KATE SWEETAPPLE
Incidental Data
2011 | *UTS Gallery, Sydney*

This exhibition is located in the field of visual communication design with a specific focus on information visualisation. The availability of digitised data and access to visualisation tools has led to the proliferation of information visualisation. Yet, as UCLA Professor of Information Studies, Johanna Drucker (2012) argues, not all data is well served by the existing tools of visualisation borrowed from the sciences, which are embedded with "fundamental epistemological values" not appropriate to all humanistic inquiry.

The curatorial premise of this exhibition is to challenge the conventions of data representation dominated by scientific posivitism. The exhibited work, by six leading international and local designers-artists (Stacey Green, Tim Knowles, Daniel Eatock, Christopher Baker, Sam Winston and Chris Gaul), is devoid of the graphs, charts, diagrams, and maps typically associated with this field.

Instead, data is rendered through analogue visual practices that reveal insights not afforded by algorithm-driven digital representations, calling "into question the claims of transparency, certainty, and objectivity embedded in the Cartesian language of the genre" (Hall 2011). By locating the work of these artists as information visualisation, *Incidental Data* offers a critique and reimagining of existing data representation practices.

This curated exhibition therefore contributes to the field of information design by offering alternate modes of representing information. It is a contribution to the growing argument about the limitations of current conventions of graphical expression and the necessity for design practitioners to engage in the area of visual knowledge production (Burdick et al. 2012, Drucker 2014, Hall 2011, Jessop 2008).

Incidental Data
by Kate Sweetapple
Photograph by Silversalt Photography

KATE SWEETAPPLE
Incidental Data
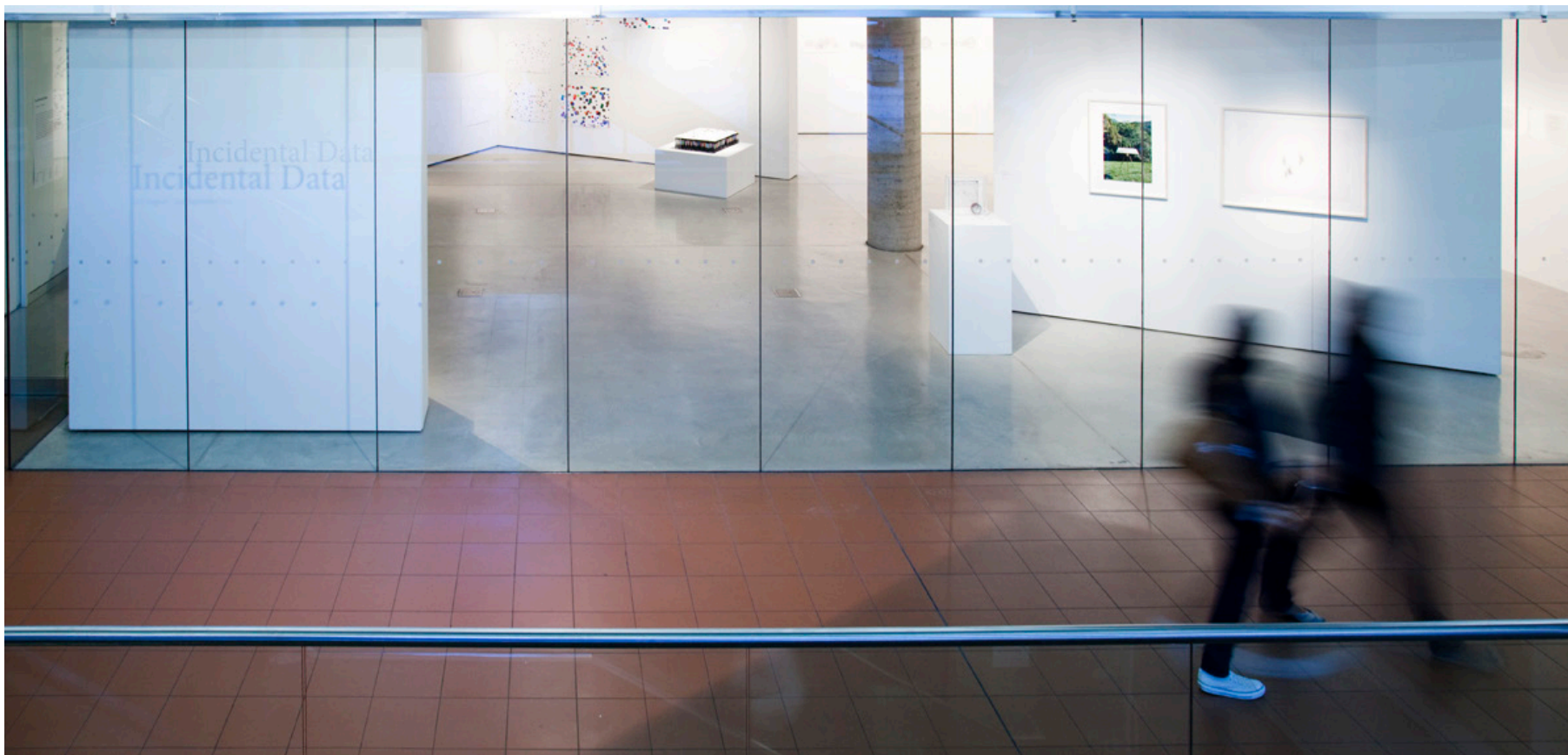
Exhibition view
Photograph by Silversalt Photography

