The Mead Gallery is committed to increasing understanding of, and engagement with, international contemporary art. Through our exhibition programme, we encourage young people to engage with key themes and ideas relating to the world they inhabit and offer opportunities for them to meet and work with artists. Every exhibition is supported by a programme of artist-led talks and discussions, workshops and other events. Details are available on our website: www.meadgallery.co.uk

These notes are designed to support your visit to the Mead Gallery, including planning prior to your visit and suggestions for follow up discussion and activities. They are aimed at all key stages, enabling you to develop them to suit your needs and inspire discussion and practical work.
The World Turned Upside Down
Buster Keaton, Sculpture and the Absurd

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In 1920, Buster Keaton released his first solo film, *One Week*. The film uses beautifully executed visual jokes to tell the story of a man’s doomed attempts to build a flat-pack house - the utopian modernist readymade - for his bride. Keaton not only performed his own stunts; he also designed the mechanics by which the scenes were created, along the way inventing shots and editing sequences that have now become the accepted syntax of cinema. Viewed shot-by-shot, these scenes undermine certainties about the world we inhabit and represent the inevitability of failure when we try to exert control.

*The World Turned Upside Down* places the work of over twenty international artists working in film, sculpture, installation art and performance in direct relation to Buster Keaton’s films to track a lineage from the melancholic and at times anarchic comedy of Keaton to the dry wit of conceptual practice. By examining Keaton’s approach to art through making – and the processes of repetition, failure and risk – the exhibition also establishes a nuanced presentation of the developmental relationship between slapstick film, sculpture and performance and highlights parallels within modern and contemporary sculptural practice.

Curated by Ben Roberts and Simon Faithfull, *The World Turned Upside Down* is a Mead Gallery exhibition which has been supported by The Henry Moore Foundation.
The World Turned Upside Down
Buster Keaton, Sculpture and the Absurd

Information about Buster Keaton

Joseph Frank ‘Buster’ Keaton (1895 –1966) was an American comic actor, filmmaker, producer and writer. Born to vaudeville performers, he began performing at the age of three. He was introduced to film when he was 21 and between 1920 and 1929, Keaton worked without interruption on a series of films that make him, arguably, the greatest actor-director in the history of the movies.

He was best known for his silent films, in which his trademark was physical comedy with a consistently stoic, deadpan expression, earning him the nickname ‘The Great Stone Face’.

In The World Turned Upside Down, the Mead Gallery presents on constant loop three of Buster Keaton’s early films:

The Boat, 1921
Dir: Edward F. Cline and Buster Keaton
USA, silent, 26 mins
Starring Buster Keaton, Edward F. Cline and Sybil Seely

The Cameraman, 1928
Dir: Edward Sedgwick & Buster Keaton
Starring Buster Keaton, Marceline Day and Harold Goodwin
USA, silent, 69 mins

One Week, 1920
Dir: Edward F. Cline and Buster Keaton
Starring Buster Keaton, Joe Roberts and Sybil Seely
USA, silent, 25 mins
The World Turned Upside Down
Buster Keaton, Sculpture and the Absurd

Information About the Works

Bas Jan Ader (1942 - 1975)
*Broken Fall (Organic), Amsterdamse Bos, Holland, 1971*
16mm film transferred to DVD, silent, 2 mins
Courtesy Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam
The interests and concerns in Bas Jan Ader’s oeuvre locate him in the art historical practices of conceptual and performance artists of the 1970s, such as Chris Burden and Bruce Nauman. Much of the artist’s work centres on the act of falling - from a roof into the bushes beneath, from a bicycle into a canal or from a tree branch. Bas Jan Ader’s falling was however a complex and changing metaphor for the absurdity of life, with all its tension, humour and inevitability. Bas Jan Ader lived in The Netherlands and the USA. In 1975 the artist was lost at sea while attempting a single-handed west-east crossing of the Atlantic in a 13ft pocket cruiser as part of an art performance, *In Search of the Miraculous*. His body was never found.

