

PETER BURGESS

Artist Statement

www.instagram.com/peterburgess6393/

The use of drawings, prints and small scale objects are part of a decades long, ongoing research and production project that explores image/object relationships under the theme “the artist as witness to their times.” I approach “witnessing” as a politically and ethically engaged act—one that transcends passive observation to become a responsive artistic intervention that marks historic times and events. The project involves the reworking of everyday objects, architectural forms, mass media, language and imagery to trace their embedded histories and reveal latent meanings. These transformations aim to challenge the familiarity of the mundane, uncovering the emotional and symbolic resonance beneath the surface.

"Letter for Mr. Cooper", 2024, is a work comprising 2 A4 sheets of lead. One is folded in the shape of an envelope and the other folded as a single sheet of letter paper. There is more than one way to tell a story, and most stories have more than one possible ending. The work 'Letter for Mr. Cooper', is intended to operate as a reworking of a common domestic object, asking it (in this particular case, an envelope and sheet of paper) to speak to an inbuilt history. By using the simulacra of an everyday object, it is hoped to retrace the trajectory of an object's innate history. This mundane object has the potential to instill terror (depending on context). Or not. Letters have been used in terrorist attacks such as those of the Unabomber and yet also to deliver a 'Dear John' screed. That's the thing about potential. Anything could happen. From our sense of familiarity with ordinary objects, it is hoped to stretch the band of associated meanings and pose more questions than answers. This work specifically references the lethal UK letter bombs sent by Miles Cooper in the early 2000's.

Materials - 2 lead sheets, cut, incised and folded.

Sheet 1 (the letter). Sheet size: L.28.5cms x W.20.5 (when folded L.19.5cms x W.20.5cms x H.6cms)

Sheet 2 (the envelope). Sheet size: L.29cms x W.21cms (when folded L.8cms x W.21cms x H.3cms)

Varying overall dimensions when installed/configured together (approx. L.27cms x W.30cms x H.3cms)

There are two small perspex circles (display elements) that slightly raise each piece from the top surface of the plinth.

Retail price is \$1,500.

CV

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1l3ak2VzWMsW_HgVJBmD1xXLIXITcgLXH/view?usp=sharing