![UTS University of Technology, Sydney]
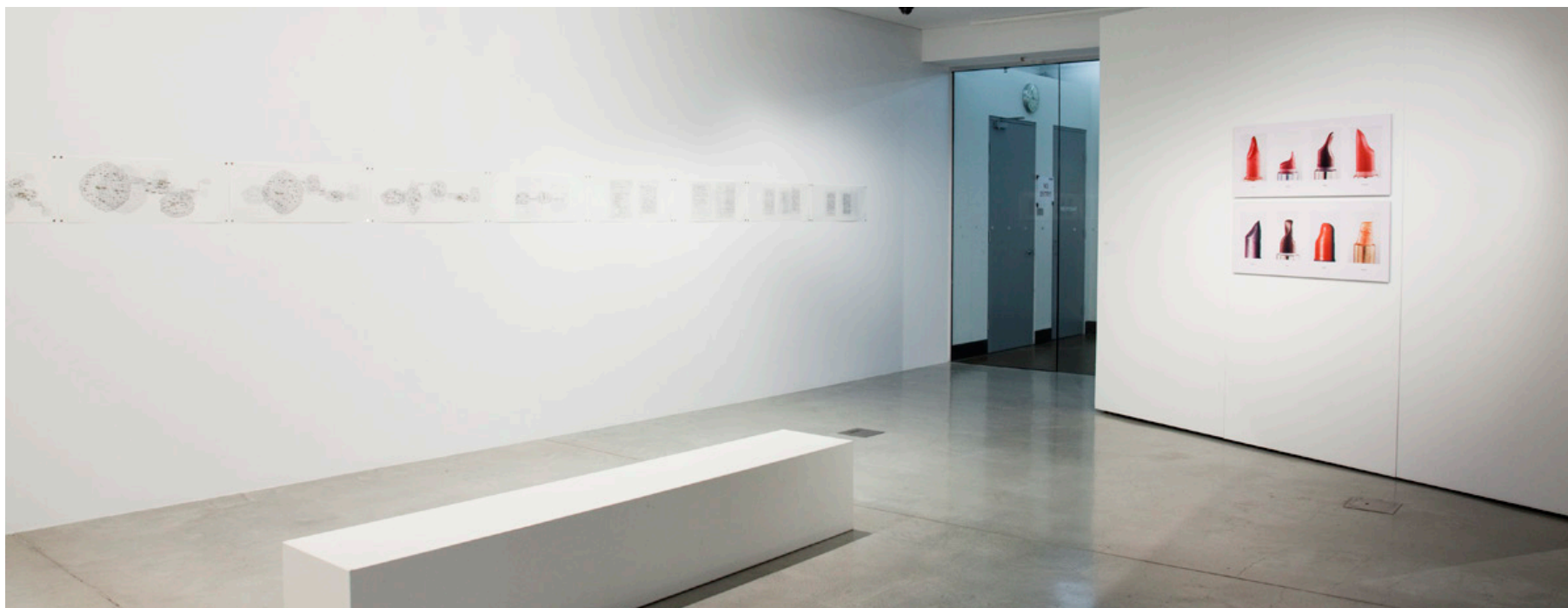
KATE SWEETAPPLE
Incidental Data

