LIST OF WORKS

   Wood, paint, PVA glue, LaserJet prints
   317.5 x 1377 x 20.7 cm
   Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

2. In and Out of the Vortex, 2011
   Ink, watercolour, Letraset text on paper
   53.5 x 64 cm
   Courtesy Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York

3. The Strange Attractor, 2010
   Ink, pencil, Letraset text on paper
   115 x 83 cm
   Courtesy Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York

4. From the World as Determined to the World as Imagined, 2007
   Watercolour, pencil, ink, Letraset text on paper
   95 x 101.5 cm
   Courtesy Galerie Christian Nagel, Köln

5. An Endless Sequence of Perceptual Frameworks, 2008
   Ink, watercolour, Letraset text on paper
   137 x 65 cm
   Courtesy Galerie Christian Nagel, Köln

   Ink, watercolour, Letraset text, photographic prints, photographic dye on paper
   80 x 126 cm
   Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

7. A Progression of Signs and Messages – Peckham Rye Lane, March 2012
   Super 8 film transferred to DVD
   6’ 36”
   Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

8. Original films made by participants recording their data streams which form the basis of their Mosaics presented in Changing Everything, 1998.
   Courtesy the South London Gallery

9. (Screen on floor)
   Archive films of Changing Everything at the South London Gallery, 1997–8, Reel One
   Super 8 transferred to DVD
   3’ 14”
   Purchased by SLG and the Contemporary Art Society from the solo exhibition Changing Everything, 1998.
   Courtesy the South London Gallery

10. Series of 12 photographs of Changing Everything; 1998
    In the South London Gallery
    Top row: artists working with participants to develop their Mosaics. Bottom rows: Participants administering the installation and visitors participating.
    Each 15.6 x 23.6 cm

11. Creating My Own Journey, November 1998 / April 1999
    Panel 1: 118.5 x 80 cm, panels 2–6 each: 116 x 16.5 cm. Six panels: photographic prints, photographic dye, acrylic paint, laser prints, Letraset on card.
    Creating My Own Journey (Julie Lewis), 1997
    Super 8 transferred to DVD
    3’ 4”
    Courtesy MOT Gallery, London

12. The Information Nomad, 2011
    Ink, pencil, Letraset text on paper
    80 x 125 cm
    Courtesy MOT Gallery, London

13. The World As It Is And The World As It Could Be, 2006
    Ink, pencil, Letraset text on paper
    125 x 82 cm
    Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

    Pencil, gouache on paper
    86 cm x 112 cm
    Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

15. A vitrine contains a collection of announcements for Stephen Willats’ recent exhibitions, several out-of-print books and a DVD, which is available on the Control website.

    Photo montage
    50 x 40 cm
    Courtesy the South London Gallery

17. SLW Life with Vases and Diagrams, 2012
    Super 8 transferred to DVD
    3’ 50”
    Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

All works courtesy the artist
London-based artist Stephen Willats is a pioneer of conceptual art and has made work examining the function and meaning of art in society since the early 1960s. Willats’ first solo exhibition at the South London Gallery was in 1998. Entitled Changing Everything, it was the culmination of a two-year project which began with a series of public meetings at various locations including a Women’s Refuge, the Kicking and Punching Club, the Vietnamese Centre, and the Baptist Church, through which Willats started a dialogue with local residents. He then invited those who were interested to go on a walk with him following a pre-determined route through the housing estates next to the gallery, including Sceaux Gardens and the North Peckham Estate, and to use a Super-8 camera to film signs, objects, traces of behaviour, or anything they felt was relevant to life on those estates. Aiming to work with participants to create a cultural model of how art might more closely relate to society, Willats not only made the work for the show with the residents, but also invited them to invigilate the exhibition and to ask visitors to make their own contributions to it.

Fourteen years later, for the current show, Surfing with the Attractor, Willats re-presents material from and documentation of Changing Everything alongside a huge new data stream made with 14 London-based artists, as well as a series of diagrams of the ideas informing its creation, and a video work of unedited sequences of signs filmed by Willats using a Super-8 film camera as he progressed down the two streets on which the central data stream was made. Comprising hundreds of carefully ordered images gathered using diverse methods, the data stream documents two contrasting streets in London: Rye Lane in Peckham and Regent Street in the West End. Also extending beyond the gallery space, the show includes films showing on monitors in three shops on Peckham Road and Camberwell Church Street, as well as graphic stickers which are being widely distributed locally and are available to visitors to take away with them.

