

Cara Mills

British, B. 1993



With an interest in curation Mills often responds to site-specific conditions, imagining the type of work she could create for an individual space. *“Floor plans serve as a catalyst for my production, they work as a two-dimensional frame-work for what I can see happening inside a space”.*

Typically, each piece is made in relation to or developed from a previous project. Mills intends for her works to have conversations, dialogues and relationships with one another as well as the viewer. Her works are designed to be experienced as part of an

ongoing creative and discursive continuum. They are to be seen as parts; part a, part b, part c and so on. Yet these parts are connected conceptually and have interplay. *“Each of my works has a different pace or rhythm which is to do with how much attention I’d like the audience to give to each piece. The works seem to have personalities.”*

FIUMANO CLASE

"I'm interested by the tags placed on my work: installation, kinetic installation, sculpture, performance piece etc." She does not try to define or limit a work by these definitions but instead leaves these open for the audience to form their own perception.

Mills sits on the side of having a critical approach to art making, whilst still making art. What does it mean to actually create something physical? What does it mean to make a painting? What do we expect from these objects as an audience? Her work addresses these questions through humour and design: refiguring or interpreting machinery to prove a point. She continues to blur boundaries in her new work for the show. Allowing the audience to find their own interpretations of these questions, playing on their values and expectations of a work.

Having graduated in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins in 2016, Cara Mills lives and works in London. Went on to study for her Masters at the Royal College of Art, London, graduating with the highest honours.

Education:

2016- 2018	Royal College of Art, Information Experience Design (MA)
2014-2015	Central Saint Martins, Diploma in Professional Studies
2013-2016	Central Saint Martins, Fine Art BA (Hons)
2011-2012	Leeds College of Art , Foundation Diploma in Art and Design

Selected Exhibitions

2018	RCA Masters Degree Show - CANM presents "Virtual Reality Game"
2017	Machine: Part A, Part B, Part C & so on..., Fiumano Projects, London
2016	Degree Show One, Central Saint Martins, London, UK The Last Night of Tynemouth, Tynemouth House, London, UK
2014	Female Perspective, London, UK The White Show, Central Saint Martins, London, UK
2013	Interim, Byam Shaw, London, UK PROPRIOCEPTION, Lewisham Art House, London, UK

CARA MILLS IN HER OWN WORDS:

It's important for me to allow an audience to view the making and process of how my work is made. I wanted the audience to be there whilst work is being made. The process of the work being made is very important for me and I wanted this process to be exposed and open.

Duration is very important for me. The time that the show is open for sets a limit and framework of how long my machines will run for and indeed determine when a work is finished. The machines running times are decided against the hours that the gallery is open for to the public. I like that the potential of the work is determined by the limit of the time it is confined by.

I like the fact that what is in the exhibition builds and builds throughout. The show will look incredibly different on day one then it will look on say ten. I like that the audience is part of this action.

I like the improbability of how the work in the show will turn out. Specifically the output and performance of the machine. I am detached from the making of the work, I effectively make machines to do the work for me. I like that I can imagine the outcomes of the machines, but never certain. The end product is never predictable. The way the shreds fall from the shredder or the way the paint hits the canvas- these are all variables. I also like that I have no privy knowledge of how exactly the works will look before presenting them in an exhibition space. I am just as confronted by these end points as the audience is. We are all part of the exhibition.

I like to show the process of how things are made and reached to a final point. This is driven by my interest and curiosity of the 'final piece'. There is a certain pressure and gravitas towards displaying a final piece or an artists final product. It gets displayed with such grandeur that I began considering if the process of how the work was realised gets forgotten or left behind only for the artist to know. Whereas for me there is no hierarchy between process and final piece.

I want to demystify the mystique that surrounds the artist and a finished work. When possible I like to make the process available for an audience to experience and in the very space, time and context that things are happening. You could say the gallery becomes a factory/ a space for production for the three weeks of the exhibition and what you're left with is mechanical discharge of material fed into it.

FIUMANOCCLASE

By allowing the process to be displayed I aim to allow the audience to come to their own judgments about where they see the work to be. Is it in the process or is it the final piece? Or both. And at which stage is the work realised? More specifically, do we expect to see something 'polished', 'finished', 'complete' ? Or can something be a work in progress?

I think I have a certain amount of detachment to the work I show in a gallery. I design machines to 'do the work for me' so to speak. My effort is in the making/ designing and conceiving of the machines and not wrapped up in the end 'tanah' here is my final piece. I like displacing the level of importance or expectation. For example, the painting machine came from a place where I really wanted to paint again but had too many queries and concerns about where or how to start having not done it for so long. I was too aware of myself in the 'making and decision stage'. I became fixated on what it meant to paint and apply paint to a canvas. At Central St Martins I never painted/ spoke about painting. I wasn't sure I had the 'right idea' or skills to stand next to something and declare it as a painting or something finished.

It felt strange applying paint to canvas in a conscious one minute I'm painting and the next I'm not. I was too worked up in the technique of it. I thought it would be interesting to design a machine which took those problems away for me. And the only thing I had to worry about was the colours and the size of the canvas the paint is hurled onto. I didn't worry about the precision of the mark making. I wanted to distance myself from making work to consider where is the quality? Is it in the machine, or in the canvas? Is it on the show working as day one or the show on day eleven?

The machines remove human agency. The responsibility of the making part changes. The machines are in control.

The paintings or paper sculpture are by-products. The end results they make bares no weight in my mind. What matters the most is the action of the machine and the possibly they have in creating something

Which is why I never like to declare when 'something is finished', rather the days of the show or the days that the machines runs for determine when a work is started and when a work is finished, it's as simple as that. The machines are performing and on stage, as easily as they can be turned on they can be turned off leaving the audience without structure.

Machines are sculptures that occupy their own stature and position in the gallery.