

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS (Est. 2009)  
Applied Grief and Bereavement Research  
Interdisciplinary/Multidisciplinary Studio

WEB: [substructuredloss.org](http://substructuredloss.org) | FACEBOOK: @substructuredloss | VIMEO: /substructuredloss

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## BACKGROUND

Established in 2009, the CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS is a Canadian organization dedicated to the development of applied grief and bereavement research. Documented through the use of practice-based/led methods within art and comprised of work from an interdisciplinary network of creative and technical practitioners; the CENTRE is committed to the advancement of the arts and sciences; providing programming in support of education; public and professional engagement; and the development of field research in partnership with local, national, and international academic bodies, institutions, foundations, and non-profits.

ENG

BERLIN SUMMER 2018

BY WHICH WE UNRAVEL: IDENTITY AND NATIONHOOD

This Summer 2018 the CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS is proud to host international interdisciplinary artists Meenakshi Nihalani (IN) and Jonathan Davis (UK).

In investigating historical and political climates and their present day shift; evidence is depicted as a personal installation of story and process for those that follow, of those that challenged, and for those that are unable to speak. Presenting a call to action- research as artefact and craft as ritual are as performative as they are illustrative, and the structures, by which these artists unravel: identity and nationhood.

Meenakshi Nihalani's works are seen as multidimensional and conceptual representations of forms which narrate human and gender-based confrontation as a core struggle in the unrepresented and unseen layers of society. Traditional embroidery, thread, and textile can be seen depicting the conflicting duality as structures within visual forms over their intended practical and functional uses in 'There Is No Finishing Line' and 'The Torch'.

Jonathan Davis' works explore nationhood as linguistic challenges mount historically dangerous pressures that emanate from current policy and pose questions about the nature of current political and social discourse. The four works, which include 'We're All Strangers Now' and 'The Storytellers' are mixed media pieces that stand together as a metaphor for the apparent power of stories over empirical information and the strange powers that lie behind them.

Works installed and artists present.

DE

BERLIN SOMMER 2018

AUF SPURENSUCHE: IDENTITÄT UND NATIONALITÄT

Das CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SUBSTRUCTURED LOSS freut sich, die internationalen interdisziplinäre Künstlerin Meenakshi Nihalani (Indien) und den Künstler Jonathan Davis (UK) präsentieren zu dürfen.

Es werden historische und politische Klimata und ihre heutige Verschiebung untersucht. Belege dafür werden dargestellt als eine persönliche Installation von Geschichte und Prozess derjenigen, die folgen, derjenigen, die herausgefordert werden, und derjenigen, die nicht sprechen können. Präsentiert wird ein Aufruf zum Handeln – Forschung als Artefakt und Handwerk als Ritual sind ebenso performativ wie illustrativ und zeigen die Strukturen, nach denen die Künstlerin und der Künstler Identität und Nationalität entwirren.

Meenakshi Nihalani's multidimensionale und konzeptuelle Arbeiten präsentieren Formen, die von den menschlichen und geschlechtsspezifischen Konfrontationen als dem zentralen Konflikt der unterrepräsentierten und unsichtbaren Schichten der Gesellschaft erzählen. Traditionelle Stickereien, Fäden und Textilien verweisen auf die widersprüchliche Dualität als Strukturen innerhalb visueller Formen gegenüber ihren beabsichtigten praktischen und funktionalen Verwendungen in „There is No Finishing Line“ und „The Torch“.

Jonathan Davis' Arbeiten erforschen Nation als sprachliche Herausforderungen, die historisch gefährliche Drücke aufkommen lassen, welche von der gegenwärtigen Politik ausgehen und Fragen über die Natur des gegenwärtigen politischen und sozialen Diskurses aufwerfen. „We're All Strangers Now“ und „The Storytellers“ sind zwei der vier Mixed-Media-Arbeiten, die als Metapher für die scheinbare Macht von Geschichten über empirische Informationen stehen und für die seltsamen Kräfte dahinter.

Der Künstlerin und der Künstler haben die Arbeiten installiert und werden anwesend sein.

## ARTISTS

MEENAKSHI NIHALANI (IN)

Web: [www.meenakshiatelier.com](http://www.meenakshiatelier.com)

## BACKGROUND

Meenakshi Nihalani is a multidisciplinary artist from Mumbai, India primarily working in sculpture. She received a BFA in Sculpture from the Sir J.J. School of Fine Arts, Mumbai. In 2016 Nihalani received the merit award from Bombay Art Society and the Lord Mayo Memorial Award for Sculpture from the Sir J.J. School of Art in 2017. In 2018 she participated in the Indo-German collaboration at Kunstfabrik, Darmstadt; showing at Artlet Studio, Karlsruhe. In 2018, Nihalani exhibited at the Honorary Embassy of Republic of India in Stuttgart.

Currently the artist lives and works in India and exhibits internationally.

## STATEMENT

Meenakshi Nihalani's current works depict the human condition and societal state of mind in modern day India. Working with two and three-dimensional representations that narrate the female perspective as a translation for the human experience. Scale is used to communicate dramatic visual forms allowing narrative to serve as a reminder. The works aim to dispel gender issues and role. As a result, female forms and characters are the main protagonists in her artworks. Nihalani's fascination with the linearity of forms and drawings representing human expressions aid in revealing socio-political facets of society; ironically, adopting traditional sewing techniques to depict modern perspectives within humanity highlighting the importance of individualism. Coming from a conservative family with a passion for the arts, her visuals aim to represent social and political issues as conceptual forms and as surreal characters. Art is then seen as activism and in aid of translating socio-political philosophies.