Exhibition views
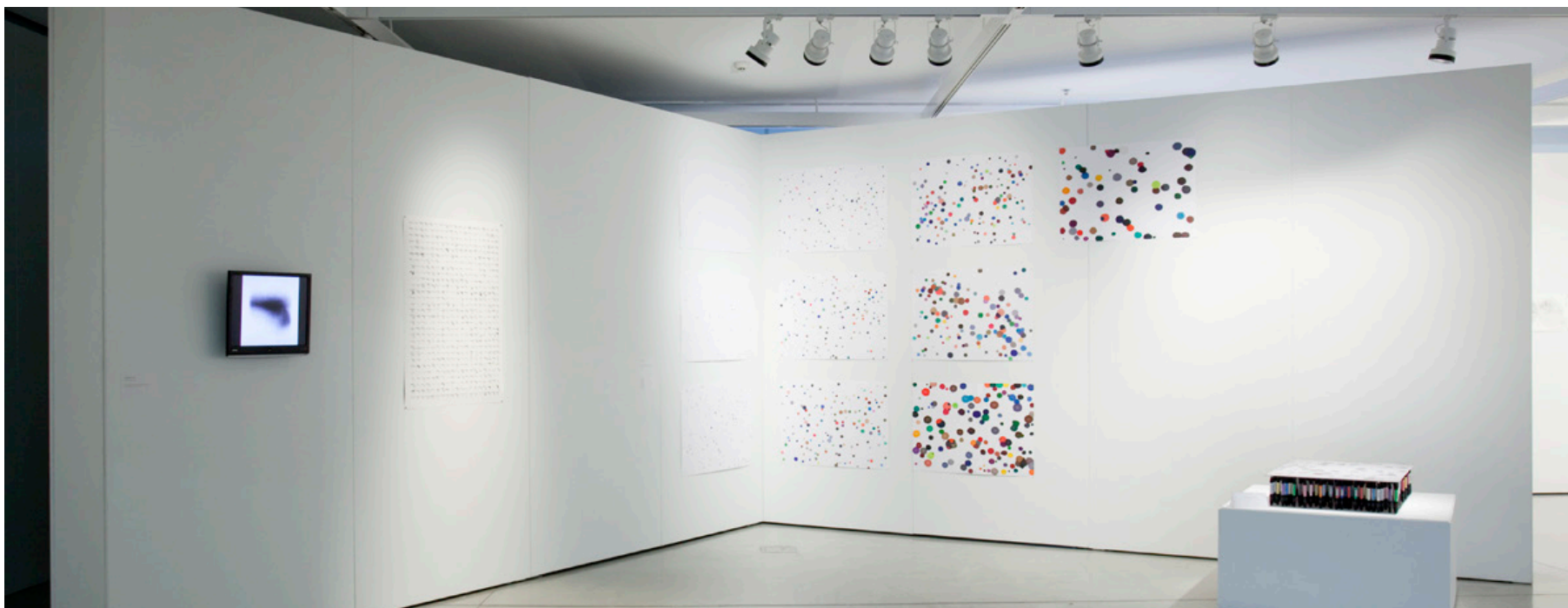Photograph by Silversalt Photography

