes in a letter to the Library, reproduced in the book's introduction, "and published myself under the title *Fiona Banner*. It's a sort of portrait. Another work in this series is a carved stone, published [with an ISBN] under the title *Sleep*. Because of their singularity and in some cases the format and material of the publications, I am presented with a conundrum, namely how to present these works for inclusion in the legal deposit." The book **ISBN 978-1-907118-99-9**, which lists the ISBN numbers of all the works in this series, was developed by Banner as a way of registering all these published works with the Library without having to deposit the actual works themselves, including her own self.

Fiona Banner's "Harrier and Jaguar" at Tate Britain

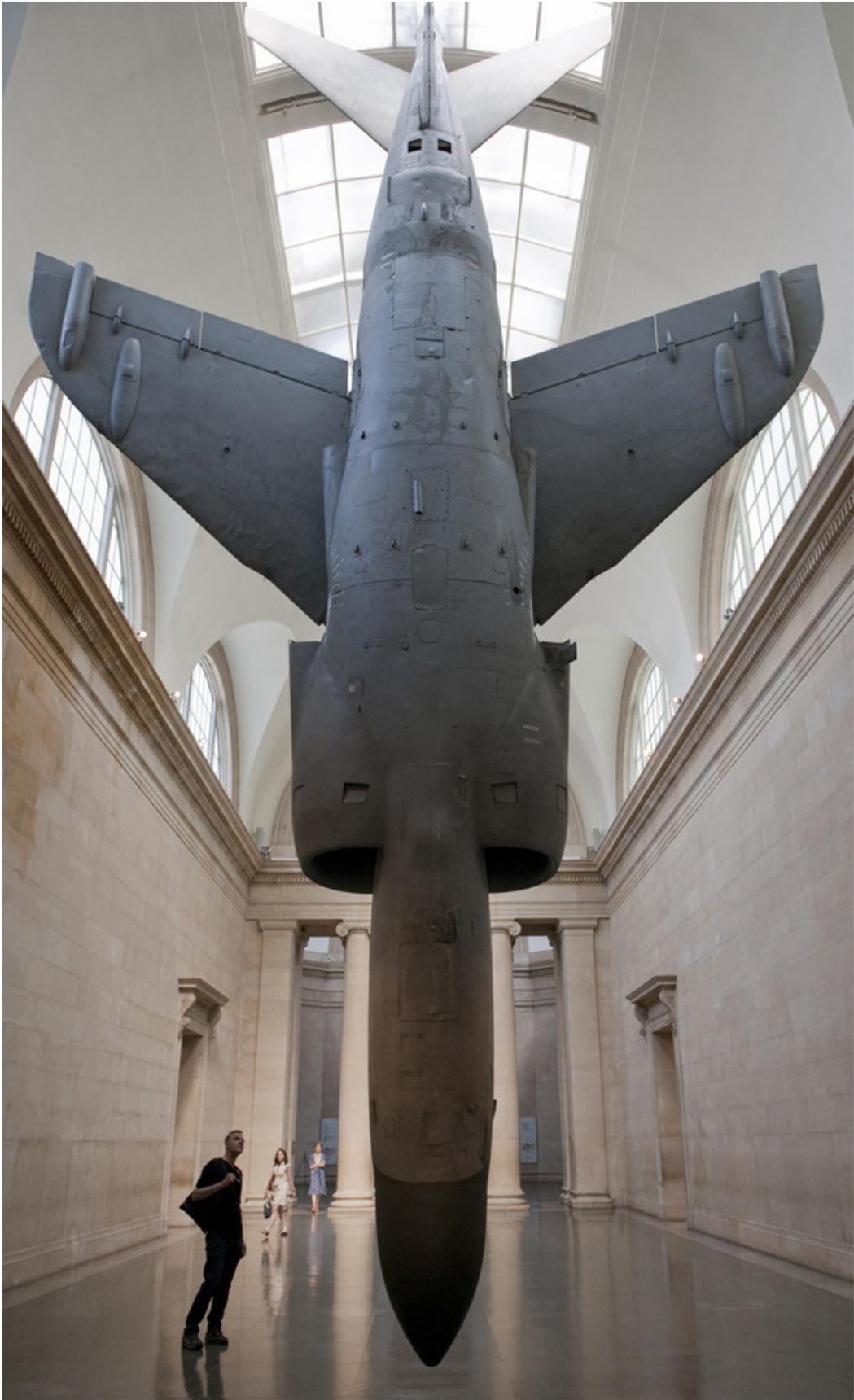
by [Aoife Rosenmeyer](#)

