

ICA

**Tauba
Auerbach
*The New
Ambidextrous
Universe***

**David
Robilliard
*The Yes No
Quality of
Dreams***

**16 April —
15 June 2014**

**Educator's
Resource
Pack**

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Aims of the Resource Pack

This resource pack has been developed to support teaching and learning both at the ICA and offsite. It offers starting points and ideas for visiting educators to use with students. It was developed with GCSE and A-Level students in mind but is well suited for work with groups of all ages. Activities and discussion points are suggested and one of the key learning objectives is for students to develop their skills in aesthetic understanding and critical judgement. Students will be guided towards an analysis and exploration of how the artworks in *Tauba Auerbach: The New Ambidextrous Universe* and *David Robilliard: The Yes No Quality of Dreams* reflect the social and cultural contexts in which they were made. Suggested activities are offered for use in the gallery and offsite.



Photo: Paul Knight. Courtesy ICA.

About the ICA

The ICA supports radical art and culture. Through a vibrant programme of exhibitions, films, events, talks and debates, the ICA challenges perceived notions and stimulates debate, experimentation, creativity and exchange with visitors.

Founded in 1946 by a group of artists including Roland Penrose, Peter Watson and Herbert Read, the ICA continues to support living artists in showing and exploring their work, often as it emerges and before others. The ICA has been at the forefront of cultural experimentation since its formation and has presented important debut solo shows by artists including Damien Hirst, Steve McQueen, Richard Prince and Luc Tuymans. More recently Pablo Bronstein, Lis Rhodes, Bjarne Melgaard and Juergen Teller have all staged key solo exhibitions, whilst a new generation of artists, including Luke Fowler, Lucky PDF, Hannah Sawtell and Factory Floor have taken part in exhibitions and residencies.

The ICA was one of the first venues to present The Clash and The Smiths, as well as bands such as Throbbing Gristle. The inaugural ICA / LUX Biennial of Moving Images was launched in 2012, and the ICA Cinema continues to screen rare artists' film, support independent releases and partner with leading film festivals.

Also showing at the ICA

Paperwork: A Brief History of Artists' Scrapbooks
1 April – 11 May 2014
Fox Reading Room



Walerian Borowczyk: The Listening Eye
20 May – 6 July 2014
Fox Reading Room



www.ica.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions

An Introduction to Tauba Auerbach *The New Ambidextrous Universe*

Tauba Auerbach: The New Ambidextrous Universe

The New Ambidextrous Universe is the first solo exhibition in the UK by San Francisco-born, New York-based artist Tauba Auerbach, who works in a wide variety of media including sculpture, photography, painting, weaving and book design. Auerbach takes a highly innovative approach to mechanical processes and colour. Her ICA exhibition features newly created sculptures and photographs which take as their starting point the scientific principles of symmetry and reflection as a means to hint at an alternate, mirror universe.

The word ambidextrous means equally strong on both the right and left. Auerbach has taken full advantage of this physical concept of parity and reflection. Her seven sculptures, meticulously arranged by the artist herself, are displayed in the Lower Gallery in such a way that visitors are encouraged to view the works from all sides and fully explore the artist's use of symmetry and three dimensional space. The strong influence of physics and maths, rather than only aesthetics is visible through the use of repeating patterns and mechanical processes. The artist has chosen to explore the complex ideas examined in Martin Gardner's book, *The New Ambidextrous Universe*, by creating sculptures that play with shape and space, allowing for a visual representation of the ideas of interconnectivity. Auerbach combines this emphasis on symmetry and reflection with the juxtaposition of opposites. Wooden works next to those of glass and metal, naturally occurring woodgrain versus brightly colored plastic, and the use of organic as well as more geometric shapes are some examples of these contrasts.

