

Catalogue Introduction by Gill Hedley Project Curator

RSVP Contemporary Artists at The Foundling

Individual Artists – Short Essays on each of the Artists:

Matt Cook

Tom Cox-Bisham

Lorraine Douglas

Sandra Flower

David Kefford

Simon Liddiment

Nicola Naismith

Alex Pearl

Emily Russell and Kristian de la Riva

Sarah Sabin

Rob Smith

Townley and Bradby

Zory

MATT COOK

Matt Cook's work is kinetic and sonic: movement and sound connect all his activities and are present throughout his performance work, his drawing events and in installations such as the work commissioned for RSVP.

"One of the exciting things about getting to create a work for a museum is my right, as an artist, to share with others my playful take on the historic significance of that museum. Seemingly unimportant elements can be represented and re-interpreted by these kinetic sculptures, through the objects, imagery, movements and sounds that are incorporated."

A kinetic and electronic sculpture is suspended through the central stairwell from the roof light on the top floor of The Foundling and is seen as "a living, breathing organism from a distance, which reveals a collection of uniquely fascinating individual objects up close".

The work was first conceived with children in mind and to give adult visitors to The Foundling "new ways to experience the museum by adapting and distorting their viewpoint in ways akin to how children experience the world" as they move around the work, up and down the stairs. It sets out to intrigue and fascinate children, too, by including toy-like elements.

The sculpture provides a sonic ambience throughout The Foundling and the artist has created sounds based on ideas retrieved from the museum's archives. We hear snatches that suggest how the Foundling Hospital might have sounded in the past and recognise the grandfather clock in the Hall that still chimes today on the hour. Specially created sounds let us imagine the London that is seen in Hogarth's paintings and elements from Handel's music are also woven in.

The architectural style of the staircase is deliberately sober and utilitarian in keeping with its role as a semi public part of the original building. The artist has undertaken detailed observational research in the space so that each object is tailored to the place it occupies and what can be seen around, through and reflected by it.

Like the prisms of a crazy chandelier, the shimmering elements colour, reflect and distort its surroundings introducing interference, energy and sparkle into the plain and measured stairs of the building. Its electronic sculptures, close to toys, and its playful sounds bring a rather defiant reminder of the presence of children through the building's earliest years, even if they were kept at a distance from the public spaces.

During the course of the exhibition, Matt Cook will also create a series of performances, aimed specifically at children whose presence is always implicit at The Foundling today even if they are busily engaged out of sight in educational activities. His work makes sure today's children are clearly seen and heard.

TOM COX-BISHAM

The Foundling houses careful reconstructions of the original elaborate 1740s interiors of the Foundling Hospital, and the Court Room is described as the best example of the period in London. The crowning glory is the Court Room's rococo plaster ceiling.

The term rococo means a flourish of repeated and extravagant decorative motifs. The word itself probably comes from a French word, *rocaille*, meaning rock-work and brings to mind the fantastical frozen or calcified shapes often seen in caves.

Tom Cox-Bisham is interested in how one visual language influences and instructs another. For his RSVP commission he has researched how dessert moulds have specifically appropriated architectural features into their design: domes, pilasters and colonnades.

Using the ideas of architects, buildings and cooks like Gaudi, the Taj Mahal and Delia Smith, as well as making discoveries and purchases on e-bay he has made a series of table-top sculptures for the Court Room. Amalgamating ideas of cakes, ruins and grottoes, these elaborate the rococo theme and the more playful aspect of architecture especially in the eighteenth century.

He has also cast a series of blancmange structures to create a monumental hybrid. This light-box is a marriage between an architectural feature and a sweetmeat. It is specifically a blancmange (white food) which has a softer opaque glow rather than the hard and colourful shine of a jelly. The image also reflects the Romantic taste for the delicious horrors of caves and their icy stalagmites and stalactites.

Architectural styles and taste often get repeated in the applied arts, décor, fashion and food. Table decorations from the Renaissance to the Edwardian era were often wildly extravagant to match the interiors, costume, entertainment and menus of banquets. Artists and craftsmen were commissioned to create table settings in precious metals, ice and food stuffs.

