

An exhibition by students from the
Slade School of Fine Art and the
University of the Arts London

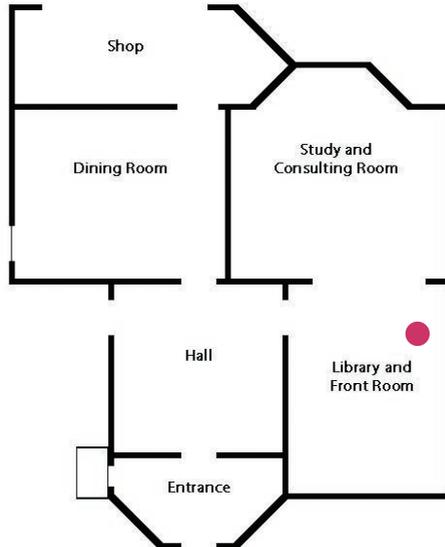
Commissioned by
UCL Psychoanalysis Unit

FREUD MUSEUM
LONDON

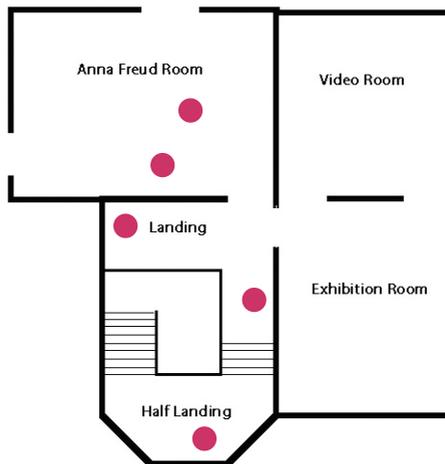


UCL

Map of the exhibition



Ground Floor



First Floor

The artworks in the exhibition are displayed around the house and the positions are marked with a dot ● in the maps above.

Secrets of the Soul

“He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore.”

Sigmund Freud, Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis

In October, 2016 the Psychoanalysis Unit at UCL invited students at the Slade School of Fine Art and the University of the Arts London to submit proposals for a work of art exploring the theme of secrets. Everyone has secrets, and we are all fascinated by other people's secrets. Psychoanalysis is particularly interested in the secrets we keep from ourselves: how and why they are hidden; what they mean; how they shape us; and what discovering or sharing them can lead to.

Over 60 proposals were submitted and reviewed by a panel of artists and psychoanalysts together with Carol Seigel, the Director of the Freud Museum. Six proposals were selected and commissioned; with the help of the map you will find the intriguing results of the commission scattered about the Museum, including examples of painting, photography and sculpture. In very different ways these pieces reflect on the fascination of secrets, meditating on art's capacity both to reveal and conceal, and challenging Freud's conviction that 'no mortal can keep a secret' from a psychoanalytically trained observer.

You can hear podcasts of the artists speaking about their artworks at www.ucl.ac.uk/psychoanalysis/secrets-of-soul/artist-podcast

The Psychoanalysis Unit's mission is to break the mould of traditional approaches to psychoanalysis, taking inspiration from the discipline's ideas to meet modern challenges. Their truly interdisciplinary research draws on a wide range of research methods and theoretical perspectives taken from neuroscience and clinical trials, anthropology, economics and history.

To find out more about our research, postgraduate study programmes and future events, visit www.ucl.ac.uk/psychoanalysis.



Yi Zhang

Secret

Lead, wire and paper, 6.5cm x 17cm x 13cm

Summary

The material I chose for the commission of “Secret”, was lead. To me, this material has interesting characteristics befitting the subject.

It is toxic, surprisingly soft and malleable, yet heavy. While working with it, I also became aware of its sound-absorbing qualities. These characteristics represent my sense of secrecy, which can be burdensome. Secrets live in shadows, in quiet isolation, and can be quite toxic or shameful to live with.

In the process of making this work, I hammered a single 3mm-thick lead sheet numerous times to a thickness of about 1mm, to give it a sense of pressure and compression. I cut it and reconstructed it in many different ways and eventually arrived at the final form. I think the process of continuous re-modeling embodies the energy of struggling with a secret.

Biography

Yi Zhang graduated from Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, BA, 2008. She graduated from New York Studio School, New York, US, with MFA degree in Sculpture. Since then she teaches sculpture classes at Central Academy of Fine Arts. She also writes art exhibition reviews for various Chinese art magazines. As a sculptor she has participated in various group art shows in China, Australia, Italy and the US, as well as two solo shows at John Davis Gallery in Hudson, New York. Now she is studying in the MFA Sculpture program at the Slade School of Fine Art.



Ishwari Bhalerao

Under the Couch

Mixed Media

Summary

When I think of Freud and his relationship to psychoanalysis, the obvious comes to mind: the famous psychoanalytic couch. I decided that I had to make something that would stem from the obvious but also be able to exist on its own, not needing the actual couch to be present alongside it.

The series of objects I made remind me of little dust bunnies that would have collected under the couch as a result of all the psychoanalytic sessions, especially studies that relate to patients' childhoods. Some of the themes I am addressing through the artwork include secrets that have been accumulating within us, especially during our childhoods, and how a tangled mesh of memories can be looked at from different perspectives.

Biography

I am a student making art at The Slade School of Fine Art. My practice is mainly sculptural, with a bit of film and photography. I like working with easily accessible objects in our surroundings. I enjoy the materiality of objects that look and feel organic. I believe in making art that's not permanent or precious and I am deeply inspired by the actual process of creation itself. Poetry, literature, nature and people have a great influence on my artwork. I enjoy the materiality of soft, entangled and fragile objects like wire and thread.



