



Front of double-image postcard of Jeremy Cooper on a studio visit to Frances Richardson who made this in a limited edition of twenty-five. 2012

POSTCARD NARRATIVES

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Jeremy Cooper & invited artists

Julie Cockburn / Daniel Eatock / Tracey Emin / Cristina Garrido
Susan Hiller / Georgie Hopton / Helen Knight / Abigail Lane
Rebecca Loweth / Sara MacKillop / Frances Richardson
Sarah Staton / Gavin Turk

R O O M BOOKS

PREFACE

Jeremy Cooper's involvement with contemporary art has always been personal and private. This, the first exhibition of his own work, is an uncharacteristically public act—supported by the presence of artist-friends he has invited to join the show. All his and their work in this exhibition is centred around postcards, which are themselves both private and public, a form of communication intimate and egalitarian, available to everyone to make what they wish.

The three best-known artists in the exhibition, Susan Hiller, Tracey Emin and Gavin Turk, were all important to Cooper in the development of his interest in artists' postcards—meaning postcards made as independent artistic expression rather than merely postcards of art, or art of postcard size. Turk's postcard *Window* [see p.33] first appeared as the personal invitation to his MA degree show at the Royal College of Art in the summer of 1991, its form a topical response to the similarly composed front page image which had appeared in *The Sun* newspaper earlier that week, beneath the caption "Support our boys and put this up in your window". Cooper saw the work as a freely available form of political as well as artistic expression. Turk and Cooper lived throughout the 1990s in the same street in Shoreditch, where Tracey Emin was a frequent visitor. It was on one of Emin's visits in the late 1990s to Cooper's warehouse home that she came across his labelled envelopes of postcards, stacked in the long drawer of a bookcase, and her enthusiasm for the collection triggered Cooper's thoughts of one day mounting an exhibition. Emin used to keep her own postcards and other ephemera in similarly stored order, from which to make work.

In 1997 Emin gave Cooper the monoprint portrait drawing of him she had made over tea in her studio in Waterloo Road, a ground floor shop with a neon sign in the window reading The Tracey Emin Museum.

Cooper used Turk's work *Godot* [1996] on the cover of his third novel *The Folded Lie* [ellipsis 2000]—Turk appears as himself in Cooper's novel *Kath Trevelyan* [Serpent's Tail 2007], the cover this time with a work by Peter Doig.

Contact with Susan Hiller, though coming later, was no less significant, and being able to buy in 2010 one of her early postcard pieces, *The Flying Spray. The Feathery Foam. Addenda 1. Section 3* [1976], sealed Cooper's commitment to forming the large collection of artists' postcards

recently accepted as a promised gift by the British Museum, scheduled for a substantial exhibition and catalogue in 2018 in the Department of Prints and Drawings. Hiller's piece for



Untitled. Cristina Garrido. Two Tate postcards with the object painted out in acrylic: Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII* [1966] and Rachel Whiteread's *Untitled (Air Bed II)* [1992]. 2011

Postcard Narratives makes use of some of the old postcards of artists' palettes she has gathered over the years, one of which, dated 1907, was illustrated in Cooper's book *Artists' Postcards. A Compendium* [Reaktion 2012].

The writing of this book and formation of his collection brought Cooper into personal contact with the two youngest artists in the exhibition, Cristina Garrido and Rebecca Loweth, both of whom spent their final year at art school working exclusively with postcards, Garrido for her MA at Wimbledon College of Art in 2011, and Loweth for her BA at Farnham College of Art in 2012. Several of their works are now in Cooper's collection, and will therefore end up in the British Museum, Garrido with the painting out of the art works in new postcards, and Loweth with the sculptural folding of found postcards. At Christmas 2011 Garrido sent as a present to Cooper her painted-out postcard of *Toxic Schizophrenia* [1997] by Tim Noble and Sue Webster, knowing that they were Shoreditch friends of his from the 1990s, with a written note: "Things are going good for me and I will always remember that you were the first to buy my work!"



T 6119 Rebecca Loweth. Composition of three folded cards. 2012

PROSE POSTCARD

Dean Hughes

The postcard arrived specific and codified. 12th Feb 2013. I hold the card pinched between my thumb and index finger and register the thickness. I tilt my wrist and oscillate my attention between the image on the front and the text on the back. The text is horizontal whilst the image is portrait requiring an extra flip to allow the appropriate engagement with either format. The text on the back of the postcard says *Riber Castle, Matlock, Derbyshire, England*. I turn the card over and look again at the image. In the center stand's an electric blue castle with three turrets, a small red roof and a yellow ladder leading up some four feet to a small balcony framed by a red and yellow curtain. At the center of the castle lies an arched doorway. I turn the card over again and read "riber castle viewed from Hall Leys Park Matlock..." I look again at the front image of the card. Adjacent to the children's playground castle stands a women and a child with a pushchair who are either looking at, or feeding ducks in a pond. I am curiously drawn to the white plastic bag hanging off the handle of the chair, and try yet fail to register the brand. The pond occupied the majority of the foreground whilst the mid ground is largely taken up by a plethora of different trees and shrubbery through which the grill and window of a parked car and single chimney point to the proximity of town or village inhabitation. Rising steadily from the trees is a steep bank of crested green hills on top of which lies the silhouette of the actual Riber Castle. A thin sliver of sky confirms that this is summer and the light coming through pinpricked windows confirms, along with the text, that castle is a roofless shell.

It's a strange image that points to the partial stories that postcards solicit. Only from the repeated turning of the card in my hand do I glimpse a fuller picture for the image presented belies the descriptive text. The image is almost a deliberate contradiction and I began to wonder if not all postcards are like this? It occurs to me that whichever way they fall through the letterbox and onto the floor behind my door the first action is already to turn them over, and then over again. The postcards state is perpetual oscillation; image and text are resolutely flipside. I enjoy writing postcards for the sensation of writing on something taut. I run my finger over what has been written and feel

the slight indentation caused by the indelible marks made by the pen. Akin to secret brail the furrows caused by the pen as it moves across the card register hesitations and assertive reconnection with the potential of what can be said. My address is smooth and fluid whilst my personalised message that begins with my name and ends with its sender admit varying degrees of applied pressure.

Postcards are restless objects.

