



Micheál O'Connell (a.k.a. Mocksim)

Projects, Selected Works, Statement, Biography

Statement - Short

I describe myself as a systems interference artist.

As well as displaying images taken by traffic wardens – a project entitled *Contra-Invention* – I discovered it was easy to access courier company Point of Delivery signatures (*Missing You*) and I began using supermarket self-checkout machines, but to buy nothing (*Less*). Later money was sent flowing unnecessarily around bank accounts, a mobile handset was used as speed camera and symphonies were created through simultaneous use of sat-nav and maps-app voices while driving between destinations.

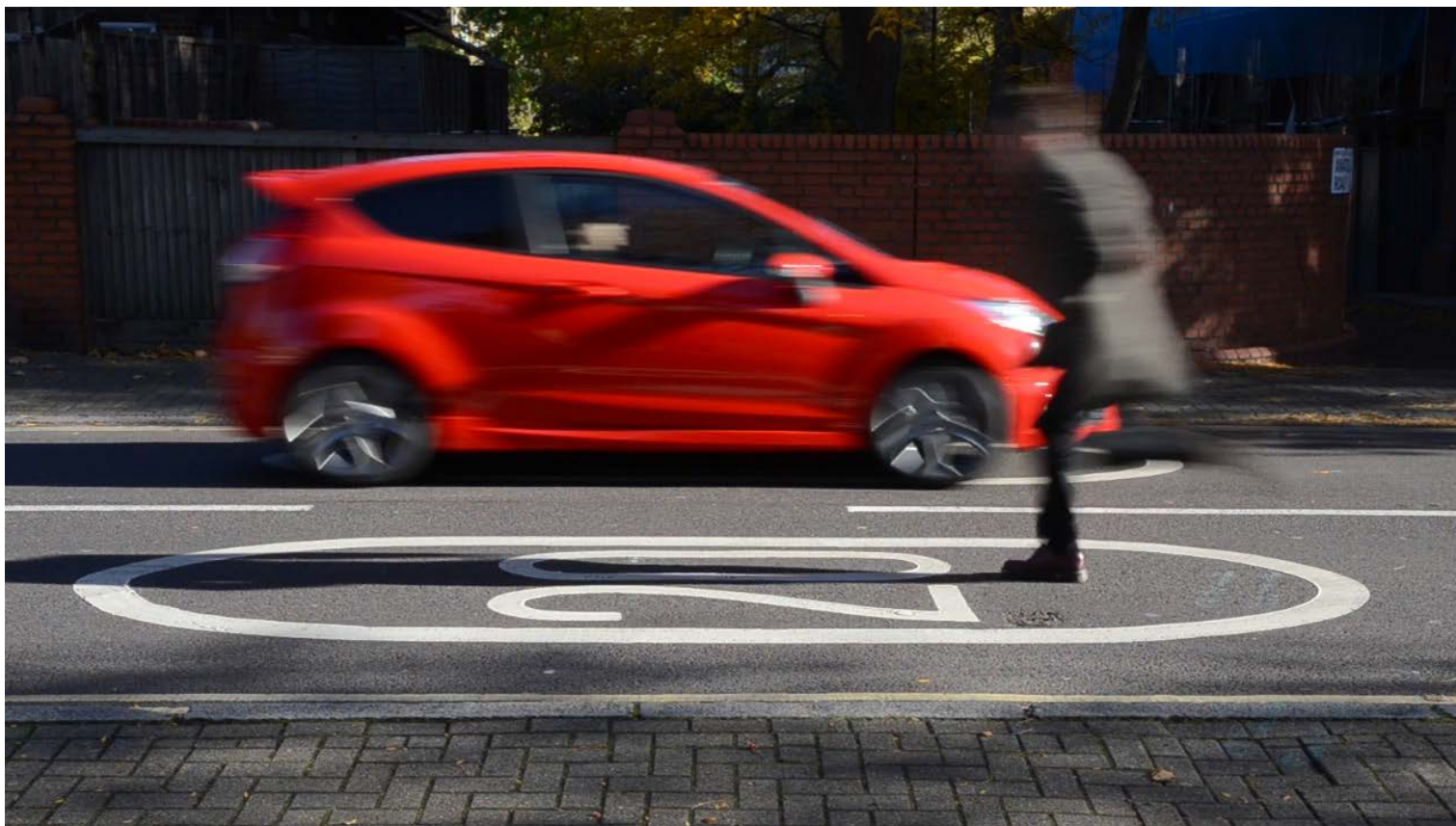
Found imagery and data is exhibited directly, the methods are shared in the form of instructions or ‘tutorials’ and, thirdly, I incorporate materials into performances or the short looping films I term '*simupoems*'. The films often employ 3D modelling and animation tools, photogrammetry, physics engines or algorithmic sequences.