June 28, 2010–January 3, 2011

Tate Britain, London

July 21, 2010







1 – 3

Fiona Banner, *Harrier and Jaguar* (detail), 2010. Mixed media. All images courtesy of Tate Britain.

Plucked from the sky, a Sea Harrier and a Sepecat Jaguar jet have fallen to earth in Tate Britain. It's the work of Fiona Banner, and in an average summer critics would be busy drawing tidy parallels between the work and the UK's ongoing military involvement in overseas conflicts. But these current affairs were overshadowed instead by a kerfuffle sparked when arts practitioners criticised the Tate's sponsorship by BP in the *Guardian* newspaper on the day of the opening. As I approached the galleries a few days later, the high-pitched argument was ringing in my ears: critic Jonathan Jones had written that given impending cuts in cultural funding, 'if they [museums] can get money from Satan himself, they should take it'; 'art will sell its soul, surrender all moral integrity' countered artist activist John Jordan the next.

As it turns out, Banner's machines are so seductive it is well nigh impossible to feel any self-righteous anger, be it directed toward BP, activists or tub-thumping columnists. In one gallery, the entire Sea Harrier is suspended from its tail, nose hovering above the floor. By painting a dark beak onto the nose and light feather markings on its wings Banner has changed its livery minimally; it shape-shifts between avian and military identities. The plane (its gutted cockpit almost at eye level) is trussed like a bird, yet with wings apart it could also be suspended in ecstatic crucifixion. Separated from the first scene by a smaller colonnaded chamber the Jaguar lies on its back, a fish out of water gasping for air through the inlets that are now high on each side. But what a stunning

fish, with its paint stripped and metal polished so the craft of its construction is revealed and visitors reflected in its surfaces. The neo-classical Duveen galleries, built between world wars, were designed not to overawe, but the enormity of planes that barely fit inside, difficult to take in in their entirety, underscores the building's physical and conceptual frame. The grandeur of an empire comes once again to the fore—bagging colonies in the New World and slavery had sweetened the British tooth to sugar, enabling Henry Tate to make the fortune that funded the original Tate collection. Banner's installation is a tight, rich bundle of contradictions; beauty and brutality, nature and culture all nestle together. Curator Lizzie Carey-Thomas has called the jets 'highly evolved predatory instrument[s]'; their titles from the natural world are a lesson in the fine distinctions between savagery and civilization. Naturalising such machines applies a lenient model that tolerates dog-eat-dog warfare, a convenient means of ceding responsibility for actions. But as the artist points out, these machines are in current usage, and thus implicate us all. Like the question of who funds culture, defence and warfare are not simple issues but a mass of interdependent factors. As much as an exploding oil rig reminded us of where the stuff that powers our cars and buses comes from, a fighter jet in a gallery cannot hide its identity as a weapon of destruction. Banner does this, yet also makes clear the heady appeal of violence. Being a civilized, enlightened society is not a matter of straightforward categorisation, with war or sponsorship by oil companies falling under immoral activities, culture in the column of good and necessary. Signifiers and symbols facilitate complexity; we shouldn't fool ourselves that they are simple.

