



DARCY LANGGE

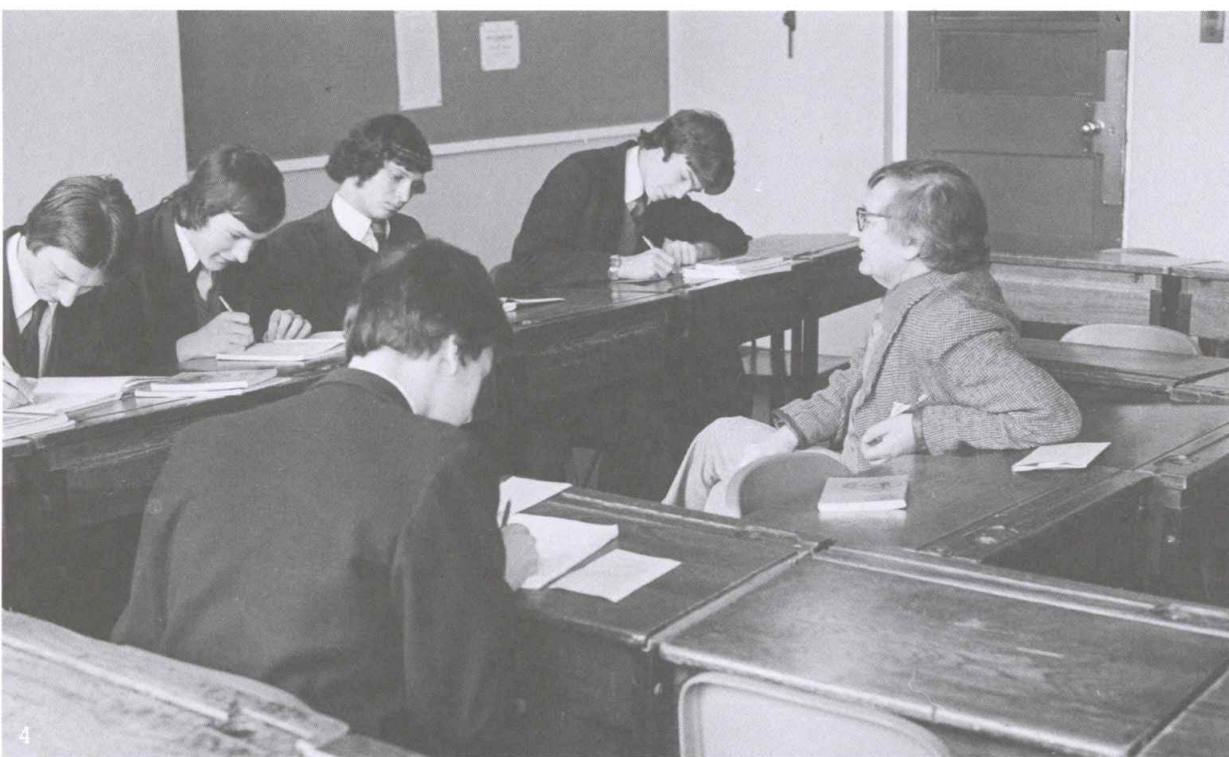
Hard, however, and useful is
the small, day-to-day work

12 AUGUST – 27 SEPTEMBER 2015

Pioneering New Zealand video artist Darcy Lange (1946-2005) aimed to “convey the image of work as work, as an occupation, as an activity, as creativity and as a time consumer.” During the 1970s, Lange developed a socially engaged video practice with remarkable studies of people at work that drew from documentary traditions as well as conceptual and structuralist video making. Lange explored the issue of labour in Britain, New Zealand and Spain. On display is a selection of Darcy Lange’s videos, shot on first generation Sony ½ inch tapes and transferred to digital video.

