



ELAINE SHEMILT
RECENT WORK

30th October - 28th November 1982

Main Gallery South Hill Park Arts Centre Bracknell Berks





FOREWORD

This exhibition draws to a close a fruitful two year residency both for Elaine Shemilt and for South Hill Park. As well as the time spent developing her own work using the studio, printmaking and video facilities at the Centre, Elaine has directed a combined silkscreen/etching course and held regular Thursday open workshops in silkscreen printing. She is also researching and selecting (with the Exhibitions Department) a show entitled 'Out of Print', which will be presented at South Hill Park in 1983 and subsequently tour to other venues. During her residency Elaine has made several visits to art schools around the country and has talked to school groups about her work.

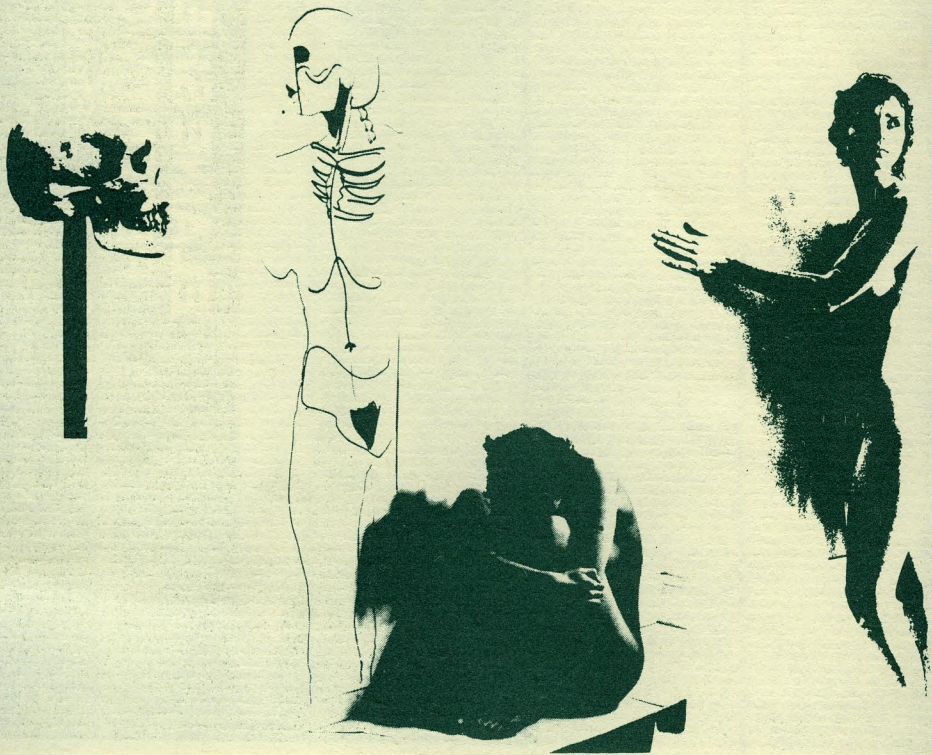
We owe particular thanks to Elaine for all her work towards this exhibition and to her overall contribution to printmaking activity at South Hill Park.

JENNIFER WALWIN
Exhibitions Organiser

ALASTAIR SNOW
Arts Director

TALK BY THE ARTIST

On Friday 26 November, Elaine Shemilt will conduct workshops and seminars in the gallery. Although intended mainly for school and art college students, everyone is welcome. Please contact the Exhibitions Department for further details.



ELAINE SHEMILT

Elaine Shemilt, unlike so many of her student generation, has used the breakdown of individual craft barriers to present specifically human imagery in various two and three-dimensional forms. She has avoided puritan formalism and the desire to outrage conventional taste — the two very active polarities of much recent art — and, instead, occupies the much more fertile middle ground from which so much good contemporary art springs.

I see her as, primarily, a maker of prints (as opposed to the more restrictive 'printmaker'). These reproduced images may find their way on to video tape as naturally as on to the lithographic plate or silk screen.

Imagery is of paramount importance to her, though formally her work is strong enough to interest the viewer unsympathetic to her images. The roots of her techniques must surely lie in the early (and, I feel, best) Warhol, and later artists who have utilised the free cross-referencing that modern screen printing and lithography facilitate. Working within this broad tradition, Elaine Shemilt has used, principally, the human form (and related objects) as a unit with which to improvise. Generally coolly, but, occasionally, with passion.

Her own body is frequently used, in a totally un-narcissistic manner. Often the symbolism of the figure, in bondage and yet absolutely in control, emerges quite poignantly. As with Allen Jones at his best, apparent submission to a predetermined formula, gives rise to the paradox of power wielded by the seemingly helpless fetish figure. Only the very literal minded can see this work in terms of 'woman reduced to sex object' or similar clichés.

The doppelgänger and the split personality are close to the bondage imagery and, in the video, become explicit. The earnestness of Elaine Shemilt's vision gives her work unity, whatever form it takes.

MARTIN BRIGHT

October 1982



BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Born 1954 Edinburgh
1960 Moved to Northern Ireland
1972-3 Brighton Polytechnic, Foundation Studies
1973-6 Winchester School of Art, Sculpture First Class Hons
1976-9 Royal College of Art, MA Printmaking
1980-82 Artist in Residence, South Hill Park Arts Centre
1982 Winchester School of Art, Printmaking Fellowship

EXHIBITIONS INCLUDE:

1975 Bexley Heath, Kent - Sculpture
1976 Serpentine, London - Video
1976 Guildhall, Winchester - Sculpture
1976 ACME Gallery, London - Sculpture
1977 National Gallery, Singapore - Prints
1977 Winchester Association Exhibition, Salisbury - Prints
1978 Winchester Association Exhibition, Southampton - Prints
1977 RCA London - Prints
1978 ICA New Contemporaries, London - Print/Sculpture
1978 London Polytechnic - Prints
1978 Bradford, Print Biennale - Print
1979 The Minorities, Colchester - Print/Sculpture

1979 Hayward Annual, London - Sculpture
1980 Fifty Years Printmaking, London - Prints
1980 Hexagon Gallery, Reading - Prints
1980 IKON Gallery, Birmingham - Sculpture/Photography
1980 International Festival of Women Artists, Copenhagen - Film
1980 Printmakers Workshop, Edinburgh - Prints
1981 South Hill Park Arts Centre, Bracknell - Slides and Tape Performance
1981 Fylde Arts Association (2nd National Exhibition of Modern Prints) - Prints
1981 South Hill Park Main Gallery, Bracknell - Sculpture, prints, painting and video
1982 Arteder '82 Muestra Internacional de Arte Grafico (Bibla) Prints

VISITING LECTURER AT:

Winchester School of Art, Berkshire School of Art, Chelsea School of Art, Hull Further Education Centre, Faculty of Art & Design

MAGAZINE ARTICLES INCLUDE:

Artscribe, Arts Review, Artists Newsletter, Flash Art, Curtains, Nineteen

