

Artist-in-Residence: May 2016 - April 2019

Ruth Ewan

'Another Time', was developed as part of the artist's residency with the North West Cambridge Development team. Contrasting the fast pace of a new construction project, Ruth's artwork was a meadow and test-bed which transformed a disused field next to Gravel Hill Farm workers' cottages into a non-mechanical clock. The plant species were carefully selected for their predictable flower opening and closing times, an idea first hypothesised by Carl Linnaeus in 1751. In April 2016, with the assistance of the local community, over 5 million seeds were planted on site. The meadow continued to grow and was accessible from June 2016 – 2019, being in optimum bloom between the months of June – August. An artist-produced plant identification guide was made available to visitors to this temporary public space.

Ewan's work takes many forms including events, installation and printed matter. Her practice explores histories of radical, political and utopian thought, bringing to light specific ideas in order to question how we might live today. Often engaging with others, Ewan's projects involve a process of focused research and close collaboration – in the past she has worked with historians, magicians, traditional crafts people, horticulturalists, archeologists, musicians, bakers and children.

One of her best-known works 'A Jukebox of People Trying to Change the World' (2003 – ongoing), invites listeners to select tracks from a CD jukebox containing over 2,200 politically motivated songs. Several recent projects have engaged with alternative perceptions of time, 'We Could Have Been Anything We Wanted to Be' for the Folkestone Triennial 2011 and 'Back to the Fields' at Camden Arts Centre 2015 which brought to life the French Republican Calendar and decimal clock.

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