My work has been shown in project spaces, online and in established locations such as the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Lighthouse (Brighton) and Wandesford Quay Gallery (Cork City, Ireland). *Contra-Invention*, for example, was invited to *Les Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles*, subsequently nominated for the *Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2012* and part of *From Here On* at Arts Santa Mónica, Barcelona in 2013.



2017-Ongoing *Navigator*: simultaneous use of satnav and maps-apps

The satnav in a car, and maps-apps on passengers' mobile devices, are programmed for the same final destination so that the different simulated voices compete to give directions, sometimes in sync and sometimes not. This has been run as a live experience (*Symphony of Stanavs*) in which six passengers are driven about in a seven-seater car. A looping film or 'simupoem', *Navigating* was created using samples recorded on one run on 1st April 2017.



2015-Ongoing *Speeding*: speed camera/speed limits work

I realised that by capturing video, and then counting the number of frames between two points on the road, the speed of vehicles could be calculated. And the actual 20mph road markings, now a feature in many urban parts of Britain, could be used for that purpose. I decided to try and beat the 20mph speed limit on foot, produced a film *Car-ing* from this and provided the data and calculations. This film was screened on-line on 25th December 2016.



2017-Ongoing *Banking*: useless money flow between bank accounts

Three bank accounts were set up, an amount placed in each (now reduced to £1) and money sent flowing in circles, automatically via Standing Order, on a daily basis. The results so far include a stack of statements received from each bank, a simupoem (*Befiling*) and performance event (entitled *Banky*) which involved percussion onto, and destruction of, a filing cabinet in order to generate a soundtrack for *Befiling*.



2014-2016 *Less*: supermarket self-checkout machines

It turns out that it is possible to use supermarket self-checkout machines to buy nothing. I did so frequently, collecting hundreds of the resulting receipts as evidence of these zero-transactions. These were compiled into books (*Less* and *More Less*), an A0 print version was produced, I shared an 'how to' tutorial (produced for #LowTechLabLondon2016 at Saatchi Gallery) and created a simupoem (*Exchanging*).



2013-2014 *Missing You*: courier company parcel tracking signatures

Having discovered that courier company parcel tracking data, and not just my own, was accessible, I began to collect this information. As well as locations, dates and times, customers Point of Delivery Signatures (PODS) were available as small image files. Exhibitions of work toured under the title *Missing You*, a reference to the 'Sorry We Missed You' cards left by couriers when delivery fails. Above installation shot: Macclesfield, 2014.



2009-2012 *Contra-Invention*: car parking contravention images

This was an investigation of the evidential photography of Britain's traffic wardens (Civil Enforcement Officers). Hundreds of their 'contravention images' were collected from municipal councils' systems. Occasionally wardens captured themselves in reflection. I was able to manoeuvre myself into certain images (by following the wardens around). Above installation shot: Arts Santa Mònica, Barcelona, 2013.