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Fiona Banner

Chinooks away: Fiona Banner's terrifying homage to a helicopter



Yorkshire Sculpture Park

A mighty chopper has swooped down in the tranquil hills of Yorkshire as a savage reminder of Vietnam, Apocalypse Now and the monsters of modern war



Jonathan Jones

Thu 18 Sep 2014 13.05 EDT



39 14



▲ A still from Fiona Banner's Chinook 2013. Photograph: © Fiona Banner and courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery, London

Yorkshire Sculpture Park is a peaceful place. On a misty autumn day, its loping hills nestle in isolation from the world's troubles – war, pestilence, referenda – and it's to this tranquil place that artist [Fiona Banner](#) has brought the hum of danger.

Wide and weighty blades turn overhead, gathering speed and pushing gusts of air to the edges of a hangar-like gallery. Through the glass wall you can see trees in the milky mist, the safe stuff of rural England. In here, the chopper blades conjure up [Vietnam](#), Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, 1970s Northern Ireland, or whatever place of troubles fills your imagination; anywhere the double sets of blades of the Chinook military helicopter have hovered above shell-shocked cities, deserts, farmlands.

Banner's installation, *Chinook*, is a perverse homage to the American-made aircraft, which has been in active service since 1962. The Chinook is a military classic. It was used in Vietnam and has flown in conflict and crisis zones ever since. With its long body and twin rotors turning in what seems an impossible, paradoxical way – why don't they collide? – it is a monster of modern war. Yet, as Banner can't help enthusing when we chat about it, the Chinook also has a "redemptive" side, carrying people out of trouble, and a vulnerability because of its heft: something touching as well as scary.

The Chinook has been flying for even longer than Banner has been making art about the Vietnam war. Back in 1997, she published her extraordinary artist's book The Nam, in which she recounts – blow by blow, death by death – the action of classic Vietnam war films. Here, she turns some of those words back into things, as the helicopters from Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now (or, at least, their humming blades) materialise in an art gallery.



Fiona Banner, *Tête-à-Tête* (still), 2014. High definition digital film (5.53 mins) Photograph: © Fiona Banner and courtesy of the artist and Frith Street Gallery/PR

How do you translate the world into words? What is the relationship between language and sensory experiences? Banner turns such apparently dry philosophical musings into exciting, intense, funny art. In her video *Mirror*, also showing here, the actor Samantha Morton reads out a description of her own nakedness written by Banner. She posed nude for Banner, who "portrayed" her in words. The description Morton reads out is sensual and explicit – is it also "true"? Is it a mirror, as the title announces it to be?

It is just as impossible to turn a real Chinook, with all its might, mass and history, into a work of art as it is to capture Morton in a portrait. Reality is too wild, savage and strange to be held by art. Words are not things. Things are not words. One of the things Banner likes about helicopters is the tendency to give them

“wild” sounding names – the Chinook are a Native American people, like the Apache.

The two lifesize rotors that spin over my head are ghost dancers, echoes of a distant war. The thing itself – a helicopter, a world of pain – hovers at the back of the imagination, getting nearer now as the motor speeds up. Shadows and light flicker on the gallery floor. Words can't describe the times we live in. The whirr of helicopters is our Homeric war poem.

Fiona Banner: Wp Wp Wp is at Yorkshire Sculpture Park from 20 September to 4 January 2015

