

**A journey of discovery, collection and ideas****Background:**

In November 2012 I was commissioned by Ovada (Oxford Visual Art Development Agency) as part of their Spotlight programme to create an installation in the Old Town Hall.



*The Security Blanket of Beadle and Dom, 2012*

The event provided me the space to create the work relevant to the language of the civic 'meeting room'. During the evening I was visited by artist, Diane Parry, from Magdalen Studios who later invited me to submit a proposal for a residency in Filament 14, the studio's project/showing space.

This was attractive to me on a number of levels. Firstly, when previously visiting Oxford, I had encountered the large stand of leaflets containing Oxford's tourists/cultural offerings located in the city's park and ride; a first stop for the visitor arriving by road. As an avid leaflet collector this enticing array appeared to be an interesting source material to work with and to extend my work created from used paper documents. The function of the leaflets as tools of seduction, of sound bites, of choice, of curatorial control etc. also relate to my interest in the relationship between artist, artwork, venue and audience. Whether the leaflets are advertising high-end galleries and museums or smaller venues and individuals they are mainly presented in the 'Scene' leaflet stands around the city in the homogenised A5 format; all flyers inviting and competing for footfall.

My secondary interest in the residency was the location of the studio in Magdalan Road Art Studios. This offered me an opportunity to meet new artists, widen my networks and engage in critical debate. I was also interested in the studio group as an organisation, its approaches, structure and vision. I am currently a studio-holding member, and Vice Chair Trustee of a similar group Art Space Portsmouth. Art Space is also a charity having developed from artists' initiatives and activity some 30 years ago.

**9 Days in October: a journey of discovery, collection and ideas****Week 1. (3 days)**

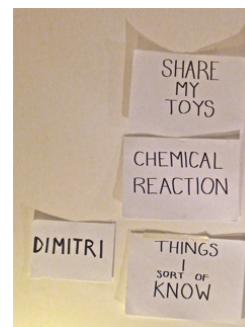
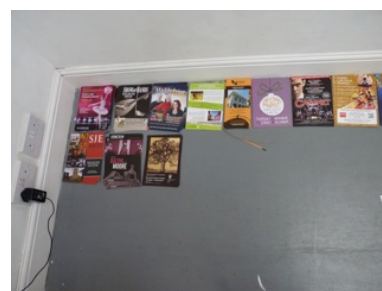
This week focused on exploring, getting my bearings and meeting people.

I arrived at lunchtime via the park and ride and my first collection of leaflets. Before going on to Magdalen Studios and getting the keys for Filament 14.

The afternoon was spent with artist and studio manager Claudia Figueiredo. We visited places where visitor information would be held including the Library, Town Hall and Tourist Information Office. As I scoured the shelves and got talking to the workers I discovered that they have a member of staff whose role it is to shred out of date leaflets. There seemed so much research that could be done to unearth a different story. Returning to the studio I undertook some initial experiments and sorting of the material.

In the evening Claudia invited me to 'Playground' a networking event at The Old Fire Station where we took part in the session followed by a tour of the venue.

Including this amazing space of the tower and viewing their new studio spaces.



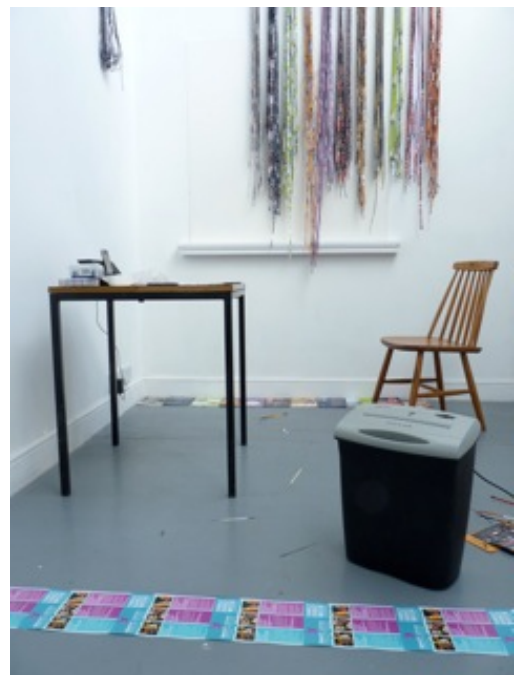
The next day included a presentation and overview of my recent work at Filament 14 to the studio artists, walks in the local area photographing things that caught my eye and experimenting in the studio.





*Playing around with the cross shredder (security level 3)*

Where I had multiple copies of the same leaflet I started sticking them together and shredding on security level 2 creating 'strings' or samples, each labelled to retain the information of what and where. This process fragmented the individual graphics and presented a dominating colour that was not always evident before shredding. The process also exposed the different paper qualities of the leaflets and my mind wondered to relationships with budgets and paper quality, especially as the (commercial) O3 Gallery's leaflets were so thick that they had to be treated in a different way as my shredder rejected continuous shredding of this heavy weight paper.