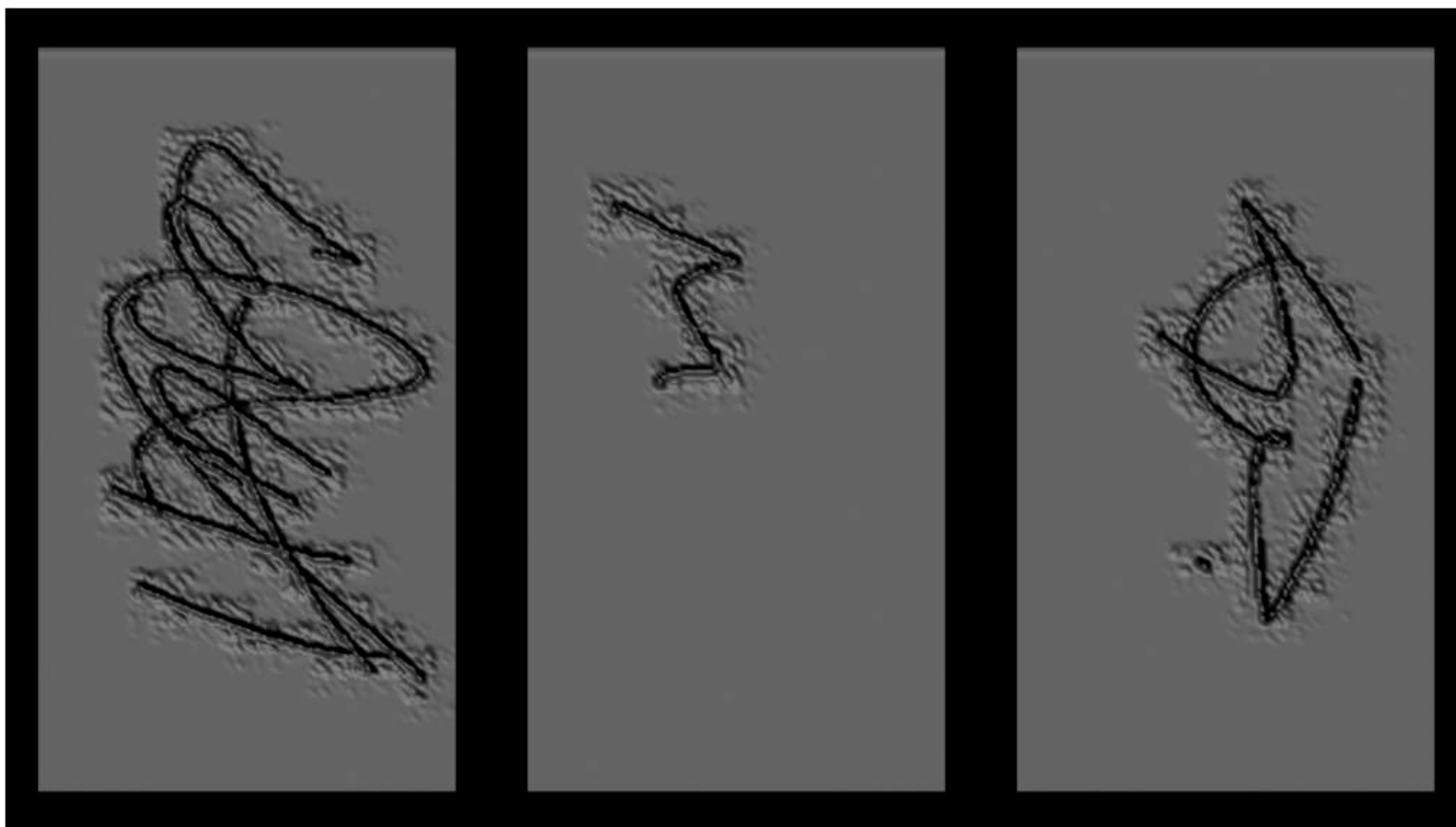
Busting 2016, 3min looping film, HD PAL and other formats

Elements include a plaster bust which was 3D-scanned roughly using photogrammetry techniques, satnav recordings and words from a historical conversation. Voice Eliza Jaye. This is new work, unconnected with *Contra-Invention*, *Missing You* or *Less*.

Link to vimeo version: <https://vimeo.com/164911795>

The transcription of one conversation with a member of staff, conducted while using a supermarket self-checkout machine, to buy nothing, is sung. An image of the receipt obtained is used in the film. Voice: Ruby O'Connell-Rogers. Part of the intervention *Less*.

Link to vimeo version: <https://vimeo.com/126480392>



Delivering 2014, 18sec looping film, HD PAL and other formats

Three Point of Delivery Signatures, selected from the intervention *Missing You*, form the basis for a 6sec looping film. An 18sec score was then created, given set limitations, by composer Stace Constantinou. *Delivering* is part of the Michael Shamberg *Turtle Salon* collection.