Similar to the late American artist, photographer and filmmaker Allan Sekula’s adherence to a critical realism in photography, Lange reintroduced the social referential in his photographic and video practice, stressing the “responsibility to keep questioning the nature and power of realism.” His seminal style of real-time, unedited, without commentary, lengthy observations of workers came to characterise his *Work Studies* series (1972-77).

Integrated within NTU CCA Singapore’s 2015 overarching research framework PLACE. LABOUR.CAPITAL., the Darcy Lange Archive is juxtaposed to the exhibition *Allan Sekula: Fish Story, to be continued*, on view at NTU CCA Singapore, generating a discussion on the complexity concerning the representation of labour.



[1] *Five Working Studies in British Factories and Workplaces*, Burns and Lux, London, 1972. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [2] *Study of Three Birmingham Schools*, 1976. King Edwards Grammar, Mr Trott, Study One, Webster. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [3] *A Documentation of Bradford Working Life*, 1974. The First Situation. Osborne Steels Ltd., Low Moore, 2nd Study: The Grinding. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [4] *Ruatoria, Study of Sheep Gathering and a Māori Shearing Gang, East Coast, New Zealand*, 1974. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate.



My intentions are to convey the image of work as work, as an occupation, as an activity, as creativity and as a time consumer.

Darcy Lange and Andrew Turner,
Bradford Galleries and Museums,
Industrial Museum, 16 May - 13 June 1976

Guest Curator Mercedes Vicente

All exhibition material courtesy of
Darcy Lange Estate and Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mercedes Vicente would like to acknowledge Darcy and Rawinia Lange, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Creative New Zealand, the support of Ute Meta Bauer, Trish Lyons, and Neil Parkinson in hosting the Darcy Lange Archive at the Royal College of Art, and Rodrigo Canas for assistance with video digitisation.



VIDEO LIBRARY CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Social consideration, communication and observation, 1971

Six super-8 films, colour, with wild sound (transferred to digital video)

- The transport café 'Pini's Restaurant', London, 3 min
- A cattle auction in a market outside, Bradford, 3 min
- Woman putting out her washing, London, 3 min
- A man milking cows, Sussex, 3 min
- A hardware store employee, South Kensington, London, 6 min
- Farmers burning wheat, Kent, 3 min

Five working studies in British factories and workplaces, 1972

Video, b&w, sound, 114 min

These series depict working life in five factories in England. They record both working and leisure time in an attempt to show the atmosphere in the factory and the personalities of the people involved. They also show people joking directly to the camera, and in some instances interview the subjects portrayed.

- **Breakers Metalworks**, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, 28 min
This is Lange's first video. In addition to shots of workers, there is a short interview with the factory owner.
- **E. Brennan General Woodcarving Furniture Workshop**, London, 18 min. This factory was opposite Lange's studio.
- **Wild, Mellor and Bromley**, Leicester, 20 min
He recorded this video with Sony's first ½ inch video recorder. It portrays work at a knitting factory.
- **Marbett Manufacturing Co. Ltd.**, London, 22 min
Images of people working at a furniture workshop.
- **Burns and Lux**, London, 18 min
Clothing factory

I think of Darcy as a late 20th century Gustave Courbet – a man of New Zealand countryside who became an 'avant-garde,' urban, political artist.

Dan Graham, "Darcy Lange: Great Artist and Friend," Darcy Lange: Study of an Artist at Work (Ikon and Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 2008) p. 183

Allotment gardens, England, 1972

Video, b&w, sound, 52 min

These studies were made near Dagenham highway, East End of London, and in Barnsley, South Yorkshire (the latest studies have lost their sound or had no sound).

Craigdarrock, Scotland, 1973

Video, b&w, sound, 90 min

This is a study of a shepherd's workday in a sheep farm in Dumfriesshire, Scotland.