The morning of my last day in the first week was spent in the studio experimenting and having interesting conversations with artists based at MRS.

The afternoon was spent visiting the city centre, people watching and photographing in the main streets. I visited Modern Art Oxford and saw the Friedrich Kunath, Tim Head and the Platform exhibitions.

I went on to The Ashmolean to see the Moore and Bacon and then on to OVADA. There were no exhibition or events running but I caught up with Lucy and photographed in their warehouse building.

I've selected the photograph below taken at Ovada as one of my 'found installations' series. I enjoy its suggestion of conversation, of interaction and an intimacy.



*Found Installation 1, Jeannie Driver 2013*

I arrived for the second week at lunchtime after a sunny drive up the A34.  
I spent the afternoon in the studio, shredding, thinking and drawing/sketching out ideas.



*Level 3 shreds.*



*Sketch looking at venue location in the city  
possible use with shreds 3.*

### **Wednesday.**

Conversation was the theme of the morning, starting with an interesting exploration of what it's like to be an artist in France with MRS artist Jonathan Moss followed by discussions over with tea and cake in the Oxford with MRS trustee, Andrew Carter.

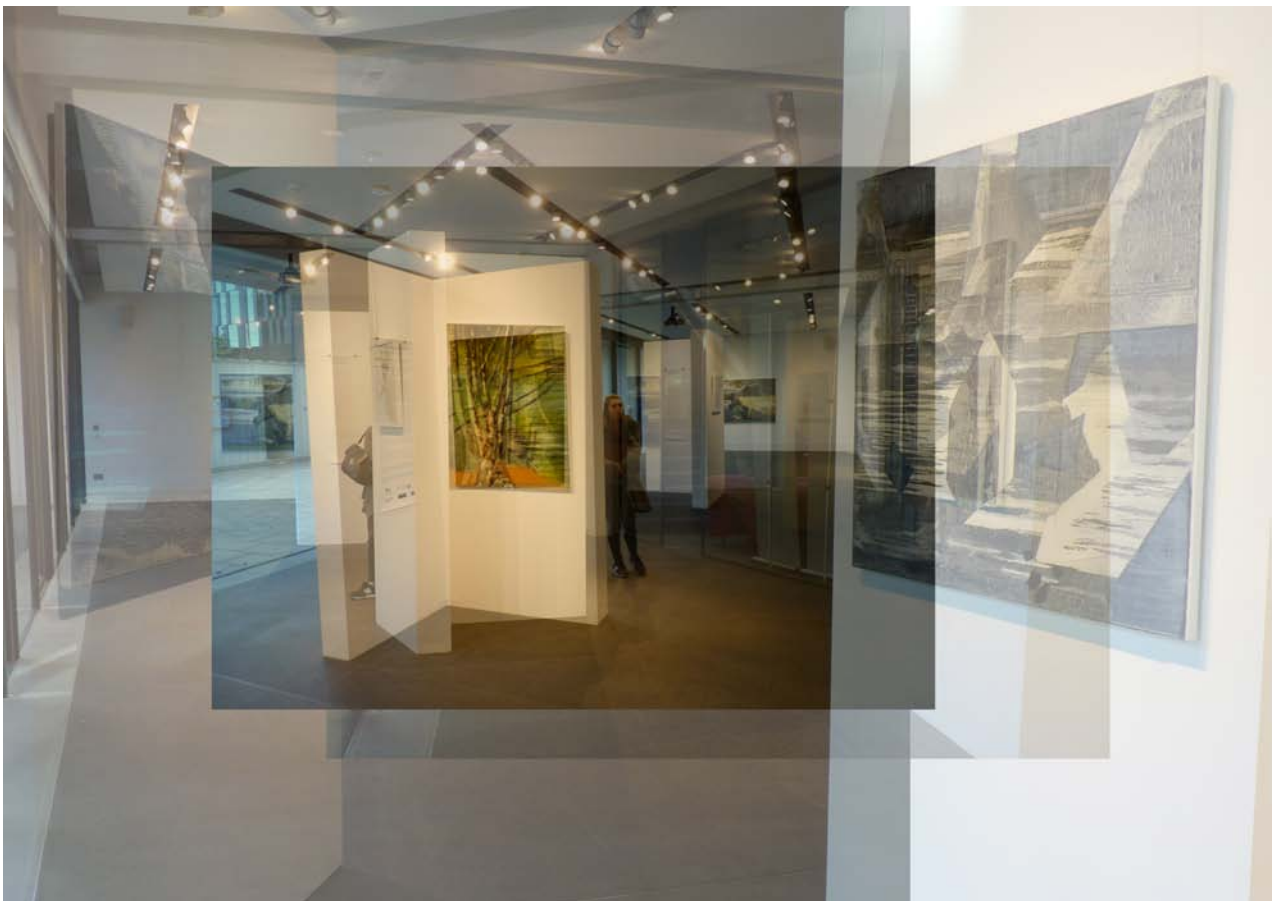
In the afternoon artist and studio manager Claudia took me down the Cowley Road. We encountered an impressively large leafed tree.