The foundlings must have constantly had food on their minds; their diet was plain and simple with dishes repeated each week. Sweets and puddings were treats for special occasions only. Today, the Court Room is regularly used for corporate dinners and events.

Tom Cox-Bisham's decision to set his sculptures here and in the Ante Room contrasts poignantly with a magazine engraving¹ of the fashionable pursuit in the 19th century of visitors coming to view the foundlings at their wholesome Sunday dinner whilst also being able to admire the paintings on the walls.

The connotations of a sugar-spun fantasy are a pithy and sharp reminder of the contrast of the rococo plasterwork with the plain values of the Foundling Hospital's mission. The light-box, which captures and illuminates an image of a pudding-as-building, sensitively emphasises all that is ephemeral in The Foundling's history and reminds us what has inevitably been lost and what has been conserved.

1 J. Swain after H.T. Thomas, Illustrated London News, 7 December 1872

LORRICE DOUGLAS

A bureau is usually understood to mean a writing desk but a bureau can also be defined as an office: an authority or site of administration, such as a “bureau of investigation”.

A scene of ambiguity is set.

A label suggests that this particular bureau belongs to a certain gentleman in Clifton Campville, a location in rural Staffordshire. We find evidence of a correspondence: “with an *uncertain* gentleman elsewhere? “. The seat of the chair which accompanies the bureau is upholstered in a textured, 'green pasture' coloured fabric, reminiscent of the 1920s or 1930s.

The room permanently houses elements of The Gerald Coke Handel Collection, a book case, harpsichord, and chairs which have sound systems embedded in them which allow visitors to sit comfortably and listen to Handel excerpts. It is a clever means by which 21st technology lets us slip away, eyes closed, to a 1750s Baroque world at least in our ears. Researchers quietly peruse the Handel archives next door.

We are in the attics of a house built in the 1930s to house reconstructions of part of The Foundling Hospital built in 1740 and to carry on the charitable works.

In 1926, the original buildings were deemed no longer suitable as a hospital so the foundlings were moved temporarily until a new home was built in Berkamsted in the healthy Home Counties in 1930. These interwar years were the period of modernism with its advances and luxuries when electricity, radio and telecommunications became widespread in homes and offices.

We spot an old-fashioned bakelite phone. The telephone had been invented in 1876 and was described by the Victorians as “talking by lightning” with rich connotations of both science and the psychic.

All of these palimpsests and definitions have informed Lorraine Douglas’s creation of the fictive set that she has surreptitiously installed for us to discover.

Are we eavesdropping or trespassing? There are items of correspondence and a telephone that belongs neither to our era (it looks so heavy and outmoded) nor to Handel’s or Hogarth’s (unheard of). But it would have been *a la mode* at the period in which the current building was designed – and just what is outmoded and non-functional within a museum setting? What exactly are we permitted to touch or pick up?

The installation features the paraphernalia of electrical cables and wires associated with the telephone and the early, braided cable, connected to the 'receiver' could be seen to resemble an umbilical bond, the artist hints.

Telephony is defined as the transmission of sound between distant stations, especially by radio or telephone. Bureau is the transmission of a palpable communication that is suspended in time, incomplete but possibly resolved somewhere else altogether.

SANDRA FLOWER

“Children used to be called Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. Now we have a new religion”.¹

Each foundling’s name would be inscribed in the register when they were accepted into The Foundling Hospital. Sandra Flower has gone straight to the heart of what most people think of as a major part of their own identity: the given name or, as it is known by some, the Christian name.

She looked through the Foundling records and noted that, in the eighteenth century, biblical names such as Matthew, Mary or Moses predominated. Then follow those named, optimistically, after great British figures such as Isaac Newton, John Milton, William Shakespeare and Elizabeth Tudor as well as Thomas Coram himself. Walter Raleigh was often chosen for those boys probably destined to a life at sea. “Persons of Quality and Distinction” – dukes and countesses - stood sponsor to some children and gave their names.