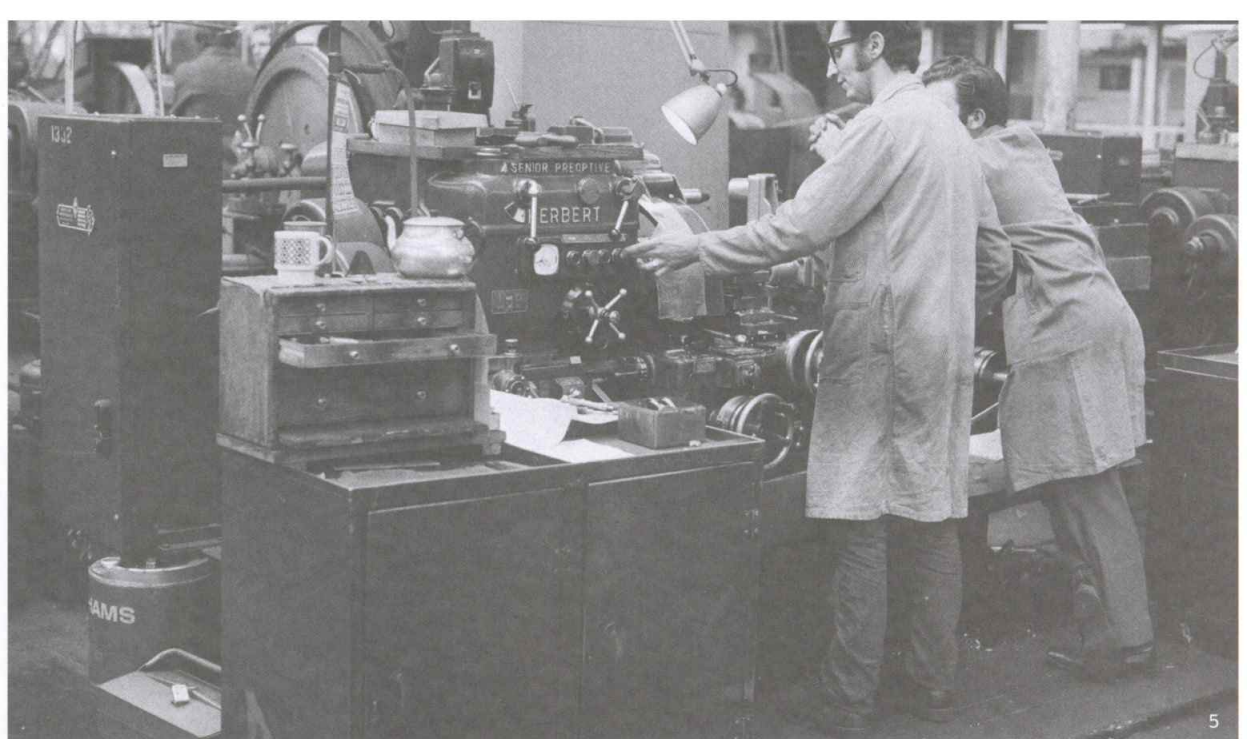
A documentation of Calverton and Pleasley coalmining communities, Nottingham, 1973

Video, b&w, 90 min

This project includes multiple media: a side-by-side projection of two looped 16mm b&w films, b&w photographs, and a transcript of a recorded interview (audio missing).

...it is hard to think about this period of work studies without thinking about the miners in England being led by Arthur Scargill in their present strike. When I made this set of studies it was just after the success of the 1973 strike, and there was a feeling of optimism in the atmosphere... The studies include portraits done in the miners' Welfares, kind of workingmen's clubs, and interviews including feelings about the recent current strike... People were good to us, telling us jokes and giving impressions of colliery life which included brassbandery and sports – and of course, politics...

