

BOUNDS. ENDS. LIMITS.

Ben Skea



Utilising a multi-faceted approach, incorporating moving image, sound and 3D printed sculpture, Ben Skea examines the materiality of the artefact and the way in which it can function as a cultural stimulant. Skea is interested in how an object or event is read by the viewer and the opposing responses it can evoke. 2D printed imagery is reordered and reconstructed into 3D forms within the computer to explore how 'thought' can transfer between physical objects – an information exchange that can challenge the rigidity of boundaries.

Ben Skea, who works and lives in Glasgow, studied Fine Art Printmaking at the Glasgow School of Art and Electronic Imaging at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design. He works primarily with moving image and sound. His recent work has become interdisciplinary – encompassing sculpture and experimental animation. He has an interest in the unknown spaces in-between physical objects and the interconnectivity of all objects in nature.

After having shown work in group shows and screenings in amongst others New York City (USA), Lucca (IT), Edinburgh and Dundee, 'Bounds. Ends. Limits.' is Skea's premier Glasgow solo exhibition.



1. Bounds. Ends. Limits. (digital projection, acrylic block, grid digital print, yellow plinth, 9 min loop, silent, 2015) is central to the exhibition. This moving image work developed from a short period of research into territorial formation – specifically the work of Inge E. Boer who contended that: 'Boundaries are spaces within, through, and in the nature of which negotiations can take place. They are not lines but spaces; neither fixed nor empty but flexible and inhabited.' (Uncertain Territories: Boundaries in Cultural Analysis, Inge E. Boer, 2004). This monochrome film is created digitally yet is processed to resemble a 16mm film reel from the past. A boundary on the horizon is revealed to be a line of rotating sculptures – transforming from oppressor to liberator at each 90 degree turn. Interspersed with subliminal schematic drawings, the silent film is back projected onto a sandblasted acrylic block – adding to the sense that material is being enriched by information.
2. Passing through the membrane, the space beneath fills out, engorged. (digital projection with sound, grid print, mdf, steel brackets, tube light, 9 min loop, 2015) fuses digital cut-out animation with photomontage – creating an ever-enveloping series of scenarios that visually explore the transfer of information between objects. Paper cut-outs, specifically from aspirational lifestyle magazines, are reformed and animated to create new perspectives on recent global events. These analogue photo layers are digitally scanned and arranged in a three dimensional space within the computer. Skea is visually exploring the object as a membrane by the introduction of 3D animated elements – flat photo images, projection mapped onto primitive 3D shapes. Both full of mass and volume yet thin and ephemeral from a different angle – these objects have skin. This work becomes a cinematic puzzle that naturally invites decryption – an ambiguous series of alternate spaces or systems that seem to be working both in harmony and opposition. There is no simplistic interpretation. New meaning is generated through the complex transitions and spaces – kinetic artefacts evolving over time – containing only fragments of the original source information.
3. Glue Extrusion (3D printed colour sandstone sculptures, 2015) and
4. Friction Ridge (3D printed colour sandstone sculpture, grey plinth, nickel plated LED spotlight, 2015) are a series of sculptures that visually explore the notion that territories are not necessarily fixed. Printed layer by layer with fine sandstone powder and bound together with a binding agent and ink, these 3d forms retain the photographic information of the original 2D source image – creating concrete objects that engage the same illusory space present in the films.