Today, the most popular name for boys in Britain is Jack, followed for the first time by Muhammed². A study in 2003 at The University of Nebraska shows that there is a trend for parents to add to the lexicon of names which still runs from The Bible to those of celebrities. Now global brand names and luxury consumer products are also giving rise to names for babies like L’Oreal, Nike, Porsche, Lexus and Chanel. Aspiration has turned from religion, achievement and valour to desirable goods and accessories.

Sandra Flower clearly obliges us to consider what this means about attitudes to the children themselves.

She has used this cultural phenomenon of personal and brand names to create wallpaper. White on black, it mimics the effect of chalk on blackboard or slate. Installed at child’s height, it also reminds us of graffiti and the timeless way in which people commemorate their own names and presence.

Above the dado rail in the Foyer are maritime pictures, pointers to the career set for many little Walter Raleighs or Admiral Benbows. The repetition of names is also the roll call of a daily register or a war memorial.

The two scripts are taken from handwriting in a child’s exercise books on display at The Foundling (formal, painstakingly copied) and the other, freer and unstructured, of a contemporary child. The names are those of children who were accepted into the Foundling Hospital between 1741 - 1756 alongside others sourced from the internet.

Developing the theme, Sandra Flower has also produced 117 mugs with a similar pattern of names, and these artist’s multiples are for sale. They stand for exactly the number of children who first entered The Foundling Hospital as well as the idea of the traditional gift for a christening or naming ceremony.

¹ Creative Review, February 2007.

² www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/19 Jun 2007

DAVID KEFFORD

The tokens in the collection of The Foundling are the most evocative items on display:

“The love tokens represent the desire of the mother to find a better life for a child. They also represent her own desire to have a better life, but there is a further desire to leave part of herself behind”¹.

The tokens left with the children by their mothers are of all sorts and materials: metal tags, ribbons, buttons, an ale bottle label, coins, locket, brooches, rings and hazel nutshell. It is impossible to equate their material value with the sentiment or intention that accompanied them. Some were left so the child would have an embodiment of its mother and past life but others were simply identity tags, the mother keeping hold of a matching half, in hope of reunion.

David has created a series of drawings loosely and intuitively based on these tokens “to reflect the sentiment, respect and emotional charge of the museum’s history”. The manner in which the drawings are framed and displayed has an innate quality that is quiet and unassuming. The in-between nature of space in which the main group is hung adds an element of privacy and intensity with which the drawings themselves are imbued.

Drawing is a physical, intimate exercise and in these works David Kefford has taken his own practice to a new place. There is an increased scale to some of the drawings in the group commissioned for RSVP.

The drawings use a range of materials including watercolour, graphite, ink, felt-tip, baby oil and toothpaste, whatever is to hand. This lends immediacy to marks which might be made by pressing, scraping, cutting or rubbing. Each drawing contains elements that are highly controlled and others that allow for “spillages and slippage”; often areas of colour are allowed to bleed into each other.

Some drawings have been selected from the main group to take their chance within displays of paintings in The Foundling’s own collection. David Kefford’s works are personal and self-reflective, works on paper which sit without bombast next to more rhetorical oils on canvas which were always conceived for a public setting.

We are not being asked to consider a hierarchy in the types of art that an eighteenth century audience would have instantly recognised: even portrait painting then fell well below history or religious painting in status while drawings or watercolours were beneath regard at the Royal Academy.

Rather it is the honesty and exposure of these drawings that gives them their immediate and continuing impact. The artist stresses the sensual and personal in their content and handling, and, by extension, the same elements in human relations: such as between mother and child or lovers.

¹ Rhian Harris, Director, The Foundling Museum

SIMON LIDDIMENT

Simon Liddiment shows works which are not quite that category of art called objets trouvés or ready-mades. Not quite, because these objects were very successfully designed to be works of popular art or stand-ins for the “real thing”. They are appropriated “character wall plaques” which the artist describes as “...stubbornly stupid grotesques”.

Produced from the 1950s by two rival British pottery companies, these plaques were once ubiquitous in homes and gift shops. Their subject matter was broad, ranging from Anne Hathaway’s cottage to three ducks in flight. They are now “collectables” and found in car boot sales or even still cheering up the odd country pub.

Simon Liddiment insists that he is not interested in the debate between high and low art but by a perverse universality in these works and a preoccupation with caricature and stereotype.