KATE SWEETAPPLE
Incidental Data

Exhibition views
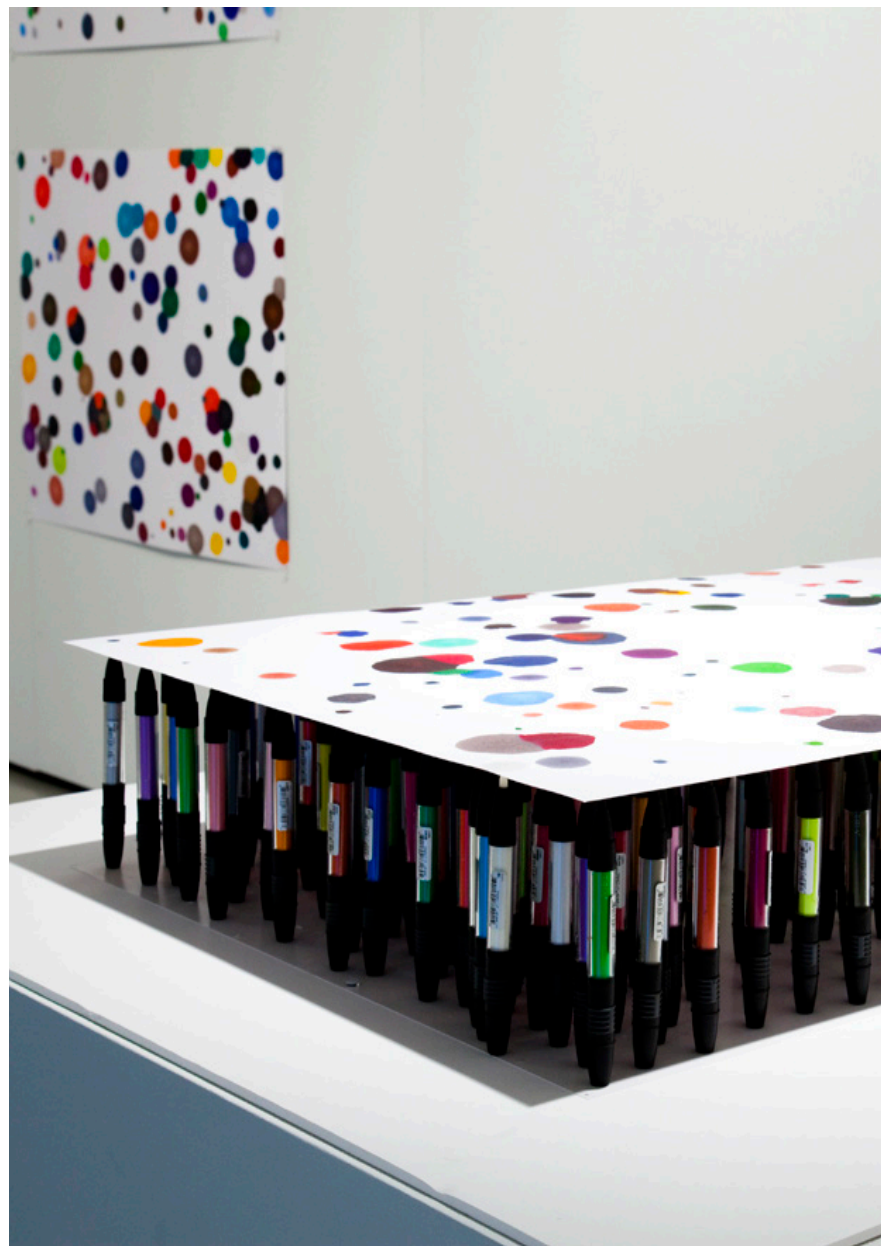Photograph by Silversalt Photography

Incidental Data invitation

Simona

Rosie

Beth

Wendy

Ellen

Maradee

INCIDENTAL DATA

2 AUGUST – 2 SEPTEMBER
OPENING TUESDAY 2 AUGUST 6 – 8PM

Devoid of graphs, charts and diagrams, Incidental Data features work that falls to the edges of conventional data visualisation, recording overlooked phenomena and human activity.

CHRISTOPHER BAKER (USA), DANIEL EATOCK (UK), CHRIS GAUL (AUS) STACY GREENE (USA), TIM KNOWLES (UK) & SAM WINSTON (UK)

CURATED BY KATE SWEETAPPLE

ACCOMPANYING PUBLIC PROGRAM

DATA POETRY: WEDNESDAY 10TH AUGUST 6.30-8.15PM
Data Poetry brings together design specialists and researchers with diverse methods of rendering abstract material into visual form. With exhibition viewing and refreshments, see website for details.

GALLERY FLOORTALK: THURSDAY 11TH AUGUST 1 – 2PM
RSVP to utsgallery@uts.edu.au

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SYDNEY DESIGN 2011
30 JULY — 14 AUG

IMAGE / Stacy Greene, Lipstick, 1992 -1993. Courtesy the artist

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UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

Incidental Data

2nd August – 2nd September 2011

Devoid of graphs, charts and diagrams, *Incidental Data* features work that falls to the edges of conventional data visualisation, recording overlooked phenomena and human activity.

Christopher Baker U.S.A.
Daniel Eatock U.K.
Chris Gaul AUS.
Stacy Green U.S.A.
Tim Knowles U.K.
Sam Winston U.K.