CATALOGUE

1. *The Sands of the Desert Grow Cold*

45 Bamforth postcards, 6 Ogden Guinea Gold cigarette cards, mounted on card. 35 x 33in. [1994]

In the process of research for his book *Under the Hammer. The auctions and auctioneers of London* [Constable 1977 and 1979], Jeremy Cooper attended in the mid 1970s several specialist auctions of postcards and cigarette cards held at Caxton Hall in Westminster, known at the time principally as a venue for civil weddings. The Middlesex Collectors Centre, the London Cigarette Card Company, and Murray Cards (International) Ltd., all held auctions at Caxton Hall and this group of WW1 postcards was bought at one of their sales, chosen because of their perfect condition and completeness of the song-sets on these early picture postcards. Legal restrictions to the inscription of messages on the same side as the address in postcards were not lifted in England until 1902 and in America in 1907. During the war and its aftermath this standard form of the picture postcard fully established itself. These postcards are from “Songs” Series No 4979/3, published by Bamforth & Co., one of the world’s leading makers of postcards during the First World War, manufactured in England, although the bulk of their production was sold into the American market through the Bamforth office in New York, as detailed within the elaborate art nouveau decoration on the backs of the postcards. The Ogden Guinea Gold cigarette cards, photographic portraits of Boer War generals, were from an album purchased at another of these auctions.

2. *Maggie & Gilbert*

25 postcards, mounted on card. 36 x 28in. [1990]

Jeremy Cooper first came across the work of Gilbert and George on attending their performance-piece *Red Sculpture* at the Robert Self Gallery in Covent Garden in 1977. When, in 1979, the artists turned up at his antique dealing premises, a Victorian schoolroom near the British Museum, he met them personally, readily agreeing to deliver that same evening the small arts and crafts table they bought, chosen to hold the black telephone in the ground floor front room. It transpired that, apart

from a 1950s conference table and chairs on the top weaver's floor, the entire Spitalfields house was empty, their two-year restoration of the original panelling recently completed. For the next three and a half years, until closing his premises in March 1983 to concentrate on writing, Cooper introduced Gilbert and George to all the material with which they proceeded to fill their home: Pugin chairs, Dresser ceramics and furniture, Talbert sideboards, Godwin chairs, Brannam art pottery, Elton vases, Perry metalwork, and stacks of other things, as described by Cooper in his article *Gilbert & George "At Home"*, published by Parkett in 1987.



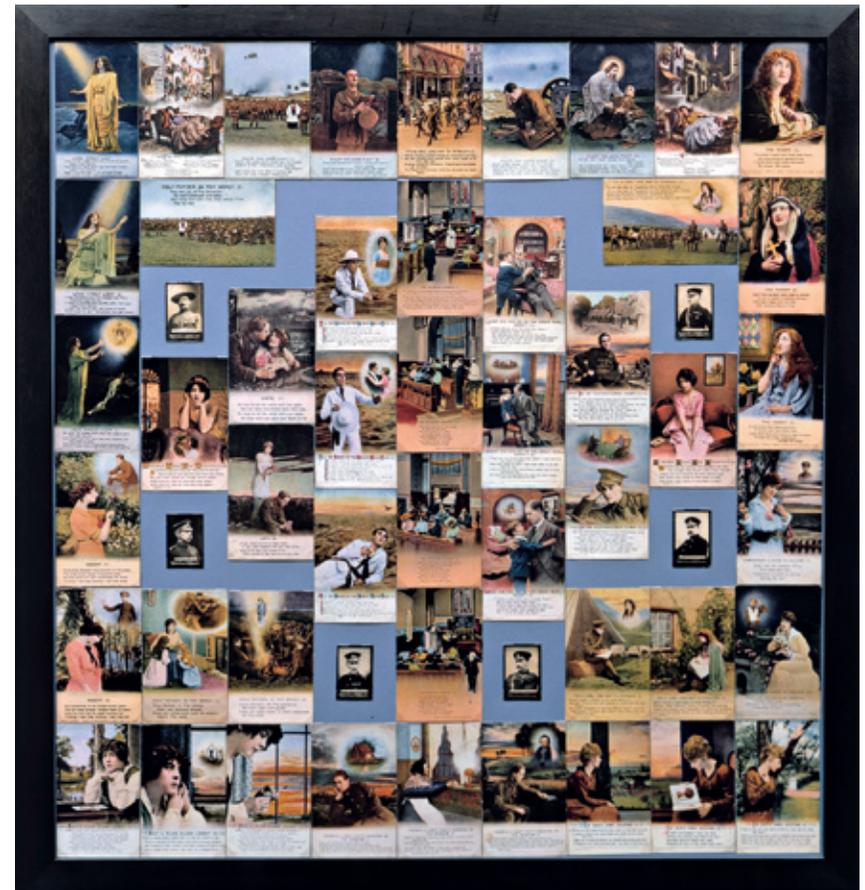
Jeremy Cooper outside his premises near the British Museum on its opening day in 1978.

The making of *Maggie & Gilbert* was Cooper's response to the desire to put to use his stack of more than thirty identical postcards titled *Lest we forget...*, of Prime Minister Harold Wilson at the cenotaph in 1975, flanked by Jeremy Thorpe and Edward Heath, leaders, respectively, of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. On coming across, at the Tate Gallery, the postcard of Gilbert and George's *England*, and incorporating this with a favourite Leeds Postcards, he devised this homage to the

artist-couple's postcard work, labelled in a way they might have done themselves. After the closure of his business [described by George as 'a tragedy'], Cooper remained in contact with the artists, and on the 15th of October 1992 was invited to their 100th Birthday Dinner at the restaurant La Gaulette in Soho, on the precise day that their combined ages—George was born in Devon in 1942, Gilbert in the Dolomites in 1943—reached a century, the nine courses for the thirty seated guests bedded down by nine different vintage wines, the last a one hundred year-old Armagnac. Youngest of the guests was

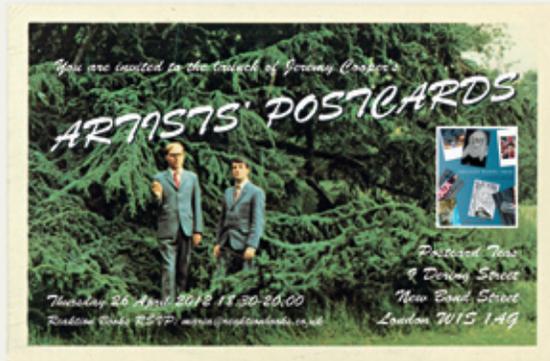


Gilbert and George's 100th Birthday Party invitation. 1992



The Sands of the Desert Grow Cold Jeremy Cooper Postcards and cigarette cards, on card. 1994

Cooper's tenant in Shoreditch, Joshua Compston, founder of Factual Nonsense, for whom Gilbert and George made in 1993 their *For our Darling HARDCORE* envelope, of which Cooper is currently the custodian.



