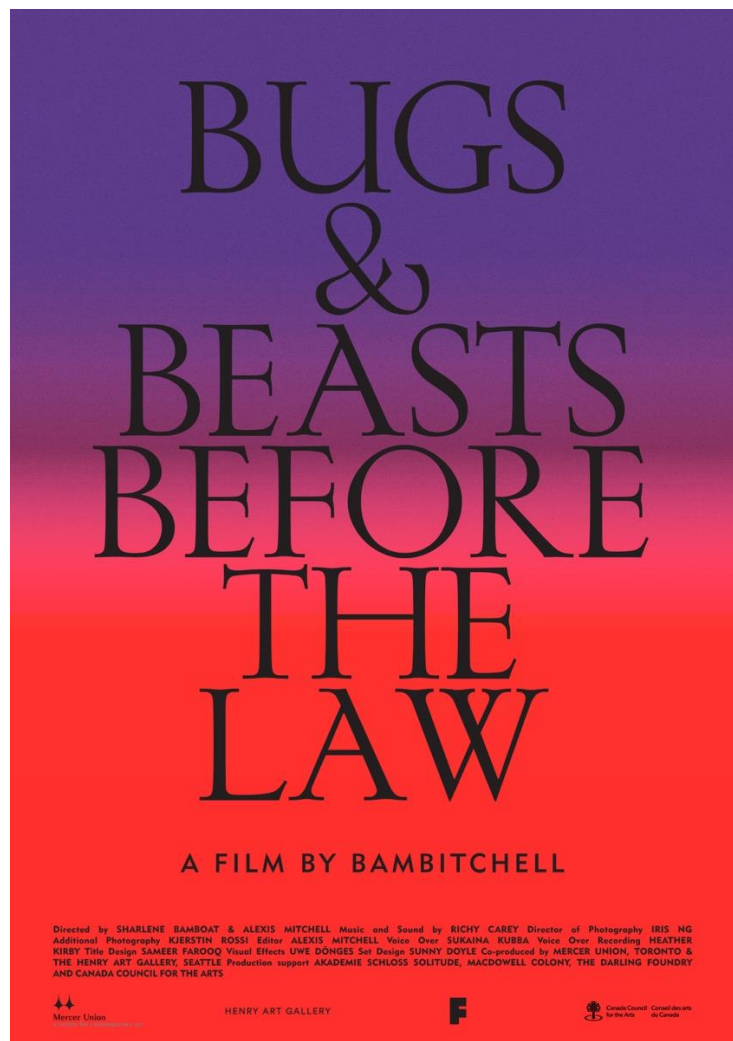


Name: Richy Carey  
Institution: University of Glasgow  
Nationality: Scottish

**David Fleming-Brown Travel Scholarship Funding Report  
Mercer Union Gallery, Toronto, Canada**

I am a PhD candidate based at the University of Glasgow. I am a composer, most often working with artists to create sound and music in film works that show in galleries and cinemas, with my practice research focusing on the collaborative language used between artists/directors and composers/sound designers in the realisation of film sound.

Supported by the AHRC, I undertake my research part-time, and am now at the start of my fifth year of study. I was awarded £530.00 by the David Fleming-Brown travel scholarship, and a further £499.00 by the Scottish Graduate School of Arts and Humanities' Research Training and Support Grant, to travel to Toronto, Canada for ten days in September 2019 to attend the installation and opening of a new collaborative work, *Bugs and Beasts Before the Law*, at Mercer Union gallery.



The trip to Toronto was the culmination of a year-long collaborative research project with Canadian artists Alexis Mitchell and Sharlene Bamboat, who work together under the moniker *Bambitchell*. Bambitchell and I have previously collaborated on two other projects; *Special Works School*, a film commissioned by gallery TPW and installed there in 2018, before being installed at the Canadian consulate as part of Berlinale 2019, Berlin's film festival, as well as various other festivals around the world. The second project was a publication *Near by*, which was pressed at Publication Studio in the Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow, and is a work that makes up another chapter of my thesis.

*Bugs and Beasts Before the Law* was co-commissioned by Mercer Union, Toronto and the Henry Gallery, Seattle. With the installation heading to Henry Gallery in mid 2020, it was important for me to be physically present during the installation of the work's first exhibition, to understand its form in the context of the gallery space and to discuss it with the curators, collaborators and audience during the exhibition's opening to understand what, if anything, might need addressed in the film's sound mix ahead of its future iterations.

### **Details of my visit.**

With my practice research being centred around different forms of knowledge exchange in the process of devising film-sound, the support of the David Fleming-Brown fund allowed me to:

- Be physically present during the installation of the work, to understand its form in the context of this gallery space with the curators, collaborators and audience during its opening.
- Share my research within a new context and community of artist-researchers through both the panel discussion and a series of studio visits with Toronto-based artists.
- Meet with academics and sound-art researchers/programmers from Toronto's film-sound community, to make new networks of researchers working in my field.

I arrived in Toronto on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September and headed straight to the home of artist-filmmaker Terra Long, who I was staying with for the duration of my trip. I first met Terra when she was on a research trip to Scotland, to undertake a week-long residency with the acclaimed sound-artist Chris Watson. I happened to arrive right in the middle of Toronto's world-famous film festival, and was immediately introduced to colleagues of Terra's, some of whom were directors of independent film festivals from other cities in North America.

The first full day of my trip entailed meeting with Bambitchell and heading straight to the gallery to see how the installation was coming, and to meet with the curators of the project, whom I had only ever spoken to previously over Skype.