Curated by Kate Sweetapple

Accompanying Public Program:

Data Poetry
Wednesday 10th August 6:30 – 8:15pm

Data Poetry brings together design specialists and researchers with diverse methods of rendering abstract material into visual form. With Kate Sweetapple, Mitchell Whitelaw, Elisa Lee and Ben Hosken.

Gallery Floortalk
Thursday 11th August 1 – 2pm

Incidental Data

2nd August – 2nd September 2011

UTS:GALLERY

From the top of my garden stairs I can see the bus stop full of people. I am glad they are waiting. It means I haven't missed the bus. Although I can't be sure until I see the girl with the pink earphones and impossible shoes. I look for her as others look to watches and timetables; I glance anxiously across the road from where she usually emerges. Have I missed it? The Express arrives and leaves, taking the office workers with it. Here she comes. We catch the 395.

Taking a seat towards the back of the bus, I turn over my ticket to check the time. It's stamped 395 07 1 27JUN11 07:51 8831 8. The bus is one minute late. There are seven previous listings of my commute to and from Central. I marvel at this modern log, this pixel-y record of my comings and goings and consider its many possible uses: a personalised bus timetable; an alibi; a time card for work; evidence of long hours and parental neglect. I put the ticket back in my wallet.

Before familiarity can turn into awareness the familiar must be stripped of its inconspicuousness; we must give up assuming that the object in question needs no explanation. However frequently recurrent, modest, vulgar it may be, it will [then] be labelled as something unusual.

— Berthold Brecht

Just as writers are adroit collecting snippets of dialogue or description, artists and designers see things – they are the note-takers of the visual world. They gather raw material for future use – in sketchbooks, on scraps of paper, as memories – where it lies and awaits repurposing. The work in *Incidental Data* is created by artists and designers with this finely tuned capacity to read the visual and to turn what remains largely unseen into rich information. Through this process of representation, new understandings and insights are both made and shared. This work is a type of data visualisation.

Data visualisation purists contend, however, that form follows function. Utility is of primary importance – designating shape and materiality as the residue of purpose. Purists are ever suspicious of these formal concerns slipping into stylistic conceit. *Incidental Data* defines this expectation: form *precedes* function.

Work is made (drawn, photographed, collaged) and in the process of making, data is collected and represented. No data set exists prior to the work; instead the work incidentally produces data. Information visualisation is the by-product of a process and not the primary intention.

Yet this work is about more than the embodiment of abstract data; it is about more than a process of revelation, of making visible. By visually recording and describing the world simultaneously this work promotes a particular kind of understanding, one that bypasses the linguistic and accesses visceral ways of knowing – a perspective too quickly discounted in a rationalist world. As participant Chris Gaul writes, 'in our daily routine it is all too easy to become unconscious to new ways of seeing the world around us and we 'literally need to be brought back to our senses.'[1]

Familiar materials in unlikely scenarios – waxy lipsticks, scratchy branches, leaky pens – alongside unlikely realisations of familiar scenarios – scanning your library card or writing a story – provide opportunities for discovery and new ways of seeing.

Through the playful work presented in *Incidental Data* these artists and designers become unofficial timekeepers, meteorologists, archivists, and anthropologists, urging us to be mindful of the delights in daily life. — K.S

1 Daswitz was, William 1930 *Philosophy and its others: ways of being and mind* SUNY Press p. 102, from Gaul, Chris 2002 *The Art of Everyday Things*, unpublished 2005.

Stacy Greene

Lipsticks 1992–1993
2 digital prints on aluminium

The genesis of the project came a number of years ago after walking out of the Whitney Biennial in New York City. A friend of mine, Rosie, dropped her lipstick, so I picked it up and unscrewed it for her. Rosie's lipstick excited me more than anything I had seen at the Whitney and sparked this photographic work.[2]

Based in Brooklyn, New York artist Stacy Greene has been practicing photography for many years. Her solo exhibitions include *Movies I'll Never Make* and *Nostalgia Isn't What It Used To Be*. Greene has also participated in a number of group exhibitions including *Open House* at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York.

