

Deveron Arts report – Claire Briegel, project intern

During my three month internship with Deveron Arts from January – April 2011 I developed a far greater understanding of the work of an arts organisation in the rural context. I learnt the need and desire of such an organisation to integrate itself fully into the workings of the community in which it is situated, as well as in the wider scope through social networking and internet. I came to understand that Deveron Arts works from within the local community as well as bringing knowledges from outside, addressing both local and global issues. I was interested to see how such an organisation – influenced by and part of the 'local' – can demonstrate a reconciliation of the private workings of an institution with the public domain which it is indebted to for its existence. I also came to comprehend more clearly issues of participation and engagement; asking questions of how the institution best engages people outside it, and how best to gather 'participants'. I really liked going to the *Huntly Art Reader* during this time as it gave me the means for criticality and depth in the way I was thinking about my time with Deveron Arts.

I also gained a good insight into the inner workings and daily running of an arts institution. I now understand that, especially in light of difficult times for the arts and culture sector, it is beneficial to secure funding from a wide array of sources, rather than just a few. From writing parts of the CCF and other funding applications, I gained skills in filtering and clarifying information to strengthen the case of application.

It was interesting for me to see the developing work and residencies of two very disparate artists: Peter Liversidge and Baudouin Mouanda. For me, Peter's work in Huntly can be defined as a string of exchanges seen in the many fruitful meetings he had with local people that informed his proposals. I'm impatient to see how this gathered information will be transformed into the absurd reality of proposals, realised in Huntly or on paper. Baudouin's work was also strongly influenced by his relationship with the community around him. Whilst language might have been a problem for him with the older generation, it seemed to pose no boundary with the young folk in Huntly, as he quickly gathered a group of young friends. This group showed him around and helped him to gain an understanding of Huntly's youth culture, and in exchange, he documented their life and styles, illuminating a part of Huntly that had not yet truly been uncovered. The young people found that Baudouin uncovered things in Huntly that, since being so normalized to them, they had become unaware of. Baudouin's residency also brought a part of the culture of the Congo to Huntly, along with the Sapeurs, who featured on the streets next to the Bogie disco. I enjoyed studying Baudouin's work and being able to place them in their theoretical and political frameworks. It was a pleasure to work with him to give the talk at the 'Guest at Gray's' series, and spend the day in Aberdeen, visiting Jason at the Modern Art Gallery and Jay Koh at his event.

Unfortunately, with Baudouin's unprecedented departure, I also became aware of the difficulties facing non-European artists and how this problem, if left to worsen, could hinder the valuable cross cultural exchanges and dialogue which help to mitigate the blows of globalization.

Working with Deveron Arts has given me lots of inspiration, and, although I am not quite sure at the moment exactly how I will use it, I am sure it will strongly influence my future. I am interested in narrowing and applying my studies to be able to unravel the cultural structures and mechanisms that take place in certain localities. I want to think about how a locality might be theorised, or thought about and represented, in order to think about the possibility of dialogue between such localities and globalising structures. How do we think through the global and the local if an ariel perspective is unavailable? I am equally interested in place as in the event which 'takes place', and how to theorise such a place which exists only temporally. I want to think about visual cultures role in weaving the bricolage of false reality which permeates our thinking of place, space and location. In the future, I am planning to research the ethics and responsibility of movement between places, thinking about national identities and human rights, and thinking about the role visual culture plays in this.