Appropriately and very challengingly they take on a new resonance in *The Foundling*, a building so closely linked to William Hogarth, the great master of visual satire and social comment. The twin heads can be seen as the bastardised descendants of Hogarth’s political caricatures in *The March of the Guards to Finchley* in the Foundling’s Collection. (**location?**).

After 250 years, the acuity of the satire of this “view of a military march, and the humours and disorders consequent thereupon” is still biting and clear.

The Bosun head is an anonymous design, though probably by Fred Wright who worked for both the specialist pottery firms. It comes from a series celebrating trades, this one being called *Men of the Sea*.

Instantly recognisable, both versions were bought by the artist on e-bay. Highly wrought and individually painted by hand, their empty story-telling and the repetition of their ‘uniqueness’ renders them curious and banal.

In contrast, and achieved by using very different means, Simon Liddiment also shows a small painted sculptural work.

Here, simple and elegant concerns are pursued by layering paint, successive applications describing contour and form, but “absurdly adulterated” by the apparently self deprecating labour involved. This work, explicitly made by hand, begins with a mundane reference but solicits “a charge through the action of time, context and provenance.”

The plaques infiltrate *The Foundling*’s own portraits of the great and good on the Staircase. Both these and the painted sculpture are shown close to undoubted masterpieces of 18th century English painting and sculpture, provoking questions of craft and status. What would these works gain or lose when shown in another context such as that of a conventional and contemporary white cube of a gallery? The artist is not providing the easy answer to any of these questions for us but a museum is the right place in which to pose them.

NICOLA NAISMITH

It is easy to forget that foundlings left The Foundling Hospital at the age of ten until 1806 when the age was raised to 14. Always aiming to create useful citizens, the Governors also wanted them to be trained “to undergo with Contentment the most Servile and laborious Offices”. They were taught only basic literacy and then girls were expected to enter domestic service and boys to join the army or navy or be apprenticed.

It is this vital element of the workforce of eighteenth century London that has been the focus of Nicola Naismith’s research and new commission.

In particular she has concentrated on the trade of tailoring. William Hogarth recognised the significance of apprenticeships, including tailoring, in several of his works. Hogarth also designed the Hospital uniform in 1745.

The first comic series that Hogarth produced as affordable engravings rather than paintings was *Industry and Idleness*. Francis Goodchild and Tom Idle are fellow apprentices in a silk weavers’ workshop in Spitalfields. Goodchild takes over from his master and becomes Lord Mayor; Tom is hanged at Tyburn.

In the opening scene of *The Rake’s Progress*, the ne’er-do-well Tom Rakewell is seen being fitted for a lavish new suit by his tailor while his servants are still in mourning for his father.

Nicola Naismith has taken apprenticeship as a metaphor for the study of process on which much of her own work focuses. Apprentices were taught to mimic, copy then perfect their master’s technique, learning as he too had learned. The artist herself uses traditional skills and re-invents them through a range of digital and integrated making techniques.

Extending her interests in work and working lives, this commission makes reference to white and blue collar working practices, the historical and the contemporary and the relationships between manual and conceptual dexterity. She has made use of research centres including the London Metropolitan Archive looking at original Foundling Hospital documents. In the studio, she has focused on specific apprentice activities and examined the relationship between skill and body movements.

The work is sited in the Coram’s Children gallery crucially just before the visitor leaves this contemporary display and enters the first of the historic rooms. The choice of the window was made because of the “inherent relationship between light and detailed tailoring work. Historical images show the posture of the tailor sitting up on the work bench next to a window making use of natural light sources. “

The commission has developed through a process of research, developmental diagrams, workbooks, drawings, images and video footage. It has been a sensitive response to an easily overlooked aspect of the Foundling story that should resonate with anyone who works or learns.

ALEX PEARL

Alex Pearl has a mordant wit and a sense of play that encompasses both the world of theatre and toys, as well as some blacker thoughts.

On his first visit to The Foundling he was struck by the way in which children are present throughout the building but predominantly as memories. He was also intrigued by the sentimentality of the Victorian paintings in the Committee Room, the history of musical performances in The Foundling and portraits of the original Governors.

