

Unhomely Street: The unconscious and the city

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Moving Images - Static Spaces: Architectures, Art, Media, Film, Digital Art and Design

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

Unhomely Street (the unconscious and the city)

- **Author(s) Name:**

Susannah Gent

- **University or Company Affiliation:**

Sheffield Hallam University

- **Abstract (300 words):**

Unhomely Street is a twenty-minute essay film that follows a female protagonist in a state of fugue following a head injury as she wanders an alienating city underbelly of clubs and free parties. Through recollections of anti-capitalist conversations, historical information about wartime atrocity, and human brutality, she searches for hope in an increasingly frightening, subjective landscape.

The film was produced when the filmmaker was recovering from post-concussive syndrome following a head injury and in contrast to conventional filmmaking methods, it was constructed directly from intuitively made audio-visual sequences without a prior script or production plan.

The film captures a subjective landscape that captures this specific form of mental illness but also explores a twenty-first century vision of the real city locations; Sheffield, the filmmaker's home, and Berlin, where she visited several times during the production. The featured locations in both cities explore the hidden sides. In Freudian terms these areas and activities could be said to constitute the city's unconscious. Outdoor 'free' parties feature, and sites of past raves where the graffiti stands for human resistance to mainstream culture.

I propose that the film is screened in its entirety. My research areas are psychoanalysis, neuroscience, and art practice as research. I would like to present a short paper by way of introducing the film and exploring the issues raised in the project; the urban environment, its relation to mental illness, dance culture, and art practice and dance as a form of resistance. The paper would consider the Freudian topography of the psyche as a metaphor for the city, and the relation of art and dance to Deleuze's notion of the *refrain*.

I am proposing to show the entire film and give a paper however should it be preferable the film alone could be screened or I could give a paper supported by extracts of the film should you prefer.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Susannah Gent is a filmmaker, artist, and lecturer in film production at Sheffield Hallam University. Her films that have gained awards at international film festivals over the past twenty years explore experimental narrative approaches to representing subjectivity. Susannah has made films for the BBC, Chanel Four and the British Film Institute, and has a British Council award winning feature film. Susannah's fine art sculpture and installation work combines light, audio, and taxidermy and has exhibited nationally.

She is studying for an interdisciplinary, practice led PhD researching the uncanny and hauntology through film, philosophy, and scientific survey. Susannah is committed to interdisciplinary approaches with a belief that interesting peripheral elements are revealed at the edges and intersections of disciplines.

Building on a new, intuitive filmmaking method developed in *Unhomely Street*, a twenty-minute essay film that explores post-concussive syndrome and hauntological landscapes, Susannah's current film project prioritises the emotional potential of film over conventional narrative devices, exploring the capacity of the spectator to 'feel' the film without an on-screen surrogate, or protagonist.

More information about my work can be found at my website:

<http://susannahgent.weebly.com/>

The film *Unhomely Street* can be seen privately on vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/172800919> password = **Gent**

Below are a few stills from the film *Unhomely Street*.

