

Topping, Jane (2020) The Peter & nou handbook: a field guide to an SF practice (So Far). Doctoral thesis, University of Cumbria.

Downloaded from: <http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/6106/>

***Usage of any items from the University of Cumbria's institutional repository 'Insight' must conform to the following fair usage guidelines.***

Any item and its associated metadata held in the University of Cumbria's institutional repository Insight (unless stated otherwise on the metadata record) may be copied, displayed or performed, and stored in line with the JISC fair dealing guidelines (available [here](#)) for educational and not-for-profit activities

**provided that**

- the authors, title and full bibliographic details of the item are cited clearly when any part of the work is referred to verbally or in the written form
  - a hyperlink/URL to the original Insight record of that item is included in any citations of the work
- the content is not changed in any way
- all files required for usage of the item are kept together with the main item file.

**You may not**

- sell any part of an item
- refer to any part of an item without citation
- amend any item or contextualise it in a way that will impugn the creator's reputation
- remove or alter the copyright statement on an item.

The full policy can be found [here](#).

Alternatively contact the University of Cumbria Repository Editor by emailing [insight@cumbria.ac.uk](mailto:insight@cumbria.ac.uk).

The *Peter & nou* Handbook:  
A Field Guide to an SF Practice (So Far)

Jane Topping

BA (Hons) Fine Art

(BSc Biochemistry, MSc Human Nutrition)

Thesis submitted to the University of Cumbria for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy

Word Count: 38,886

February 2020

I, Jane Topping, declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been  
submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree  
elsewhere.

## Abstract

This text examines *The Peter & nou Project*, a developing body of work consisting of four entwined works - two videos, a publication and an online artwork. The project is one strand of an interdisciplinary art practice which is concerned with making, particularly making the moving image, in a post-digital context. The project offers a significant contribution to the recent trend in British contemporary art which David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan have called 'fictioning', a term which refers to practices which blur the boundary between reality and fiction. Through its dense weave of methodological approaches – including use of the archive, science fiction tropes, the cut-up, altered states and intertextuality - *The Peter & nou Project* operates beyond the gallery space and demands a calling into question of truth on both a personal and cultural level. The project contributes to a range of discourses across discipline areas including fine art, filmmaking and literature, opening up new areas of discussion and offering fresh perspectives in each. Works from the project have been exhibited in galleries and screened in film festivals internationally and have been the focus of discussion at a number of conferences and symposia. In 2017, *Peter* (2014) won Best Philip K. Dick Short Film at *The Fifth Annual Philip K. Dick Science Fiction Film Festival*, New York.

## Acknowledgements

**Thank you** to supporters of *The Peter & nou Project*, including Daniel Abella (Director Philip K. Dick Science Fiction Film Festival), Sarah Adams (dokumentART Festival), Lucy Byatt (Director Hospitalfield House), Rob Churm, Patricia Fleming (Patricia Fleming Projects), Alex Hetherington, Marcus Jack (Transit), Matt Lloyd (Director Glasgow Short Film Festival), Alex Pollard, Markus Schäfer (Director Kurzfilm Festival Hamburg), Dieter Wieczorek (Director Festival international Signes de Nuit), Nicole Yip (Director LUX Scotland) and colleagues of The University of Cumbria Graduate School Professor Diane Cox and Sonia Mason.

**A special thank you** to experts and collaborators Matthew Walkerdine and Jessica Higgins (*Good Press*), Patricia de Vries (*deFreeze* web design), Mark Vernon (*Meagre Resource Productions*) and Max Wilkins. Supervisors and advisors Professor Robert Williams, Professor Mark Wilson and Professor Tom Grimwood. The University of Cumbria Institute of the Arts Fine Art Programme staff team and students, past and present. Friends and family, particularly Dr Clare Stephenson, Senga Topping, Iain Topping and Method Topping.

## Contents

Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Contents	iv-v
List of Figures	vi-xv
A Timeline of Practice	xvi-xvii
<i>The Peter &amp; nou Project: A Beginning</i>	1-2
<i>The Peter &amp; nou Project: A Description</i>	3-4
How to Access the works of <i>The Peter &amp; nou Project</i>	5-6
Methodologies of This Text	7-11
<i>The Peter &amp; nou Project: A Context</i>	12-20
<i>The Peter &amp; nou Project: An Introduction</i>	21-33
Introduction 0.1 Fiction as Method	34-37
Introduction 0.2 Retrofitting (in) <i>Blade Runner</i> (Part 1)	38-43
Introduction 0.3 Hypnosis on Screen	44-51
Introduction 0.4 The Archive	52-55
Introduction 0.5 The Poor Image (of Self) and a Thing Like Me	56-59
Introduction 0.6 Let's Just Call it SF	60-64
Introduction 0.7 Feminist Worlding	65-69
Introduction 0.8 Adaptation and Intertextuality	70-73

