

James N Hutchinson

Rumours of a New Planet

24.11.18 — 31.03.19

Rumours of a New Planet is a three-part project by James N Hutchinson that draws on the life, work and travels of historical figures connected to Calton Hill as a means to develop systems and methodologies that help us observe and examine the world today.

The first part is based on a portfolio of botanical drawings made by Margaret Stewart and her husband John Herschel when they lived in Cape Town in the 1830s. In 2017, James went to Cape Town to re-enact one of Stewart and Herschel's nineteenth-century excursions, and has made 26 botanical drawings based on what is growing along the route today. The process of travelling, documenting and identifying the flora, and meeting local people along the route, led James to ask wide-ranging questions about land use, urban redevelopment and conservation. The route took in various locations including wealthy suburbs, nature reserves, townships, urban farms and stalled developments, as well as the site of Stewart and Herschel's bulb garden,

which is now occupied by an electricity substation. Each drawing represents the spot where a particular encounter took place.

The second part is based on the work of Jessica Duncan, who toured significant geological sites in Europe before marrying the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, Charles Piazzi Smyth in 1852. James re-enacted an excursion made by Duncan that took her from Dieppe to Florence, but re-thought the sites through significant developments in 20th century art, industry, architecture and science. He collected rock samples at each location, and produced a book that operates simultaneously as travel journal, a work of auto-fiction, and a set of theoretical texts. He also made a drawing of Michelangelo Pistoletto's sculpture, *Dietro-Front* (About-Turn), which is located at the gates of Florence, the final stop on the excursion. The sculpture was drawn from multiple angles, the image turning a full circle over three months, thus counting down to the end of the exhibition. [Continues overleaf]

James N Hutchinson is an artist and founding member of the curatorial co-operative, Chapter Thirteen, for which he curated *The Landis Museum*, 2018. Exhibitions and curatorial projects include: *Archive*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, 2016/17; Jeremy Deller's *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, Hayward Touring, London, 2013; *Proposal For A Warehouse or Towards A Museum Of Reorganisation*, part of *How to Turn the World by Hand*, Collective, Edinburgh, and PiST, Istanbul, 2011. From 2006-2010, he was co-director of the curatorial agency, The Salford Restoration Office. He is also a lecturer at The Glasgow School of Art.

Rumours of a New Planet is part of *Affinity and Allusion*, an exhibition presented across all of Collective's exhibition spaces, grounds and buildings.

Affinity and Allusion is sponsored by Baillie Gifford investment managers.

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The third and final part of Rumours of a New Planet is an audio guide to Calton Hill, which was produced with members of the Lothian Blind Ramblers walking group. This work charts the achievements of Edinburgh astronomers, both professional and amateur, who made important discoveries despite being visually impaired. It is available to stream on Collective's website.

1

The Manenberg Tornado

Coloured pencil on paper

Series of 26 drawings, changing configuration throughout the exhibition.

Drawings top row, left to right:

$33^{\circ}58'55.3''S$ $18^{\circ}27'37.2''E$

$33^{\circ}59'16.6''S$ $18^{\circ}33'12.6''E$

$34^{\circ}01'59.9''S$ $18^{\circ}44'21.1''E$

$34^{\circ}06'50.9''S$ $18^{\circ}56'49.0''E$

Drawings middle row, left to right:

$33^{\circ}59'30.8''S$ $18^{\circ}30'29.9''E$

$33^{\circ}59'30.2''S$ $18^{\circ}35'08.4''E$

$34^{\circ}00'02.9''S$ $18^{\circ}35'39.9''E$

$34^{\circ}06'56.1''S$ $18^{\circ}49'37.5''E$

Drawings bottom row, left to right:

$33^{\circ}59'44.3''S$ $18^{\circ}28'07.3''E$

$34^{\circ}00'02.9''S$ $18^{\circ}35'39.9''E$

$34^{\circ}08'17.6''S$ $18^{\circ}51'30.9''E$

$34^{\circ}06'49.0''S$ $18^{\circ}56'60.0''E$

2

One Drop of Water Contains as much as Much Electricity as Would Make a Thunderstorm

Book of essays, 14 rocks, graphite on paper drawing.

James' collection of essays is also available to download from Collective's website

