

# SARA-JAYNE PARSONS

The Art Galleries at TCU, TCU Box 298000, Fort Worth, 76129 [s.j.parsons@tcu.edu](mailto:s.j.parsons@tcu.edu)

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As an arts professional with nearly 25 years of experience, I offer a dynamic work ethic driven by business acumen and curatorial expertise. My strengths include sound project management and artistic programme delivery; practical experience of managing and motivating staff and volunteers; great organisational proficiency and administrative skills; excellent written and verbal communication skills; experience of devising and managing budgets; and, the practice of successful fundraising.

My curatorial practice is informed by working in close partnership with artists to produce new works through commissions and exhibitions, and previous collaborations include Ayman Baalbaki, Sebastiaan Bremer, Daniel Bozhkov, Jyll Bradley, Gina Czarnecki, Hew Locke, Janek Schaefer and Emily Speed.

## CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

**Director & Curator, The Art Galleries at TCU**, Fort Worth, Texas, USA: August 2014 – present

- delivery of a diverse exhibition programme in contemporary art across two university galleries

## EDUCATION

**Ph.D. in Art History**, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, USA: in process

Dissertation: *Liminal Britain: Place and Memory in British Photography since 1979*

**M.A. in Art History**, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA: December 1996

**B.A. (Honors) in Art History & Publishing**, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, England: December 1992

## PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

**Exhibitions Curator**, the Bluecoat, Liverpool: November 2006 – July 2014

- working closely with the Artistic Director to develop the visual arts profile of Bluecoat; devising and delivering an exhibition programme presenting five contemporary art exhibitions a year, featuring the work of a diverse group of artists in various media, including commissions and artist residencies
- curatorial research and development
- writing for exhibition interpretation and publications, and press
- working directly with artists and leading the gallery team in management and production of all exhibitions
- maintaining fiscal responsibility for all gallery projects, including devising and managing annual budgets of up to £160,000
- strategic fundraising including the success of securing awards from the Wellcome Trust (£29,000), the Henry Moore Foundation (£6500) and the Zenith Foundation (£5000)
- managing key commission projects (including installations by artists John Akomfrah, Daniel Bozhkov, Jyll Bradley, Gina Czarnecki, Nicholas Hlobo, Khalil Rabah, Carol Rama, The Royal Art Lodge, Ranjani Shettar and Tracey Moffatt.)
- working directly with external partners and collaborators to develop and deliver touring exhibitions (including the Hayward Gallery, London; The Exchange, Penzance; Chapter, Cardiff; New Art Exchange, Nottingham; the Herbert Gallery, Coventry, and the Liverpool Biennial)
- liaising with the Bluecoat's Participation team on engagement projects and audience development
- liaising with the Bluecoat's Marketing team to create promotional strategies for exhibitions

- supporting the Bluecoat's CEO and Artistic Director in informing, nurturing and maintaining good relationships with major funders and stakeholders

**Assistant Director**, University of North Texas Art Gallery, Denton, Texas: January 1999 – May 2006

- curatorial research, development and collaboration resulting in delivery of annual exhibition programme
- daily administration of four university galleries, including responsibility for gallery accounts, supervision of technical and support staff, responsibility for University Art Loan Program and collection management
- stepped up to temporary role as Acting Director (January – August 2005) and completed a successful fundraising campaign for gallery programme, including \$25,000 award from National Endowment for the Arts

**Adjunct Professor**, School of Visual Arts, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas: August 1997 – July 2003

- Teaching senior-level art history classes *History of Photography* and *History of Graphic Design*, and lower-level art history classes *Art History Survey I & II*, *Art Appreciation*, *Art Appreciation for Non-Majors* and *Classic Core Art Appreciation*

**Adjunct Professor**, University of North Texas Study Abroad Programme, London & Paris: June - July 2000

**Art Consultant**, Frito-Lay Inc., Plano, Texas: June 1997 - May 1998

**Teaching Fellow**, School of Visual Arts, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas: January - May 1996

**Teaching Assistant**, School of Visual Arts, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas: August 1993 – December 1995