Tim Knowles

Mk3 Postal Drawing Project 2006–ongoing
Perspex, cardboard, pen, ink on paper

Larch on Easel #1 [4pen] The How, Borrowdale, Cumbria 2005
Ink on paper, c-type print

Like signatures, each drawing reveals something about the different qualities and characteristics of the various trees as they sway in the breeze: the relaxed, fluid line of an oak; the delicate, tentative touch of a larch; a hawthorn's stiff, slightly neurotic scratches. Process is key to my work, so each tree drawing is accompanied by a photograph or video documenting the location and manner of its creation.[3]

Tim Knowles has presented nine solo exhibitions over the last ten years, most recently his concurrent shows in New York *Recorded Delivery* and *For The Baron*. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions mainly in Europe and the U.K. and has been awarded several prestigious grants and residencies including a British Council & 07-08 Ignite grant towards *The Weather Exchange* project in collaboration with Brazilian artist Cadu. His public art installations have also been shown in The Economist Plaza, London, Plymouth Hoe, Plymouth and Millennium Square, Bristol.

Daniel Eatock

Full Colour > No Colour 2011
Inkjet on paper

Pen Prints 2011
300 Tria Pantone markers, 14 prints on paper

A sheet of paper is carefully laid to rest on the pen's nibs. It is left for a few minutes until the ink from the pen is absorbed by the paper and leaves circular dots on the page. The pens are knocked down, rearranged and the process repeated. Each subsequent print will need to be left resting on the pen's nibs for longer to absorb ink from the drying pens.[4]

Since completing his M.A. at London's Royal College of Art, Daniel Eatock has exhibited extensively across Europe, the U.K. and the United States. Known both as an artist and graphic designer, his most recent solo exhibition, *Performing Circles*, was shown in Dublin 2010. His work will feature in an upcoming group exhibition *Graphic Design Now* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, U.S.A. Eatock's comprehensive bibliography includes the monograph *Imprint*, published by the Princeton Architectural Press in 2008.

Chris Gaul

Library Card 2010
Library card, music box

This library card uses coded punch cards to translate the language of barcodes into a form that also resonates with people. The borrower winds the card through a music box that plays the unique tune of their name as it scans the information. The same concept could be applied to driver's licences, video store cards, staff passes or other forms of personal identification, so that each person's tune would become a familiar motif in their daily life.[5]

Chris Gaul recently completed a B.DESIGN in Visual Communication and a B.A. in International Studies at UTS. His practice focuses on creating moments of discovery and mindfulness in everyday life. *Incidental Data* is the first exhibition of work from his recent project *The Art of Everyday Objects*.

Christopher Baker

American Toys 2007
Animation, digital print

The United States Patent Office can be viewed as the collective repository of the nation's imagination – a historical database of possible futures. Like the hazy images from an almost-forgotten dream, this imagined toy gun is the residual footprint of all 500 patent applications submitted for the 'toy gun' category since the 1800s. The resultant image becomes a collective expression of the prototypical American toy.[6]

Christopher Baker's recent projects have explored the complex relationship between society and its technologies. His time and/or site-specific works such as *Murmur Study* and *H.P.V.S.* (*Human Phantom Vibration Syndrome*) have been presented in the U.S., Europe and Canada. His work has also featured in several well-known publications including the critically acclaimed *Data Flow: Visualising Information in Graphic Design* series. Baker is currently an Assistant Professor in the Art and Technology Studies department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.
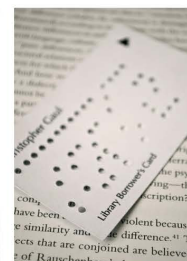
Sam Winston

Orphan 2010
Paper collage

Since 1999 I collated scraps of paper, diary notes and typed word documents all pertaining to this one idea I was trying to express through a story. And when in 2010 I finally did reach a final draft …I had generated a history of documents that said something about the process of writing itself … I created clouds of text that I could use as the 'typeface' for my final draft. It is a book in which you have both the story and its history presented in the same page.[7]

London-based artist and typographer Sam Winston works across the fields of writing sculpture, drawings and artist book production. Solo exhibitions include *Scuola Internazionale di Grafica*, Venice, Italy. He has participated in many international exhibitions including *Typecast* at Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne. He is a U.K. founding member of Arc–Artists Editions and his work is held in Special Collections in the Getty Research Institute, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Tate Gallery and the Museum of Modern Art.