Angus Braithwaite and Fred Lindberg
(Braithwaite, born 1984; Lindberg, 1972)
*A series of objects fall upon the artist’s head (live)*
Refining the absurd, artist Angus Braithwaite’s practice frequently transforms the performing body into a ludicrous actor. In this ongoing collaboration, Braithwaite and the Swedish-born artist, Fred Lindberg, continue their investigation into the nature of slapstick, alternately dropping objects upon the other’s head. The work examines the schadenfreude at the core of physical comedy communicating itself through the title before the action takes place. The work exists as a performed sculpture both in the gallery and in the mind of the viewer.

Marcel Broodthaers (1924 – 1976)
*La Pluie (Projet pour un texte)*, 1969
Multimedia recording, 16mm film transferred to DVD, silent, 2 mins
Centre Pompidou, Paris. Musée national d’art moderne / Centre de creation industrielle
Marcel Broodthaers was a Belgian poet, filmmaker and artist who, during his prolific twelve-year career as a visual artist, produced works in a wide range of media. Although extremely rich in allusion, Broodthaers’ work is ultimately enigmatic and evades definition, raising questions about the nature of art and the institutions that protect and foster it. *La Pluie (The Rain)* was filmed in the garden of the Rue de la Pépinière. It is at once melancholic and humorous, a kind of Sisyphean tale of the ridiculousness of the artists’ position.
Alexandre da Cunha (Born 1969)

*Landmark*, 2011
Parasols, flagpole and fittings
Courtesy the Artist, Sommer & Kohl, Berlin and Thomas Dane Gallery, London

Alexandre da Cunha’s work incorporates found objects of a kind considered ordinary and unspectacular. While speculating on modernist ideas of form and composition, da Cunha also draws on the creative provisional resourcefulness so often seen in countries such as his native Brazil where ad hoc recycling and re-use overcome the sparseness of new materials. By de-contextualising these objects and reshaping them through a modernist language, da Cunha’s sculptures develop narratives and identities of their own, liberated from their previous functions.

Simon Faithfull (Born 1966)

*0º00 Navigation*, 2008
Super 8 and video transferred to DVD, Silent, 55 mins
Courtesy the Artist

British artist Simon Faithfull’s practice often involves elements of failure and anti-heroism. His works revolve around research and experiments and he is cited as trying to measure the world in order to check whether it exists and whether, when absent, he also still exists. *0º00 Navigation* documents an intriguing and obsessive journey along the Greenwich Meridian from Peacehaven in Hampshire to Cleethorpes in Lincolnshire. A solitary figure is seen using a GPS device to follow the exact line of longitude, negotiating all obstacles encountered, including climbing through windows, wading through streams and crawling through hedges.

Peter Fischli David Weiss
(Fischli, born 1952; Weiss, 1946 – 2012)

*Der Lauf der Dinge (The Way Things Go)*, 1987
Video film transferred to DVD, 30 mins
Copyright Peter Fischli David Weiss Zürich.
Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London; Matthew Marks Gallery New York; Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zürich

Fischli and Weiss began working together in 1979 and were among the most renowned contemporary artists of Switzerland. Their collaborative practice spans a range of media from film and photography to sculpture and performance. Elegant, and at times deceptively simple in
appearance, their work is often characterised by a wry humour in which the viewer is invited to participate before realising, perhaps too late, they are also part of the joke. This, their most famous work, shot over three days in their studio, documents an epic, causal chain of events verging on the impossible.

**Brian Griffiths (Born 1968)**

*Performing Ambition (for Robinson Crusoe)*, 2005

Organ, wood (various), varnish, wood dye, fixings

Courtesy the Artist and Vilma Gold, London

British artist Brian Griffiths' sculptures are portals for adventure: cardboard box space ships, abject monsters and mediaeval heroes. Through recognisable languages of making, the individual is repeatedly pulled centre stage in an absurd attempt to understand and shape the world. His work is almost entirely out of time; plundering the narrative histories of our most familiar objects and collective memories to create sculptures and installations which appear both effortless and laden with associations. Aspirational, and yet tragically flawed, Griffiths’ works are charged with deadpan humour, discontent and sadness.

**Emma Hart (Born 1974)**

*LOST*, 2009 – 2011

HD Video Installation, 19 mins.

Courtesy the Artist

Emma Hart is a British artist who makes films, installations, performances and photography describing her practice as ‘a course of action.’ Much of her recent work has been concerned with the relationship between camera, performance and sculpture; interrogating the possibilities of combining an action or narrative within an object. In the video installation *LOST* the camera itself becomes the protagonist. Its new function is to reveal a super-sized view into the crevices of our domestic world. The camera’s strangely insistent foraging questions our relationship with the familiar and mundane, promoting this experience into high definition and stereophonic sound.

**Jeppe Hein (Born 1974)**

*Screw on Wall*, 2007

Wood screw, motor, motion detector

Courtesy the Artist, Johann Koenig, Berlin and 303 Gallery, New York

Imbuing technology with an element of surprise and humour, the Danish-born artist Jeppe Hein’s interactive works playfully remind viewers of their vital part in activating art’s communicative potential. At first glance Hein’s sculptures appear to be uncomplicated, formally simple affairs referring to 1970s conceptual art and minimalism, but something happens as they are approached: they react to human presence.
Tehching Hsieh (Born 1950)
*Elements from One Year Performance*, 1980 - 1981
Mixed media
Courtesy the Artist and Sean Kelly, New York
Tehching Hsieh is a performance artist. Between 1978 and 1986 in New York, he accomplished a series of five extraordinary *One Year Performances* in which simple, self-imposed rules or actions such as living outside or being tied to another human being would be rigorously adhered to with all their attendant inconveniences. For this work every day for twelve months, at every hour, day or night, Hsieh, wearing a worker’s uniform, went to a grey-walled room in his loft in Manhattan and stamped a time card in a sign-in machine. This process was documented and verified by witnesses. Hsieh’s rigour and stamina during this process reflect a remarkable, condensed understanding and commentary of modern life and society; our capacity for the banality of hardship and willingness to endure for an often only imagined reward.

Sofia Hultén (Born 1972)
*Fuck it Up and Start Again*, 2001
Photograph and DVD
Courtesy the Artist Konrad Fischer Galerie, Berlin
The Swedish-born artist Sofia Hultén’s work explores the relationship between human beings and the object world. Many of her video works document the artist undertaking a series of seemingly futile or absurd tasks such as repeatedly destroying and repairing objects. In this work we see the artist entering a bare white space and smashing up an acoustic guitar – seven times and the same guitar. During intervals that take as little or as long as a change of clothes the guitar is repaired for another deconstructive ‘fuck-up.’ With each performance the guitar breaks a little more easily; for the seventh time all Hultén has to do is throw the instrument in the air and let gravity do its work.

Gordon Matta-Clark (1943 – 1978)
*Ssplitting*, 1974
Super 8 film transferred to DVD, silent, 11 mins
Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York
Gordon Matta-Clark’s work, like that of Dennis Oppenheim and Robert Smithson, was formed outside the parameters of the gallery and, in common with many artists of his generation, his activities were rooted in a critique of bourgeois American culture. During the 1970s, Matta-Clark made the works for which he is best known: his ‘anarchitecture.’ These were temporary pieces created by sawing and carving sections out of buildings. For *Splitting*, Matta-Clark’s first large-scale project, the artist sawed two parallel slices through a wood-frame house in New Jersey slated for demolition then removed the material between the two incisions.
Hayley Newman (Born 1968)
*Domestique*, 2010 - 2013
Embroidered dishcloths. Photograph by Adrian Wood. Courtesy the artist and Matt’s Gallery, London
Courtesy the Artist and Matts Gallery, London
Hayley Newman is a British visual and performance artist with an interest in humour, fiction and documentary practices. *Domestique* comprises a large series of used dishcloths and dresses which have been anthropomorphised using ribbons, sequins, peals, embroidery silks and buttons, a selection of which are shown here. Made at home whilst in a state of absentmindedness (listening to the radio or watching films), they are both an articulation of melancholic despair of disposable culture and a joy at the possibilities of contingent and the remade.