### **ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Board Member**, Art This Week (arthisweek.com), Dallas: January 2017

**Panelist**, *Art & Politics in North Texas*, College of Visual Art & Design, University of North Texas: January 2017

**Juror**, "Fresh Ideas", *Art League of Lewisville Annual Juried Exhibition*, Lewisville, Texas: July 2016

**Panelist**, Westcreek Drive Public Art Project, Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County: Feb – Sept, 2016

**Guest Curator**, *Alyssa Hawkins: Estranged Space*, Terrain Dallas: July 2015

**Juror**, Barnett Foundation Photography Awards, University of Texas at Arlington: April 2015

**Juror**, Voertman Student Art Competition, College of Visual Art & Design, University of North Texas: April 2015

**Panelist**, Grant Writing Workshop for Creatives, University of North Texas: March 2015

**Panelist**, San Antonio Artist Foundation Awards and Grants Visual Arts Panel, Texas: Nov 2014

**Juror**, Art in the Metroplex, Fort Worth Community Arts Center, Fort Worth, Texas: September 2014

**Board Member**, LOOK: Liverpool International Photography Festival: February 2012 to present

**Juror**, Koestler Trust Awards, exhibition of works by Young Offenders, CUC, Liverpool: March 2011

**Portfolio Reviewer/Professional Practice Interviewer**, University of Chester: March 2010 & 2011

**Juror**, Cultural Awards, St Helens City Council: November 2009

**Graduate**, Common Purpose, Liverpool Arts Successor Leadership Programme: 2007

**Residency Bursary Award Panel Member**, Artsadmin, London: May 2007

**Advisory Panel Member**, Artist Assistance Review, Texas Commission on the Arts, Austin, Texas: May-June 2006

**Art Writer in Residence**, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas: May 2005 & 2001

**Advisory Panel Member**, Artist Awards Committee, Dallas Museum of Art, Texas: April 2005 & May 2004

## **PUBLICATIONS**

“Performing Likeness,” exhibition catalogue essay, Fort Worth Contemporary Arts, October 2015

“*Materiality & Seduction: Mary McCleary and Andrew Rosenberg*,” exhibition catalogue essay, University of Texas at Arlington Gallery, November 2014.

“In the rear view mirror” in *Soft Estate*, exhibition catalogue, the Bluecoat, December 2013

“Exposing the Night” in *3am: Wonder, Paranoia and the Restless Night*, Liverpool University Press, 2013

“City of Trees: Jyll Bradley.” *Art Monthly Australia*, August 2013 (262): 30-33

*I exist (in some way)*, exhibition catalogue, the Bluecoat, 2013

*Humancraft: Gina Czarnecki*, foreword, exhibition catalogue, the Bluecoat, December 2011

*Is Britain Great? 3: The Caravan Gallery*, essay, exhibition catalogue, Dewi Lewis, November 2011

*Confined: Juergen Chill, Edmund Clark, John Darwell, Dornith Doherty, Ben Graville, David Maisel & David Moore*, exhibition catalogue, the Bluecoat, May 2011

*Janek Schaefer: Sound Art 2011*, exhibition catalogue, the Bluecoat, March 2011

“She drinks like a plant the energy of Light,” essay in *Jyll Bradley: Airports for the lights, shadows and particles*, Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange, February 2011,

Catalogue essays for Daniel Bozhkov, Nicholas Hlobo, Carol Rama and Ranjani Shettar, 2010 Liverpool Biennial

Catalogue essays for David Blandy, Tracey Moffatt, The Royal Art Lodge and Khalil Rabah, 2008 Liverpool Biennial

“Simon Denison,” (review) *Source* (Belfast), Summer 2007

“Reni Burri,” (review) *Source* (Belfast), Autumn 2006

“William Wiley,” *Collection of Twentieth-Century American Art Catalogue*, Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, May 2006

“Dornith Doherty: Burnt Water/Agua Quemada,” and “Elizabeth Mellott Carréon: Diaries of an Enlistment,” essays, *Foto-Fest Catalogue*, Houston, March 2006

Entries for photographers Richard Billingham, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, John Hilliard and Richard Misrach for the *Encyclopedia of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Photography* (Routledge, New York), November 2005

“Lupita Murillo Tinnen, photographer, Dallas Center of Contemporary Art, September 2004,” *Exposure*, Spring 2005

*Sprawl: Aspects of Human Agency in the Landscape*, exhibition catalogue essay, Arlington Museum of Art, Arlington, Texas, April 2002

“David Taylor – West Gallery, Texas Woman’s University; Brent Phelps – Afterimage Photography Gallery, Dallas.” (reviews) *ArtLies* (Houston), Spring 2000

“Voices: Recent work by Dornith Doherty, Spring 1999.” *SPOT* (Houston Center for Photography), Fall 1999

### LECTURES & PRESENTATIONS

“Subject: Disability,” the Gallery at UTA, University of Texas at Arlington, March 2015

“Curating and the Contemporary Arts Centre,” Manchester Metropolitan University, March 2012

“The role of the curator in contemporary art”, Liverpool John Moores University, November 2011

“Curating the New: the commission process and the role of the contemporary curator,” University of Chester, November 2011

“Desert visions: Gertrude Bell and the role photography in colonial politics,” National Photographic Symposium, Liverpool, May 2011

“The curator and contemporary art: core elements of practice,” Liverpool Hope University, February 2011

“Northern Art Prize nominee David Jacques in conversation with Sara-Jayne Parsons,” Leeds City Art Gallery, December 2010

“The contemporary curator: core elements of practice,” Liverpool John Moores University, November 2010

“In conversation with artist Jyll Bradley” The Exchange, Penzance, March 2010

“Curatorial Practice in the European Capital of Culture 2008”, University of Central Lancashire, March 2009

“From Building site to Biennial,” Storey Gallery, Lancaster, October 2008

“Desert Visions: Gertrude Bell and the framing of colonial Iraq.” Annual National Conference for Society For Photographic Education, Portland, March 2005

“Reacting to Sprawl: Art and Human Agency in the Landscape.” 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Southwest/Texas Popular & American Culture Associations Conference, San Antonio, Texas, April 2004

“Ecocriticism and Contemporary Art.” *Literature, Culture Environment: Positioning Ecocriticism* Conference, Westfalian Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany, March 2004

"Sprawl: Human Agency in the Landscape." Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in the Liberal Arts, Annual Conference, Banff, Canada, May 2002

"Tracing Reality: Nick Waplington's *Living Room* Series." Annual Conference, Society For Photographic Education, Las Vegas, March 2002

"Problems and Paradox in domestic family photography; the *Living Room*, a photographic series by Nick Waplington." 2001 Art History Graduate Student Association Symposium, University of Arizona, February 2001

"193 Grove Road, London - The Site of Memory in the work of Rachel Whiteread." Society for Art History and Archaeology Symposium, University of Illinois/Urbana-Champaign, October 1999

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

**Society For Photographic Education:** member since 2002

**College Art Association:** member since 1999

### **AWARDS**

**Professional Development Grant, University of Texas at Austin, Texas:** March 2005

Travel to present a paper at the National Conference of the Society For Photographic Education, Portland

**College of Fine Arts Dean's Travel Scholarship, University of Texas at Austin:** March 2004

Travel to present a paper in the "Literature, Culture Environment: Positioning Ecocriticism" Conference, Westfalian Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Germany

### **ADDITIONAL SKILLS**

Alongside my professional expertise as outlined, additional personal skills of daily value that I offer include:

- attention to detail supported by tenacity and patience
- ability to remain calm and focused in pressured or stressful situations
- ability to solve problems, prioritise tasks and meet deadlines
- hands-on experience of exhibition installation and nearly 20 years acquired art handling skills
- adept in the use of Microsoft Office programmes (Word, Excel, Outlook, Access, PowerPoint and Publisher)
- excellence in public speaking and professional presentation
- reading and writing knowledge of French