APOLLO

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE

REVIEWS

Fiona Banner's language-based art relies on its own wit

Laura Harris

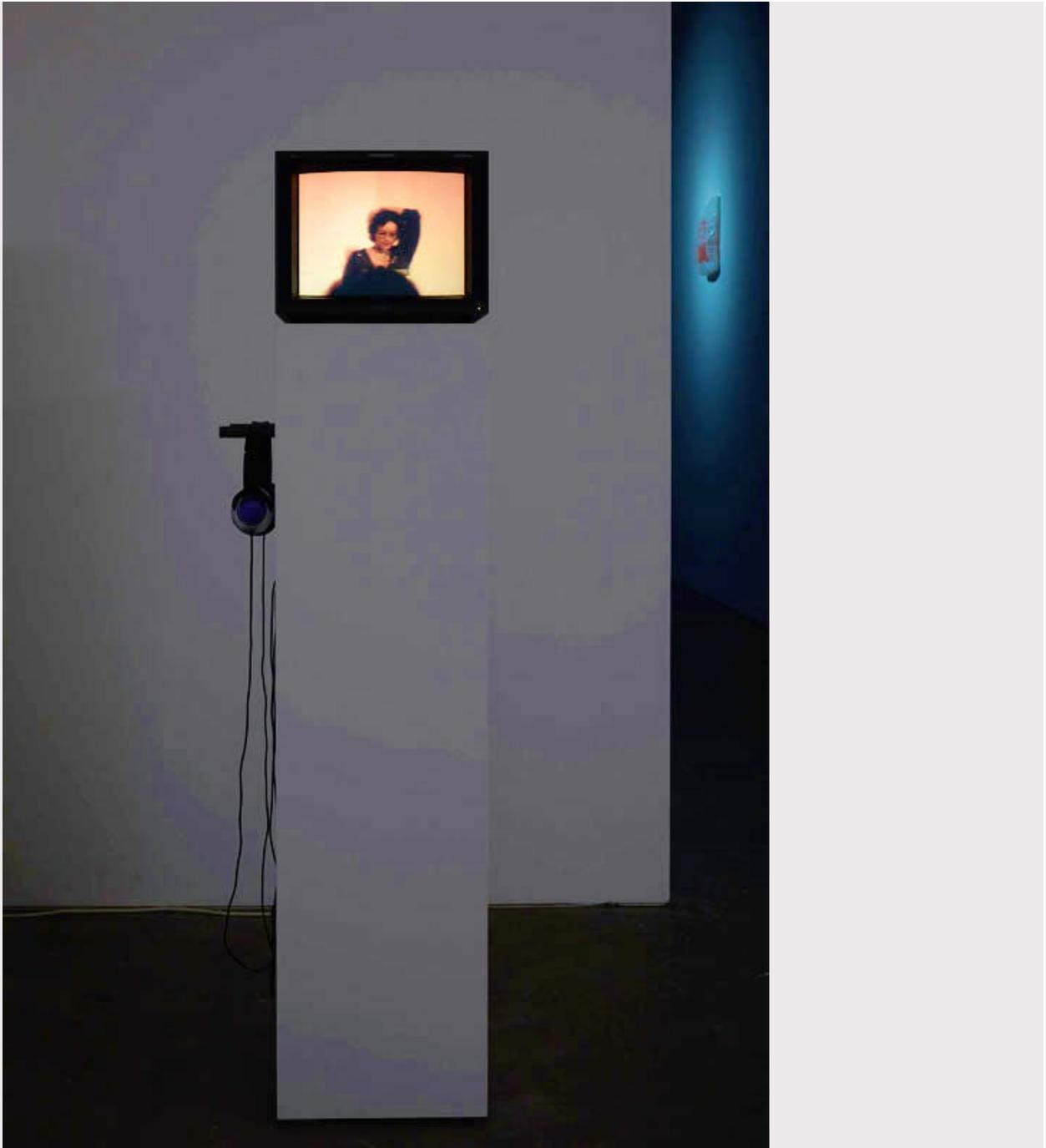
4 NOVEMBER 2015



Fiona Banner with 'The Bastard Word' (2007), installation at Ikon gallery, 2015. Courtesy the artist and Ikon gallery. Photo by Stuart Whipps.

When actress Samantha Morton posed nude for Fiona Banner, they produced a work that, unusually, retained all the uncomfortable intimacy of nakedness. Banner recorded their encounter only in text; but to listen still feels like an act of unadulterated voyeurism.