Invitation to book launch in 2012, adapted from Gilbert and George postcard invite to Hayward Gallery exhibition of 1972

Gilbert and George lent eight images of their large postcard works for illustration in Cooper's book *Artists' Postcards* [2012], and several of their invitation postcards remain in his collection, including to the Hayward Gallery group show of 1972, with Michael Craig-Martin, Barry Flanagan, Hamish Fulton, Richard Long, John Stezaker and others, for which Gilbert and George's *Photo-pieces* [1971], a colour photograph of the pair standing beside a big evergreen tree, was chosen for solitary illustration on the front of the invitation. This postcard invitation was included in the exhibition of Cooper's collection of artists' postcards in the spring of 2012 at Spike Island, Bristol, and was adapted, with Gilbert and George's permission, for the invitation to the book launch at Tim d'Offay's Postcard Teas.

3. *Les Bikes de Bois Rond Collage*

6 Gavin Turk postcards, and portrait postcard of Jacques Tati, mounted on card. 20 x 12in [2011]

The London publishers Polite issued in 2010 a boxed set of Gavin Turk postcards: one portrait accompanying twenty-one bicycles made by Turk from round pieces of wood, painted in the national colours of European countries. The bicycles were available at the 2010 Frieze Art Fair for free rides around Regents Park. Turk's project was conceived as homage to André Cadere's *Barres de Bois Rond*, long poles of cylindrical, multi-coloured wooden blocks carried around by the artist; whilst the photo of Turk was modelled on the classic shot of the actor Jacques Tati in 1949 by Robert Doisneau. Turk later organised two mass bicycle rides on his wooden machines, one in East London, the other in Suffolk, the majority of cyclists dressed for the occasion in the striped French T-shirt he wore for the postcard shot. Cooper's collage adds a postcard of Doisneau's Tati



Maggie & Gilbert Jeremy Cooper
Postcards on card. 1990



Gavin Turk and Deborah Curtis' two eldest children, Frankie and Curtis, with Jeremy Cooper at a Sunday picnic in Springfield Park, Upper Clapton, organised by their neighbour in Charlotte Road, the sculptor Cedric Christie. Photograph May 17th 1997.

to a selection of five of the bicycle post-cards and to Turk's self-portrait.

Turk was a neighbour of Cooper's in Charlotte Road in the 1990s, at a time when Gary Hume, Don Brown, Georgina Starr, Cedric Christie, Sue Webster, Tim Noble, Abigail Lane and other artists of this generation

also lived in and around the Shoreditch Triangle. Cooper had bought a four-floor warehouse there in 1985 for £65,000, lived on the top two floors and initially let out the bottom two light industrial floors to a City printer and to Best Curve Ltd., 'Makers of Lingerie and Late Day Wear.' For several years he was the only person living on his side of the street, before artists began to colonise the semi-abandoned upper floors of these Victorian furniture factories. From 1992 Cooper's tenant on the ground floor of No. 44 Charlotte Road was Joshua Compston, recently graduated from the Courtauld Institute, committed to making contemporary art happen in a participatory, public way, centred on the combined gallery/office/home, which he called Factual Nonsense. In the process of creating his great street events, the Fête Worse Than Death, Factual Nonsense first 'party' Conference, and Hanging Picnic, Compston involved Tracey Emin, Gary Hume, Damien Hirst, Gillian Wearing, Sarah Lucas, Mat Collishaw and many other of the then-little-known YBAs. Sharing a similar sense of fun and daring, and living on opposite sides of the same cavernous street, Joshua Compston and Gavin Turk became close friends. It was through Compston that Turk and Cooper met.



Les Bikes de Bois Rond Collage Jeremy Cooper
Postcards on card. 2011

4. Gavin's Sheep

10 One Sheep notes, 2 Ten Sheep notes, and The Articultural Show brochure, mounted on card. Signed and dated 'FN. p.p. G.T. 1999'. 14 x 17in [1999]

Joshua Compston died in March 1996, by his own hand, at the age of only 25. His body was discovered by Cooper on the ground floor of his Charlotte Road building. Gavin Turk had been the last person to see Compston alive, three nights earlier. This shared experience of loss made Turk and Cooper particular friends, and in the summer of 1997, in memory of Compston, Cooper helped Turk organise the ambitious Live Stock Market, closing Charlotte Road and Rivington Street to traffic and encouraging hundreds of artists to set up creative stalls, for an event which attracted towards ten thousand visitors. Turk had decided

to design and print his own currency, and the three neighbourhood pubs, as well as the artists, agreed to accept only Bull notes on the day, exchanged for pounds through the bars of Compston's old premises. Emboldened by Turk's infectious good-humour and warmed by the summer sun, Gillian Wearing and



Moses, a tame Jacob wether, at the front door of Jeremy Cooper's home in the Quantock Hills, Somerset. Photograph. 2011.

Michael Landy made 'Bits and Pieces' portraits, Georgina Starr and Paul Noble offered a 'Parallel Youniverse', Sean Dower pedalled 'Senseless Subliminals', Abigail Lane developed her 'Complete Arthole', Michael Marriott ran a pin-the-tail-on-the-cow stall, and Adam Dant wrote 'Love Poems' to order.

When Turk expressed the wish to put on a similar event on the riverbank in front of the Festival Hall, Cooper helped him negotiate official agreement with the South Bank authorities. Turk again drew the currency, brown Ten Sheep notes and green One Sheep. The Articultural Show took place on Saturday August 9th 1999, billed by Turk on the brochure: IT'S AN FN DAY AWAY—even more sophisticated and demanding—ENTRANCE FREE—a sheep day out for all the family.



