

WIDOWHOOD INTERRUPTIVE WILDNESS AND UNRULY DOMESTICITY IN PIGEON RACING SYSTEMS

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I presented *WIDOWHOOD, INTERRUPTIVE WILDNESS AND UNRULY DOMESTICITY IN PIGEON RACING SYSTEMS* at [Animal Borderlands](#), the autumn meeting of BASN (British Animal Studies Network) hosted by the Oxford AnNex team at Keeble College in 2020.

Widowhood is the name of a performance I made in 2018 at Matt's Gallery London and later published in book form in 2022. It is also the name of a motivational strategy used in pigeon racing to encourage the birds to fly faster during competitions.

Observations discussed in the paper are taken from the 2018 Matt's Gallery performance, the 2022 book and related field research. They have been shaped in part by a close reading of Donna Haraway's 2008 text *When Species Meet*.

In the paper I discuss

- The border crossing between species during the race, where pigeons and humans form an extraordinary competing animal spanning both species.
- Data production and conversation as a means of maintaining this cross-species body whilst the racing birds are absent.
- The borders crossings between wild and domestic space in a race
- The shifting categorizations of the birds and the race itself at different stages of the event and during race preparation.

Finally I look at metaphorical border crossings in terms of the widowhood system. I propose that during a race the love, loss and longing experienced between pairs of birds also occurs across species, between the pigeons and the men who race them.

Matt's Gallery

This Sunday at Matt's Gallery, Bermondsey
Bronwen Buckeridge *Widowhood*

Starts promptly at 2pm. Please arrive from 1:30pm.



Bronwen Buckeridge, *Widowhood*, 2018, production image. Courtesy of the artist and Matt's Gallery, London.

KEYWORDS Pigeon Racing | The Widowhood | Animal Borderlands
BASN | AnNex | Matt's Gallery | Conference Paper | Performance |
Liveness Archives | Compound Animal | Donna Haraway | Post Human



Performance Still, Matt's Gallery London, 2018





Research image and performance still, 2018



Performance stills, 2018

S/STAKE	BIRD	SEX	COLOUR	SYSTEM	LOFT	DISTANCE	RING	TIMED	FLY TIME	VELO	POS
17	GB18F13918	H	CHEQUERED	YOUNG BIRD	KNOWLES+SON	57 MI 1,707 YD	3734				
18	GB18F13536	H	CHEQUERED WHITE FLIGHT	YOUNG BIRD	KNOWLES+SON	57 MI 1,707 YD	3736	16:58:20	01:53:20	924	②
19	GB18F13539	H	DARK PIED	YOUNG BIRD	KNOWLES+SON	57 MI 1,707 YD	3737				
20	GB18F13912	C	BLUE	YOUNG BIRD	KNOWLES+SON	57 MI 1,707 YD	3733				
21	GB1736969	C	RED	WIDOWHOOD	J CLARET DAUGHTER	45 MI 1,179 YD	3747				
22	GB16Z81552	C	CHEQUERED	WIDOWHOOD	J CLARET DAUGHTER	45 MI 1,179 YD	3746				
23	GB16Z81545	C	CHEQUERED	WIDOWHOOD	J CLARET DAUGHTER	45 MI 1,179 YD	3748				
24	GB16Z75191	C	CHEQUERED	WIDOWHOOD	J CLARET DAUGHTER	45 MI 1,179 YD	3749				
25	GB17BD9063	C	RED	WIDOWHOOD	J CLARET DAUGHTER	45 MI 1,179 YD	3739				
26	GB18H25828	H	BLUE	NATURAL	DARRAL CROWTHURST	52 MI 1,214 YD	3731	16:57:15	01:52:17	825.89	⑥
27	GB18H25832	H	CHEQUERED	NATURAL	DARRAL CROWTHURST	52 MI 1,214 YD	3732	16:58:30	01:53:30	898.2	⑤
28	GB18N72494	H	BLUE PIED	YOUNG BIRD	A ANNIS+SON	57 MI 1,600 YD	3798				
29					KNOWLES +SON	57 MI 1,707 YD	3750				