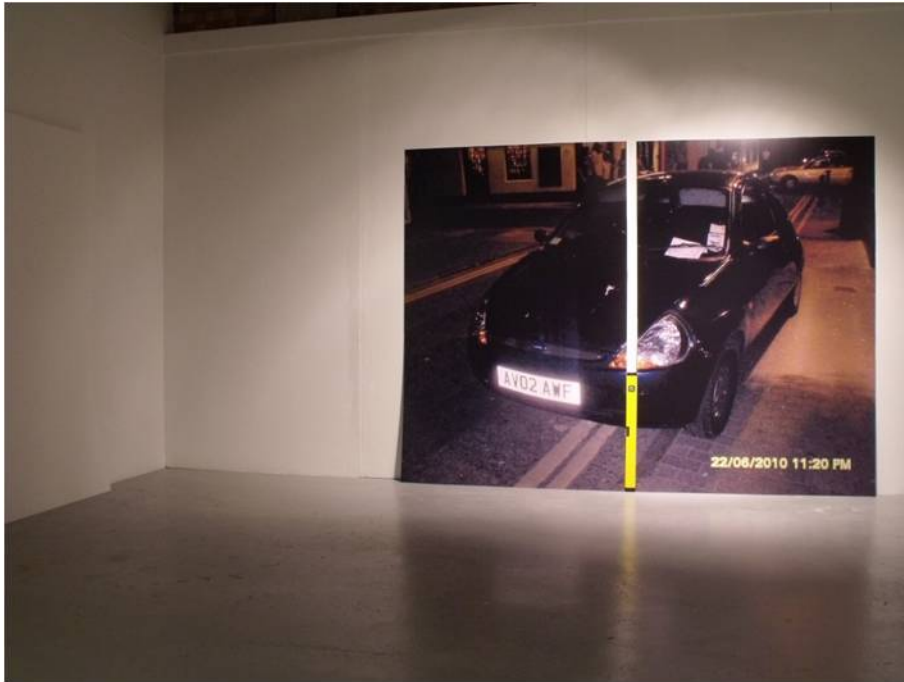
Link to vimeo version: <https://vimeo.com/112043307>



Boring 2012, 3min30sec silent looping film, DV PAL and other formats

Photography captured while snarled up in one of the longest traffic jams in the history of London's orbital motorway in 2011, forms the basis. The film was not directly connected with the intervention *Contra-Invention* but was created during the same period.

Link to vimeo version: <https://vimeo.com/41018346>



Contra-Invention Prints 1 2010, three pairs of 1.2x1.8m C-type prints mounted on corrugated plastic and one spirit level

Three 'night shots', selected from hundreds of 'contravention images' collected, depicting the same parking violation, were blown up to car-size. Each is split vertically so that there are six sections in total. Part of the body of work created for *Contra-Invention*.

Link to other Contra-Invention materials: <http://www.mocksim.org/works/contra-invention.htm>



Contra-Invention Images 2010-2012, 1) The Artist captured by Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO), 2) CEO captures herself in reflection.

Two images selected from the hundreds of contravention images collected between 2009 and 2012

Further *Contra-Invention* images and documentation: <http://www.mocksim.org/works/contra-invention.htm>



Delivering being screened in the back of a high-top van, 2014

The film was screened as part of *Art Language Location*, Cambridge and *Turtle Salon*, Birmingham in 2014. *Delivering* was produced during the intervention *Missing You*.

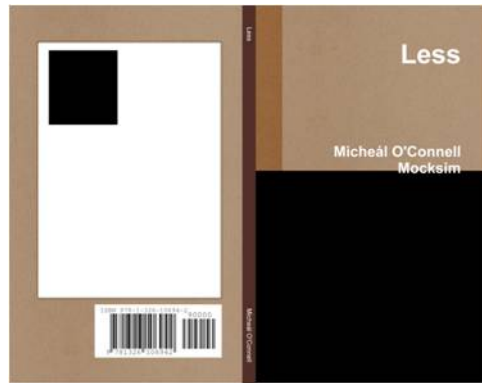
Further *Missing You* images and documentation: http://www.mocksim.org/works/Missing_You.htm



PODS 2013, 3min silent moving image piece, DV PAL and other formats

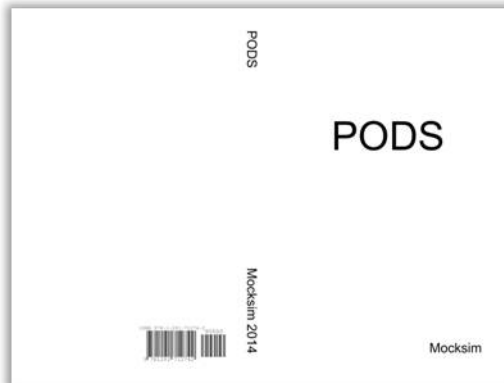
Point of delivery signatures (PODS) from intervention *Missing You* played in sequence.