Auerbach's recent solo exhibitions include Standard, Oslo (2013), Wiels Centre of Contemporary Art, Brussels; Malmö Konsthall, Malmö; and Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen (2011 – 2012). Recent group exhibitions include *Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language*, 2012, Museum of Modern Art, New York; *The Painting Factory*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and *Lifelike*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

Supported by Paula Cooper Gallery, STANDARD (Oslo), Tristan Capital Partners and the Tauba Auerbach Exhibition Supporters Group including Maya & Ramzy Rasamny, among others.

www.ica.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions

Tauba Auerbach
The New Ambidextrous Universe

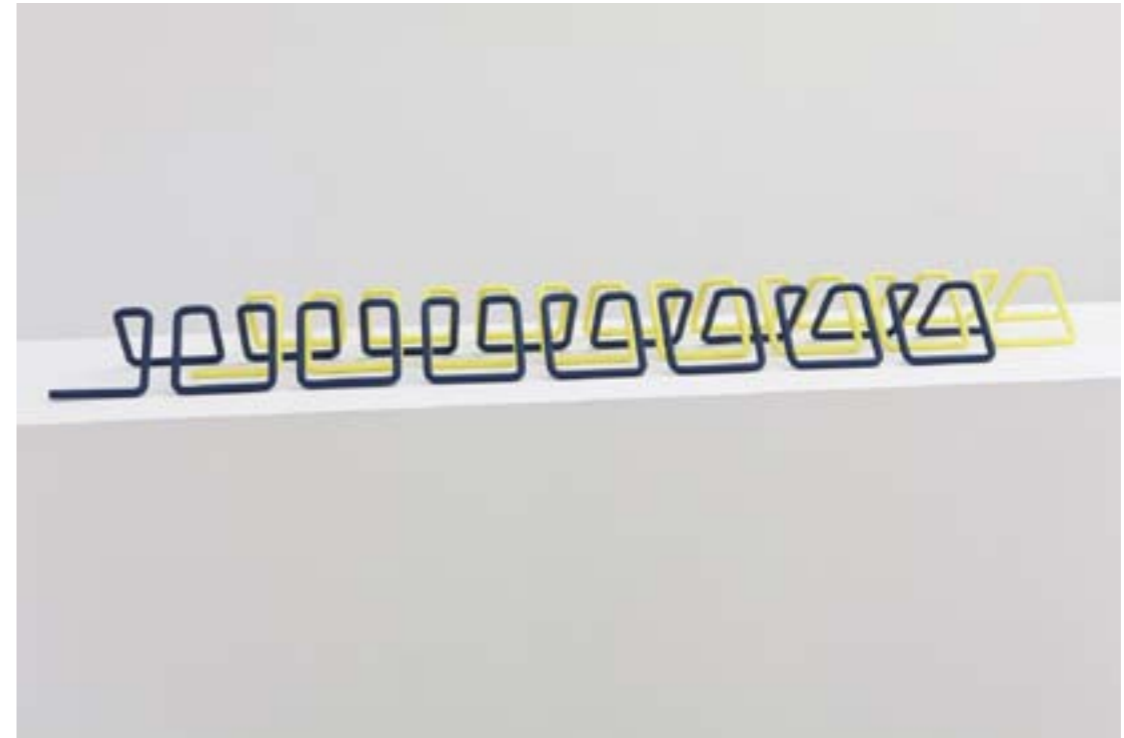


Tauba Auerbach, installation view of *The New Ambidextrous Universe IV*, 2013
Photo: Paul Knight.



The New Ambidextrous Universe I, 2013, Plywood, .75 × 96 × 48 inches.
Photo: Vegard Kleven Courtesy Standard (Oslo).

Tauba Auerbach
The New Ambidextrous Universe



Tauba Auerbach, installation view of *Knit Stitch*, 2014. Photo: Paul Knight.



Tauba Auerbach, installation view of *S Helix*, 2014. Photo: Paul Knight.

Discussion and Activities

Discussion

- Auerbach's work has been carefully arranged in the gallery. What aspects of the artist's work are emphasised through the design of the space?
- What does Auerbach emphasise visually in her work? Describe the formal elements of each piece and discuss the relationships between the works.
- Auerbach has stated that she thinks more about maths than art history. Her work here is linked to Martin Gardner's book *The New Ambidextrous Universe* which is about modern physics. Do you think it is important that the viewer understands the challenging concepts and scientific theories behind Auerbach's work? How can the audience access a greater understanding of her work?
- Analyse the term 'ambidextrous' and how we can understand the works in relation to this.
- Why do you think Auerbach chose to explore scientific principles and systems of signification through art?
- Explain how Auerbach has used colour in her work. How does the artist's use of colour relate to the theme of the exhibition?
- Auerbach uses a wide variety of materials - photography, plywood, aluminium, glass, metal and stainless steel. Her work in general includes sculpture, photography, painting, weaving and book design. What does this broad range of materials and techniques suggest about the role of contemporary artists today?
- Auerbach's work has been described as conceptual, abstract and graphic. How would you categorise the works in the exhibition?

Activities

Create

- Auerbach uses the scientific principles of symmetry and reflection in her work to hint at an alternate mirror universe. Using a variety of media create a work of art that explores symmetry and reflection in relation to natural and man-made forms.
- *The New Ambidextrous Universe*, a book by Martin Gardner, inspired Auerbach's exhibition of the same name. Choose a book that has had a significant impact on you and make the title the starting point for a series of works, experimenting with a variety of media.

Analyse

- Analyse how the work has been arranged in the gallery. Imagine you are a curator and re-designing the exhibition. How might you arrange the works? Which works would you choose to highlight? How could you emphasise certain themes through the design of the space?
- Auerbach is fascinated by the process of deconstructing systems of signification. Deconstruct a system of signification that interests you. Explore how the process of breaking down the structures might open up new visual possibilities. Assess the success of these new visual possibilities – how might you measure this?

Experiment

- Auerbach combines her interest in spatial experience with her fascination with mechanical process and craft, as demonstrated by the work *Knit Stitch* (2014). Experiment with traditional crafts such as weaving, knitting and paper folding. Use drawing and diagrams to document the visual and tactile qualities of the materials and the underlying structures.

An Introduction to David Robilliard

The Yes No Quality of Dreams

David Robilliard: *The Yes No Quality of Dreams*

The ICA brings together a selection of paintings by London-based poet and painter David Robilliard in the first UK institutional exhibition for over twenty years. These intimate paintings combine figurative elements with text taken directly from Robilliard's own poems. Coded and knowing, his evocative prose alludes to intimate sexual encounters and passing infatuations that ultimately conjure an image of 1980s queer London.

Robilliard moved to London in 1975 and became close friends with Gilbert & George, momentarily appearing in the film *The World of Gilbert & George* (1981). Commenting on him, they said, 'His truthfulness, sadness, desperation and love of people gave his work a brilliance and beauty that stands out a mile.' Throughout the 1980s Robilliard published books and postcards of his poetry, as well as contributing to publications such as *The Fred*, *Square Peg* and *The Manipulator*. Despite being heavily associated with 1980s queer culture, Robilliard's poems still carry a sense of fresh and sardonic humour today. Gilbert & George described him as 'the new master of the modern person' due to the raw truth present in his work.

In the group of paintings on show in the Upper Gallery, Robilliard plays with the combination of text and image. His works are not simply illustrations of the text but rather additions that add to their meaning. His imagery is figurative, but more specifically facial, never showing the whole body but instead focusing on heads. Never formally trained, Robilliard's style is minimalist but expressive, using flat line and color on stark white backgrounds. His use of bright colors and playful image has a feeling of irreverence at first but the text and the facial expressions used take on a more serious tone, creating a sense of irony, contradiction, and uncertainty.



Image: Alan Macdonald, Manipulated Polaroid of David Robilliard, 1981. Courtesy Alan Macdonald.

Robilliard's works are heavily based on his personal experiences but deal with the relatable themes of attraction, relationships and loneliness. His subjects include glances, arguments and everyday thoughts that define the way people interact with one another. By using single lines of poetry on the canvas, the artist draws the viewer's attention to a subject but avoids making a firm comment on it. This careful composition allows viewers to draw their own meanings based on personal experience and reflects the ambiguity that exists in social and emotional relationships

Robilliard's paintings appeared in numerous gallery exhibitions during his lifetime, as well as exhibiting in venues such as London's Hippodrome and L'Escargot restaurant. In 1993, a major retrospective was held at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

Exhibition to be accompanied by an ICA publication. Introduction by Gregor Muir (ICA Executive Director), main text by Andrew Wilson (Curator of Modern & Contemporary British Art at Tate Britain).

Supported by the David Robilliard Exhibition Supporters Group including Aurel Scheibler, among others.