Miranda Pennell (Born 1963)
*Fisticuffs*, 2003
DVD, 11 mins
Courtesy the Artist and LUX
Miranda Pennell is a British artist whose work is concerned with aspects of performance in a range of subjects including teenage ice skaters, amateur and professional dancers, soldiers and drummers. For this film, Pennell took inspiration from the ritual of the Western bar-brawl, relocating it in a London working men's club. Her formal approach to the choreography, as well as to framing and editing, ensures that the viewer is constantly aware of the choreographed nature of the violence, which appears to have no consequences - the actors' bodies being as rubbery and invulnerable as those in TV Westerns of the 1960s and 1970s.

Ruth Proctor (Born 1980)
*OK. Set. Drop.*
Site specific commission for the Mead Gallery, 2013
Courtesy the Artist
Ruth Proctor is fascinated by spectacle sports such as ice skating (in which she originally trained) and gymnastics; the contemporary dance of Michael Clark and Merce Cunningham and the fantastic set pieces of Busby Berkley. She is concerned with capturing the fleeting moment of audience awareness between the build-up to an event and the event itself. Made from both new and used materials as well as found objects including snooker table felt, juggling rings and musical instruments, the artist describes the objects she makes as ‘performers in a modernist spectacle.’ The work Proctor shows here is simultaneously spectacle and explanation. A conjuring trick laid bare. The repetition of falling from a height and explaining the techniques and training required to do so, yet also providing a position from which the view might conceivably participate in this activity make ambition and fear manifest, as if there is a possibility that the movies could be real.
Roman Signer (Born 1938)
*Brille mit Rakete (Glasses with Rocket), 1982*
Super 8 film transferred to DVD, silent, 32 mins
Courtesy the Artist and Hauser & Wirth
For his action sculptures Roman Signer carries out and documents experiments involving everyday objects such as umbrellas, tables, boots, containers, hats and bicycles often resulting in explosions, collisions, and the projection of objects through space. Signer’s actions although apparently futile or banal on first sight are suffused with a dry humour and delight at the physicality of the world; his works in this series are both enigmatic and unflinching in their appraisal of life’s absurdity.

William Wegman (Born 1943)
*Two Dogs and a Ball (Dogs Duet), 1975*
Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix, New York
While teaching at California State University, the American artist William Wegman acquired and then photographed his first Weimaraner dog, Man Ray. Man Ray became so famous that the *Village Voice* named him ‘Man of the Year’ in 1982. On 29 January 1992, Wegman appeared on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson* and showed a video clip of *Dog Duet* in which Man Ray and another dog slowly and mysteriously peered around. The resulting film is a biting parody of much of the sculptural, performative actions of the 1970s while at the same time offering rare humour within conceptual practice. Wegman went on to make a number of films with Weimaraners including one famous work in which he attempts to teach the animal how to spell.

Richard Wentworth (Born 1947)
*Making Do and Getting By, 1979 onwards*
Slide presentation transferred to DVD
Courtesy the Artist and Lisson Gallery, London
Richard Wentworth is a British artist whose work tends to focus on the idea of transformation through the alteration and juxtaposition of objects. For this photographic series, Wentworth observed the ingenuity of humankind in the appropriation and adaptation of everyday objects for new uses, new meanings, and new narratives. A wellington boot becomes a doorstop, a cup becomes a window prop, a brick and piece of board become a ramp etc. Wentworth delights in the incongruity and poetry of these interventions in the world, suggesting that making is never something that starts from nothing.
Richard Wilson (Born 1953)

*Butterfly, 2003*

Time-lapse video, 4 mins

Courtesy the Artist

The British artist Richard Wilson is a sculptor, sound and installation artist whose work is characterised by architectural interventions, illusionary spaces and auditory perception. The work shown here is time-lapse video that shows Wilson and a team of helpers working over four weeks to unfurl the crushed body of a Cessna light aircraft.