Link to video: <https://vimeo.com/73614369>



Less 2014, Paperback book, 112 pages, 10.8x17.48cm

Receipts collected as evidence of buying nothing during a three month period.



Less 2014, Hardcover book, 104 pages, 15.24 x 22.86cm

One hundred collected Point of Delivery Signatures.



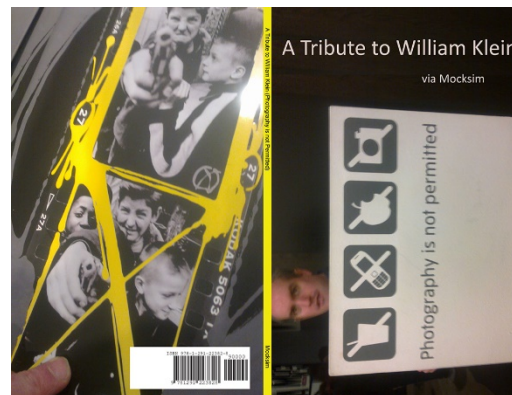
Contra-Invention Catalogue 2010, Paperback book, 84 pages, 20.98x29.69cm, Full colour interior

All of the 'Contravention images' collected between 2009 and 2010, along with meta-data for camera type, shutter speed, aperture, other photo-metrics. An essay by Hito Steyerl and commissioned writing by Huw Bartlett is also included. Photos include examples in which the wardens inadvertently capture themselves in reflection. Others include the artist, who manoeuvred himself into images by following the wardens around. This catalogue was included on 'Martin Parr's Best Books' list 2010.



More Less 2016, Paperback book, 116 pages, 20.98x29.69cm

Receipts collected as evidence of buying nothing between 2015-2016, blown up to fit A4 pages.



A Tribute to William Klein 2012, Paperback book, 92 pages, 16.84x26.04cm

Images captured on phone handset at a major retrospective of the work of an iconic street photographer.



A0 Zero Receipt Poster 2016, B&W print on paper, **How to buy Nothing 2016**, 1min4sec YouTube video

High resolution scans of zero-transaction receipts printed t A0 size and Instructional video describing how to obtain zero-transaction receipts. All produced as part of intervention *Less*.

Instructional video link: https://youtu.be/6Gx_6JfXHc

Statement - Long

In the past I designed and directed scenarios involving performers, often a professional clown. Appropriated objects, photographic tools, digital recording and display machineries were incorporated into orchestrated routines. The work I do now was influenced by that period but one project, culminating in 2010, marked a change in direction. The activity involved appropriating images from municipal council car parking contravention systems. Since then I have carried out many similar exercises: instead of inventing routines, everyday mechanisms are interrogated directly. At first the aim was to find contemporary readymades, ostensibly mundane data and digital imagery, but the methods themselves became interesting to share. I present selected found data, images and effects, through exhibition, live events and online. I also provide documentation and instructive material. Thirdly, elements from these investigations may be included in short looping experimental films or 'simupoems' which have been a consistent feature of my practice.

As well as displaying images taken by traffic wardens – a project entitled *Contra-Invention* – I discovered it was easy to access courier company Point of Delivery signatures (*Missing You*). Later I began using supermarket self-checkout machines, but to buy nothing (*Less*). More recently I have sent money flowing unnecessarily around bank accounts, used a mobile handset as speed camera and created symphonies through simultaneous use of sat-nav and maps-app voices while driving between destinations.