In response, he has created a filmed opera about the creation of The Foundling Hospital using Handel's Foundling Anthem as the basis, performed by a cast of lollipop sticks. He now has a further story to tell:

"This film was structured using Handel's *Foundling Anthem*. I also intended to use the anthem in its entirety as a soundtrack. However, I had two interesting quotes for licensing the music. The first was for £1875 because I was foolish enough to think I might like to send it off to a few film festivals after the show. The second, just for exhibiting in galleries, was £1000. This was still more than three times what I was expecting and budgeted for. Also it did not include the master rights from Decca or mechanical rights from MCPS should I wish to produce an edition for sale. I believe that this is a daft amount of money so I decided to make a largely silent film and a donation to the Foundling Museum (£200) instead.

I have always had an interest in failure and compromise. This and my own personal difficulty with acts of charity perhaps make for a more appropriate outcome." ¹

Tiny cameras mounted on wandering toys have also been let loose in The Foundling in pursuit of today's Trustees with a plan to create a portrait for today.

A playful but critical eye has been given full rein. Small interventions have highlighted major elements of The Foundling's history and a topsy-turvy world has been created.

Alex Pearl remembers watching simple magic tricks performed by his father and grandfather with "attachment and wonder". He also recalls loss of that wonder when he learned how to perform all the tricks himself. Today, he harnesses technology in the service of mischievous and anarchic outcomes, whatever obstacles are in the way.

He cuts things down to size. With cameras whizzing about unchecked, adding a 2007 portrait to a long line of traditional forebears, a 21st century child is at liberty in an eighteenth century setting. The artist brings his tricks and tools into the museum with an air of puzzled detachment and a determination that allows him to create his work in spite of every tribulation.

¹ blog:www.a-unedited.co.uk/projects/index.php?c=post&p=list&uid=349&bid=50&dir=DESC

EMILY RUSSELL and KRISTIAN DE LA RIVA

Emily Russell and Kristian De La Riva have used the profound pain of separation of foundling children from their mothers as the basis for their new work for RSVP. Their work constantly responds to a fundamental question: “how do people exist in relationships?”

A collage, at first glance a kaleidoscope or mandala¹, explores “what it means not to be conjoined or physically tied to the one you love, but to be separated...”

The formal arrangement of concentric circles represents “the battleground of relationships” with its endless and inevitable roundel of repetition. The tiny scale of each element is like a private language created with gesture and coupling in place of words.

It develops the continuing theme of their work which explores human relationships and experience but in this commission there is an entirely new emphasis on loss: “rejection (possibly... abandonment), a separation or even a divorce”.

Russian criminal tattoos have been a stylistic influence on their recent collage works and these very intimate graphic decorations express a need for personal identity where little exists. In the new collage work they also reflect the institutional life of children in the Foundling Hospital, some of whom did not even keep their own names. Lucky ones had only letters or tokens as the sole link to their own identity.

A second new work builds on Emily Russell and Kristian De La Riva’s constant theme of male/female characters and the repetition of sound and gesture. Here, for the first time, they have forcibly separated their emotive self-portrait and large scale heads on to two individual screens, installed agonisingly just beyond one another’s vision. It is not clear, or rather it is left for us to decide, whether this is a momentary loss or a scene of total abandonment.

Sound is employed as a vital and visceral element, conveying raw emotions and the sense of “frantically calling and searching for one another.” The artists make reference to the natural animal instinct by which a parent or a lover will search blindly for the lost loved one.

They have also been sensitive to the siting of the video projection, aware that it will sometimes be difficult or painful to view as the audience becomes witness to something very intimate but universal.

There are sudden startling noises which combine with the deliberately exaggerated mouth movements so that the sound always appears convincing and often disturbing. The neutrality and underground nature of the basement Exhibition Gallery adds to the sense of disquiet and displacement so this is the sole work that seemed appropriate to separate from integration within the body of the museum. Its message lies of course at the heart of the museum.