John Wood and Paul Harrison

(Paul Harrison, born 1966; John Wood, born 1969)

*Luton – from Twenty-six (Drawing and Falling Things), 2001*

Extract from 26-screen video installation, 3 mins

Courtesy the Artists and Carroll/Fletcher, London

John Wood and Paul Harrison are British artists who together explore the physical and psychological parameters of the world around them. As trust and support, cause and effect are played out through simple material and conceptual gestures, the artists question and ultimately affirm a human position in the world that is essentially positive. This film is an extract from a larger installation in which 26 films - all under 3 minutes - are looped continuously on a like number of television screens. Each film shows the straight-faced artists - sometimes one, sometimes both – as they undertake a variety of absurd tasks and experiments.

Ben Woodeson (Born 1965)

*Fuck You You Fucking Fuck, 2012*

Glass and workbench

Courtesy the Artist

Ben Woodeson is a British artist who makes work that deliberately sets out to challenge both the viewer and the exhibiting institution. This work is part of a series entitled Health and Safety Violations. Using everyday objects and modular materials he creates works that confront our perceptions of safety and stability. Many of Woodeson’s works can only be full realised in their destruction either through interaction or accident. Broken glass, an electric shock or a blow to the head; these works are deliberately dangerous and intriguing while engendering a caution and an approach to risk which is fast vanishing from the modern world.
Erwin Wurm (Born 1954)

*One Minute Sculpture*, 1980s ongoing

Courtesy the Artist

Erwin Wurm uses photography and film to capture transient sculptural works. Since the late 1980s, Wurm has developed an ongoing series of *One Minute Sculptures*, in which he poses himself or his models in unexpected relationships with everyday objects close at hand, prompting the viewer to question what sculpture can be. As the sculptures are fleeting, spontaneous and transitory, they exist only as images captured in photographs or on film. Here the artist presents a series of instructions and objects with which viewers are invited to make their own sculptures.
The World Turned Upside Down
Buster Keaton, Sculpture and the Absurd

Knowledge and Understanding
Themes, Ideas and Questions to Explore

THE LOGIC OF OBJECTS

Still from One Week, 1920

1. If the function of an object is changed, how does our understanding of it change?

In the films of Buster Keaton, the actor-director often portrays a sense of bemusement at the object world: a bemusement that heightens own awareness of the environment we inhabit.

In The World Turned Upside Down, there are a number of works in which familiar objects are made to seem alien, assume new meanings and functions. For Erwin Wurm’s One Minute Sculpture, we are invited to become the artist by making sculptures from everyday objects such as oranges, buckets, a jumper and a chair; the work questions the value we put upon the artist, on art and on objects ordinarily taken for granted. In Emma Hart’s film, Lost, a familiar domestic environment is made to feel both dangerous and repellent through its magnification and by physically constricting the position of the viewer. For Richard Wentworth’s work, Making Do and Getting By, the artist has documented people’s ingenious adaptations of everyday objects for new uses – be it a wellington boot used as a doorstop or a brick and a piece of board as a ramp.