Gavin's Sheep Jeremy Cooper
Printed paper on card. 1999

5. Male Artists

56 portrait postcards, mounted on card. 48 x 31in [2011]

The standard postcard is a shape suited to the photographic portrait, and over the years Jeremy Cooper has gathered a large number of this category of postcard, here represented by fifty-six photos of artists, printed in black and white as well as in colour. They are a tiny portion of Cooper's reservoir of unsent, mint postcards, mostly bled images, not a single one with words on the picture-side, and all commercially produced. Conscious of the loss, through posting to friends, of especially 'good' images, Cooper made, in 1984, a private rule to buy at least two copies of every postcard he saw and liked, and keep one in a store-drawer. The first envelope was filled, the postcards stacked in order of acquisition, the bracket of purchase dates noted, and, when full, a new envelope taken down. On locating his art-history postcards, mostly of renaissance Madonnas, still in fine condition, which he had gathered in the late 1960s while reading History of Art at Cambridge, these joined what was becoming a 'collection'. Tracey Emin, not a Shoreditch resident but frequent visitor to the area, used to call regularly on Cooper after the death of her friend Compston. She happened to see one evening the open drawer of envelopes, stored and marked in the same kind of way that she keeps her photos, and came back a few days later to show the stash of postcards to Georgina Starr.

"Why?" Cooper asked.

"Because it's so weird!" one of them replied.

The fact that two prominent young British artists were intrigued by his guileless gatherings set Cooper thinking and, over the following months, he took notes on the contents of each envelope and then re-sorted them all into subject categories, one of which was Male Artist. He continued this practice for another ten years, tending only to buy postcards that fitted in to one of his established categories. By the late 2010s, then living in West Somerset, Cooper decided to frame some of these postcards of artists—not artists' postcards, which, by then, he was collecting and writing about.

Beginning at the top left and reading to the right, in lines, the artists are:

Line 1: Salvador Dali *In Voluptate Mors* [1951] Photograph by Philippe Hasman [fotofolio]; Francis Picabia [1923] by Man Ray [fotofolio]; Salvador Dali by Joan Vehi [nd]; Martin Kippenberger [nd]. Part of the series *Köhner Künstler Photographieren*; Derek Jarman [1991] Photograph by Liam Longman [Design Museum]; Ray Johnson, Christmas Season 1965. Photograph by William S. Wilson [Ragged Edge Press]; Ben Nicholson [c.1935] Photograph by Humphrey Spender [NPG]

Line 2: Joseph Cornell [1933] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]; Gilbert and George. In the library—dining room, Sir John Soane Museum [1999] Photograph by Stephen White; Chris Ofili



Male Artists Jeremy Cooper
Postcards on card. 2011

[2002] Photograph by Eamonn McCabe [NPG]; Gavin Turk *Window* [1991]; Michael Craig-Martin [2006] Photograph by Eamonn McCabe [NPG]; Keith Haring [1989] Photograph by Patricia Staur [Art Unlimited]; Cecil Beaton [1937] Photograph by Paul Tanqueray

Line 3: Jean Cocteau [1944] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]; Damien Hirst [1999] Photograph by Steve Pyke [fotofolio]; Christo [1977] Photograph by Ad Peterson [Art Unlimited]; Damien Hirst [1997] Johnnie Shand Kydd; Andy Warhol [1965] Photograph by Billy Name [fotofolio]; Edward Kienholz [1976] Photograph by Ad Peterson [Art Unlimited]; René Magritte [1944] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]

Line 4: Francis Bacon [1952] Photograph by John Deakin; Alberto Giacometti [nd] Photograph by Henri Cartier-Bresson; Edward Bainbridge Copnall [1934] Royal Institute of British Architects; Henry Moore [c.1969] Dane Tree House, Perry Green; Constantin Brancusi [1933] Self-portrait; Jacob Epstein [1956] Photograph by Geoffrey Ireland [NPG]; Francis Bacon [1963] Photograph by Bill Brandt [fotofolio]

Line 5: Ai Weiwei [1995] Dropping a Hang Dynasty Urn 1/3; Martin Kippenberger [nd] Jörg Schlick; Marc Quinn [1994] Photograph by Julian Broad; Jean-Michel Basquiat [1982] Photograph by James van der Zee; John Isaacs [nd] Other Criteria; Georg Baselitz [1993] Photograph by J. Littkeman [Anthony d'Offay]; Roland Penrose [1942] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]

Line 6: Karel Appel [1961] Photograph by Cor Dekkinga [Art Unlimited]; Marc Chagall [c.1965] [Art Unlimited]; Jackson Pollack [1950] Photograph by Hans Namuth [fotofolio]; Sam Francis [1980] Photograph by Kurt Blum; Jackson Pollock [1951] Photograph by Hans Namuth [fotofolio]; Joseph Beuys [1983] Edition Staeck; Constant Permeke [c.1950] Photograph by Emmy Andriesse [Art Unlimited]

Line 7: Joan Miró [1964] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]; Gilbert and George [1969] Photograph by Ad Peterson [Stedelijk]; David Hockney [1978] Photograph by Arnold Newman [NPG]; Leigh Bowery [1990] Photograph by Steve Pyke [fotofolio]; David Hockney [1978] by Lord Snowden [NPG]; Willem de Kooning [1982] Photograph by Nico Koster [Art Unlimited]; Pablo Picasso [1954] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]

Line 8: Pierre Alechinsky [1986] Photograph by Agnès Bornot [Art Unlimited]; Le Corbusier and Dr Malik Raj Anand [c.1953] Photograph by Marilyn Stafford; Peter Blake [1986] Photograph by Patrick Shanahan; Richard Hamilton [1970] Photograph by Ad Peterson [Art Unlimited]; A.R.Penck [1983] Photograph by Paul Andriesse [Art Unlimited]; Max Ernst [1955] Photograph by Lee Miller [Lee Miller Archives]; Jean Arp [1947] Photograph by Emmy Andriesse [Art Unlimited]

6. *Mother's Boy*

Photographs, photographic cigarette cards, cotton cap-badges, mounted on card. 42 x 36in. [1993]

The four sports team photographs were taken at the preparatory school Orley Farm, at the foot of Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex, framed by cigarette cards of 1950s film stars and chorus girls, all named, including Kay Francis, Olivia de Havilland, Anna Picasso and Lana Turner. The earliest of the team photographs, in all of which Cooper sits in the centre, as captain, is of the Under Eleven Cricket XI, taken in the early summer of 1957—Cooper's eleventh birthday was July 25th 1957. The other three are of the school's senior soccer, rugby and cricket sides two years later, in the season 1958/9. The badges are the actual 'colours' shown in the photographs, on cap and shirt. The cigarette cards were purchased by Cooper at a specialist auction held in Caxton Hall in 1975, in the process of research for his book, *Under the Hammer* [Constable 1977].