## OVERVIEW

On August 15th, 1947 India achieved independence from 200 years of British-rule lasting from the mid-18th century until 1947. The road to independence highlighted the Quit India Movement and marked the contribution, strength, union, and leadership quality of women at a time of mass male incarceration. The moment had given birth to a rise in collective thinking, attaining freedom, and an insight into women within politics and socioeconomic spheres.

Currently, the participation of women in political and educational environments is necessary and the exhibition highlights the notion of unity, realization of self identity, an upbringing of an entire civilization, and the presence of dynamism as matriarchy and its unique element or power within an evolved society.

The craft techniques within the works here explicitly mock society from where I stand, by introducing the element of stitching and sewing which is commonly taught to every young girl as a custom to eventual male servitude. The technique instead is used as an element for self-individuality and to unite women at a grassroots level.

## WORKS

### 1. There Is No Finishing Line

Cotton textile fabric, thread, pastels

117 x 73cm

2018

The work represents the myth of targets created to colonize and maintain the structure of society. These targets however, end up being the pedestals of achievement wavering off the individuality and creating new extensions of the mind and the natural phenomena of life.

### 2. The Torch

Cotton textile fabric, thread, pastels

90 x 60cm

2018

The work is metaphor for the vision of progressive society with no gender preferences and nationality labels.

### 3. Young India=Matriarchy Society

Cotton skirt, nylon rope

Varying Dimensions

2018

"I stand here, feeling the urge to be elevated, with a vision of a matriarchal aspiration, where my nature gifted gender is respected."

JONATHAN DAVIS (UK)

Web: [www.studiojdavis.com](http://www.studiojdavis.com)

## BACKGROUND

Jonathan Davis established his art practice and studio in North London in 2013 following a career in architecture (qualifying at the University of Sheffield), urban design, urban planning (qualifying at the London School of Economics), built environment research and urban policy. In addition to his self-guided development as an artist, he has so far undertaken part time study at London's University of the Arts -

Central St Martin's School; under the mentorship of Tricia Gillman and; at the International Dresden Summer Academy.

Jonathan's practice is primarily concerned with material, human and conceptual; in 2D he works in painting, drawing and collage and he has more recently made mixed media works in 3D and with light. Having exhibited in solo shows in London, 'Contemplation Fields' at Bloomsbury Design in 2014 and 'Panta Rhei' at Highgate Contemporary in 2016, this will be Jonathan's third exhibition.

Jonathan was born in England and is a British and EU citizen.

## STATEMENT

The so called 'populist revolt' of 2016 - 17 was a turning point in Jonathan Davis' work. It focused his attitudes towards social, political and economic processes on his artistic practice. Until that point, in earlier bodies of work, he had withheld personal and biographical elements by creating processes in which, albeit under tightly controlled conditions, the works 'made themselves'. They were left open to the possibilities of chance and offered the audience opportunities to make what they wanted of them. This turning point has however been a transformatory 'call to action' and he now permits himself to enter the frame.

The body of work in this exhibition originates from Jonathan's questions about identity, nationhood, contemporary UK and historic German political discourse, symbols and a two year period of reflection. An ongoing series of experimental work which began in 2016 with the title 'A Stranger in My Own Country' (the title borrowed from Hans Fallada's 1944 prison diaries) lies at the foundation of the current show.

Jonathan is grateful for this opportunity to participate in the Centre's residency programme which has enabled him to come to Berlin to pose questions about the direction of contemporary political discourse and its possible relationship to past events.

## OVERVIEW

From the onset of the so-called 'populist revolt' of 2016-17, the artist has suspected that the UK Government's stated aim to leave the European Union, otherwise known as 'Brexit,' is in fact the manifestation of a coup d'état.

Given the apparent similarities between the front pages of two newspapers (one published in 2016, the other in 1933), the artist also considers ways in which public opinion can be manipulated. Is there an equivalence of distortion, of euphemism or of intention to deceive between two very different periods of European history?

These works are the interim findings of an investigation in which the artist requests your participation. The investigation has so far gathered material that suggests that public opinion can more often be influenced by telling stories than attempts to elucidate truth by the examination of empirically derived evidence. Psychological and neuroscientific research has demonstrated that this is more likely if a person's thinking style is of a type associated with conservative, or even authoritarian political attitudes.

Reflecting these possibilities, the work has been separated into four rooms:

Room A – My evidence

Room B – My story

Room C – Your evidence

Room D – Your story

The artist has concluded that as he has not been able to discern either your evidence or your story prior to your visit, he has decided to close Rooms C and D to the public. He does however welcome your response. Please address an email to him in either German or English at [jonathan@studiojdavis.com](mailto:jonathan@studiojdavis.com).

## WORKS

### 1. We're All Strangers Now

Polyester fabric, collage, light projection

190 x 105cm (approx.)

2018

### 2. The Storytellers

Polyester fabric, collage

190 x 105cm (approx.)

2018

### 3. - alles schwamm...

Mixed media on paper

160 x 75cm (approx.)

2018

### 4. Wer hat Angst vor Weiss Blau Rot?

Set of 9 nr. 6 x 4 cm transparencies

18 x 12cm

2018