

THE ART OF MAKING AN IMPACT

- Solo and group exhibitions explore the relationship between man-made technology and the natural world
- Worldwide acclaim for works created by Staffordshire University Professor of Fine Art
- A pioneering collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew is due to begin in September 2015

Few academics have the privilege to lead as varied a working life as Ian Brown, Professor of Fine Art at Staffordshire University. His artworks include everything from short films dissecting the theme of tourism to wax-cylinder recordings of folk ballads, and have been exhibited across Britain, Europe and the United States.

He explains: "My research is predominantly formed around the production of artefacts – artworks for the public realm – and I also curate exhibitions and take part in symposia. I produce my own artworks as an individual artist and researcher, but also work as part of the collaborative artists' group Common Culture."

The fraught relationship between the natural and man-made world underpins much of his work – both as producer and curator. In 2009, he curated a touring exhibition, *Trying To Cope With Things That Aren't Human (Part One)*, which received financial backing from the British Council and Arts Council England. The critics' response was excellent, with laudatory reviews in *The Guardian*, *Art Monthly*, and *Artforum*.

Of Brown's solo projects, his research into our relationship with natural and technological disasters has had the widest impact in recent years, with shows in London and Berlin. The works have spanned a range of different media, taking in objects, films, prints and audio works.

Brown is currently collaborating with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, on an initiative that will put our relationship with plants under the microscope. *An Incredible World of Beauty and Terror* received financing from Higher Education Innovation Funding

(HEIF), a fund that supports knowledge-based interactions between universities and the wider world that bring economic and social benefit to the nation.

Beyond his solo endeavours, Brown has also been internationally recognised as part of *Common Culture*, a trio that also includes Professor David Campbell from Northumbria University and Professor Mark Durden at the University of South Wales.

Common Culture has been instigating exhibitions since 1996, with an impressive roster of publications, lectures and conferences. To date, one of its highest-profile works has been *The New El Dorado*, which was selected for *Manifesta 8*, the 2010 European Biennial of Contemporary Art in Murcia, Spain. The film juxtaposed two ideas of cultural tourism: the world of ex-pats and holidaymakers, as seen in nearby resort towns such as Alicante, and the world of the art biennale itself, where artists are parachuted in from all over the world.

To find out more about Professor Ian Brown and his artworks, read the case study in full at: www.staffs.ac.uk/impact-art



Prof IAN BROWN

Professor of Fine Art

After completing a Masters in Fine Art at Staffordshire University, Ian developed a successful profile of exhibitions, lectures and part-time teaching, resulting in him becoming a permanent member of staff in 2005.

As an active practitioner, Ian's work has been reviewed in *Art Monthly*, *The Guardian* and *Artforum*, where it was Critics' Choice. He received critical acclaim for a touring exhibition that he curated in 2009 entitled *Trying To Cope With Things That Aren't Human (Part One)*. He is also one third of the collaborative artist's group *Common Culture*, which has exhibited a range of interdisciplinary artworks across Europe, Asia and North America.

The project at Royal Botanic
Gardens Kew, entitled
An Incredible World Of Beauty
and Terror, seeks to question
the human/plant relationship as
depicted in popular culture