Mother's Boy Jeremy Cooper
Photographs, cigarette cards, on card. 42 x 36in. 1993

The juxtaposition of glamorous Gaiety Girls with equally, though differently beautiful young boys seemed both appealing and moving. In the 1950s such women were the mothers of such boys—indeed Cooper was one of them, his mother not a chorus girl but a nurse, who had seen active service in all theatres of the Second World War as a front-line theatre sister, awarded in Normandy an MBE for extreme bravery, the highest such honour then-available to women—a male doctor who acted at her side in saving patients' lives from their burning tent hospital, the first operating theatre to enter through the Fallaise Gap, was awarded the MC. Doreen Cooper (née Thompson) was the youngest of thirteen children, born in 1919 on a farm in central Ireland, the only sibling to be educated beyond school, when she journeyed to Manchester to train as a nurse at Bellevue Hospital. Her parents had both been born in their families' remote two room cottages on the moors of the Slieve Bloom Mountains—her father never learned to write. She is the last of the thirteen siblings still alive, managing alone in her second floor flat in Lymington, Hampshire, meeting friends for bridge five times a week, attending concerts given by the Poole Symphony Orchestra, and taking Theatre Society coach trips to London shows. Cooper considers himself saved from the worst effects of his over-privileged private education by the strength of his Irish farming genes.



Doreen Thompson shortly before qualification as a State Registered Nurse in 1939, before her marriage to Basil Cooper in 1946.

7. Leavers

169 photographs of boys at Harrow School, mounted together on card. 66 x 46in [1991]

It used to be the custom at Harrow School for boys to exchange photographs of themselves when they left school. Called Leavers, the photographs were also given to those masters by whom the boy was taught, and also to friends staying on at school. The photographs, taken in full dress privileges by the school photographer on the High Street at Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex, were mounted on card, signed and dedicated on the front, with home address usually on the back, a personal message sometimes added. Between 1948 and 1960 Cooper's father was an assistant master at Harrow School, where like all 'beaks' he was



Leavers Jeremy Cooper
Photographs on card, mounted on card. 1991

known by his initials, BEDC. As Harrow masters were offered considerably reduced fees for their sons, most were sent to the school at thirteen. Seventy-seven of the leavers in this piece were given to 'BEDC', the other ninety-two to Jeremy Cooper, the earliest in the summer of 1948, was dedicated to the two-year-old Cooper by Tom Pigott, when he used to call at the family home overlooking the cricket fields to have extra Maths lessons. The two Coopers overlapped as master and boy for a year, before Basil Cooper took up the post of Headmaster of St Bartholomews Grammar School in Newbury, Berkshire, in the winter term of 1960, where he stayed until retirement in 1985. Two weeks before the end of the summer term of 1964, Jeremy Cooper, by then a school monitor and triple school blood [colour in each of the three main sports—see *Black and White Harrow*], was expelled for breaking out of The Park to go swimming on warm nights in the school's big open-air pool across the fields and, on one occasion, attending a dance in Maidenhead, returning to the Hill at seven o'clock in the morning and clambering back into the house through a left-open window. The distress caused Basil Cooper by his son's expulsion was considerable. Cooper himself has always thought of his Harrow 'disgrace' as a beneficial escape from the system's damaging effect on young people. In his experience, the potential advantage—to individual pupils and to society as a whole—of ending the divisive presence of private schools within British education is clear.

The remarks written on the backs of these leavers have been recorded, and the names identified of all but twenty-two of the hundred and sixty-nine boys. In the centre of the bottom row is Cooper's own leaver, inscribed to Dr James, the Headmaster of Harrow, by whom he was expelled before



Detail from *Leavers*: Charles Guthrie, aged eighteen in the summer of 1957, as head boy at Harrow School, now General the Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB. LVO. OBE



Detail from *Leavers*: Andrew Ritchie, aged seventeen in the summer of 1964, subsequently the inventor of the Brompton folding bicycle, and founder of the Brompton Bicycle Company.



Left: Detail from *Leavers*: H.R.H. Prince Hassan bin Talal, aged seventeen in the summer of 1964, wearing his Hashemite headdress, later founder of the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan and of the Arab Thought Forum, and, since 2012, Honorary President of the Euro-Mediterranean Association for Cooperation and Development.



Right: Prince Hassan bin Talal here standing in the Jordan Valley, the West Bank in the background, Bethlehem beyond, where he and his brother King Hussein spent much of their childhood. Photographed by Cooper in 1974.

being able to deliver the memento. A number of the boys portrayed in *Leavers* at the ages of seventeen and eighteen, now in their late sixties, seventies, and even eighties, occupy exceptionally powerful and privileged positions—for example: General the Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank GCB. LVO. OBE [Chief of the Defence Staff 1997–2001]; Professor Colin Sanderson [Head of Operational Research in Health Care at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine]; two High Court Judges, Sir Tim Walker and Sir Michael Connell; H.R.H. Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan and H.R.H. Prince Muffakhan Jah of Hyderabad; Andrew Ritchie MBE [inventor of the Brompton folding bicycle, founder of the Brompton Bicycle Company]; and Professor Dr. Ben White [Emeritus Professor of Rural Sociology at the International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague]. One of the boys in *Leavers*, the Hon. Patrick Anson when photographed in 1957 on leaving school to join the Grenadier Guards, later 5th Earl of Lichfield, the society photographer who died in 2005, re-photographed himself and a number of Old Harrovian friends in 1993 in the same pose and wearing the same clothes as in their leavers.

8. Black and White Harrow

Photographs, chewing gum cards, mounted on card. 34 x 34in [2012]

Jeremy Cooper's first team photographs at Harrow School during four of his last five terms. At the beginning of his final term, summer 1964, he resigned from his second year in the Cricket XI in order to concentrate on 'A' Levels. Despite being expelled before the exam results came through, he gained a place at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, to read History Part I and History of Art Part II. The surrounding colour-printed chewing gum cards are from three different but similarly sized and styled sets of professional football stars of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The backs contain detailed statistics on their playing careers. The cards were purchased in 2008 for specific use in this collage, visual and social illustration of contrasts between the two sporting backgrounds.



Portrait fronts and information backs of the three different sets of chewing gum cards used in the framing *Black and White Harrow*. Early 1970s.