Morton herself recited the description for the first time in front of a live audience at the Whitechapel Gallery in 2007. She had never read the text – which dwells on her body in frank and intimate detail – before, and her performance faltered between dramatic virtuosity and deeply personal exposure. Watching the only recording – an unsolicited and muffled film peppered with the sounds of an audience shifting in their chairs – this work is the rarest of nudes; candid, intimate and human.

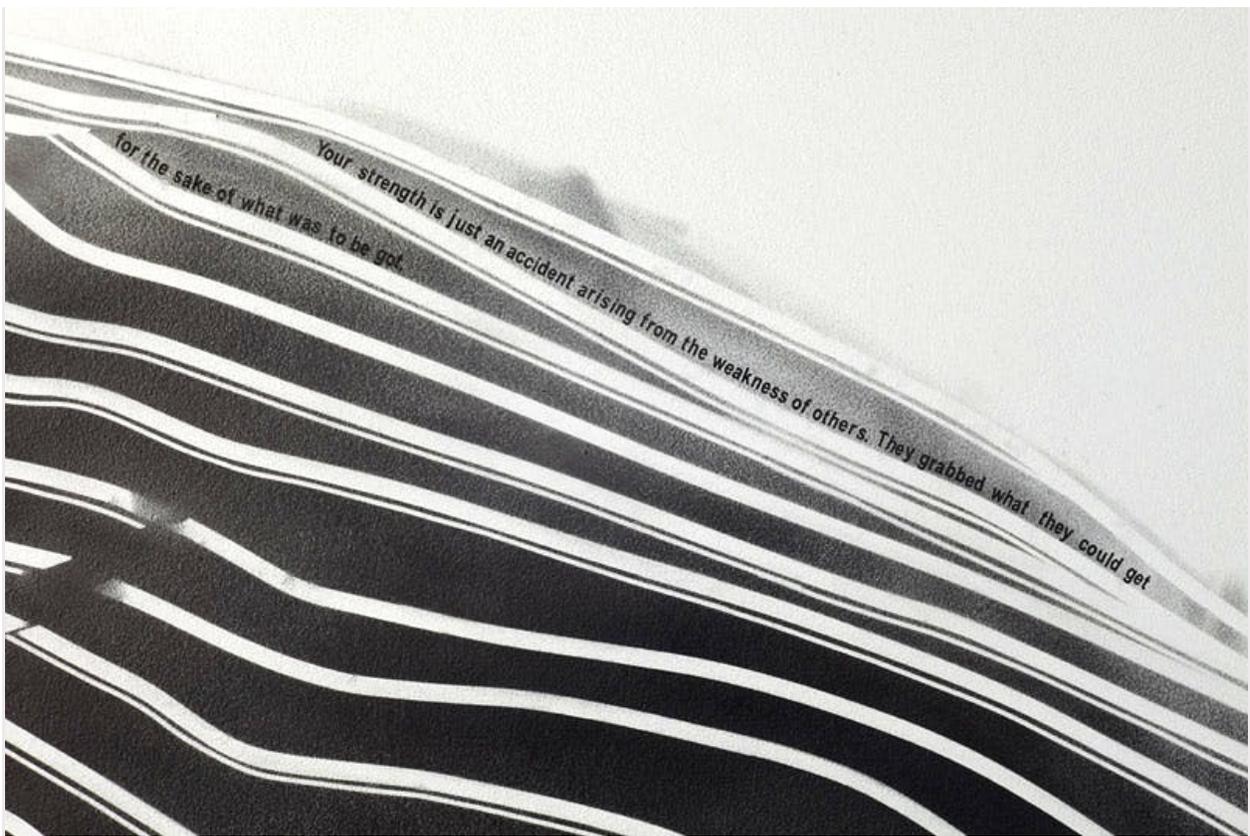


Mirror (2007), Fiona Banner. Installation, Ikon gallery, 2015. Courtesy the artist and Ikon gallery.
Photo: Stuart Whipps

A small TV perched on a plinth plays this recording, called Mirror, in a corner of Ikon gallery's 'Scroll Down and Keep Scrolling' exhibition, the most comprehensive survey of Banner's career to date. The show benefits from

understated curation, which elucidates the central themes of Banner's work while leaving the artist's character and wit writ large.