Darcy Lange

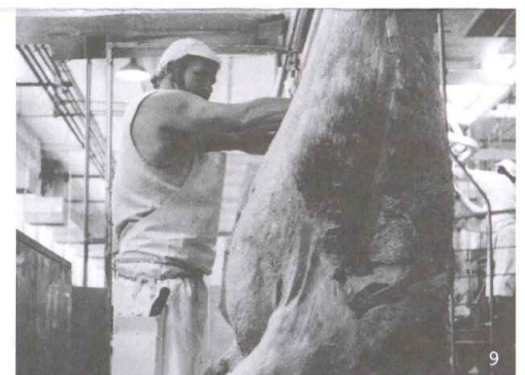


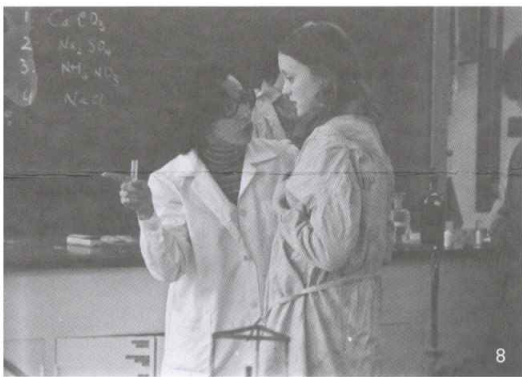
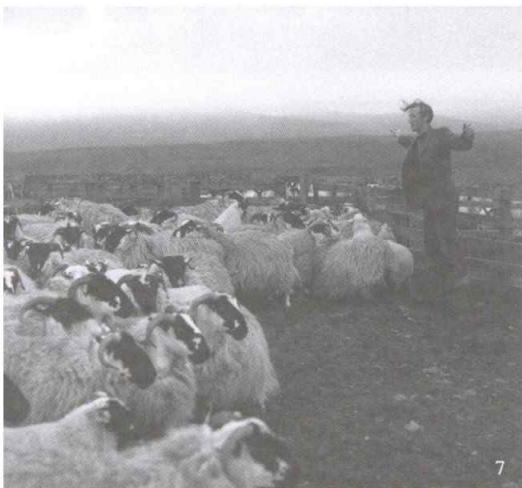
A documentation of Bradford working Life, 1974

Video, b&w, sound, 150 min

These are studies of people working in four factories in Bradford: a steel melting factory, a wool mining company, a piston and piston ring factory, and a mail order warehouse. This project shows a greater level of structure, with the footage being systematically organised around each factory (labelled 'situation') and three to five concentrated studies of workers and their working tasks per factory. Lange's use of the three media is more deliberate; indeed, film and video are recorded simultaneously and with the same framing. Each study is videotaped for 10 minutes, and filmed during the first 30 seconds and the last 30 seconds of the videotaped scene. The film and video components were shown alongside a single black and white photograph per each study. Lange intended to show the work in these factories but he was not granted permission and its exhibition at the Bradford Industrial Museum was delayed until 1976. This series was widely shown in European and American institutions including The Video Show at Serpentine Gallery, ICA in London, The Kitchen and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Biennale of Paris and Nice, among other venues.

- **The First Situation. Osborne Steels Ltd., Low Moore**, a steel melting works, 15 min
1ST STUDY **Rolling Mill**—N. Magloire, O. Moyston, K. Harper, J. Charington, C. Telemuque, R. Martin, F. Pashley, D. Robertshaw, B. Cook and A. Josephe
2ND STUDY **The Grinding**—Leon Frazier and Godfrey Broadbent
3RD STUDY **Furnaces**—Charley Helps, Alan Wright and Harry Barraclough
- **The Second Situation: Whiteheads Woollen Mills**, 40 min
1ST STUDY **French Combing**—Mrs. O' Connor
2ND STUDY **Traditional Combing**—Alah Dad
3RD STUDY **Spinning**—Mrs. Alice Jennings
4TH STUDY **Spinning**—Theresa Hird
- **The Third Situation: Hepworth and Grandage Ltd.**, England's largest producers of pistons and piston rings, 30 min
1ST STUDY **The Verson Press**—Roy Penny
2ND STUDY **Piston Inspection**—Miss June Bell
3RD STUDY **Dual Lathes**—Albert Ozolins
- **The Fourth Situation: Grattan Ltd.**, a large mail order warehouse, 50 min
1ST STUDY **Study of a Packer**—John Wood
2ND STUDY **Study of a Packer**—Burford Maunders
3RD STUDY **Order Assembly**—Michael Normington
4TH STUDY **Order Assembly**—Kevin Bulmer
5TH STUDY **Punch Card Operator**—Janet Thornton