2 Stacy Greene, from *Art Exhibit* accompanying text, 1.2.2.2.
   Information Visualisation Conference 2007
3 Tim Knowles, *Cabinet Magazine Issue 28 Events* Winter 2007/08
4 Daniel Eatock, correspondence with curator on *Pen Print*, May 2011
5 Chris Gaul, correspondence with curator, July 2011
6 Christopher Baker, quoted in *Data Flow*
   Die Gestalten Verlag 2008
7 Sam Winston, www.samwinston.com
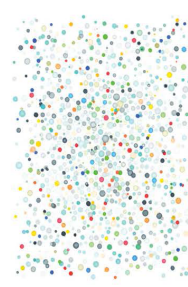
Stacy Greene *Lipsticks* 1992–1993 (detail)

Chris Gaul *Library Card* 2010 (detail)

Tim Knowles *Hawthorn on easel 1 Foot of Castle Crag, Borrowdale* 2005 (detail)

Christopher Baker *American Toys* 2007 (composite)

Daniel Eatock *Felt-Tip Print* 2006
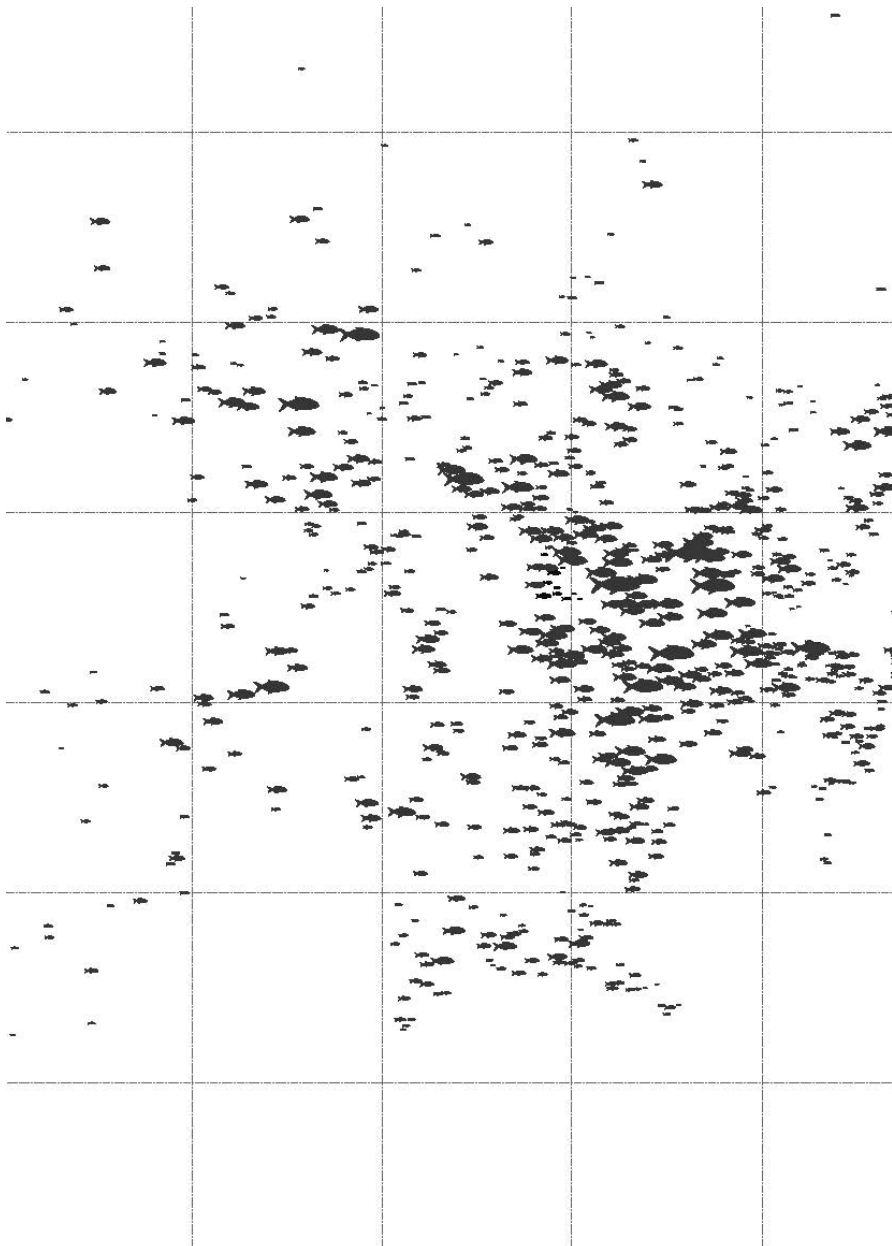Ink on paper. Made by repeatedly balancing a single A1 sheet of paper on the nibs of a set of Pantone pens.

