

Jim Allen's News

Ramp Gallery

6 - 28 November 2014

Curated by Mark Williams

with Jim Allen and Mark Harvey

Jim Allen's News presents video and still documentation of three works by Mark Harvey responding to a performance by Jim Allen entitled News.

Originally presented in front of a live audience in 1976, News features Allen engaged in a repeated action which over the course of 15 minutes gradually destroys a broadsheet newspaper.

In Jim Allen's News, Mark Harvey has performed three works for video, one a re-enactment of the original News which is faithful to Allen's original intent. The remaining two (News floor and News wall) are self-devised works by Harvey, which show the artist engaged in increasingly manic, physical encounters with the materiality of newspaper.

In the past decade Allen has been asked to re-enact News as a live event and as a performance to camera. Allen's response has been to actively engage with the politics of documentation. For Jim Allen's News, Allen directed the crew documenting Harvey's performances to also record the act of documentation. In still photographs of Harvey performing News we see videographer Daniel Strang tracking along a dolly, which gradually brings Harvey into view alongside camera and operator. In Harvey's News floor and News wall, we see Strang following the performers increasingly frantic and unpredictable movement around a tight, closed space.

Jim Allen's News began as a project examining questions around documentation and performance, with News as a case study. Should performance be documented? How does documentation affect performance? At what point does the documentation become a work in itself?

For Allen it is clear that these questions have long been part of the post-1976 re-enactments of News. Jim Allen's News celebrates the legacy of this classic work but importantly, and at Allen's insistence – presents the work as a catalyst for a response from Mark Harvey.

List of Works

Stills from *News* (1976/2014) Jim Allen
Performer: Mark Harvey
Camera: Daniel Strang
Photography: Mark Williams
Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett

Still from *News wall* (2014) Mark Harvey
Performer: Mark Harvey
Camera: Daniel Strang
Photography: Mark Williams
Courtesy of the artist

News floor (2014) Mark Harvey
Digital Video, Sound
Performer: Mark Harvey
Camera: Daniel Strang
Courtesy of the artist

News wall (2014) Mark Harvey
Digital Video, Sound
Performer: Mark Harvey
Camera: Daniel Strang
Courtesy of the artist

News (1976/2014) Jim Allen
Digital Video, Sound
Performer: Mark Harvey
Camera: Daniel Strang
Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett

Instructions for Mark... text from an email by Jim Allen

Credits

Jim Allen's News,
Ramp Gallery, Wintec, Hamilton
6 - 28 November 2014
Curated by Mark Williams
with Jim Allen and Mark Harvey

All works performed and documented
22 October 2014 at Wintec, Hamilton

Publication designed by Alan Deare, AREA Design

Thanks to RAMP staff, Daniel Strang, Michael Lett,
Jo Williams, Torben Tilly, Nova Paul, Callum Devlin,
Joanna Langford, Alan Deare

Mark Williams is the 2014 Wintec School of Media Arts
Research Fellow