

## **Sean Edwards – ‘FOR WHAT WE HAVE’**

**Saturday, 1 July 2023**

**Saturday, 30 September 2023**

### **Cardonald, Hillhead, and Ibrox Libraries**

#### **Ibrox Library, Glasgow G51 1SL**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday:

10am – 5pm

Tuesday, Thursday: 10am – 8pm

#### **Cardonald Library, Glasgow G52 3BU**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday:

10am – 5pm

Tuesday, Thursday: 10am – 8pm

#### **Hillhead Library, Glasgow G12 8AP**

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am – 8pm

Friday, Saturday: 10am – 5pm

Sunday: 12 – 5pm

Sean Edwards has made a series of intimate sculptures for three libraries: Cardonald, Hillhead and Ibrox. ‘FOR WHAT WE HAVE’ draws together Edwards’ own personal memories of time spent in libraries during childhood and adolescence, with fragments of material from Glasgow’s archival collections.

These small-scale sculptures are designed, like books, to be held in the hand and close to the body, and to sit on the shelves of the library. Each sculpture has been assigned a unique shelf mark and entered into the library system; catalogued, indexed and positioned according to Dewey Decimal Classification which organises items by subject. Enfolded into the mechanism of the library, the sculptures will be locatable in the stacks; held, supported and contextualised by neighbouring titles on the shelves.

‘FOR WHAT WE HAVE’ recalls the act of browsing books; the sparks of interest and anticipation that compel a reader to pull a book off the shelf and enter into another world, revealing possibilities beyond everyday realities. The surface of each sculpture offers an abundance of narratives; some autobiographical, some social, others fictional, and full of imagined potential. For Edwards, the sculptures contain within them “the atmosphere, texture and sensibility of neglected people and places”, but also the promise of change.

Formally, Edwards’ sculptures make reference to the Modernist architecture and design of the libraries where they are located. Cardonald, Hillhead and Ibrox libraries were designed and built by architects Rogerson and Spence from the 1970s–1980s, towards the end phase

of post-war investment in civic infrastructures that was concerned with sustaining social frameworks and public services. For Edwards, these sometimes-underinvested spaces remain physical sanctuaries, imbued with a subtle and enduring political consciousness. Embedded with the principles of free access and shared ownership, the public library persists, continuing to position itself as one path out of an endless cycle of withheld opportunity.

The project's title is borrowed from a library membership card found in Glasgow Libraries' collection of ephemera. 'FOR WHAT WE HAVE' suggests an open offer and speaks to the plurality of the library space.

'FOR WHAT WE HAVE' is accompanied by a piece of fiction by writer Claire-Louise Bennett. Bennett's text will be available from Cardonald, Hillhead and Ibrox Libraries for the duration of the project and from The Common Guild website for a limited time.

Browse 'FOR WHAT WE HAVE' in the library catalogue [here](#).

**Sean Edwards** (b. Cardiff 1980), graduated with an MA from the Slade School of Art in 2005, and is currently Programme Director for Fine Art & Photography at Cardiff School of Art and Design. Edwards' work investigates the sculptural and political potential of the everyday, often using remnants and fragments of previous activities as a starting point. In many of the works there is a sense of objects being in-progress, indeterminate and open to change. The work intertwines simple sculptural objects, mixed media installations and audio-visual components with personal family and political histories.

He represented Wales at the 58th Venice Biennale (2019) and was awarded the Turner Prize Bursary in 2020 for the installation 'Undo Things Done'.

Recent solo exhibitions include 'chased losses', Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin (2022) 'distant borrowing', Tanya Leighton, Berlin (2021); 'Undo Things Done', Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham, Senedd, National Assembly for Wales and Bluecoat, Liverpool (both 2020); 'Drawn in Cursive', MOSTYN, Llandudno and Network, Aalst, Belgium; 'Putting Right' Limoncello, London (both 2014); 'Resting Through' Kunstverein Freiburg (2012); and 'Maelfa' Spike Island, Bristol (2011). Group shows include 'British Art Show 9', Hayward Touring and 'The World We Live In', Southbank Art Centre, London (both 2022); 'Olaph the Oxman', Copperfield Gallery, London (2019); '49a', Limoncello, Woodbridge (2016); 'This is Your Replacement', Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf (2016); 'Un Nouveau Festival 2015' Centre Pompidou, Paris; and 'Finite Project Altered When Open', David Dale Gallery & Studios, Glasgow (both 2015), amongst others.

**Claire-Louise Bennett** is the author of 'Pond' (2015), 'Fish Out Of Water' (2020), and 'Checkout 19' (2021). Her fiction and essays have appeared in numerous publications, including the New Yorker, Harper's, The White Review, and frieze. Bennett grew up in Wiltshire and studied Literature and Drama at the University of Roehampton, before moving to Ireland where she worked in and studied theatre for several years. In 2013 she was awarded the inaugural White Review Short Story Prize and her debut book, 'Pond', was

shortlisted for the Dylan Thomas Prize in 2016. Checkout 19 was shortlisted for the Goldsmiths Prize in 2021.