Black and White Harrow Jeremy Cooper
Photographs, chewing gum cards, mounted on card. 2012

9. *Wish you were here / Rather than me [No.1, 2 and 3]*

Three framed pairs of embossed and hand-inked postcards, mounted on card. 12 x 9.5in [2013]

Application of the words onto the grid of six commercial postcards was executed by Colin Sackett, the artist, publisher and book designer based in Axminster, Devon, a

short drive from Cooper's home in West Somerset. This group of work emerged from the experience of writing *Artists' Postcards. A compendium* [Reaktion 2012] and of forming a large collection of artists' postcards. The inspiration sprang directly from three pieces in the collection: by Stuart Whipps, Anwyl Cooper-Willis, and Simon Morley. A broad selection of this material was exhibited in the spring of 2012 at Spike Island, the contemporary arts centre in Bristol, and a tour is planned to seaside galleries and museums later in 2013. The entire collection of artists' postcards has

been accepted by the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum as a future gift, to include *Wish you were here / Rather than me [No.4]*. Further artists' postcards, mostly contemporary, will be added to the collection over the coming years, prior to transfer to the BM.

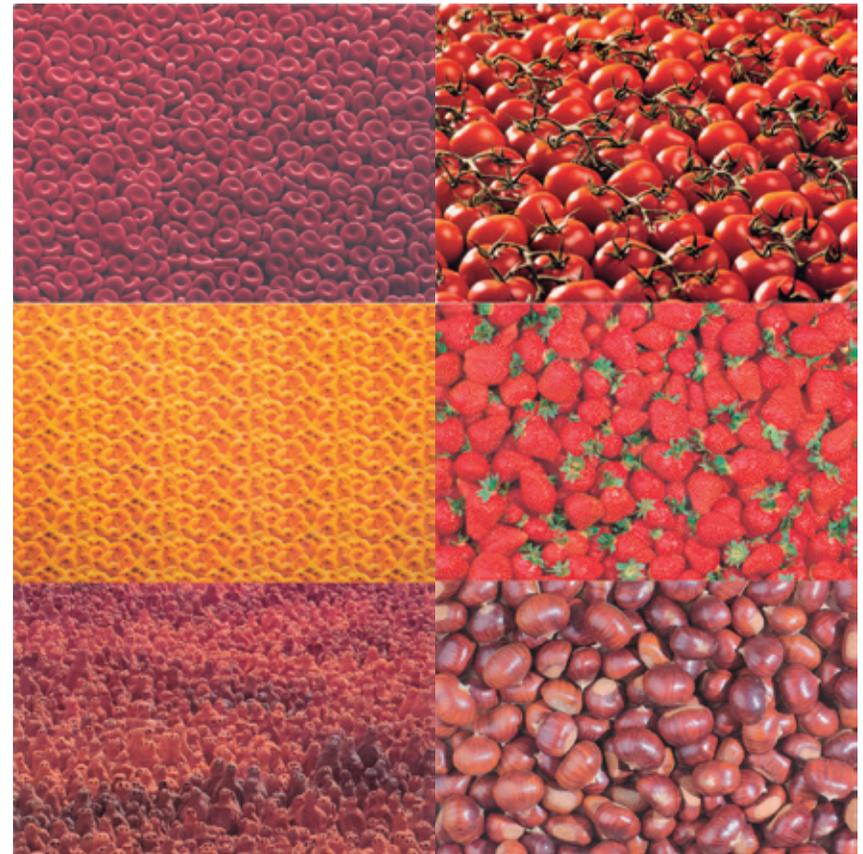


Postcard invitation to 3 April 2013 preview of Postcard Narratives

10. *Untitled*

Quantity of mint postcards white-taced to wall. Unspecified size. [2013]

This is a small selection of the two-thousand store-drawer duplicates of postcards bought by Jeremy Cooper from 1984 to the present. The rest were made available to invited artists for use by them in their exhibition contributions. The project of gathering stylistically appropriate postcards for the thirty defined categories is ongoing, adding to those that remain after the sale of the installations at ROOM.



Six of the eighty-two postcards in the category Unusual Patterns in Jeremy Cooper's store-drawer, included in the *Untitled* installation.

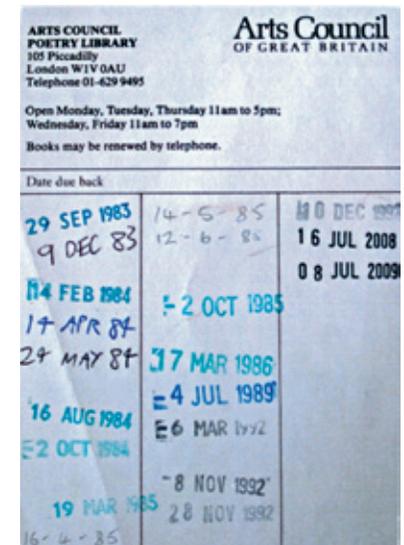
Clockwise from top left: red blood cells [Wellcome Collection, London]; tomatoes [Art Unlimited, Amsterdam]; strawberries [Art Unlimited, Amsterdam]; chestnuts [Art Unlimited, Amsterdam]; *Field for the British Isles* [Antony Gormley]; chicks [James Lee Byars]

11. Invited Artists

A number of artists were invited by Jeremy Cooper each to create a postcard-related piece for the exhibition. Although it was envisaged that the artists might wish to make use of Cooper's store-drawer of postcards, there was no obligation to do so. Thousands of unused postcards, in visually ordered categories such as Bridges, Buildings Contemporary, Chairs, Church Exteriors, Interiors Traditional, Lettering, Portraits Men Film, and Stained Glass, were available for cutting, painting on, folding, indeed for manipulation in any imaginable way. Most of the artists involved have made postcard pieces in the past, and continued with their established practices, Frances Richardson, for example, incorporating postcards into her three-dimensional MDF work, Cristina Garrido painting out the art-objects from postcards, in this case with cards chosen from Cooper's store-drawer, and Rebecca Loweth further exploring her technique of folding postcards, also selecting from Cooper's gatherings. Susan Hiller, who has made use of old postcards in her work since the early 1970s, pursued a plan she has long nurtured to make something of the collection of postcards of artists' palettes she has collected over the years, one of which is illustrated in Cooper's book *Artists' Postcards* [2012]. The alternative-thinking Daniel Eatock planned to design and print three different-sized overlapping 'Poster Postcards', continuing a visual theme he mined in his numbered and signed edition *Postcard Back Compositions* [2006], which consisted of seven different configurations of the standard reverse of a postcard, printed in gloss on the front, the back remaining blank. Abigail Lane made a sculptural installation involving hundreds of Cooper's postcards, in a form related to a series of pieces she began working on in 2012. Sarah Staton used her own postcards, in watercolour with collaged postcards, and in an architectural postcard piece.

