

## **Background to submission:**

In March 2012, I will be undertaking a new walk (actually a 'meander') in Sunderland for the AV festival (other artists included in this part of the festival include Hamish Fulton in Newcastle, Tim Brennan, also in Sunderland and Ian Sinclair in Middleborough). This walk, or meander, (and the resulting work) is part of a series of projects I am developing called **Street Flowers – Urban Survivors of the Privileged Land** (a derivation of Sunderland). This walk will take place early in the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> March the along the banks of the River Wear in the middle of Sunderland, when the sounds and smells are at their sharpest in the urban environment. For more details about my practice and WALK (Walking, Art, Landskip and Knowledge – a new research centre at the University of Sunderland) visit my website – [www.mikecollier.eu](http://www.mikecollier.eu)

## **Abstract - Permanent / Ephemeral**

Walking is inherently itinerant, embodied and potentially social and by foregrounding these engaged cultural 'activities' my work adopts them as a methodology, stimulating my own practice as an artist and collaborator with other artists and the public, resulting in a social exchange of knowledge which then feeds back into my work.

One part of my practice is ephemeral – the walk (or meander), and for some participants the work ends here. That's fine. However, the research undertaken during the walks (the species seen, the knowledge shared of each plant or bird's history - often linked to place-specific social and sometimes political events) is then assimilated and reflected upon by me to make permanent art-works for exhibition in galleries and semi-permanent Billboards.

For this paper and talk, I would like to explore further the relationship between

- The meander or walk, the historical and contemporary social and physical landscapes we walk through, the way in which flora and fauna map our histories and the way that the naming of flora fauna charts a wider move in society from an embodied relationship with our world to one which is discreet and deterministic and
- The resulting art-work shown often in spaces with a loaded history (Galleries)

My practice in recent years has straddled the performative and ephemeral (through the walk) and the permanent through the work I subsequently make in my studio. I intend that this talk and paper will explore the relationship between these activities – for me it will also be 'work of enquiry' as my practice has evolved organically over time in this way, but I have yet to reflect properly on this relationship. My talk may well, then, be exploratory.