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Janice Kerbel

1 September –
28 October 2007

This exhibition showcases the work of the Canadian-born, London based artist, **Janice Kerbel**. Earlier this year, the Arts Council Collection purchased two works by the artist: *Nick Silver Can't Sleep* (2006) and *Home Climate Gardens* (2004). This is the first time these works have been exhibited together in the UK.

Janice Kerbel has gained an international reputation for work that considers issues such as ecology, tourism, surveillance, urbanism and poetry. Her extensive research into these areas is presented to us in many different forms including codes, instructions, plans and narratives. Fiction lies at the heart of Kerbel's practice: her detailed and precise presentation of imagined possibilities invites us to question the boundary between reality and illusion.

Nick Silver Can't Sleep 2006

Nick Silver Can't Sleep is a 16-minute radio play for insomniacs. This enchanting tale of thwarted desire for love and sleep is set in an urban garden on a moonless night. Its characters are all nocturnal plants. Nick Silver (*Nicotiana sylvestris*), a nocturnal subtropical perennial in bloom, longs for Cereus Grand (*Selenicereus grandiflorus*), an exotic climbing perennial who blooms just one night a year. The two plants are destined, botanically, never to be together. Kerbel uses the structure of the lullaby and the tradition of a ballad to tell this narcotic tale of love, and the text intertwines Kerbel's botanical research with material gleaned from interviews with insomnia sufferers.

The play, which was directed by Ariane Koek, features vocal performances by **Rufus Sewell** (as Nick Silver), **Josette Simon** (as Moonbeam) and **Fiona Shaw** (as Cereus Grand) among others. The duration of the play reflects the average time it takes to fall asleep.

Nick Silver Can't Sleep is the first sound piece ever to be acquired for the Arts Council Collection. The play was commissioned by ArtAngel and first broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in October 2006 as part of a body of work commissioned to mark the clocks turning back (*Nights of London*).

Home Climate Gardens 2004

This series of prints was developed in collaboration with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change at the University of East Anglia. The series consists of nine plans for plausible yet improbable gardens that could flourish in indoor climates such as a launderette, a restaurant or a Victorian terraced house. These indoor garden plans reveal Kerbel's detailed research into the most suitable plants for growing in each environment, determined by factors such as heat, water, humidity and temperature.

At a time when the effects of climate change are increasingly uncertain, *Home Climate Gardens* opens our eyes to a contradiction central to our relationship with the environment: our love of nature is often compromised by the demands of modern living and the quantities of energy required to fuel our desire for cleanliness, warmth, refrigeration, mobility, light, communication and entertainment.

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About the artist

Janice Kerbel was born in Ontario, Canada, in 1968. After studying anthropology in Canada, she gained an MA in Fine Art from Goldsmith's College, London in 1996. Kerbel now lives and works in South London. Her work has been exhibited in various group and solo shows in the UK and internationally. She is currently working on a commission for Frieze 2007.

About the Arts Council Collection

The Arts Council Collection is the largest loan collection of modern and contemporary British art in the world. It is lent to public buildings throughout Britain and to exhibitions nationally and internationally. Since its foundation in 1946 the Collection has acquired some 7,500 works of art. These include sculptures, paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, videos and installations. The aim of the Collection is to acquire innovative work by artists living in Britain and to achieve this it actively seeks work by emerging artists. The Arts Council Collection team works with a changing acquisitions panel of artists, writers or curators, who are appointed for eighteen months at a time, visiting exhibitions and studios.

To find out more about the Arts Council Collection and to search the Collection online, visit www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk