

Audience

Alex Clarke

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Super Dakota
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Alex Clarke is an artist and lecturer based in London.

Clarke's work as an artist functions across his own practice, lecturing and occasionally a collaborative project space. Through text and visual languages, Clarke's work in each role engages with the conditions, politics and networks of relations between the personal and public; dialogue and discourse; meaning and legibility; research, practice and living.

With Emily Dickinson as central protagonist and *Lost* as diagram, *Audience* is an exhibition of painting, drawing, photography, text and video that considers how forms of social or professional withdrawal might connect practice with more critically intimate networks and gestures of exchange.

An *index of first lines containing personhood* compiled from Emily Dickinson's nearly 2000 poems is centre and circumference to this show. Though Dickinson lived as a recluse and her unpublished poems were discovered posthumously, it seems her poems may have lived a good life in her active correspondence — connected, aired with a particular addressee, or written with an audience of one.

Withdrawal-as-practice, maybe mysticism sounds good again, maybe other words for withdrawal begin with de— and dis—

The negation of public, a dazzling obscurity decreating. Being beside the point might be the point and point towards a deeper hole for another access to access. Or, not what nor who nor where nor more *more*, but *with whom* and across which vectors.

Practice, a series of ascending negations that are in opposition to the currents, currants, currency, raisons and reasoning of descending affirmations. Dark forest. Practice, or, direction of travel, not integration into mode, but: disintegrate yourself.

To take a position is to kiss the collapse you're stood on:

Audience is an abbreviation of the diagram of encounter between:

artist — artwork — audience,

or,

author — text — reader.

All of the work in this show is 'of' those em dashes, of all this betweenness and againstness. Awkward grammar that diagrams: separates and connects. Vectors, (captive penguins, condensation on a cobweb, spit on a surface, denim torn by keys and phone) spitty language connecting.

A previous show called *Snowballing* forced an idea that spit is the first moment that language is given material body. A spit trail across a kiss, 'Snowballing' is also an informal academic term that refers to citations made within citations, voices speaking voices: pre-attentional distribution happening in footnotes populated by people. Reading, both an isolated and connected experience — 'hyphen': *together*: author, reader, body, body of the text: a personhood drift, disintegration of self: each other and the production of eachother: *exchange*.

Or, what value can connection have when everything is next to everything, immediately producing the immediacy of ourselves next to everything.

Don't be there, *Audience* fails by being public. *The Disfunction of the Studio*.

Ambivalence, the function of the practice.