With thanks to support from Guernsey Arts Commission

www.ica.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions

David Robilliard

The Yes No Quality of Dreams



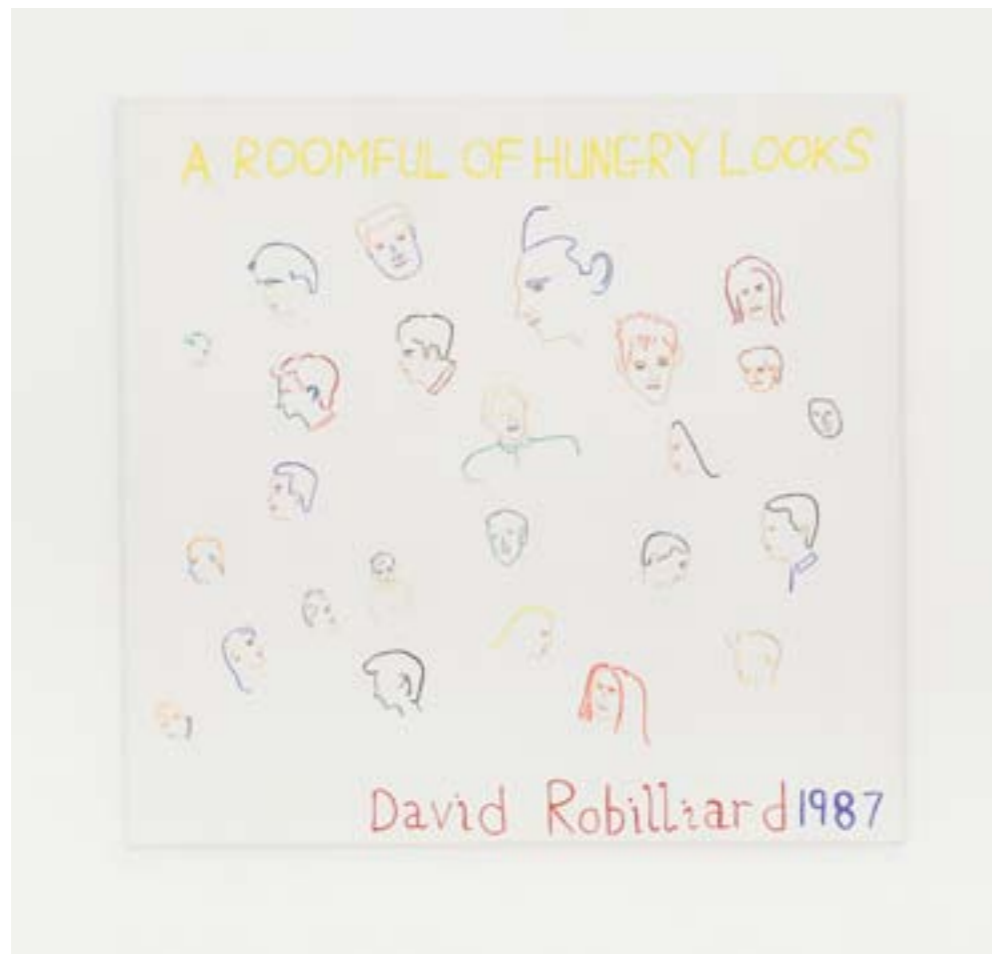
David Robilliard, installation view of *You Know*, 1988. Photo: Paul Knight.

David Robilliard

The Yes No Quality of Dreams



David Robilliard, *Life Isn't Good, It's Excellent*, 1987. Photo: Paul Knight.



David Robilliard, *A Roomful of Hungry Looks*, 1987. Photo: Paul Knight.



David Robilliard, installation view of *The Naked Flame*, 1988. Photo: Paul Knight.

