

# 'Spooky Action at a Distance'

Excerpt from a blog conversation between artists Mandy Lee Jandrell and Melanie Stidolph (<https://connecteverything.tumblr.com/>)

## **Mandy Jandrell**

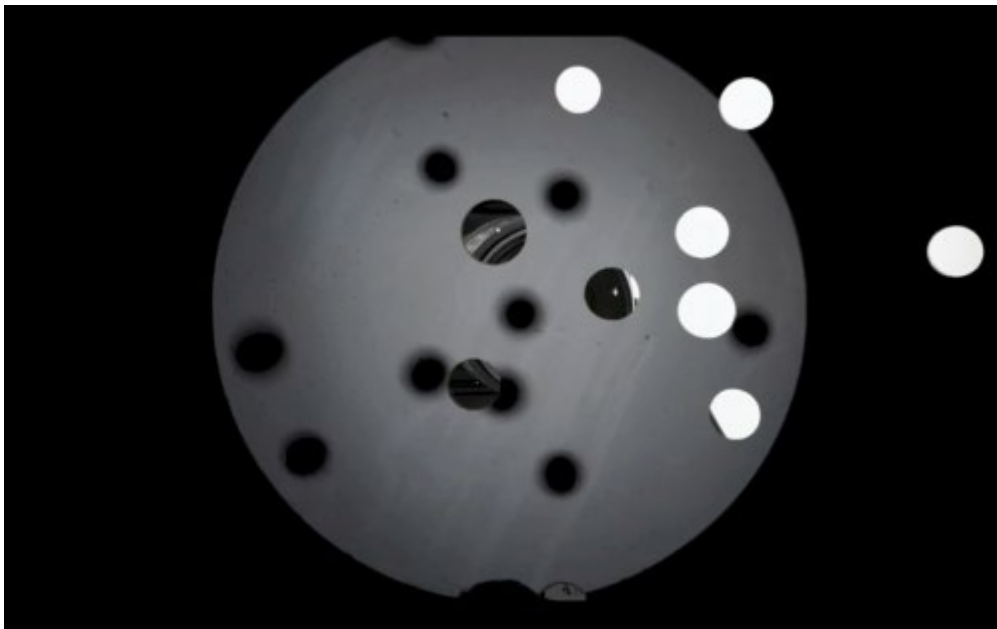
When I started working on ideas for this show, I was thinking about the (derisive) term Einstein coined for the behaviour of entangled particles as proposed by quantum physicists in the late 1920's. He called it 'Spooky Action at a Distance', he didn't go for such nonsense. Entanglement is one of the weirdest features of quantum physics. It refers to a situation in which two "particles" (a term that must be construed loosely in the quantum world) share a common history that makes their futures intertwined. And it didn't fit in with the way Einstein saw things. In effect this discovery by early quantum physicists seemed to turn everything physicists knew, at that point, about the way the world works, on its head. Physicists were desperately trying to work out the logic of, what at the time, seemed to be deeply illogical behaviour. Breaking news: Spooky Action at a Distance has just been demonstrated in an experiment conclusively for the first time.

<http://factor-tech.com/connected-world/17149-spooky-action-at-a-distance-demonstrated-in-single-particle-quantum-experiment-for-first-time/>

There were a few things that drew me to this, things I thought related well to the way we were shifting our practice. Firstly this idea that this 'spooky action a distance' could not ever be directly observed. It only seemed to happen 'behind the curtain'. There was evidence for it but that the 'act of looking forces nature's decision'. It's our observation that 'forces nature to collapse to one reality'. Schrodinger's Cat, explained here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOYyCHGWJq4>

So I was thinking about this in relation to the act of photography, it forces the chaos of nature to 'collapse into one reality'. The reality defined by the lens, or the artist, or the way the viewer interprets it through the lens of their own cultural conditioning etc. The camera can't observe the world directly ever, it can be so limited, and it makes reference to things without talking about those things directly. There's a slipperiness in its ability to answer any questions. And I think this is evident so clearly in the work 'Conversation III' you [Melanie Stidolph] made last year. You interrogate the camera, your relationship with it, frustrated with the way it defines things, frustrated with its inability to live up to your expectations, the difficulty in finding that balance between the intentions behind the lens and the subject in front of it.



Melanie Stidolph, Still from 'The Conversation III', 2014

It was also out of this thinking about 'Spooky Action at a distance' (in a discussion we had at The Barbican a few months ago) that we came up with the title of the show 'Eventually everything connects' (actually because we had serendipitously noticed a children's book of the same title in the gift shop window). We bounce ideas between us, between us and other people, between us and the world, the things we photograph (as disparate as they may be) have a relationship to one another. I think the difficulty for me in developing work for the show has been in 'letting go of logic', letting go of

Einstein's notion that things directly correlate, that there's a logic to the universe, when actually, that logic seems to be beyond my/our understanding. So I keep having to remind myself to 'Let it go', to let a more intuitive process take over, to trust that 'Eventually everything Connects'.