Discuss the use of found objects in the exhibition and how new meanings are elicited from the use of juxtaposition, de-contextualisation and adaptation.
Look around the exhibition:

- **What found objects can you identify – both physically within the gallery as well as in the films?**

- **Choose one work in the exhibition and discuss how that artist has used de-contextualisation, juxtaposition and adaptation to give objects new meanings.**

**You may also want to consider / refer to:**

- Dadaism’s use of the readymade.
- *Fountain* – a porcelain urinal signed ‘R. Mutt’ and turned on its side - widely attributed to Marcel Duchamp which was submitted for an exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in 1917.
- Surrealist artists’ combination of incongruous objects to assume new meanings - Salvador Dali’s *Lobster Phone* of 1936 for instance, or Meret Oppenheim’s *Objet* of 1936 (a fur covered cup, saucer and spoon).
- Rachel Whiteread’s *House* of 1993, for which the artist made a concrete cast of an entire Victorian terraced house.
Knowledge and Understanding

Themes, Ideas and Questions to Explore

THE ELEMENT OF RISK

2. Why do we laugh at someone slipping on a banana skin?

The physical comedy of performers such as Buster Keaton often depended on the proximity and possibility of death and Keaton famously designed and performed his own stunts at great personal risk.

In *The World Turned Upside Down*, there are a number of works which incorporate elements of risk—either to the artist or to the viewer. In Ben Woodeson’s work, a large piece of glass is precariously held within the vice grip of a workbench, threatening to topple at any time. During the exhibition, Ruth Proctor uses trained techniques to fall from a scaffold tower in the gallery and, in the short film by John Wood and Paul Harrison, the artists are seen rolling around on swivel chairs in the back of a moving vehicle. The 1971 film *Broken Fall (Organic)* by Bas Jan Ader shows the artist falling from a tree; three years later he was lost at sea while attempting a single handed crossing of the Atlantic as part of another work.
From the escapology of Harry Houdini to Evel Knievel’s daredevil motorcycle stunts and David Blaine’s feats of endurance, there is a long history of people putting themselves in danger for the entertainment of others. Discuss the relationship between entertainment and danger; comedy and risk.

Look around the exhibition. Identify which works you think incorporate an element of risk and which of these works you find funny, unsettling or other. Why?

Discuss the work by Ben Woodeson.

- **How does the work make you feel?**

- **The piece is part of a series entitled *Health and Safety Violations*. Discuss the title of the series and of the work in the gallery. The artist has used deliberately provocative language. How does this affect our response to the sculpture?**

**You may want to consider / refer to:**

- Performance art involving personal endurance such as by Gina Pane and Marina Abromović.
- Sculptures which contain implicit danger such as the works of Richard Serra.
Knowledge and Understanding
Themes, Ideas and Questions to Explore

THE FILMMAKER AS AUTEUR

3. What is the difference between video art and theatrical cinema?

In film criticism, the term ‘auteur’ (author) derives from French New Wave Cinema and was advocated by the director François Truffaut. It tends to be applied to film directors whose personal vision is evident in the films he or she produces and usually implies a large degree of creative control.

From 1920 to 1929, Buster Keaton worked without interruption on a series of films that make him, arguably, the greatest actor-director in the history of the movies. Keaton gave up his artistic independence when he joined MGM in 1928 and this is widely blamed for his subsequent career decline.

Most films produced for the cinema today require a huge amount of financial investment and involve a large number of people both behind and in front of the cameras; only a very few directors are able to retain their artistic independence. By comparison, most artists’ films are produced on a relatively small budget and – similarly to Buster Keaton in his early career – the artists often produce, direct and star in their own films as well as design, source and make any props required.
Look at the artists’ films exhibited in *The World Turned Upside Down*. How many people can you see in them? How long are they? Is there any dialogue? Is there a beginning, middle and end? Do you stand or sit in front of them?