My intentions are to convey the image of work – as work, as an occupation, as an activity, as creativity and as a time consumer. It is due to my interest in realism and progress from naturalism and realist constructional sculpture, that I have become more interested in this area of direct and natural recording of a given live situation. I am committed to the development of a social conscience, and a development of a record and memory of the physical world. My approach is to reveal social truth through the particular way I use video. I am not in this project to build a creative abstraction, but to do a service to the people with whom I am working – to truthfully render situations. This art documentation is an attempt to relate an aesthetic truth through three different media.

Darcy Lange, notes written on the occasion of his exhibition at the Bradford Art Galleries and Museums, 16 May-13 June 1976

Waitara Freezing Works, Taranaki, New Zealand, 1974

Video, b&w, sound, 90 min

Studies of people at work in a slaughterhouse in New Zealand. This work shows the skill of the workers in their particular tasks in the meat chain and conveyor belt.

PART 1 Mutton Chain 1, Mutton Chain 2, Mutton Chain 3, Beef Conveyor, Beef Conveyor 2, Stomach removal;
PART 2 Boning Calves, Boning Beef 1, Boning Beef 2, Beef Conveyor 3, Beef Conveyor, Beef Conveyor 2, and Stomach removal.

Ruatoria, Study of sheep gathering and a Māori shearing gang, East Coast, New Zealand, 1974

Video, sound, b&w, 161 min

This work contains several studies of a Māori shearing gang recorded in the remote East Cape's town of Ruatoria, a Māori-owned land. The studies are divided into two sections: work and personalisation.

A. WORK Muster, Yard work, Yard work, George Haig & Oli, Fleece-o, Wool Press, Shearing 'Pekama', Shearing 'Tim'
B. PERSONALISATION Walking from the shed to the cookhouse, Meal cookhouse, Building new marae Tuparoa Beach, Shepherd's Children. The Shearing 'Pekama' chapter was shown at The Video Show.

Jack Jury, stockman, Uruti, Taranaki, New Zealand, 1974

Video, b&w, sound, 41 min

Studies of Jack Jury, a stockman whom Lange had known since childhood, and who worked on Lange's father's farm in Taranaki, New Zealand. There are shots of work and leisure time.

Clem Coxhead, study of cow milking in Opunake, Taranaki, New Zealand, 1974

Video, b&w, sound, 31 min

Study of Clem Coxhead, a New Zealand dairy farmer. It records the gathering of the cows, the milking, the milked cows returning to the paddock, and leisure time with Clem and his friends and family. Mount Taranaki (previously known as Mt. Egmont) can be seen in the background.

A. WORK [1] Study of cow milking in Opunake, Taranaki [2] Recording with Mt. Egmont in the background
B. PERSONALISATION [1] Evening with Clem [2] Family and friends

Vern Hume, aerial top dressing, Taranaki, New Zealand, 1974

Video, b&w, sound, 47 min

This work comprises documentation of Vern Hume, a top dresser in Taranaki, New Zealand. Lange recorded five trips from inside the aeroplane, each with a different angle of vision, three trips from the ground looking up at the plane, and one study of Hume having lunch along with a loader driver, a farmer, and Lange himself.

A. WORK [1] Study from aerial top dressing plane [2] Study of plane doing circuit

Competition axemen at agricultural and pastoral show, Stratford, Taranaki, New Zealand, 1974

Video, b&w, sound, 16 min

Studies of a log-chopping competition and pastoral show in Stratford, New Zealand. Lange records the overhand chop, the underhand chop, and double-hand sawing competitions. These studies present the leisurely contest as work by centring on the physical exertions of the competitors.