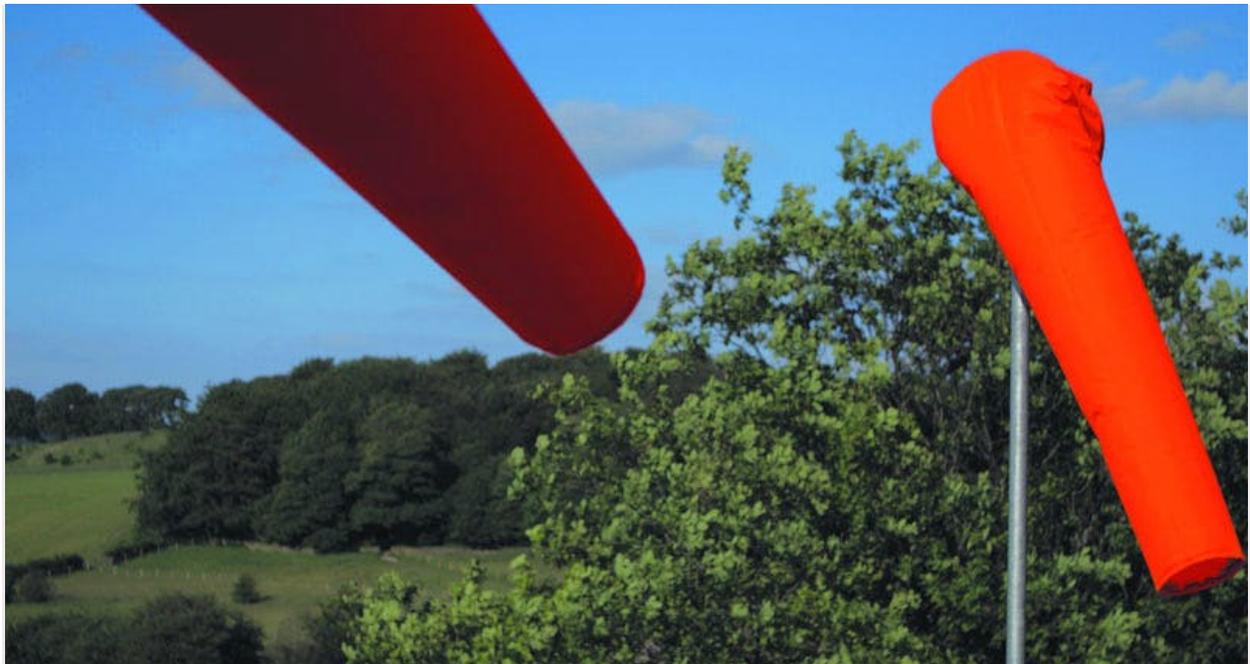
Banner designed a new typeface for the exhibition that playfully combines comic sans and Dr Seuss. This gimmicky exercise captures the jocular nature of much of Banner's oeuvre, but lurking between the lines is a serious concern; how does language filter and divert our attempts to communicate? Banner's talent is her ability to make us engage with everyday situations and concerns by presenting them in an alien way.



Mista Kurtz – He Not Dead (2014), Fiona Banner. Graphite on wall. Image © the artist

This skill is showcased in film work Mista Kurtz – He Not Dead (2014/15), the result of a fruitful collaboration between Banner, the Archive of Modern Conflict and war photographer Paolo Pellegrin. Pellegrin shot suited businessmen (and the occasional woman) navigating the City of London, an unforgiving world of remorseless competition. Banner created a staccato slideshow of these images, presenting the City as a willing if unlikely muse for the visual language of conflict.