Chapter 1	<i>The Horizon Object</i>	74-97
Chapter 2	<i>Peter</i>	98-141
Chapter 3	<i>nou</i>	142-188
Chapter 4	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i>	189-234
Chapter 5	<a href="http://www.rabbitcottonoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottonoothcottonrabbit.com</a>	235-257
Alternate Conclusion #1: The Fictioning Ending		258-265
Alternate Conclusion #2: The Found Image Ending		266-270
Alternate Conclusion #3: The Mutant Starfish Ending		271-277
Afterward		278-280
References		281-314
Appendices 0.1 - 0.8		315-340

## List of Figures

1:	Screen Shot from <i>White Wash Death Watch</i> (2015), Jane Topping	14
2:	<i>Dentistry for the Deceased annual 1974</i> (2013), Richard Littler	17
3:	The programme of the British Society of Clinical and Academic Hypnosis Northern Counties Branch Meeting (2016)	19
4:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	23
5:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	24
6:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> with title (2018), Jane Topping	25
7:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018) on Good Press website	27
8:	Screen Grab of <a href="http://www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com</a>	27
9:	Still from <i>The Quatermass Experiment</i> (1953), BBC Television	29
10:	<i>Blade Runner</i> Ultimate Collector's Edition (2007)	42
11:	<i>Well, What Would YOU Do, I Mean Exactly What is it that You Would DO?</i> , Jane Topping (2010)	45
12:	<i>Arise</i> , Jane Topping (2012)	46

13:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	47
14:	Still from Google Maps (circa 2008)	59
15:	Vivienne Westwood Hobos skirt (1984)	73
16:	Vivienne Westwood Hobos skirt (1984)	73
17:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	74
18:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	79
19:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	81
20:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	82
21:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	83
22:	Screen shot from <i>The Horizon Object</i> (1982), BBC Television/the author	84
23:	Still from Hilary Brougher's <i>The Sticky Fingers of Time</i> (1997)	85
24:	Still from Hilary Brougher's <i>The Sticky Fingers of Time</i> (1997)	85
25:	Screen shot from <i>Vicki &amp; Alex, Like the Clouds: Final Edit</i> (2015), Jane Topping	101



26:	Screen shot from <i>Vicki &amp; Alex, Like the Clouds: Melissa Edit</i> (2015), Jane Topping	101
27:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	102
28:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	107
29:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	108
30:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	109
31:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	111
32:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	111
33:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	113
34:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	113
35:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	117
36:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	117
37:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	118
38:	Screen shot from <i>Teeth</i> (2014), Jane Topping	120
39:	Screen shot from <i>John</i> (2016), Jane Topping	121
40:	Screen shot from the ZX Spectrum version of <i>Blade Runner</i> (1985)	122
41:	<i>New Look</i> shop window (2017)	124
42:	<i>New Look</i> shop window (2017)	124
43:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	127
44:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	128

45:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	128
46:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	129
47:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	129
48:	Cartoon by Stephen Collins (2018)	130
49:	Cover of <i>Jane Topping Newspaper, or (Memoirs of a Spacewoman)</i> (2018) by Alex Hetherington	132
50:	Page 4 of <i>Jane Topping Newspaper, or (Memoirs of a Spacewoman)</i> (2018) by Alex Hetherington	132
51:	Page from <i>The Precognitive Painting Programme</i> (2019), Alexander James Pollard	133
52:	Page from <i>The Precognitive Painting Programme</i> (2019), Alexander James Pollard	133
53:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	138
54:	Screen shot from <i>Peter</i> (2014), Jane Topping	138
55:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	145
56:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	145
57:	Screen shot from <i>Disaggregated Industries AKA The Man Who Fell to Millom</i> (2018), Jane Topping	147
58:	Screen shot from <i>Disaggregated Industries AKA The Man Who Fell to Millom</i> (2018), Jane Topping	147
59:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	149

60:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	150
61:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	150
62:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	151
63:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	152
64:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	153
65:	Still from <i>The Man Who Fell to Earth</i> (1976)	163
66:	Still from <i>Aliens</i> (1986)	166
67:	Publicity photograph for <i>Aliens</i> (1986)	166
68:	The Reebok Alien Stomper High (2016)	166
69:	Publicity poster for The Reebok Alien Stomper High (2016)	166
70:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	169
71:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	171
72:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	171
73:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	173
74:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	175
75:	Still from <i>Mork and Mindy</i> (1979 – 1982)	176
76:	Still from <i>Mork and Mindy</i> (1979 – 1982)	176
77:	Still from <i>Mork and Mindy</i> (1979 – 1982)	176
78:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	177
79:	Screen shot from <i>nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	177