A. WORK [1] Study of overhand chop; [2] Study of 12" underhand chop; [3] Study of 12" double-hand sawing

Cantavieja, Study of work in a Spanish village, Spain, 1975

Video, sound, b&w, 44 min

These working studies were conducted in the surrounding agricultural areas of Cantavieja in the isolated Maestrazgo province. The recordings were done over a week, but research covered five weeks, and portrait different working activities.

PART 1 Ploughing with cows, Ploughing with mules, Ploughing with bulls, Scything greens, Family gathering greens, Scything wheat.

PART 2 Wheat gathering by mule, The village harvester, Shepherdess. In the evening the video recordings were shown to the people who participated in them.

Study of three Birmingham schools, 1976

Video, b&w, sound, 6 hours

This work focuses on the process of teaching and learning in the classroom, while making a socio-economic comparison of teaching practices and their results. Lange chose institutions representative of different social classes and recorded the teaching of various subjects (English, mathematics, chemistry, physics, music, geography, biology and history). Three schools were selected contrasting class differences: Ladywood Comprehensive School, a racially mixed school in one of Birmingham's lowest income areas; King Edward's Grammar School, a privileged, boys-only, public school where students are accepted based on academic merit; and Leabank Junior School, also a racially-mixed school in a low income neighbourhood.