Sam Winston *Orphan* 2010 (detail)

All images courtesy and copyright the artists

Data Poetry invitation

DATA POETRY

WEDNESDAY 10 AUGUST 6.30-8.15PM

DATA POETRY brings together computing specialists, professional designers and researchers to discuss their diverse methods of rendering abstract material into visual form. A variety of visual practices will be explored as well as debate and discussion of new, computer-driven processes.

KATE SWEETAPPLE, SCHOOL OF DESIGN, UTS
MITCHELL WHITELAW, FACULTY OF ARTS & DESIGN, UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
ELISA LEE INTERACTION DESIGNER, SYDNEY
BEN HOSKEN FLINK LABS, MELBOURNE

In conjunction with INCIDENTAL DATA at UTS Gallery.
Followed by exhibition viewing & refreshments. All wecome, free.
LOCATION: Level 6, UTS Faculty of DAB, Building 6, 702 Harris St, Ultimo
RSVP REQUESTED: utsgallery@uts.edu.au

GALLERY FLOORTALK: THURSDAY 11 AUGUST 1-2PM

IMAGE / Kate Sweetapple, *Map of Sydney, Fish Surnames*, 2010 (detail)

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RECOMMENDATIONS

INCIDENTAL DATA

2 August – 2 September, Monday – Friday 12pm – 6pm. Gallery floor talk: 11 August, Thursday 1pm – 2pm.

Opening event:
Tuesday 2 August 6-8pm in conjunction with DAB LAB Research Gallery.

UTS Gallery

Cost:
Free

Contact:
Holly Williams

Phone:
02 9514 1652

Email for Enquiries

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Design, Digital Media, Graphic Design, Installations, Urban Design, Visual Arts

We are all used to interpreting graphs, charts and diagrams as an everyday part of life but can information be represented without the use of these conventional formats? Curated by visual communications designer Kate Sweetapple, the exhibition measures, records and reveals overlooked phenomena and human activity using such diverse analogue visual practices as handwriting, lipsticks, trees, glue and the postal system. Unexpected insights will be revealed that are not afforded by algorithm-driven digital representations. Read more

Gallery floor talk: Thursday 11 August 1-2pm.

CURATOR: Kate Sweetapple (AU)

EXHIBITORS: Christopher Baker (US), Daniel Eatock (UK), Chris Gaul (AU), Stacey Greene (US), Tim Knowles (UK), Sam Winston (UK)

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DATA POETRY

Wednesday 10 August 6:30 – 8:15pm

UTS Gallery

Cost:
Free

Booking information:

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Book now – limited places. Parking may be available by prior arrangement.

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Holly Williams

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02 9514 1652

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Design, Design Process, Digital Media, Graphic Design, Sustainable Design, Urban Design, Visual Arts

Computing specialists, professional designers and researchers discuss their diverse methods of rendering abstract material into visual form. Data Poetry is held in conjunction with the exhibition, Incidental Data and presents a critique of data visualisation practices through contemporary work created by 'old' methods and tools. It will explore diverse analogue visual practices that reveal insights not afforded by algorithm-driven digital representations as well as encouraging debate and discussion of new, computer-driven processes. The seminar is preceded by an exhibition viewing and drinks.

Speakers: Elisa Lee, Ben Hosken, Kate Sweetapple, Mitchell Whitelaw

Sydney Design events will be filmed by Powerhouse Museum staff and the content will be used by the Museum for promotion and this includes uploading into Powerhouse Museum accounts across a variety of third party platforms. If you do not wish to be filmed please inform the photographer/videographer at the time of the event.

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KATE SWEETAPPLE
Incidental Data

1. Incidental Data, exhibition listing, Sydney Design

2. Data Poetry, exhibition listing, Sydney Design

Weblinks:
http://art.uts.edu.au/index.php/incidental-data/

http://katesweetapple.com/Incidental-Data

http://www.sydneydesign.com.au/2011/exhibitions/incidental-data

http://www.sydneydesign.com.au/2011/talks/data-poetry