

## **Jerwood Open Forest**

15 January – 23 February 2014

Jerwood Space, London



Adam James



Amanda Loomes

### **Juan delGado - Adam James - Amanda Loomes Semiconductor - Chris Watson and Iain Pate**

*“Our ancestors came out of the open forest more than a million years ago, and we compulsively return, maybe in search of our origins.”* Richard Mabey, Jerwood Open Forest catalogue.

The inaugural **Jerwood Open Forest** exhibition examines art in the environment and what it has the potential to be in its broadest definition. This unique, multisensory exhibition of new work charts the five selected projects over a six-month period of research and development.

**Juan delGado, Adam James, Amanda Loomes**, artist duo **Semiconductor (Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt)** and **Chris Watson** collaborating with producer **Iain Pate**, have expanded on the concept of their ambitious proposals, engaging with forest sites across England. In doing so the artists have produced exciting new bodies of work comprising sculpture, film, audio, and performance.

Since 1968 the Public Forest Estate has been the testing ground for a diverse range of projects across artforms that explore our relationship with the environment. **Jerwood Open Forest** is the first time that a national open call invited artists working in any discipline to respond to the possibilities presented by these incredible, diverse landscapes. The initiative seeks to contribute to a national conversation about how contemporary visual artists engage with the environment today.

Visitors to the exhibition will be immersed in the soundscape of a Raven roost through **Chris Watson** and **Iain Pate**'s surround sound installation which explores the raven's role in storytelling and the idea of the forest as a habitat. **Semiconductor** blend art and science with a sculptural film installation based on data gathered by charting a canopy of trees through a year. **Amanda Loomes** will show four films that look at the life of the forest, the process of forestry itself, the people involved and their labour. **Adam James** presents a series of performances created through LARP (live action role-play), expanding on an invented social structure developed during his research and development period in Sherwood Pines Forest. **Juan delGado** reacts to his personal phenomenological experience of the forest with an audio-sensory film installation.

**Jerwood Open Forest** is a new initiative in the **Jerwood Visual Arts** programme supported by **Jerwood Charitable Foundation** in partnership with **Forestry Commission England**. The exhibition will be on display at **Jerwood Space, London** from **15 January - 23 February 2014**. On 11 February 2014 one project will be selected by the panel of leading practitioners and project partners to receive a £30,000 commissioning budget to realise their proposal.

For further details about Jerwood Open Forest please visit: [jerwoodopenforest.org](http://jerwoodopenforest.org)

For further information about the Jerwood Visual Arts programme please visit: [jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://jerwoodvisualarts.org) or follow Jerwood Visual Arts on Twitter: [#JerwoodJVA #JOF14](https://twitter.com/JerwoodJVA)

A catalogue will be available with texts by Richard Mabey and Michaela Crimmin.

-Ends-

### **Exhibition Information**

Title: Jerwood Open Forest  
Dates: 15 January – 23 February 2014  
Address: Jerwood Space, 171 Union Street, London SE1 0LN  
Opening Times: Mon–Fri from 10am–5pm, Sat & Sun from 10am–3pm  
Admission: Free  
Nearest Tube: Southwark, London Bridge or Borough  
Website: [www.jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://www.jerwoodvisualarts.org) / [www.jerwoodopenforest.org](http://www.jerwoodopenforest.org)  
Twitter: [#JerwoodJVA #JOF14](https://twitter.com/JerwoodJVA)

Jerwood Visual Arts will host a series of evening events to accompany the exhibition. All events are free - advanced booking is required. For more information please check the website: [www.jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://www.jerwoodvisualarts.org)

### **Artists - R & D**

**Juan delGado** is an interdisciplinary artist who aims to explore the extraordinary variety of ever changing sounds and motion created by the combination of trees and wind. His multimedia installation Ringing Forest will aim to open a dialogue with the audience about nature, sound and motion, exploring the original concept of 'green noise'. He is collaborating with an arborist to research ideas on phenomenology and the representation of movement and auditory perception. delGado has visited Westonbirt Arboretum, Gloucestershire and Kingswood, Kent to develop his proposal which explores the forest and our relationship to trees from a phenomenological perspective. [www.juandelgado.net](http://www.juandelgado.net)

**Adam James** is developing a new performance to be staged in forests, exploring cultural belief systems and rituals of a fictional isolated people, living in a pagan, folklore-inspired wild woodland. Utilising parallels between performance art and LARP (live action role-playing) it will develop the use of LARP game mechanics as a means to generate choreographic content. James led a troop of volunteer performers to LARP workshop his performance proposal in Sherwood Pines Forest. Volunteer performers learned bushcraft skills, built and lived in their own shelters, developed their own language, ate, played and performed together as part of the R&D. [www.mradamjames.com](http://www.mradamjames.com)

