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Research



University of Cumbria Professor's work in Swedish nuclear culture exhibition

University of Cumbria Institute of Arts Professor of Fine Arts, Robert Williams, exhibits in *Perpetual Uncertainty* at the Bildmuseet in Sweden as part of the finale to Arts Catalyst's Nuclear Culture Programme 2016/17.

The Nuclear Culture Project, which launched in June 2016, is led by Ele Carpenter from Arts Catalyst, in partnership with Goldsmiths College, University of London. The project brings together scientists, engineers and community activists with artists and ethicists to develop new opportunities for creative practice. Areas explored include: the invisibility of the nuclear economy, the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant meltdown, geological waste storage, the Anthropocene and nuclear humanities.

Perpetual Uncertainty is an exhibition of contemporary art in the nuclear Anthropocene exploring the complexity of knowledge and the deep time of radiation. It brings together 25 international artists from across Europe, the USA and Japan, investigating nuclear aesthetics through the material sensing of nuclear sites and experiences. Previous exhibitions in the programme have included *Material Nuclear Culture* at KARST in Plymouth.

Professor Williams said, 'It was very rewarding for Cumbrian Alchemy to be part of the *Perpetual Uncertainty* exhibition. To have a Cumbrian voice within the discourse of the Nuclear Anthropocene, particularly because of the history of the county, was very important. It was wonderful too, to participate with such an interesting group of artists and academics.'

Professor Williams' project, *Cumbrian Alchemy* is supported by Arts Council England. In it, British artist Robert Williams and New York artist Bryan McGovern Wilson explore the relationships between the nuclear, mining and renewables industries of the north-west Energy Coast, with the landscape, archaeology and folklore of North Lancashire and Cumbria.

Both artists are fascinated by the challenge of working with impossible materials: deep-time, ghosts, narrative and imagination. A book of the same title *Cumbrian Alchemy* containing Williams' and Wilson's illustrations makes for absorbing reading before or after visiting the exhibition.

Perpetual Uncertainty: Contemporary Art in the Nuclear Anthropocene runs until 16 April 2017 at Bildmuseet, Umeå, Sweden. info@bildmuseet.umu.se www.bildmuseet.umu.se

[News article on University of Cumbria website accessed 20.02.17 at:
<https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/about/news/articles/articles/university-of-cumbria-professors-work-in-swedish-nuclear-culture-exhibition.php>]