Given the demands of other commissions, few of the artists were able to produce their work in time for inclusion in this catalogue and, in the case of installations, these works could anyway not be constructed until the space in Manchester Street was freed from the previous exhibition, ten days before the opening of *Postcard Narratives* on 3 April 2013.

Jeremy Cooper's first regular contact with contemporary artists was in the late 1970s, when Gilbert and George became impassioned collectors of the architect-designed furniture and ceramics in which he dealt at the time, from his premises near the British Museum [see p.11]. On ceasing to deal, and instead taking up full-time writing, Cooper went to live first in Wapping and then, in 1985, in Charlotte Road, Shoreditch, a short



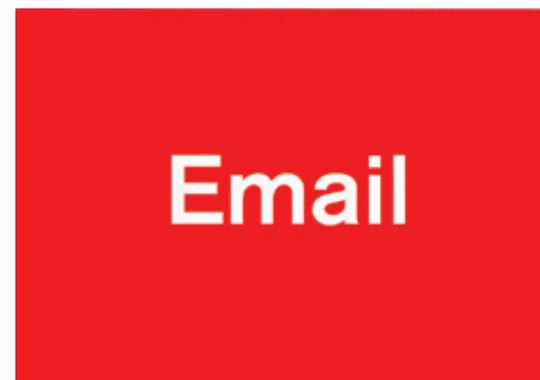
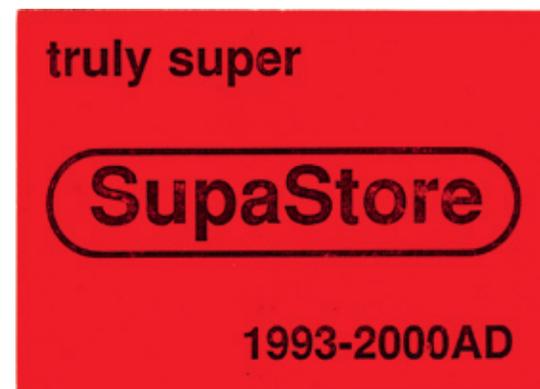
Top left: *Drawing of Box for Standing*. Frances Richardson. Photograph, self-portrait 2011.
Top right: Artist's palette postcard of 1907, from Susan Hiller's collection.
Below left: *Window* Gavin Turk. Postcard 1991-8.
Below right: 1983-2009 Sara MacKillop. Postcard 2010.

walk from Gilbert and George's home in Fournier Street, Spitalfields, leading to the artists becoming friends rather than clients.

By the early 1990s young artists had taken over the upper floors of vacant premises in Charlotte Road, and Gavin Turk was the first whom Cooper came to know, using a work of Turk's, *Godot* [1996], on the cover of his novel *The Folded Lie* [ellipsis 2000]. Until moving to Somerset in 2000, Cooper met Turk regularly to discuss projects and they have kept in touch ever since, in June 2012 together giving a talk at the Hay Literary Festival. Abigail Lane lived in Curtain Road, across the rooftops from Charlotte Road, before moving further East to Bow in 2003, and, in 2007, to Suffolk. Tracey Emin also became a friend at this time, drawing a portrait of Cooper in 1997; she is exhibiting a recent etching of the beach front at Margate, her home town, inspired by picture postcards. It was Emin, one evening at the Barley Mow in Rivington Street, who introduced him to Sarah Staton. Staton and her partner, the painter and novelist Simon Bill, with their daughters Ozzy and Evlyn, are regular visitors to Somerset—they were down from Sheffield to stay with Cooper on the weekend when Moses [see p.18] arrived as a tiny lamb, to be bottle-reared by Helen Knight, a neighbour, who subsequently wrote and illustrated a children's book about the experience, dedicated to Moses' young friend Evlyn. For the exhibition, Knight is drawing postcards in her own blood.

Gary Hume was another Shoreditch resident, and he and his partner—now wife—Georgie Hopton are close friends. For Cooper, the friendship was sealed when Hopton turned up, unannounced, at the secure NHS Mental Hospital in which he was confined on the outskirts of Taunton in 2002, enveloped by suicidal despair. Cooper's slow recovery, punctured by another descent, when he was rescued for nine months' care by his sister in New Zealand, continues to be enhanced by the loving presence of Georgie and Gary.

Frances Richardson is part of a different group of artists, whom Cooper met through curating the exhibition of drawings *In Between the Lines* at Trinity Contemporary in 2009. Early in 2008, Richardson was the first artist whom Cooper approached for the exhibition, buying several of her drawings, although they had ever met before—she is now a regular visitor to Somerset, and for the exhibition will be making use of a group of Cooper's postcards. In 2012 Richardson introduced Cooper to a final year student of hers at Farnham Art College, Rebecca Loweth, who at present works entirely with postcards. Cristina Garrido is another recent art school graduate, from Wimbledon in 2011, where she too worked exclusively with postcards in her final year, several pieces of which have since been



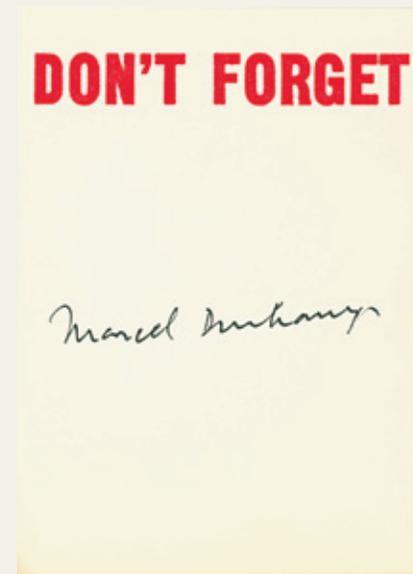
Top: *SupaStore*. Paul Kuxemczak for Sarah Staton. Postcard, 2000
Centre: *Work*. Helen Knight. Postcard knife-drawn in the artist's blood. 2012
Below: *Email*. Daniel Eatock. 2002

acquired by national institutions back home in Spain. Through writing on contemporary drawing contact was also made with Dean Hughes, two of whose early paper bag works are now in Cooper's personal collection.