Studies of teaching in four Oxfordshire schools, 1977

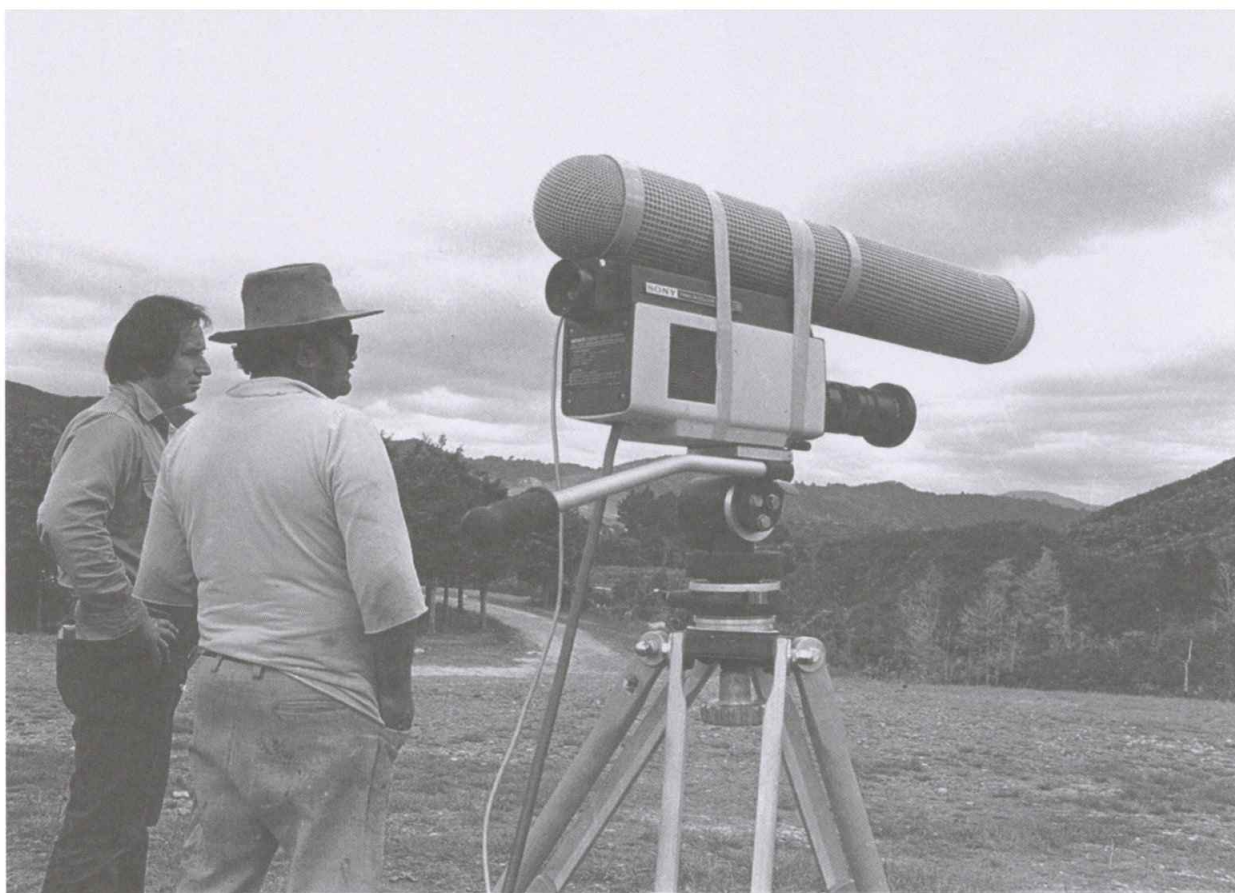
Video, b&w, sound, 12 hours

This is a more structured series in which the careful selection of subjects focuses on the teaching of art, science, and history and is conducted in two comprehensive (Banbury School and Cheney Upper School) and two public schools (St. Mary's School and Radley College) in Oxfordshire. As in the previous Birmingham series, Lange videotapes the class study but here he systematically plays it back to the students and the teachers and subsequently records the students' and the teachers' responses to the tapes, which become part of the project. The series offers a comparison between the various teachers, schools and subjects, and suggests teaching as a socially constructive force. In the catalogue of the exhibition titled Work Studies in Schools, curated by Mark Francis and commissioned by director David Elliott at the Museum of Modern Art Oxford in 1977, Lange lays out his intentions for this series as such: "1) To investigate teaching as work; 2) To illustrate the skills of the teacher through vocal and gestural communication with the class and also the class's response to this; 3) To illustrate the process of teaching and learning in the classroom; 4) To illustrate the social breakdown within each class; and 5) I am particularly concerned to prevent what I make, whether it be photograph or video, from becoming an end on itself – not dissimilar to the loved art object."

One thing we ought to compare ... these tapes. ... with other television programmes. One very obvious difference, which has a lot of meaning and implications, is that you have a great deal of time to think about what you think in looking at these tapes. Normally when you look at television because of pressures of all kinds, it zips before you, it's immediately compared with something else, and all the thoughts are manipulated in a certain direction.

Guy Brett, transcription from the videotaped roundtable organised at MMAO with the students and teachers

[5] Five Working Studies in British Factories and Workplaces, Breakers Metalworks, Birmingham, 1972. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [6] A Documentation of Bradford Working Life 1974. The Fourth Situation: Grattan Ltd, 3rd Study: Order Assembly. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [7] Social Consideration, Communication and Observation, 1971. A hardware store employee, South Kensington, London. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [8] Studies of Teaching in Four Oxfordshire Schools, 1977. St. Mary's School, Miss Astani, Chemistry Class Study. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [9] Bill Montgomery, Waitara Freezing Works, Taranaki, New Zealand, 1974. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate. [10] A Documentation of Bradford Working Life, 1974. The Second Situation: Whiteheads Woollen Mills, 4th Study: Spinning. Still b&w photograph. Courtesy of Darcy Lange Estate.