While the show is laden with conceptual provocations, Banner's playfulness lends 'Scroll Down and Keep Scrolling' an endearing dimension. Tucked away in Ikon's Tower Room, the film work *Tête a Tête* is a humorous and touching way to end the exhibition. Two windsocks somehow turn to confront each other, their bright orange sleeves blowing and bowing in the breeze. They are coquettish and tantalisingly close; but try as they might they can never quite reach, their connection perennially missed. Banner asks whether communication can ever quite bridge the gap that separates us. She leaves the answer blowing in the wind.



Tête-à-Tête (2014), Fiona Banner. Courtesy the artist and Ikon gallery. Image © the artist

'Fiona Banner: Scroll Down and Keep Scrolling' is at [Ikon](#) gallery, Birmingham, until 17 January 2016.

Fiona Banner: Every Word Unmade To Feature At DRAF London

14 December 2015 / Art Categories Art News, News / Art Tags DRAF London, Every Word Unmade, Fiona Banner / [t](#) / [f](#) / [in](#) / [s](#) / [e](#)



Study #13 looks in depth at the work *Every Word Unmade*: a series of 26 metre-high neon letters, together comprising an upper-case alphabet, hand made by artist Fiona Banner in 2007. This first presentation of *Every Word Unmade* in London is accompanied by a selection of Banner's works using light and language.



Image: Fiona Banner, Every Word Unmade, 2007, detail in Fiona Banner studio in 2006. David Roberts Collection, London. Courtesy the artist

“I was thinking about a kind of unmaking of language. As if you could make every word, or story imaginable, from these 26 letters. All the potential is there, but none of the words. The fragile wobbly letters, a byproduct of incrementally, inexpertly bending the glass – then the electrical circuit pumping the gas through, make it like one big, constant stutter”...words about to be made or unmade. Fiona Banner, 2007.



Image: Fiona Banner, Every Word Unmade, 2007, installation view at Power Plant, Toronto in 2007. David Roberts Collection, London. Courtesy the artist

A new text by writer Emily King studying the work is commissioned for the exhibition. Previous Studies include works by Victor Man, Carole Bove, Bruce McLean, Martin Boyce, Boyle Family, Michael Simpson, Yto Barrada, Sterling Ruby, Ida Applebroog, Andreas Slominski and Etel Adnan.

About DRAF:

DRAF is a non-profit independent organisation. Together with curators and writers, DRAF creates new spaces for artists to develop ideas and practices and a platform to share them with the public. Last year they worked with over 150 emerging and established artists and collaborators to deliver a programme of exhibitions, commissions, performances, events and research free to 12,000 visitors.

Lead image: Fiona Banner, Every Word Unmade (The Bastard Word), 2007, detail in Fiona Banner studio in 2005. David Roberts Collection, London. Courtesy the artist

Craft/Work

Everything Must Go: Mike Nelson Inters British Industry

John Quin , March 30th, 2019 09:04

At Tate Britain, John Quin sees a different kind of corporate raid



Installation view of The Asset Strippers at Tate Britain, 2019. Photo: Tate (Matt Greenwood)

Mike Nelson's new project is called *The Asset Strippers* and is installed in the capacious central zone of Tate Britain known as the Duveen galleries. To call the show timely would be to underestimate its pertinence.

Continuing the use of economic jargon, you might say Nelson's intervention is something of a hostile takeover. He deftly obtained the objects he shows here by a very twenty-first century capitalist innovation: through the existence of on-line auctions led by company liquidators.

The Duveen galleries were the first public space in England to be specifically designed for the display of sculpture. Joseph Duveen (1869-1939) was an art dealer. His Wikipedia entry states that he "made his fortune by buying works of art from declining European aristocrats and selling them to the millionaires of the United States". In other words he was something of an asset stripper himself. The likes of William Randolph Hearst, J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller and Henry Clay Frick, the great robber barons, built up their collections from Duveen in this manner and then in turn opened their own museums.