¹ From the Sanskrit, meaning circle or completion

SARAH SABIN

The Foundling is a beautifully furnished building. Visitors see the original public rooms – Picture Gallery, Court Room and Committee Room – lovingly re-constructed and their original function implied. Serious decisions about the welfare of the foundlings were made around these tables over many years and we feel the weight of that history.

The Committee Room was where each mother came to be interviewed about the suitability of her child for adoption before she and the baby were submitted to the process of selection by ballot. The associations are therefore formal, the one public room of business where the vulnerable women spent time. Most of the paintings in the room are scenes from childhood in general or lives of foundlings in particular.

In the middle is a beautiful seventeenth century elm refectory table used throughout the eighteenth century in the Hospital and this was the object to which Sarah Sabin responded most strongly.

Today we also see a child-height work table, surrounded by small chairs pushed to one side as its small occupants have perhaps just left the building. Boxes, in the process of being opened or packed, are scattered about and contain a selection of “adapted children’s clothing from an ambiguous era ...components of unfeasible ‘survival kits’ for babies and small children to use on the streets of London....to blend in with the landscape, vital objects for self-protection.” These include small shoes with tree-climbing spurs attached and a child-sized grappling hook, part of a battery of components essential for an expedition or perhaps an escape.

The planning committee seems to have left in a hurry. Whether the children have chosen to go or been forcibly interrupted will never be clear.

A new taxonomy subverts the usual one in the museum. Sarah Sabin has created elements which, through the force of their attention to detail and compelling near-credibility, allow us to infer a story. She has given us the props and invites us to create the script and outcome.

In spite of the continuing commitment of the Coram Family, and other organisations, to the welfare of children, Britain’s streets remain very dangerous indeed for the young and the vulnerable. Sarah Sabin confronts her own worst fears as a mother by making reference to links between the 1750s and now.

William Hogarth’s painting of *The March of the Guards to Finchley* (**location?**), for example, depicts the road that is known today as Tottenham Court Road. A group of digitally manipulated photographs are displayed near the table as casually as a group of treasured family snaps. In them, a child blithely negotiates busy locations in London today and the continuing perils of streets everywhere are brought home to us all once more.

ROB SMITH

"*1140 Frames* uses a computer-controlled apparatus to capture a series of 1440 images at a rate of one per minute over a period of 24 hours. Each minute, the camera will also rotate 1440th of a revolution so enabling it to rotate through 360 degrees over the 24 hour period.

The captured images are then compiled into a digital video that will describe a 360 degree panorama of the Hallway at The Foundling as recorded over the last 24 hour period. The video will play at a rate of 24 frames per second giving it the duration of exactly one minute. During that minute, the apparatus will have rotated 1440th of a revolution, captured another frame and updated the video."

This specification ensures that the video is updated every minute. As each frame is erased a new one will be added and nothing remains fixed. The passing of time in the museum and the changing patterns of use of the space, and the people who inhabit it, are captured fleetingly.

The work will present and represent snapshots from the building's day to day routines. Images of visitors and staff will appear and disappear from the video as they move through the building. This has similar technology but the opposite function to surveillance as it allows us glimpses of ourselves and others but they are never permanent.

Museums today hide a lot more than they display: offices for staff who also work outside public opening hours, stores, security systems, fire and smoke alarms, audio-visual equipment, environmental and lighting controls.

Rob Smith's commission for RSVP knowingly fits into a new landscape. Taking in data from the Hall and playing it out in the Café, it subverts the museum's function by capturing, at any moment, some of the events, characters, structures and objects that make up The Foundling. The points of view are over-written and replaced. It operates within the museum and without.

Accretion of data is one of the roles of a museum and, in this work, different time scales, the historic interior and objects in the immediate environment are recorded as they change. Like any museum and its collections, this work is also influenced by the presence and movements of staff and visitors, all with their own route and pace.

Every museum, whatever period it covers or history it tells, is rooted in its own era and has its own point of view. Changes of public opinion, scholarship, technology, educational and visitor needs inform and alter the way in which museums present themselves. Just like *1140 Frames*, the only constants that a museum has are the passing of time, the architecture and the objects themselves. People and their views come and go.