Darcy Lange with Motatau Shorthand during the videotaping of the Ngatihine Block, New Zealand, 1977

Darcy Lange (Urenui, New Zealand, 1946–2005)

A graduate of Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland, New Zealand and the Royal College of Art in London (1968–71), Darcy Lange established a career in the late 1960s as a sculptor with large, hard-edge abstract works, but soon turned to photography, film, and video. In 1971, he began filming and videotaping under the general theme of "people at work" in factories, mines, and schools and throughout the 1970s continued documenting working life in Britain, New Zealand and Spain. In the late 1970s, Lange joined Māori activists' struggles to establish land rights during what became known as the Māori Renaissance, when bicultural policies in New Zealand fully came into place, and developed his ambitious *Māori Land Project* (1977–1981). Beginning in the 1980s, Lange became increasingly involved in the study of music, especially Flamenco, and created several multimedia performances involving music, poetry, and art. He died in Auckland in 2005.

Mercedes Vicente

Mercedes Vicente is a curator and writer undertaking an AHRC-funded PhD at the Royal College of Art, London. Prior to her current studies, Mercedes worked in New York and New Zealand. She was Curator of Contemporary Art at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Darcy Lange Curator-at-Large. Mercedes earned Masters' degrees in Film and the Arts at New York University and in Curatorial Studies at Bard College and was Helena Rubinstein Curatorial Fellow at the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York. Recent curatorial projects include *Art and Social Change Research Project: Delhi Residency*, 2013 (*Te Tuhi and The Physics Room*, 2014); *Vestigios invisibles* (EACC, 2014), and at Govett-Brewster: Walters Prize nominee Maddie Leach's *If you find the good oil let us know* (2013); *True Stories: Scripted Realities* (2011), and *Points of Contact: Jim Allen, Len Lye, Hélio Oiticica* (2010). Mercedes' extensive writing and editorial credits include books, exhibition catalogues and art magazines including *Manifesta Journal*, *Flash Art*, *Camera Austria* and *Reading Room*. She is also contributing editor of *Darcy Lange: Study of an Artist at Work* (Govett-Brewster and Ikon Gallery, 2008) published in conjunction with the exhibition *Darcy Lange: Work Studies in Schools* (Ikon Gallery, 2008).

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Allan Sekula: Fish Story, to be continued International symposium on the occasion of Allan Sekula's exhibition at NTU CCA Singapore

26 September 2015, 10.30am - 5.00pm
 NTU CCA Singapore, The Single Screen, Block 43 Malan Road, Gillman Barracks

The symposium will highlight the continued relevance of Allan Sekula's work and writings on the theme of globalisation and capitalism, bringing together art professionals who have collaborated with Allan Sekula across the years as well as different researchers and artists who share a set of common interests with his work. The programme will focus on key themes underlying Allan Sekula's practice, including questions of critical realism in contemporary art, representation of labour, and the vast topic of the sea.

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Mercedes Vicente CURATOR AND WRITER, PHD CANDIDATE, ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART, LONDON
Shabbir Hussain Mustafa CURATOR, NATIONAL GALLERY SINGAPORE
Charles Lim ARTIST

Moderators

Ute Meta Bauer NTU CCA SINGAPORE FOUNDING DIRECTOR
Anca Rujoiu NTU CCA SINGAPORE CURATOR, EXHIBITIONS

PLACE. LABOUR. CAPITAL.

PLACE.LABOUR.CAPITAL. is NTU CCA Singapore's overarching year long framework that will intertwine our platforms: exhibitions, residencies, research & education. This open-ended research and curatorial programme address the complexities of a world in flux and the dynamic and inseparable relation between the local and the global. The notion of place as a locale often fades into the background shadowed by the focus on the 'larger picture'. How does labour, routes of migration, and flows of global capital impact upon smaller scale? Singapore – the world's second largest trading port and an economic epicentre of Southeast Asia serves as point of departure and 'locale' to examine the entanglement between place, labour, and capital. Coordinating curator: Anca Rujoiu

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Opened in October 2013, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore is a national research centre of Nanyang Technological University. Developed with support from the Singapore Economic Development Board, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore takes a holistic approach towards art and culture, intertwining its three platforms: exhibitions, residencies, research & education.

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