In research during 2010 and 2011 for his book *Artists' Postcards. A Compendium* [Reaktion 2012] Cooper came across another exciting selection of artists, several of whom have contributed to the exhibition *Postcard Narratives*. It was a particular pleasure to meet Susan Hiller, an artist Cooper had much admired since coming across her work in the late 1970s—he was able to buy for his collection a postcard piece from this early period, *The Flying Spray. The Feathery Foam. Addenda 1. Section 3* [1976]. Hiller has generously forgiven Cooper for a ridiculous error he made in his postcard book, describing her as the mother of two young daughters, whose seaside visits in the early 1970s allegedly inspired her interest in postcards of rough seas, when, in fact, the subject was raised by her then-and-now husband, the father—later—of her only child, a son. An important postcard work by Julie Cockburn hangs in a prominent place near the front door of Cooper's home in the Quantock Hills—a silk-embroidered postcard of hers is also in the collection, and she has made several more for the exhibition, choosing postcards from Cooper's store-drawer. More than twenty postcards by Daniel Eatock, all rigorous in design and in their pursuit of thoughtful concepts, were given by the artist to Cooper's collection, the earliest of which, designed while taking his MA at the Royal College of Art in 1998, is called *Rubber Stamp*: on the front a photograph of the black-handled stamp which Eatock made, and on the back a postage stamp stamped by this stamp. *Email* [2002], a bright red postcard with the word EMAIL in capital letters across the middle, was made at a time when Eatock's grandmother was confined to hospital in his hometown of Bolton, Lancashire. They had joked earlier in the year about the old lady's unwillingness to use a computer, and in her hospital bed she used to wave these posted postcards in the air in delight, saying to the nurses: 'Look, I've received another "email"!'

Two Sara MacKillop postcards are illustrated in Cooper's artists' postcards book, in one of which she makes use of found material, in this case taken from the record of a reader's book borrowings from the Arts Council Poetry Library in Piccadilly over a twenty-six year period. A group of these postcards was exhibited in 2010 at the Poetry Library itself, in its new home on the South Bank. As a result of the talk which MacKillop gave at her solo exhibition *Faded Paper* [2011] at Spike Island, Bristol, Cooper met the art centre's director, Helen Legg, who subsequently presented at Spike Island in April and May 2012 *The Artists' Postcard Show. From the collection of Jeremy Cooper*.

Another section of the exhibition shows fifteen single artists' postcards in Perspex boxes and frames, so as to reveal the designed backs of the cards, in the case of Sol LeWitt's with an original drawing by the artist. They were selected from the thousands of works in Jeremy Cooper's collection—unlike the remainder of the exhibition, these works are not for sale, but will in due course be given to the British Museum. Each was created specifically for expression in the form of a postcard: Carl Andre *Pair/Hearth* 1980; Vittore Baroni *Tautological Card No. 1* 2011; Elisheva Biernoff *Richard Halliburton* 2011; Christian Boltanski *Le papa bricoleur* 1975; James Brooks *Approximates. 'London to Somerset—Somerset to London'* 2010; Gordon Matta-Clark *Post Cuts* 1977; Jeremy Deller *Mimesis* 1994; Jan Dibbets *Untitled* 1969; Richard Hamilton *To Mother* 1968; Richard Hamilton *composer (to john cage)* 1972; Gabriel Hartley *Untitled* c.2010; Sol LeWitt *Kubus* 1984; Roy Lichtenstein *Untitled* c.1985; Richard Long *Sculpture* 1968; Andy Warhol *Cigarette Burn* New York, June 1971.



Reminder. Richard Hamilton. Postcard. 1979

CONTRIBUTORS

Dean Hughes

The artist Dean Hughes, who wrote Prose Postcard as an introduction to the catalogue, was born in 1974 in Salford, Greater Manchester, and now lives in Edinburgh, where he is Director of Undergraduate Studies, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh. Like most artists of his generation, Hughes has made postcards in his time, but his prime expressions have been in ignored, non-art materials, produced after long gestation periods. On completion of a group of work Hughes needs to quieten down, waiting for the return again of a productive type of vacancy. This process was particularly noticeable on finishing, in grey board, his series *Shelves* [2008], all of which were bought by the Saatchi Gallery, in one of whose publications Hughes commented: "This series originated from notebooks; I used the cardboard backings from the used writing pads I had. I became intrigued by the ring binder holes that were punched down the side. I made a cube just as a way to look at the holes without having to hold the card in my hand. There was enough in this activity to allow me to make more. For me it's like building a relationship with them." When the thing is made, the relationship over, it takes time and patience to tidy away the debris and move on.

Colin Sackett

Working in library bookselling in the mid-1970s, Colin Sackett, designer of this catalogue, was drawn towards the individualistic and often subversive world of 'alternative' and small press publishing, eventually working on the printing and design of books at Coracle Press, London. During the 1980s Coracle's trade bookbinder was Barmotts, who had their premises in Charlotte Road, where Jeremy Cooper lived, before the Shoreditch 'loft' conversion boom. To evade the fashionable commercialism of the art world, Sackett moved to Axminster, Devon in 1995, where he still lives, working independently, editing and publishing his own books and writing, as well as designing and producing others' books and catalogues. His new imprint Uniformbooks, began in 2011, is stated as being "a flexible and open series for the visual and literary arts, cultural geography and history, and bibliographic studies. The concern is with the connections between creative and academic work, and printed formats." The writer and poet John Bevis described Sackett's *Englishpublishing: writing and readings 1991-2002* [Spacex/Coracle 2004] as "striking in the consistent wit and audacity charging this assault on an unsuspected hotchpotch of source material".

Jonathan Taphouse

The photographer Jonathan Taphouse graduated in 2003 from Loughborough University with a BEng degree in Product Design & Manufacturing. He moved to Cornwall in 2004 to develop and manufacture, at his Driftwood Skateboards, eco friendly slalom and longboard skateboards. Having also pursued interests in street-life and skateboarding photography, Taphouse moved to Bristol in 2009, where he earns his living as a professional photographer. In 2012 he began restoration of a houseboat in central Bristol, and plans to return to environmental product design in the future.

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Back of double-image postcard of Jeremy Cooper on a studio visit to Frances Richardson who made this in a limited edition of twenty-five. 2012