TOWNLEY AND BRADBY

Daniel Buren posed a seminal question: “Can art get off its pedestal and rise to street level?”¹ As a way off the pedestal and out of the museum, some artists create their work through the simple act of walking a line, often unseen, sometimes recording the act through photographs or text.

Townley and Bradby describe their own practice as “ambulant investigations: journeys on foot with an aim but often without a destination”, using a set of rules or guiding principles to generate the walk and control the route. These give a ludic element to the walk/work, like the rules of a game or “a score which is performed or interpreted across the city”.

The artists have published a broadsheet, *Feet Follow These Rules*, as a multiple available to each visitor as they leave to negotiate the area around Coram Fields. This lists a number of journeys which the artists undertook or imagined, presenting details and images from some of them. It also contains the rules that generated the journeys, for visitors to consider, “act upon, or adapt as they choose” and it shares the fact that “the experience was more interesting than the map”.

Townley and Bradby have used The Foundling as their focal or starting point in every sense.

They were struck by the cluster of health and paediatric institutions in the area. To investigate whether the present-day relationship with The Foundling was more than one of proximity, they undertook Journey 3, visiting offices, roof gardens, and stairwells at the various institutions in search of a view, however partial or oblique, of the museum. This simple request became a way of hearing opinions on the Foundling from a range of local workers.

Journey 5 is a reminder that all the artists in RSVP have developed their relationship with The Foundling through numerous visits to Bloomsbury from East Anglia:

“on one of our regular journeys from Norwich to Brunswick Square, had just left Liverpool Street Station and found a lump of London brick, kicked it along with us to the Foundling Museum; took photos of the kicks, made notes to describe the noises (hollow and xylophonic on paving slabs, chiming on manholes): sounding out the city’s fragile carapace, thoughts of riot.

We don’t want the outcome to be a well-rounded lump of brick on display, a relic; we’d like the brick to go out again during the exhibition, a prompt for other walks that people might carry out. A log book in the foyer will invite people to record their journeys with the brick.”

Through these journeys, lines are drawn around the museum, tying many elements together and encouraging visitors to follow and look beyond.

¹ Daniel Buren, essay, *Munster Skulptur Projekt catalogue*, 1997

ZORY

Zory's new commission has responded to one overwhelming statistic: between 1739 and 1953 The Foundling Hospital was a home for over 27,000 children.

"It has saved lives crushed by other parts of society...it has stood for the ideas of outcast children, supported them and given them a place". She has also looked at characterisation and caricature in Hogarth's prints admiring his role in highlighting corruption and conspiracy in the judiciary and army. Zory notes that "he painted slaves and jesters in such a way to suggest that they were equal to the people of the time." She has also researched the conditions of slaves in Britain during the period The Foundling was created.

Her work for RSVP connects "the history of the museum to children who are born into poverty, war, racism, segregation and inequality." Zory has made connections between the tokens, the enforced separation of children in a range of conflict zones and the abuse of human rights everywhere in the world. It underlines the fact that separation takes many forms: children can be refugees, abandoned, rejected or simply lost.

She has made casts or replicas of tokens in The Foundling, drawing on some, and continuing to use them not simply as a starting point but dealing with their physical impact and their universality. They reflect practices in many cultures where paper, cloth and images of body parts or organs are left as symbols of hope or prayers of intercession. These are found not only in churches and outside temples but also at sites long believed to be sacred such as springs or groves.

Zory's tokens will be attached by safety pins to plaited hair which is suspended from the ceiling.

Hair is a very potent and intimate material itself. It is associated with the coming of maturity and with strength, and continues to grow after death.

Hair has also been used all over the world to add to spells, preserve the memory of an individual after death or, on a more cheerful but apposite note, the very first time a baby's curls are cut. Installed in the small spaces of the Coram's Children gallery, hanging like a curtain or waterfall, Zory's work demands attention. It can be seen as impeding or inviting but cannot be ignored. The artist asks us to participate and contribute actively. Materials are available for visitors to create their own tokens and attach them, making the sculpture grow.

If you do not negotiate the installation you must decide to turn away and avoid the issue.

Small sculptures of birds are also present. Made from fabric and newspaper with links to conflict and childhood, they shelter, unable to fly; larger crows menace the same spaces.