Compare and contrast one of Buster Keaton’s films being presented in the exhibition and one of the artists’ films. Discuss:

- **What is the difference, if any, between cinema and artists’ film and video?**

- **How important is the gallery context and the visitor experience to this distinction?**

- **What do you think are the defining characteristics of Buster Keaton’s films and comedic style? Can you see these characteristics in the artists’ work presented in the exhibition? Can you think of any contemporary equivalents in cinema and comedy?**

**You may want to consider / refer to:**

- The films of Steve McQueen including *Deadpan*, 1997, for which McQueen restaged a Buster Keaton stunt, and *Hunger*, 2008, his first film produced for cinema release.
- The relationship between performance and artists’ film and video, including the films of Bruce Nauman.
- Contemporary comedians including Lee Evans, Rowan Atkinson and Miranda Hart; Jack Dee and Paul Merton.
Skills and Techniques

Ideas for activities during your visit to the gallery

1. **OBSERVATION**
   Choose a work in the exhibition that involves the juxtaposition of found objects – it could be a sculpture, it could be a scene in one of the films. Draw each of the objects from which the work is comprised separately but indicating how they are combined. This could be through the use of arrows and dotted lines (similar to the instructions you get for putting together a piece of flat-pack furniture); it could be a storyboard sequence (such as in a comic strip). Once you have completed your drawings in the gallery, you may wish to think about how the objects could be configured differently, or could incorporate new objects to acquire different meanings.

2. **MAPPING**
   The Mead Gallery is roughly divided into three cubic galleries. Choose one of these galleries, draw a square then draw onto that square everything you see within it – from sculptures to monitors to projected images and wiring. The curators of the exhibition have carefully selected which works to put next to each other and how to present them.

   - Note down any themes you pick up on that link the works?
   - In many exhibitions involving film, the projectors, monitors and players are hidden. In *The World Turned Upside Down*, the equipment is on open view and most of the monitors are cube rather than flat screen. Why do you think the curators have chosen to present the works in this way? Note down on your drawing what the gallery makes you feel. Is the environment domestic/industrial; comfortable/uncomfortable; familiar/unfamiliar?
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Exploring and Developing Ideas

Follow up activities

1. CREATING A CAUSAL CHAIN
   In Peter Fischli and David Weiss’s film, *Der Lauf der Dinge (The Way Things Go)*, of 1987, the artists documented an epic, causal chain of events. Create your own causal chain and document it either in film or using a sequence of photographic images. The chain can be formed from objects or from actions. It can be as short or as long as you like. You are the artist: have fun – just be careful you get permission for any objects you use and that you don’t risk hurting anyone, including yourself.

2. MAKING A PIECE OF ART FROM FOUND OBJECTS
   On individual similarly sized pieces of paper, draw or name as many objects as you can remember seeing in *The World Turned Upside Down*. Put the pieces of paper in a hat or box, shake and then, with eyes closed, pull out five pieces of paper. Look at the objects you have selected and then design either a sculpture or a causal chain from them. You can use real objects to make a 3-dimensional work or alter scale using collage, photography and drawing. You may even wish to create a sequence using flip-book animation. Repeat the exercise at least three times to see what new meanings you can give to objects by removing them from their original contexts as well as by juxtaposing and altering them.
3. MAKING A FUNNY FILM

Think about the films you saw in *The World Turned Upside Down* and how their use of repetition, futile actions and risk variously invoked the deadpan humour of Buster Keaton. In Sofia Hultén’s film, *Fuck it Up and Start Again*, the artist is seen repeatedly destroying then repairing a guitar. In Simon Faithfull’s *0°00 Navigation*, the artist is seen making an obsessive but ultimately futile journey along the Greenwich Meridian from Peacehaven in Hampshire to Cleethorpes in Lincolnshire. In John Wood and Paul Harrison’s film, *Luton – from Twenty-six (Drawing and Falling Things)*, the artists are seen risking personal injury by sitting on office swivel chairs in the back of a moving vehicle. Make your own funny film which incorporates elements of repetition, futility and risk (though do be careful not to hurt yourself or anyone else). You may want to use Vine to create a short film loop and post your funny film online.
The World Turned Upside Down
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Further Reading and Related Links

Buster Keaton

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buster_Keaton
http://www.biography.com/people/buster-keaton-9361442