Duveen is also thought to have sold fakes and is held responsible for restoration work that caused damage to some Old Masters and the Elgin Marbles. Wikipedia goes on to point out drolly "in recent years Duveen's reputation has suffered considerably".

Two old wooden doors guard the main entrance to the Duveen space and above these are some decorative planks of wood that give the immediate impression of a stockade. Once inside we are confronted by the overwhelming sight of heavy machinery, masses of it, most of which are displayed in the manner of sculpture on plinths. Nelson's act of *détournement* takes this detritus from the industrial age and recasts it as sculpture, thus revivifying the original role of the venue. He turns the meaning of the place full circle – the profits made by the machinery we see here (when it was functional) once enabled the bagging of much beautiful booty. Times were good financially for corporate UK in Duveen's day. But now that we are in decline, what more suitable visual metaphor for national depreciation than to stuff the place with the relics that once made us great.



But what exactly are we looking at here? Those with a trained engineer's gaze will take pleasure in recognising old bits of kit. For the rest of us, some of these objects may trigger memories from ancient TV documentaries on manufacturing. But there is a lot that remains mysterious.

Looking at the equipment begs questioning as to its previous functionality. Nelson plays games too by gnominically mounting a cement mixer on a set of metal cabinets. There are hand wheels and locking nuts. The less well acquainted with such artifacts will be left somewhat dumbstruck – just what exactly were these things *for*? There is awe too at the size and implied power of these machines that reflect the control Britain once exerted over the rest of the planet.

We see looms with their coloured bobbins of thread and there are tools made by Wadkin for woodworking, milling machinery made by Adcock and Shipley, things that might be lathes, saw benches with trunnions, Crown Windley cast iron products, drill bits, flat chucks. Stuff that was used by skilled workers, “men with a trade” as comedian Brian Limond has it in his bittersweet impersonation of a retired shipbuilder gazing wistfully out at the empty Clydeside wastelands.

There are also sly references here to the art history of contemporary sculptural practice. The stacks of timber and metal can be seen as a parodic take on the machismo and sometimes-pompous monumentality of work by the likes of David Smith and Richard Serra. A set of ancient black tire tracks, possibly from a tank, conjures up images of defeat in battle. This might be a militaristic nod to an earlier commission at the Duveen by Fiona Banner when she installed two decommissioned jet fighters, *Harrier and Jaguar* (2010). Old sets of red-painted weights made by Avery are loaded with large boulders and put one in mind of Chris Burden and Michael Heizer's fascination with mass and weight. Here we also find a set of portholed NHS doors from the orthopaedic hospital in Bolsover Street, London, and a wink perhaps to Gary Hume's fascination with these structures in his early paintings.

There is very little in the way of flash and filigree here; many of the machines are dusty, grimy, shop-worn. A scabby old sign for General Electric – GE - reads “long may they reign” and is draped with tatty dust-stained Union Jacks. We recall that GE paid \$23.4 million in 2010 to settle a complaint that they bribed Iraqi government officials to win contracts under the UN oil-for-food programme.

Some of the woodwork stacked here comes from a former army barracks in Shropshire, another reminder of a Britain in military decline, as exemplified by the current defence secretary's recent impotent blustering over China.

There is a shadow of the dignity of labour in these mute, inutile beasts from yesterday. Now, sadly, we appear to be led by a regime embodying the old cliché that proclaims a poor workman blames his tools. They suggest we blame Parliament or the People, that we blame anyone and anything but the Government itself for our current mess. Back in the day Joseph Duveen ripped off 'declining European aristocrats'; he clearly functioned as something of a rogue trader. Similarly the last remaining assets of the UK – our NHS for example – may be sold off to the likes of the predatory Trump administration with its well-known antipathy to 'socialised' medicine.

The Asset Strippers is Nelson's urgent warning: look at this and imagine what can happen to the remnants of our welfare state. Don't bet against our MRI scanners being installed at the Duveen in due course.

Mike Nelson, The Asset Strippers, is at Tate Britain, London, until 6 October