Mercer Union, Toronto.

Mercer Union is situated in on Bloor Street West, close to numerous other gallery spaces including the newly rehoused Museum of Contemporary Art. Housed in a former cinema, the gallery was founded in 1979 by twelve local artists, and has gone on to exhibit works by major international artists.

I was able to work with the install team directly to position the surround sound speaker system in its specific relationship to the seating gallery which was also constructed by the team. Working from the gallery during the week, I was able to remix the sound of the film, calibrating it for the cavernous space and its off-axis orientation to the walls, both of which were having a strong impact on the acoustics of the film.

With my collaborators based in different cities, Alexis in Berlin and Sharlene in Montreal, time spent with each other discussing the work's aesthetics and gestures had mainly taken place over Skype sessions, and being together in the same city for an extended period of time allowed us to investigate and explore further the more intricate and nuanced details in the work in real time.

I spent the days leading up to the exhibition's opening either in the gallery itself, visiting exhibitions in the city's numerous galleries, or undertaking studio visits with local artists and composers. These visits were incredibly useful in expanding my understanding of the kinds of conversations driving the broader artistic community in the city and introduced me to a range of practices that I would otherwise not have encountered.

One such trip, included a visit to the Toronto Islands with Terra, to do some field recording with various contact microphones, underwater mics and field recorders, sharing skills and spending time coming to understand the drivers behind each other's practices.



Field recording with artist-filmmaker Terra Long.

The opening of the exhibition itself was a real success, with my decision to attend the installation of the work proving invaluable, both to my own understanding of the differences required for mixing sound between cinema spaces and gallery spaces, but also in understanding the audience's reception of the film's sound itself.

A few days after the exhibition's opening, I took part in a public talk with Bambitchell and the show's curators, where we screened the work and then discussed our aesthetic, conceptual and practical approaches to its creation. Within that discussion we unpacked some of the collaborative exercises I have been devising throughout my PhD research with the audience.

### **Impact of the Travel Scholarship.**

The impact of the travel scholarship has had a large impact on my understanding of the work, on its ability to travel to different exhibition spaces and on my own practice. Through visiting the space and meeting so many new artists and researchers, I have already been asked to contribute to new projects in both Canada and in the UK.

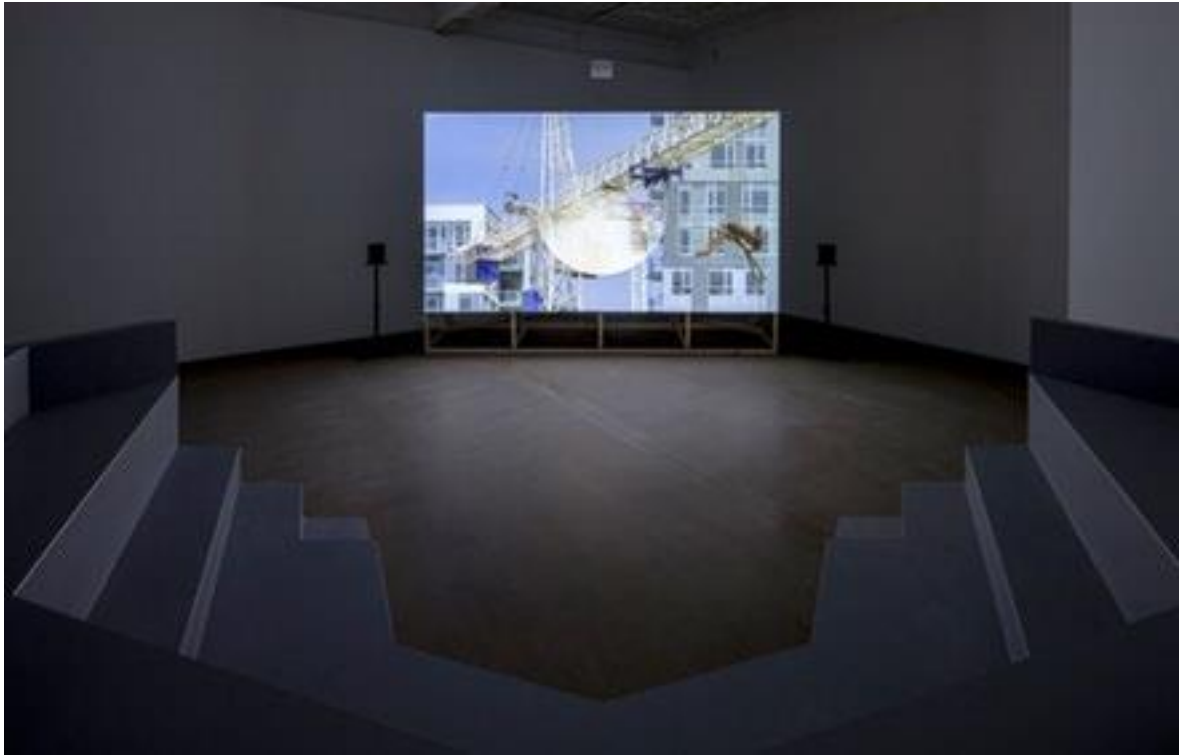


Image of the work installed in the space.

Without the support of the David Fleming-Brown travel scholarship it certainly would not have been possible for me to undertake the research trip, and I am grateful for their support in this juncture which has broadened my skills, knowledge and the impact of my research. I am looking forward to seeing how the seeds planted during my research trip might flourish.