Discussion and Activities

Discussion

- Describe the relationship between text and image in Robilliard's work. What impact do the words in his paintings have on the viewer?
- A lack of certainty is suggested by the title of the exhibition. Analyse the theme of uncertainty and ambiguity in Robilliard's paintings. How do the formal properties of the works emphasise these themes?
- The works show a selection of the artist's intimate thoughts and observations about life. What do you think the artist wanted to communicate to the viewer? Do you think the artist is expressing his identity through the works? How does the knowledge of his life and early death to AIDS change the way you view the work?
- How does Robilliard's work fit into the social aspect of life in London during the 80s? What does Robilliard's work tell us about the experience of being homosexual during this time?
- Robilliard's imagery might be perceived as child-like or simplistic by some viewers. How would you describe the work? Discuss the impact of the style that he employs. Have you encountered other artists who have used a similar style?
- Discuss how Robilliard's work might be understood by viewers of different ages and cultures. How do you think critics might have responded to his work at the time it was produced?
- Robilliard was friends with Gilbert & George. They wrote of Robilliard that he is 'the new master of the modern person. Looking, thinking, feeling, seeing, bitching – he brilliantly encapsulates the 'Existers' spirit of our time.' Think of a person who could be a present-day equivalent and discuss the reasons for your choice.

Activities

Create

- Create a sound piece using a poem that you have written. Record certain lines and words from the poem and experiment with varying the sound and speed of these words (think about sound in terms of composition). Assess the impact that these recordings have on the listener.
- Robilliard has considered the arrangement of text on the canvas, as well as its size and the colours used. Develop a series of paintings and/or drawings that explores text in terms of scale, shape and composition.
- Research historical precedents for using image and text in works of art. Find three artists who use image and text and compare and contrast their work. Create a work of art in response to one of your chosen artists using any media.

Write

- The words used in Robilliard's paintings are taken from his poetry. Write a poem about your observations as you walk around the gallery or another space of your choice. Use one line from the poem as a starting point for a painting. Repeat the process in different settings to create a series of paintings
- Writings about Robilliard often reference the artists Gilbert & George, as they were close friends. Research the work of Gilbert & George and write an essay about the influence they had on the artist.

Art Rules

The ICA's Art Rules website is an online forum designed to generate debate around contemporary art. The website asks visitors to answer the question: 'What is art?'. Their answers appear on the website for other visitors to comment on, and conversations are started around the submitted 'rules'. Visitors can 'Agree' or 'Disagree' with these rules - as well as share a rule using Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest.

The more people 'Agree' with a rule, the larger it will appear on the website, and vice versa. The website has been seeded with a number of rules written by leading artists, curators and critics. This is to serve as inspiration for visitors and enable the site to become a repository of outstanding thinking as well as a community of cultural commentators.

artrules.ica.org.uk



Activity

Log onto the 'Art Rules' website and submit your very own 'Art Rule' and discuss with the group why you chose it. The rest of the group will then have the opportunity to debate the rule and decide whether or not they agree with it.

artrules.ica.org.uk

ICA Learning

Our dynamic learning programme provides opportunities for creative exchange, investigation and discussion between practitioners and audiences. The ICA strives to build sustainable relationships with universities, students, schools and our wider audiences, nurturing interest and appreciation of the creative process, and broadening engagement with contemporary arts.

ICA Learning provides different opportunities to engage with the ICA programme through gallery tours, guided visits to our exhibitions, Friday Salons, online educational platforms and the ICA Student Forum, a dedicated student body that curates events and projects for the Public Programme.

Our University Partnerships exist to encourage the development of joint projects and research. In addition, ICA Academy provides career paths to Further Education, Higher Education and employment.

For further information or to make a booking, please email learning@ica.org.uk

ICA Learning is generously supported by The Ernest Cook Trust

ICA Forthcoming Events

Learning Workshop

'Get Off My Back Will You and Give Someone Else a Chance'
Saturday 31 May, 2pm

In light of the David Robilliard exhibition, artists Jay Bernard and Evan Ifekoya will lead a workshop for 16-19 year olds that experiments with alternative poetry, drawing connections between voice, text, and technology. Participants will create their own postcard poems and have the opportunity to be part of an evening of readings and performances alongside leading international poets.

The workshop is free but a place must be booked in advance.

To book contact ICA Box Office on 020 7930 3647 or email sales@ica.org.uk

The workshop will be followed by a performance at 7.30pm, which is £5, free for ICA members and workshop participants.

ICA Forthcoming Events

Gallery Tours

Richard Scott
Thursday 12 June, 6.30pm

All Gallery Tours are Free.

Culture Now

Joshua Dector
Friday 23 May, 1pm

Ariel Reichman
Friday 20 June, 1pm

All Culture Now Talks are £5,
Free to ICA Members.

