

***Ugly Beast, a practice led project*** in Contemporary Fine Art, is framed by a lived experience of a curatorial history. It uses manifesto, archival website, diagrams, hymn poems, writing, radio and protest as research. These elements, allow interrogation via fiction and voice as method, culminating in *Ugly Beast* statement publication, *Ugly Beast* a novel and *Your Tongue in My Mouth*, a visual conversation with artists, within a curated exhibition. *Ugly Beast* is a reflexive research project, which repositions the artist curator's voice and agency, within the expanded field of curating, social sculpture and subjectivity.

*Ugly Beast Manifesto* was born from the construction of a curatorial archive, held on [www.estherwindsor.com](http://www.estherwindsor.com). Documentation prompted an erasure, where realities of budgets, politics, accidents, materials and inter- subjectivities of artist, curator and space, were absent, in favour of the finished press release, images and reviews. *Ugly Beast Manifesto* proposed resistance to dominant discourses in contemporary art practice by treating life as art. It was informed by: 70's feminist practice; Stuart Hall & CCCS; Psychoanalytic study, Mark Cousins Friday Lecture series at The Architectural Association, Kaprow's Happenings; Irigaray's language; Warhol's address book and personal experience of BANK, (artist led group) in tabloid, fax backs and events in 90's, London.

*Ugly Beast Novel* tells a story of art world characters, a teacher, artist, dealer and gallery director on the therapists couch, to express four key points of critique: political economy, ideology, consumption, objects and spaces. This axis provides a continuous scaffold for practice. Fiction acts as method, as characters embrace what was edited out of the official voice. Words are tools, interrogating ideological symptoms, as structural sources of shared subjectivity, allowing personal problems to be seen as social. Subjects of modernism, art school, architecture, conceptual art and love get aired in the characters navigation of personal pain and struggle for productivity in an art world, in London, spanning periods between 1996 to 2016. Displaced from institutions like the academy, family, the art world, the city and even themselves, they all experience loss, sometimes of language itself. They question how to exist in relationships transformed by market transaction, a city changed by real estate, make sense of objects, have a home, be a mother, a precarious worker, to mourn, or have a place for the mind? In *Ugly Beast Novel*, artists, therapists and prostitutes charge for their services on a sliding scale, applying the Marxist dictum 'from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs'.

*Ugly Beast* curated exhibition, *Your Tongue in My Mouth is a visual conversation*, locating subjects of feminism, ethnicity and class in recent 20c history, as strategies for thinking about anxiety and precarious consciousness, as dominating emotions in a neo liberal, 21c society. It was held at Stanley Picker Gallery, Kingston University, 2014, with artists: Terry Atkinson, John Akomfrah: *The Stuart Hall Project*, Ellen Cantor, Peter Harris, Alexis Hunter, Sarah Jones, Karen Knorr, Janette Paris, Bob and Roberta Smith, Heather Sparks, Jo Spence.