Zoe Forster

Dance as Language

Eight 6cm x 4cm photographs and one 6cm x 4cm print of the contact sheet

Summary

These pieces explore the breaking down of a psyche by a secret coming to light. The secret is being told through the language of dance. The dancer was shot on film through long exposure allowing for a more abstract form, capturing the movement of the secret. Then in complete darkness the film was placed into a pinhole camera. This pinhole camera now contains 'the secret'. By exposing the film to light through the camera, the secret has 'come to light' breaking down the film and in return showing a break-down of the dancer through the telling of this secret.

The piece itself is a series of eight 6x4 photographs and one 6x4 print of the contact sheet. I wanted this piece to feel intimate, in keeping with the essence of a secret, hence the small scale. The damage to the photographs through the 4-second light exposure can be seen in all its glory on the contact sheet displayed alongside the photographs.

Biography

Currently residing at Chelsea College of Art studying Fine Art. From the very North of England, grown by the sea & used to salty air. My work explores the sublime, on a tiny scale or the most cosmic, both as predominant in my practice to the other. At present my work is focused on the female and her relationship with the cosmos and the earth through mythology and astrology. Chance plays a huge role in my practice; found objects and chance encounters being the most recent. I seem to have a knack for manifesting these chances, which to me is as magic as the sublime that I so thoroughly explore.



W.K. Lyhne

Through A Glass Darkly

Oil on board, 59cm x 38cm

“If you want to keep a secret, you must also hide it from yourself.”

George Orwell, 1984

Secrets very rarely reveal themselves through the simple act of looking. While we often make a judgement about individuals in seconds. We can all readily acknowledge that these are often subjective and influenced by prejudicial shorthand that we the viewer have, for a multitude of reasons, taken on.

The same sort of thing can happen when we are confronted with art. The contextual label for an artwork, the title and the clues given by the curator operate their own form of shorthand to understanding; just as the text you are reading now illustrates. This example differs in that the work you see here comes with its own challenge to you the viewer. If it could say anything to you it would say ‘Step back and as you look, start to think about the inner, personal and hidden you’.

If you feel challenged, think about why that is and in what circumstances would you be willing to share and with whom? Whatever you do be careful not to get caught by Dostoevsky's White Bear!*

**“Try to pose for yourself this task: not to think of a polar bear, and you will see that the cursed thing will come to mind every minute”*

Fyodor Dostoevsky in ‘Winter Notes on Summer Impressions’, 1863

Biography

W. K. Lyhne trained as to be an architect at the Architectural Association but then went on to develop a painting career. Lyhne had a highly successful solo show hosted by Mark Hix in 2015 called “Death and Desire: We are all Animals.” W.K. Lyhne is currently at Chelsea School of Art doing a Masters Degree in Fine Art.



Sarah Gracie

Totem

Recycled ash wood; printer's ink; printer's whiting; laser-engraving,
37cmH x 37cmW x 8cmD

Summary

In this piece, I have taken the text of Christina Rossetti's poem 'Secrets' and made a dynamic composition to dramatise the conflict between the will to reveal, and the will to conceal, a secret. In the poem, Rossetti expresses the seductive thrill of telling a secret, of trusting, relaxing, on the one hand, versus the drive of the super-ego, or will, to resist this, on the other.

The character in the poem is surrounded by a blizzard and is determined to keep her bonnet, wraps and cloak about her. She 'wears her mask for warmth' and will not have her secret 'pecked' out of her. But all around her time and transience prove that none of us can do this. Whether we want it or not, our secrets leach out of us.

I have laser-engraved the words of the Rossetti poem onto a piece of recycled timber which has been covered with printer's whiting to give it the appearance of a blizzard. The laser-engraving is burnt through the whiting and leaves scorch marks.

I wanted to suggest something about the violence of the human will to pride, and its cost. At the same time, I also wanted to suggest that our drive to control is continually defeated by time and mortality. In this case, the heat of the laser is consumed by the 'blizzard' around it.

Biography

Sarah Gracie took a double first in English literature at Oxford University before going into journalism, where she wrote for *The Independent on Sunday* and *The Sunday Times*. In the past few years, she has gone back to the practise of art, and is now doing an MA in Drawing at Wimbledon College of Art. Her work has been included in exhibitions at The Slade School of Art, Chelsea College of Art, the Royal Scottish Academy and ING Discerning Eye.



Li Yang
Untitled

Mixed media (white gesso, tape, charcoal),
25.4cm x 25.4cm x 0.9cm

Summary

When we scratch and dig with our nails bodily down through layers of memory to our earliest secret we discover a dim scene framed in time. Although the memory may be faded and to be grey, the remove of many years may render the secret kept inconsequentially, the intensity, worry or ecstasy created in the formation of keeping a secret will never cease to radiate through our conscious minds. The greyish strips on the surface of this piece are covering the precious layer of marks. By looking at it closely we see that there are countless subtle fine lines scratched by the peak of a cutting knife, as well as a few repetitive notes scratched into the surface by fingernails. Charcoal dust mashed into the gesso powder cover the surface and it provides a perception of a secret.

Biography

Li Yang was born in Chengdu in China and raised in the practice of the classical Chinese art forms. She crossed over to America and Europe, Studying in San Francisco, at Academy of Art University, and presently in London, at The Slade School of Fine Art. Yang's work draws together Eastern and Western traditions of drawing and sculpture in a study of the relationships between 2-dimensional surface and 3-dimensional objects and space but her motivation is inspiring a principally communication. Yang views her art as a medium that can communicate with others across and more profound than words can carry.

“There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream thoughts which cannot be unravelled... This is the dream’s navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown.”

Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*



www.ucl.ac.uk/psychoanalysis

www.freud.org.uk

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