Artists' Film Club

Anka & Wilhelm Sasnal
Saturday 17 May, 5pm

Colour
Wednesday, 21 May, 6.45pm

Adrien Missika
Wednesday 4 June, 6.45pm

Yang Fudong
Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 June,
6.15pm

All Artists' Film Club tickets are
£5, Free to ICA Members

Friday Salons

Art as Spatial Practice

Friday 16 May, 3pm
This Salon will take as its starting point the concept of contemporary art as an architectural form to discuss more broadly the boundaries between contemporary art and theoretical architecture.
£5, Free to ICA Members.

Re-materialising Feminism

Friday 20 June, 3pm
The curators of Re-Materialising Feminism will be joined by students and emerging practitioners to present and explore new feminist research and practice over the last few years.
£5, Free to ICA Members.

Group Screenings

Continuing this autumn is our group screenings programme aimed at schools, colleges, further education centres, community groups, and young people outside of school. Further information about films, dates, and resources will be available on the website in the coming months.

For more info visit [ica.org.uk /learning/school-and-group-screenings](http://ica.org.uk/learning/school-and-group-screenings)

ICA Forthcoming Events

Pick-Me-Ups and Pick-Ups

Tuesday 3 June, 7pm

This event invites a series of artists to contribute textual pieces (their own, or of others) to be presented as readings, performances and poetically wry gestures over wine in the ICA Bar.
£5, Free to ICA Members.

Artist Presentation: Tauba Auerbach

Saturday 7 June, 6pm

To coincide with Tauba Auerbach's first UK solo exhibition at the ICA and the inaugural Room&Book Art Book Fair, Auerbach will make a presentation on her practice that will touch on her self-published print on demand artist books.
£10, £7 to ICA Members.

Re-Materialising Feminism

Performance: Saturday 20 June 6.30-8pm

Workshop & Performance: Sunday 21 June, 12-5pm

Re-Materialising Feminism is a collaborative project, hosted between the ICA and The Showroom and aimed at interrogating materialist feminist discourse within in contemporary culture and emergent feminisms. The second part of the project at the ICA comprises of a series of text-based interventions, performances, screenings and onstage conversations that reconsider older feminist strategies of representation in light of a resurgence of interest in feminism in culture and the mass media.
£5 per day or £8 for 2-day ticket, Free to ICA Members.

How to book

To book for groups or individuals contact ICA Box Office on 020 7930 3647
or email sales@ica.org.uk

For more details on events visit
www.ica.org.uk/whats-on

Useful Links and Resources

ICA Learning

www.ica.org.uk/learning
learning@ica.org.uk

Educator's Previews

Join our educators previews for all of our exhibitions

Educator's Resource Packs

Educator resource packs are available at the ICA Box Office, on the ICA website, or by emailing learning@ica.org.uk

Art Rules

Art Rules is an online space to discuss the rules of art today. Engage your students by visiting: artrules.ica.org.uk

MA in the Contemporary

Find out more about our unique, interdisciplinary MA programme, in partnership with University of Kent:
www.ica.org.uk/ma-contemporary

Cinema Matinee Screenings

Cinema group matinees are available for schools, colleges and universities. To see the full programme visit:
www.ica.org.uk/whats-on/films

ICA Student Forum

Join the ICA Student Forum to shape and develop a public programme of events in response to the ICA programme:
www.ica.org.uk/student-forum

University Partnerships

Through our University partnerships we engage and promote greater collaborative opportunities between university students, teaching staff and the ICA's public programme. Find out more:
www.ica.org.uk/university-partnerships

Opening Hours

Tuesday—Sunday, 11am—11pm

Day Membership £1

Wednesday—Sunday, 11am-6pm
Until 9pm on Thursdays

Exhibitions

Tuesday—Sunday, 11am—6pm
Open late every Thursday until 9pm

ICA Box Office & Bookshop

Tuesday—Sunday, 11am—9pm

ICA Café Bar

Food served from 11.30—3.30pm / 5.30—9pm

Tuesday Cinema

All films, all day: £3 for ICA Members / £6 non-Members

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www.ica.org.uk/signup

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Cover image: Tauba Auerbach, installation view of *Square Helix*, 2014. Photo: Paul Knight.

Resource Pack developed by Rita Cottone and Irene O'Hare