**Amanda Loomes** is exploring how film and forestry can be used on site to reveal the labour and stories of the foresters. Using the short experimental documentary form she will examine forestry processes and the life cycle of timber, drawing attention to the contemporary working forest. Traces of physical production provide rich territory to question our relationship to the forest, our perceptions of anachronism and the timeless quality of the forest. During her wide-ranging research Loomes has recorded interviews with Forestry Commission staff and filmed processes and labour associated with forestry. This has taken her all over the country including visiting the tree nursery at Delamere Forest, Cheshire. [www.amandaloomes.net](http://www.amandaloomes.net)

**Semiconductor (Ruth Jarman and Joe Gerhardt)** are developing a site-specific sculpture based on visualisations of the rich research data collected in and around the Forestry Commission's forests and

woodlands. The proposed large-scale work would be installed in ways that dynamically interact with their site. Semiconductor have been working with a climate change research scientist at Alice Holt Forest and Research Station exploring the data produced by the latest field research and ways of transforming data into sculpture. They have visited the forest canopy via a 26m high Flux Tower which captures data on the carbon dioxide uptake by the forest. [www.semiconductorfilms.com](http://www.semiconductorfilms.com)

**Chris Watson** collaborating with producer **Iain Pate** is investigating a multi-channel sound installation to be created from recording the remarkable and seldom heard conversations of ravens returning to their roost en masse. They anticipate a real time cycle of events in a forest setting, during sunset. The audience will be immersed in sound, blending the acoustics of an incredible location with a rare piece of prerecorded audio. Watson and Pate have engaged Ecologists and Wildlife experts at Kielder Forest, Northumberland to scope their sound installation which utilises recordings of roosting ravens from the forest there. Other raven roosts are also being researched. [www.chriswatson.net](http://www.chriswatson.net)

### **Notes to Editors:**

**Jerwood Open Forest** is a new initiative in the **Jerwood Visual Arts** programme supported by **Jerwood Charitable Foundation** in partnership with **Forestry Commission England**. Artists were invited to submit bold, broad-thinking proposals for a major £30,000 commission to be realised anywhere within England's Public Forest Estate, exploring the potential for forests as a site for art.

From an exceptional response of strong and diverse proposals, five projects were selected for a six-month research and development period. The artists each received a £2,000 research and development fee and support from Jerwood Visual Arts and Forestry Commission England to expand on the concept of their proposal and explore potential sites through this phase.

The selection panel of leading practitioners and project partners includes; Michaela Crimmin, Co-director, Culture+Conflict; Dan Harvey, artist; Tania Kovats, artist; Shonagh Manson, Director, Jerwood Charitable Foundation; and Hayley Skipper, Curator of Arts Development, Forestry Commission England.

**Jerwood Visual Arts** is a contemporary gallery programme of awards, exhibitions and events at Jerwood Space, London and on tour nationally. Jerwood Visual Arts supports and showcases the work of talented emerging artists. It aims to make connections and provoke conversations within and across visual arts disciplines. JVA is a major initiative of the Jerwood Charitable Foundation. [www.jerwoodvisualarts.org](http://www.jerwoodvisualarts.org)

The **Jerwood Charitable Foundation** is dedicated to imaginative and responsible revenue funding of the arts, supporting artists to develop and grow at important stages in their careers. The aim of their funding is to allow artists and arts organisations to thrive; to continue to develop their skills, imagination and creativity with integrity. It works with artists across art forms, from dance and theatre to literature, music and the visual arts. For more information visit [www.jerwoodcharitablefoundation.org](http://www.jerwoodcharitablefoundation.org)

### **Project Partner:**

**Forestry Commission England** is recognised and respected as an international leader in sustainable forestry. Working with others we look after the country's trees, woods and forests for the good of everyone - today and for the future. Our reputation has been built on our expertise and our ability to achieve results that benefit people's lives. These benefits include the unique Public Forest Estate where millions of visitors enjoy a wide range of recreational activities every year. [www.forestry.gov.uk/visit](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/visit)

We believe that **Forest Art Works**. Since 1968 England's Public Forest Estate has played host to artworks and initiatives across artforms. We believe that woodlands and forests are vital places for contemporary artists to engage with, to make and present new work. Forest Art Works is a new partnership between Arts Council England and Forestry Commission England to support achieving great art and culture for everyone in England's public forests. [www.forestry.gov.uk/forestartworks](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestartworks)