80:	Scarlett Johansson during the filming of <i>Under the Skin</i> circa 2013	180
81:	Scarlett Johansson during the filming of <i>Under the Skin</i> circa 2013	180
82:	Meme of Scarlett Johansson circa 2014	180
83:	X-ray of the author's teeth (date unknown)	186
84:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	190
85:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	190
86:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	191
87:	Front cover of <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> (2018), Jane Topping	191
88:	Back cover of <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> (2018), Jane Topping	191
89:	A page of <i>Transit #3 and everything crooked will become straight</i> (2016), Jane Topping	192
90:	A page of <i>Transit #3 and everything crooked will become straight</i> (2016), Jane Topping	192
91:	A page of <i>Transit #3 and everything crooked will become straight</i> (2016), Jane Topping	192
92:	Badges given away at the launch of <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018) Jane Topping	193

93:	Richard Hamilton's badge for the relaunch of Tate Britain (2000)	193
94:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	194
95:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	195
96:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	199
97:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	201
98:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	201
99:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	202
100:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	203
101:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	205
102:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	205
103:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	206
104:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	207
105:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	207
106:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	208
107:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	210
108:	Still from <i>Solaris</i> (1972)	210
109:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	211
110:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	212
111:	Image from <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	212
112:	Screen shot of <i>Untitled (For Ursula and Naomi)</i> (2018)	
	Jane Topping	213

113:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	214
114:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	214
115:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	216
116:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	216
117:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	216
118:	Front of a postcard in <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	218
119:	Reverse of a postcard in <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	218
120:	Front of a postcard in <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	218
121:	Reverse of a postcard in <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018), Jane Topping	218
122:	Front of the Hospitalfield Pamphlet (2017), Jane Topping	219
123:	Reverse of the Hospitalfield Pamphlet (2017), Jane Topping	219
124:	<i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> (2018), Jane Topping	220
125:	Strips of <i>Blade Runner</i> on 35mm film	221
126:	Still image of <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> <i>for Phone</i> (2017), Jane Topping	222
127:	Screen shot from <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade</i> <i>Runner on the Stairs</i> (2017), Jane Topping	223
128:	Screen shot from <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade</i> <i>Runner from the Harp Room</i> (2017), Jane Topping	223

129:	Screen shot from <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner (Negative)</i> (2018), Jane Topping	224
130:	Screen shot from <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner (B&amp;W)</i> (2018), Jane Topping	224
131:	Screen shot from <i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner (X-Ray)</i> (2018), Jane Topping	224
132:	Screen shot from <i>Screen Used</i> (2016), Jane Topping	225
133:	Request slip and envelope in <i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018)	227
134:	<i>Peter &amp; nou</i> (2018) branded return envelope	228
135:	A print ad. for Sea-Monkeys (date unknown)	229
136:	A print ad. for X-Ray Specs (date unknown)	229
137:	<i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> (2018), Jane Topping	231
138:	<i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> (2018), Jane Topping	232
139:	<i>A 35mm 208-ish Frame Version of Blade Runner</i> (2018), Jane Topping	233
140:	A screen grab of <a href="http://www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com</a>	237
141:	A screen grab of <a href="http://www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com</a>	237
142:	A screen grab of <a href="http://www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com</a>	238
143:	A screen grab of <a href="http://www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com</a>	238

144:	<i>Untitled (Tooth)</i> (2018), Jane Topping	241
145:	<i>Untitled (Deckard hand)</i> (2018), Jane Topping	241
146:	Screen shot of Laurie Anderson's <i>Puppet Motel</i> (1994)	248
147:	Screen shot of Chris Marker's <i>Immemory</i> (1998)	248
148:	Installation view of <a href="http://www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com">www.rabbitcottontoothcottonrabbit.com</a> , <i>The Influencing Machine</i> , nGbK, Berlin (2018)	253
149:	<i>The Influencing Machine</i> , pp194 and 195 (2018)	255
150:	<i>The Influencing Machine</i> , pp196 and 197 (2018)	255
151:	End-Papers (front) <i>The Influencing Machine</i> (2018)	256
152:	End-Papers (back) <i>The Influencing Machine</i> (2018)	256
153:	Installation view of Stan Douglas' <i>Doppelgänger</i> (2019)	261
154:	Still from Jamie Crewe's <i>Ashley</i> (2020)	263
155:	Mark Wilson's 'Video still' of <i>Peter</i> (2019)	268
156:	Diagram showing <i>The Peter &amp; nou Project's</i> nest of fictions	274
157:	A model of practice for <i>The Peter &amp; nou Project</i> (2020)	276
158:	<i>The Curios Society</i> at the Whitechapel (2018)	329



## A Timeline of Practice

The following *Timeline of Practice* lays out the products of my practice from 2014 to 2018.

The four works of *The Peter & nou Project* are highlighted in a dark tone:



Artworks which are not part of *The Peter & nou Project* but which share themes or methodologies with the project are highlighted in a mid tone:



Other products of my practice - included to offer context to and evidence the range of my practice from 2014 to 2018 - are highlighted in a light tone:



*A Timeline of Practice* was created by Max Wilkins.