We then walked through the park towards Oxford Brookes, stopped at the old home of the Maxwells (so I'm told) and saw the stained glass window, which is actually a 3d glass work that places Robert Maxwell in the position of Samson, from Greek mythology - hilarious.



We walked on to Oxford Brookes for a quick tour of art department where I found this amazing press (envy!) in the bookbinding area. We next visited the Oxford Music offices, and had interesting conversations about publicity, the Scene distribution service and how cultural organisations work together using anti-clash diaries to help timetable their programmes as not to split audiences. I left with a stack of leaflets from their archive, and was particularly interested in their Graphic Score leaflets - for the quality of the graphic and the paper.

We went on to visit the Glass Tank exhibition space and stumbled into a MA graduate fair where I was given an Oxford Brooks bag, which came in handy to carry my pamphlet stash. After viewing and photographing the space we went to talk to the gallery manager and exhibitions curator Joanna Walker to explore the galleries remit and programming criteria.



*Composite views Glass Tank Gallery, Jeannie Driver 2013*

Leaving the site we encountered another 'found installation of imagined conversations'. It was an abandoned station from another graduate fair.



*Found installation of imagined conversations, Jeannie Driver 2013*

Returning to the studio I started exploring shredding 3 and the idea of Socratic circles in relation to galleries and art opportunities for audiences.



Arriving for the third week I had been thinking about the function of the flyer, as tools of seduction, information, enticement, all seeking footfall. Looking at the leaflets led me to consider each design, and how the main image can become the reinforced image of the exhibition or event. How this moment or fragment of a wider event becomes the overarching lasting image that gets fixated due to the prominence and duplication of the image appearing in many different places.

I was tempted to drill down further into issues about quantities of leaflets produced, data on the amounts that went straight to the waste having become out of date. The correlation between audience numbers and quantities produced. There could be so many lines of enquiry, however with limited time and with the benefit of the studio space I decided to focus on my response and relationship to the leaflets.

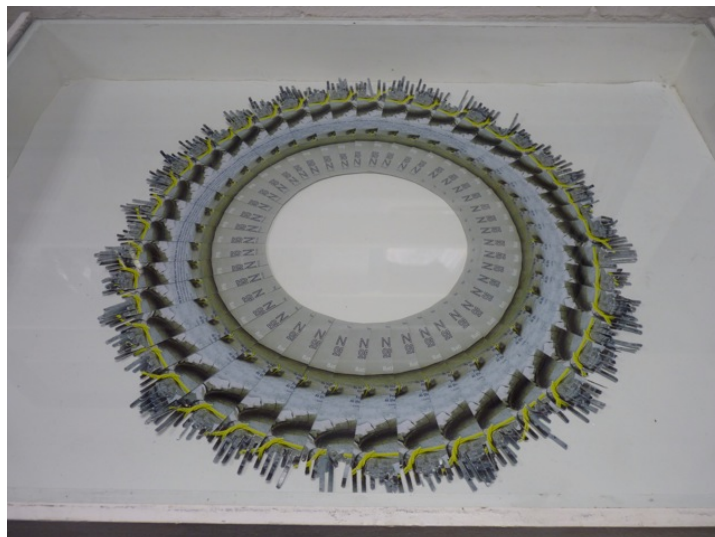
I realised my interest has developed from that sense of excitement I get when approaching a leaflet stand. This embedded reaction in me was borne out of holidays as a child being presented with enormous stands of colourful flyers with its associated sense of possibilities, of new experiences, of fun and wonderment. For me the flyer rack maintains its appeal when visiting any new city, it provides a flavour of the genres of venues and places to visit, for me it is security, comfort and intrigue.

I decided to draw on these experiences to create work in the Filament 14 room. I continued to experiment and create works from the paper as well as the photographs that I'd been taking of crowds in and around the city centre.

The week culminated in a preview, showing work in progress to MRS members and the public. I included two photographic works in this to extend conversation and explore issues that I'd had with Paul Hobson, the director of Modern Art Oxford the day before.

The intention of the exhibition was to reveal my processes, and to retain some information on the leaflets that people may have a familiarity with.

The next image shows a work created from the 03 gallery leaflets.







I returned a couple of weeks later for one day to create an installation that would be light hearted and playful and to really utilise the small space of the Filament 14, which due to its size enabled me to create an encompassing environment where the viewer could inhabit the work, were they would be 'inside' the work and their movement would create a draught and cause the paper to gently sway, providing different viewing experiences whilst walking around and through the installation.



*New places, new possibilities. Jeannie Driver 2013. At Filament 14, Magdalen Road Studios.*

I would like to thank MRS, artist Diane Parry for making the original invitation and studio manager and artist Claudia Figueiredo for her support and her hospitality that made the residency possible. I'd also like to thank many of the artists I met at the studios with whom I had many great conversations.

Further images can be found at [www.jeanniedriver.com](http://www.jeanniedriver.com)  
And at <http://www.axisweb.org/p/jeanniedriver/>