

# Tim Davies

Senior Lecturer

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Research Groups: Fine Art; Creative Industries Research and Innovation Centre

## **Evidence Portfolio: *Drift***

### **Output Number: 4 of 4**

Output Code: WIRAD-UWTSD-TD04

Output Type Code: Q

Output Description: Video Installation

Author: Davies, Tim

Year of Publication / Production: 2011

Location / Venue(s): 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, International Art Exhibition 2011, Italy

Media: Single channel HD video installation

Number of Works: 1 x 10 minutes 49 seconds duration



*Drift, 2011, Video still*

## Research Context

*Drift* is one of three site responsive pieces commissioned for the 54th Venice Biennale of Art and it extends Davies's exploration of the social relations of site. His site-responsive work evolves from an examination of the most appropriate medium with which to represent the practices through which sites are made and experienced. Drifting through the canals of Venice, one has a unique view of the city's architecture: the littered impact of tourism, the daily arrival and departures of workers from the mainland, the tide-marks from rising water levels, and the underbelly beneath the beauty in something approaching the 'totality' of the city. The work has evolved from concerns with how the human body interacts with 'real-and-imagined spaces', drawing on Edward Soja, to examine how we negotiate the spatial, temporal and social aspects of the built environment.

Through the medium of real and manipulated time video, *Drift* investigates how multiple interpretations can be conveyed simultaneously. The gentle touch of fingers playing on the surface of water can be perceived as innocent pleasure or sinister amusement in the unique context of medieval and renaissance splendour under threat from human and environmental excess. The art work itself — commissioned for the largest art jamboree in the world — references a myriad of other art works inspired by Venice.

## Research Imperatives

Davies's aim was to explore the ways in which a performative video can represent a drifting experience, both in the navigational sense and the art historical sense of Situationism, mediating the frailty of the city and its stunning architecture by means of a human hand disrupting the glassy canal reflections.

## Project Methods

Davies's exploration of the social, cultural, political and physical meanings of a particular site has been an on-going theme in his work for several years. In the case of *Drift*, he made several site visits to Venice in an attempt to build a relationship beyond the usual touristic experience.

The production process developed through a number of video sketches and water-side performances that attempted to create a fusion between figure and material, in this case, water. The reflections and shadows cast by the city's buildings on to the surface of the water became a key focus for the final piece.



*Drift* installation at the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, 2011



*Drift* installed at Fold Gallery, London, 2012

## **Outcomes and Dissemination**

### **Exhibitions**

*Drift* has been presented in the following solo exhibitions:

- *Tim Davies - Wales at Venice*, 54th Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition 2011 at the Ludoteca Santa Maria Ausiliatrice, Venice, 4<sup>th</sup> June – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2011
- *Tim Davies: Drift*, part of Diffusion: Cardiff International Festival of Photography, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff 9th March – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2013
- *In and Amongst*, Fold Gallery, London 17th November 2012 – 19th January 2013

### **Publications**

*Drift* is featured in the following publications:

Curiger, B. and Carmine, G. (eds.) (2011) *Illuminations* (exhibition catalogue) Venice: Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia ISBN 978-88-317 0820

Globus, D. and Jones, A. (eds.) *Tim Davies* (2011). London: Ridinghouse, ISBN 978-1-905464432.

*Tim Davies*, (2011) Arts Council of Wales Educational Resource Pack

*Drift* was featured in a British Council film about the 54th Venice Biennale.

## Reviews

*Drift* was critically reviewed in the following:

- 'Golden Triangle: U.K. at the Biennale', *Art in America*, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2011 by Faye Hirsch
- 'Shifting Connections: the 54th Venice Biennale', *Bombsite* 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011, by Kathleen MacQueen
- Flux Magazine, November 2012, 'In and Amongst: Tim Davies solo show at FOLD Gallery' by Philomena Epps
- 'The 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale', The Brooklyn Rail, July-August 2011, by Emily Warner
- The work was also included in reviews of the 54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale by Lucy Bannister and Alicia Millar for Axisweb

## Talks

*Drift* was discussed in invited lectures at:

Ludoteca S.M. Ausiliatrice, 54th Venice Biennale International Art Exhibition 2011

'Tim Davies in Conversation with Amanda Farr', Oriel Davies Gallery, Newtown, Wales, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2011

'Tim Davies: Walers at Venice' Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Wales, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff, Wales, 2012

'Wales in Venice', National Museum, Cardiff, Wales, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012

'A Focus for Memory', University of Lincoln, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

*Drift* was purchased for the Amgueddfa Cymru/National Museum of Wales collection in 2013



Tim Davies and assistants at work, Campalto, Venice 2011





Tim Davies (2011). London: Ridinghouse,



54<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale of Art 2011 catalogue *Illuminations*



Tim Davies Drift 2011



Arts Council of Wales Educational Pack. 2011



Catalogue for solo exhibition *Drift* at National Museum of Wales, part of Diffusion: International Festival of Photography, 2013