The Artists

http://www.basjanader.com/

http://angusbraithwaite.com

http://alterpreconsistant.blogspot.co.uk/

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcel_Broodthaers


http://www.simonfaithfull.org/

http://fischli-weiss.com/

http://www.vilmagold.com/newpages/previous/briangriffiths4.htm

http://www.emmahart.info/

http://www.jeppehein.net/

http://www.tehchinghsieh.com/

http://www.sofiahulten.de/

http://www.davidzwirner.com/artists/gordon-matta-clark/

http://www.hayleynewman.com/

http://www.mirandapennell.com/
http://hollybushgardens.co.uk/index.php/artists/ruth-proctor/

http://www.romansigner.ch/en

http://www.williamwegman.com/about.html

http://www.lissongallery.com/#/artists/richard-wentworth/

http://www.richardwilsonsculptor.com/


http://www.woodeson.co.uk/

http://www.erwinwurm.at/

The Mead Gallery and University Art Collection

www.meadgallery.co.uk

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/art/
**The World Turned Upside Down**  
*Buster Keaton, Sculpture and the Absurd*

Planning a Visit to the Mead Gallery

**Contact Details and Opening Hours**
Mead Gallery  
Warwick Arts Centre  
University of Warwick  
Coventry CV4 7AL  
Box Office: 024 7652 4524

Open Monday – Saturday, 12 noon – 9pm. Free Entry.  
For group visits, it is advisable to book in advance.

The Mead Gallery is exclusively available for school group bookings Monday – Friday, 9am – 12noon by prior arrangement. Staff and resources are available to support these visits. There is a charge of £100 to cover staffing costs outside normal opening hours.

**Parking at Warwick Arts Centre**
Daytime parking on campus can be difficult so please allow plenty of time. For directions to Warwick Arts Centre, go to [http://www.warwickartscentre.co.uk/visit/getting-here/](http://www.warwickartscentre.co.uk/visit/getting-here/)

For a map of the campus, [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/campusmap/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/campusmap/)

**Coaches**
Coaches can drop off and pick up on Library Road. Please follow the signs for the short walk to the Arts Centre. Please inform our Box Office if you are arriving by coach so that effective and safe arrangements can be made with campus security.

**Cars**
 Charges apply for all University of Warwick car parks during the day. The nearest to Warwick Arts Centre is CP7 (free if arriving after 6pm). Please note, CP7 has no lift.

**Minibuses**
CP4 and CP5 (1hr max stay) are not height-restricted. Charges apply. After 6pm, please use CP4 or CP5, which are both free.

**Lunch**
If necessary, rooms are available where pupils can eat their packed lunches. Let us know in advance if you want us to book one.

**Toilets**
Public toilets are available in the Arts Centre.
Risk Assessments
Risk Assessments are available from the Arts Centre’s Education Team. Contact Brian Bishop on 02476 524252.

Before Your Visit
We recommend a preliminary planning visit and are happy to discuss your requirements with you. Two of the works in the exhibition have titles including language that may be deemed offensive. The work by Ben Woodeson is very fragile and poses a deliberate threat to visitors if approached with incaution. Your visit will confirm which works which are most suitable for your group.

Adult supervision of students under 16 is required at all times. An adult student ratio of 1:5 for under 5s, 1:10 for 5-11 year olds, 1:15 for 11-16 year olds and 1:20 for 16-18 year olds is required.

During Your Visit
Teachers/group leaders and accompanying adults are responsible for their group’s behaviour whilst at Warwick Arts Centre.

Many contemporary artworks are fragile and damage easily. Unless you are told otherwise, please take extra care to ensure that your group follows the Gallery guidelines at all times:

No running
No touching
No leaning against walls or plinths
No photography

Drawing
The Mead Gallery has some drawing materials available and can supply a certain amount of clipboards. Please contact Gallery staff on 024 7657 3732 to discuss your needs. We regret that we cannot supply drawing materials with little or no notice.