Willats’ intention for the data stream is to present a dynamic picture of the transient world we live in, or a multiplicity of individual viewpoints on a shared experience, in this case that of walking down two contrasting streets of London. The work relates closely to Data Stream Portrait of New York, 2011, for which Willats worked with artists living in New York to create the centrepiece of his exhibition there, The Strange Attractor, at Reena Spaulings Fine Art. The data streams both for that show and for the Attractor were made through a process of allocating each participating artist a medium (such as a disposable camera, digital camera, video camera, audio description, rubbering etc.), and a ‘channel’, such as ‘facial expressions’ or ‘signs of nature’, within which to frame their documentation of the two very different streets. Willats then worked with some of the artists to edit and ‘re-media-se’ their documentation into the diagrammatic format of the data stream in which the multiple viewpoints and channels are brought together. Cutting across the gallery space, the vast data stream divides it in two, analogous to the separation between the two streets recorded, and invites visitors to create their own walks, both through the gallery and along the two streets, via whichever channels they choose to focus on. The mass of information presented in the data stream, and visitors’ interaction with it, combine to make a clear and powerful statement about Willats’ understanding of reality as a cultural phenomenon which is shared and present within everybody’s consciousness, albeit through individual and therefore differing registers.

The contributing artists are: Gareth Bell Jones, Laura Bygrave, Reem Chaif (Febrik), Lucy Clout, Alex Crocker, Philip Ewe, Luke Kemp, Louis Le Brocq, Paul Pieroni, Philomene Pirecki, Ros Taylor, Edward Thomasson and Laura Wilson.

This exhibition also re-presents a series of graphic works from Changing Everything in 1998, made from footage shot in the 1990s around the South London Gallery, alongside film works on 14 monitors.

A catalogue accompanies the exhibition and includes an interview with the artist and texts by John Kelsey and Tom Martin. This catalogue is available online and from the SLG shop for £12.

www.southlondongallery.org/stephenwillats

Text taken from CHANGING EVERYTHING, Stephen Willats’ 1998 exhibition at the SLG

The Mosaics presented on the walls of the South London Gallery were the outcomes of a workshop conducted by the artist with a group of local residents who had participated in the work during 1998.

Individual residents were asked to accompany the artist on a walk through the North Peckham Estate, taking Super 8 and Snappy Snap 35mm cameras, looking for signs, objects, textures etc., that they felt had another meaning and that through their perceptual transformation they could see as having a new association with their life on the Estate. All participants in the workshop had made the same walk, to show the relativity of personal perception.

In a second workshop, participants edited their documentaries into a series of images and texts that reflected a question or problem situation that they wanted to ask the viewer about how life on the Estate could be changed.

The resulting set of fourteen mosaics were viewed with the aid of a Guide Book which presented these questions and, at the back, contained a set of Response Sheets on which the viewer’s own response to the Mosaics could be expressed in whatever way they wanted. Pens and pencils, tables and chairs were provided in the Gallery so people could create their own conceptualisations on the Response Sheets. There were no right or wrong answers to the questions, and all the responses were made anonymously.

Completed Response Sheets were given to an administrator of the installation who was one of the local residents that had made the Mosaics, and then in turn these were displayed on Response Mosaics, situated as free standing open grids in the centre of the Gallery. Each Wall Mosaic had its own dedicated Response Mosaic so that visitors to the Gallery could compare responses to each of the questions.

The displays of the Mosaics were records of the personal journeys of the participants, and the Response Mosaics were a wider statement showing the diversity of people’s differing social perceptions and creative imagination for possibilities of change in the world around them.

**Biography**


Further information: www.stephenwillats.com

Stephen Willats Book Launch

Wed 20 Jun, 7pm, free

RGAP publishers invite you to the launch of Stephen Willats’ new book Artwork as Social Model: A Manual of Questions and Propositions, which includes texts, interviews and artwork from the last five decades of his career. Artwork as Social Model describes Willats’ radical approach to making art that challenges the overt determinism of our surrounding social infrastructure, from the remote architecture of so many of the buildings that form our daily environment to the nature of the art museum and gallery.

The Influence of Stephen Willats on Younger Artists

Thu 19 Jul, 7pm, £5/£3 conc

Emily Petrick, director of The Showroom, chairs a discussion with artists Kathrin Bohn, Jacob Jacobson and Nina Pope exploring the influence of Stephen Willats’ work and ideas on a younger generation of artists.

Book online: www.southlondongallery.org/tickets

Or call 020 7703 6120

**Current exhibition**

Febrik: Play, I Follow You

17 May – 22 Jul 2012
First floor galleries

**Forthcoming exhibition**

Rashid Johnson

28 Sept – 26 Nov 2012
Main gallery

**Off-site works can be found at:**

18. Parson’s, 28–30 Peckham High Street SE15 5DT
People and Diagrams, Oxford Street – Film Two, 2010
Super B transferred to DVD 4’2”. Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

19. Payless, 95–96 Peckham Road, SE15 5LG
People and Diagrams, Rye Lane, Peckham, 2012
Super B transferred to DVD 3’4”. Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London

20. Camberwell Superstore, 32–34 Camberwell Church Street SE5 0BZ
People in Fins with Diagrams, Regent Street, 2012
Super B transferred to DVD 3’ 52”. Courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery, London