My work has been shown in project spaces and established locations, such as the Whitechapel in London and Lighthouse, Brighton in the UK and Wandersford Quay Gallery in Cork, Ireland. I ran a blended reality event using Second Life and curated guerrilla fringe activities at the Venice Biennale. Increasingly I simply screen and share materials online, on specified dates, to a limited audience. *Contra-Invention* had been invited to *Les Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles* 2011, was subsequently nominated for the *Deutsche Börse Photography Prize* 2012 and part of *From Here On* at Arts Santa Mónica, Barcelona in 2013. Thanks to Arts Council England and other funding sources, the show also toured Britain and Ireland in 2012/13. The original catalogue was included in Martin Parr's Best Book List in 2010 and for a time I became a member of the international ABC Artists' Books Cooperative, which advocates the use of Print on Demand and queries the status of publishing. *Missing You* was exhibited in Macclesfield, supported again by Arts Council England, in 2014. A public event was run to coincide with the show, at the famous Silk Heritage Centre, where photography artists Rut Blees Luxemburg, Mishka Henner and I debated under the title *From Jacquard to JPEG*. In 2014 also the simupoem *Delivering* was screened in Birmingham as part of *Turtle Salon*, initiated by producer and director Michael Shamberg, and along with another work *Recay*, is formally part of that collection.

Since completing a practice-based PhD in 2017 I have concentrated on producing and disseminating again. Recently I was joint winner of The London Group's *President's Prize* and have been elected as a member, I streamed work as part of *Failure in Chrome* Digital Artist Residency, and contributed to events at The Bomb Factory venue and during Chinese New Year in London.

Education

2010-2016	Practice-led PhD, School of Media, Film and Music, University of Sussex
2004-2006	MA Fine Art (Distinction), University of Brighton

Selected Exhibitions and Events

2017	Failure in Chrome, Online residency and event London Group Open, The Cello Factory, London
2016	ABC Artists' Books Collective, Offprint, Tate Modern, London #LowTechLabLondon2016, Saatchi Gallery, London
2015	Delivering a Paper, Impact, Lighthouse, Brighton
2014	Rearing, Matt's Gallery, London ABCEUM, Offprint, Beaux-Arts de Paris, France Turtle Salon, Article Gallery, Birmingham ABCEUM, Grand Parade Gallery, Brighton Photo Biennial Missing You & From Jacquard to JPEG, The Silk Museum, Macclesfield
2013	Visual Urbanism, British Library, London Missing You, CAC, Brighton Milkbar, Subterranean Art House, California From Here On, Arts Santa Monica, Spain LIPS. Ormston House, Ireland
2012	Contra-Invention Plus, Over and Out, Lincoln Boundary Work II, Wandesford Quay Gallery, Cork Disruption II, Elysium Gallery, Swansea Contra-Invention Plus, Marburae Gallery, Macclesfield Trainofthoughts, The Horse Hospital, London Turtle Salon, Meter Room, Coventry Occupant, Grey Area Gallery, Brighton Art of Architecture, The Public, West Bromwich
2011	Artists Disguised Procession, Cecil Sharpe House, London Les Recontres D'Arles, Atelier de Mécanique, France
2010	Brighton Photo Biennial, Frieze-Greene Gallery, Brighton

Selected Exhibitions and Events contd.

2009	Mockeyah, The Joinery, Dublin
2008	MakeShift, Camping Fusina, Italy Testing Grounds, Permanent Gallery, Brighton Digiville, Lighthouse, Brighton
2007	Vacancy, Grey Area Gallery, Brighton Critical Incident, Freeman Centre, East Sussex
2006	Wormhole Saloon, Whitechapel Gallery, London Trouble With Them, Grey Area Gallery, Brighton Athens Video Art Festival, Various locations, Greece
2005	Max10, Falmouth Art Centre, Cornwall
2004	Big Blip 4, Sallis Benney Theatre, Brighton Zeroes & Ones, Fairfields Arts Centre, Basingstoke

Awards, Funding

2017	Joint winner of The London Group's <i>President's Prize</i>
2014	Arts Council England grant <i>Missing You/From Jacquard to JPEG</i> Studentship, PhD Creative and Critical Practice, University of Sussex
2012	Nominated for The <i>Deutsche Börse Photography Prize</i> London Sinfonietta's <i>Blue Touch Paper</i> workshop 2012 Arts Council England grant <i>Contra-Invention</i>
2011	Selected for <i>Les Recontres d'Arles</i>

Online

Web site	www.mocksim.org
Twitter	https://twitter.com/Mocksim Latest
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/Mocksim
Vimeo	https://vimeo.com/mocksim
YouTube	https://goo.gl/vnPg0o and https://goo.gl/V1VL2V (process work, clips, research)