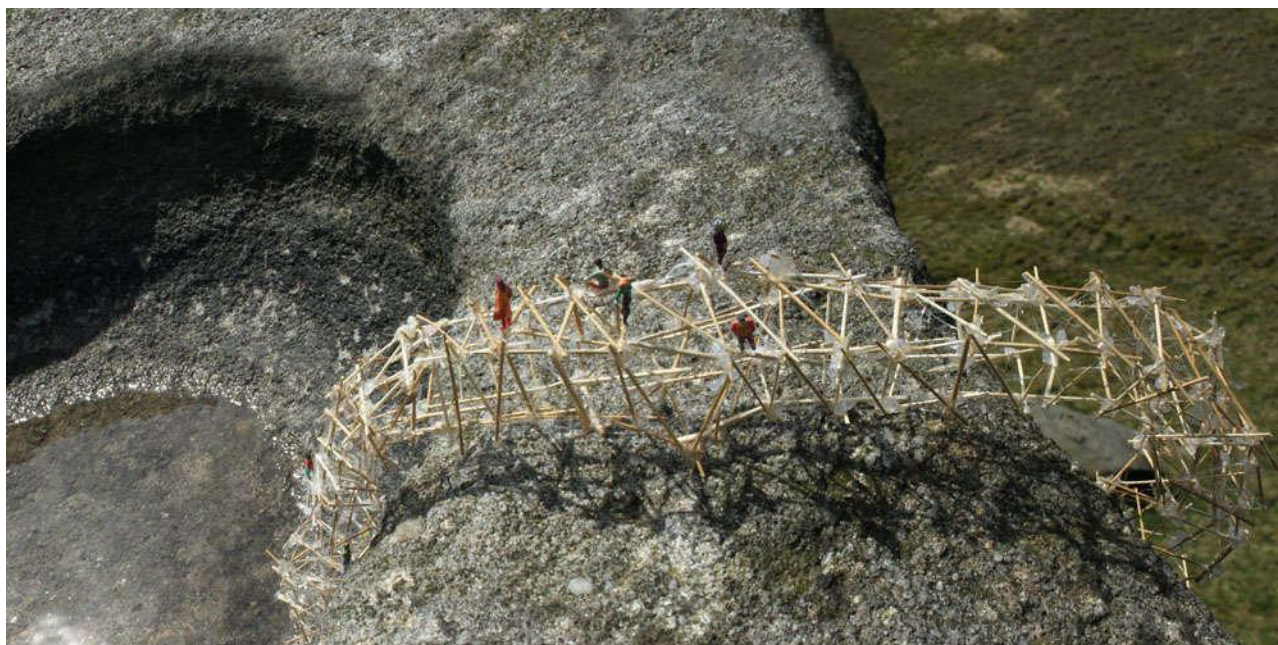


South Square Gallery presents:

Sally Barker

08 June - 28 July 2013



Sourcing an eclectic mix of organic and synthetic materials, including weathered stone and neon Perspex, Barker constructs intricate sculptures and photographic scenes that explore our complex and ever-shifting relationship with the natural and built environment. Seeing her role as encompassing elements of architect and gardener, Barker is interested in how we connect, intervene and leave our mark on the environment around us. Caught between the urban sprawl of Bradford and the wilds of the Bronte moors, South Square Gallery provides a prime location to continue this research further.

The series of new photographic and sculptural works commissioned for this exhibition, develop Barker's ongoing fascination with human and natural transformation in the landscape as both creative and destructive forces. Barker physically performs the act of human intervention herself, as she splits, drills and cuts holes into the stone. Fractures are stitched with wire, stuffed with moss and packed with grass scaffolding structures, creating a living sculpture that implies a tension between processes of breaking, repair and further manipulation.

Taking inspiration from local landmarks, such as viaducts, reservoirs, ruins and quarries, the works develop an enquiry into the interrelationship between the physical makeup of the built and natural landscape. Exploring the boundaries and points of interaction between seemingly conflicting structures and sites, Barker reconstructs hybridised, utopian model landscapes where two worlds encroach and evolve together.

Referencing architectural models and drawings, carefully placed model-scale figures are inserted into the work, appearing to negotiate uncharted landscapes and scale absent buildings. As the figures precariously perch atop futuristic skeletal structures and cavernous precipices, the work suggests a sense of isolation and vulnerability in relation to their place in the environment. At times dwarfed, at others imposing their position, human presence within Barker's work is constantly shifting, continually questioning man's influence on the natural environment.

Defying traditional representations of landscape, Barker explores the relationship between environment and identity, raising questions around our role in shaping, or indeed, being shaped by our surroundings.

Artist Information

Having worked in London for the past 20 years, this exhibition at South Square Gallery marks a homecoming for Barker, who grew up on a farm nearby and whose studio is now based in Hebden Bridge. Barker has exhibited her work widely in galleries, institutions and museums, most notably *The Century City* exhibition at Tate Modern (2001) and at the ICA, London. She has undertaken several commissions and residencies to make work in response to the landscape, including *Fred*, an exhibition of site-responsive work in Cumbria (2005 -8); *The Watershed Landscape* project culminating in a solo exhibition at Cartwright Hall Art Gallery, Bradford (2011); and more recently *Exploring Landscapes* in the Lancashire Pennines.

South Square

South Square is a visual arts resource centre based within a Grade II listed building in Thornton, Bradford, West Yorkshire. It is home to South Square Gallery, a grassroots exhibition space committed to providing a professional and supportive resource for artists and emerging curators. As a test bed for new ideas, the gallery hosts an ever evolving dialogue between artists and their audience. The square also incorporates artists' studios, workshop rooms, a fine art framer and a café.

Opening Times

Opening night: Friday 07 June 7– 9pm

Exhibition open: 08 June – 28 July 2013

Opening times: 12 – 3pm | Tuesday – Sunday | And by appointment

Media Contact

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