

Artists' Residency

PANGAEA SCULPTORS' CENTRE

—Sculpting  
Practice  
Catching a  
Train on  
the Move,  
London  
2015 —

Marsha Bradfield  
Lucy Tomlins

01 OCT — 09 DEC 2015



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# Directors' Introduction

Fast forward twenty years: If asked to reflect back on the most pressing developments in the practice of sculpture<sup>1</sup> in London 2015, what would you say? This publication responds to this question by being a kind of time capsule of this historical moment. The present described here springs from the perspective of Pangaea Sculptors' Centre (PSC) but it's impelled less by the time-honoured urge to project ourselves into the future and more by a drive to understand the now. Many of the concerns we consider will be familiar to those working in the cultural sector today: As an artist, where do I fit into the economies and ecologies of cultural production? How can I possibly plan for a long-term future in London when my position here is so precarious that I'm unsure I can make next month's rent? In what ways are the ethos and commitments of the not-for-profit organisation that I work for being shaped by the socio-cultural-economic matrix that surrounds both it and me? We wonder about and wander around these and other questions, as both practitioners and co-directors of PSC. But our hope is that the content of this publication also resonates with our peers, other cultural producers living and working in London and additional readers besides. These include policy makers, regeneration teams, public and private funders and other supporters of the fine arts. We offer the following reflections to seed discussion and build solidarities amongst those practicing sculpture in particular and art in general, in London as a global city of both culture and capital.

Ask someone in media, branding or elsewhere in the creative industries about life in the trenches and they may well say that work is good, pointing to the 1.9 million jobs in creative occupations in the UK in 2014. That's an increase of 6.4% or three times the average job growth rate across the national economy,<sup>2</sup> with culture topping the charts when it comes to the UK's exports overseas.

But ask the same question of an artist, curator, producer or other practitioner working in the largely not-for-profit world of critical art and their answer is likely to be less sanguine. 'It's a bit like living in an Escher painting,' someone recently opined to us. 'Paths that seem to go one way unexpectedly swing to the left, others abruptly split in several directions or suddenly end. Many are uphill—or up stairs. It takes a certain sensibility to knowingly embrace this kind of structured chaos: to seize opportunities when they arise, with conviction, but to also be prepared to let them go if the wind changes. It is the journey that is the prize and rarely the destination in and of itself.' It's a timely analogy given the major retrospective, *The Amazing World of M.C. Escher* at the Dulwich Picture Gallery (14 Oct 2015 - 17 Jan 2016). But it's also timely because this cocktail of confusion and conviction keys into precarity, precarious living and working conditions, as arguably the most pressing issue for both individuals and organisations in London's cultural sector at this historical moment.

It was against this backdrop that PSC's 2015 artists-in-residence programme unfolded, with this also occasioning the time capsule you're now reading. For six weeks, seven artists worked side by side to create ambitious artworks that were both produced and exhibited in PSC's temporary project space in London Fields. In what follows, we reflect on this process by contextualising our programme, considering in particular the burning concerns of the day for London-based sculptors and other practitioners of three-dimensional art. As expressed above, our point of view is specific and situated but we also draw on the insights of our peers, colleagues and associates as our reflections move between the micro and the macro, from a fleeting episode in the residency, to scanning the wider cultural landscape, as we attempt to make sense of our lived experience as practitioners in London in 2015. For us this involved running PSC from a warehouse in London Fields between May 2015 and January 2016. Here we provided a mixed cultural offer of studios and a workshop-cum-production zone, an artists' residency and a parallel programme of public workshops, field trips and talks.

1. Here at PSC we understand a sculptor as someone who practices sculpture, with this demonstrating a particular interest in relationships, forms, materials and space as these things separately or together create a frisson between us and the material expressions that comprise our world. Our definitions of sculpture and sculptor are therefore elastic ones and the publication should be read with this in mind.

2. Department of Culture, Media and Sport, *Creative Industries: Focus on Employment*, June 2015, 8, available from [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/439714/Annex\\_C\\_-\\_Creative\\_Industries\\_Focus\\_on\\_Employment\\_2015.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439714/Annex_C_-_Creative_Industries_Focus_on_Employment_2015.pdf).



The three themes of the residency programme also provide areas of interest explored in this publication: 'Adventures in Material and Space'; 'Public Sculpture, Public Art' and 'Ambition and Afterlife'. More specific subjects broached by way of these concerns include material matters in an age of dematerialisation and digitisation, especially how disseminating art through the Internet is affecting the types that get made, funded and profiled today. And if art schools of the late twentieth century encouraged using what you had at hand, an easy come (skip diving), easy go (skip throwing) mentality to making art, what has the cry of these institutions been in the teens of the twenty-first century if not for legacy and greater attention to archiving and life cycle. At the same time, we are witnessing the life cycles of cultural institutions and startups accelerate in response to cuts in funding and regularly being displaced by London's rampant redevelopment. This brings to the fore the rise of placemaking agencies in our capital and the need for more critical consideration of the role played by property developers as both leading commissioners of public art in London and powerful actors who exert huge influence over where artists can live and work here.

Witness the example of PSC's temporary project space at 45 Gransden Avenue, E8 3QA. Once a cold-store industrial unit, it was opened as a place of work by former Prime Minister and long-time leader of the Labour Party, James Callaghan in 1980. Thirty-five years later, it's slated for redevelopment as flats with a ground-floor workspace. Albion Homes offered PSC a unit in their warehouse for a peppercorn rent, suggesting that our production facility might also inform the site's future usage. In exchange for occupying the space to run a cultural programme and covering the rates and bills, the developers requested we support their planning application, effectively confirming the cultural benefit of their future offer. What are we to make of our complicity in gentrification like this? For sure, setting up shop at 45 Gransden Avenue benefited PSC in vital ways. It enabled us to pilot our emergent thinking about studio provision while providing subsidised workspace. We also used this opportunity to evolve PSC, sculpting it into a more sculpture-forward arts organisation that is better able to meet the current and future needs of practitioners working three-dimensionally. These things were above and beyond the residency programme, which in addition to benefiting the seven artists-in-residence, aimed to create value for all those who attended our events. These are all good things. But it is also important to acknowledge all the value this cultural production created for Albion Homes. Despite its mutual benefit, disconcerting is the fact that our 'deal' with the developers is symptomatic of the chronic nomadism that grips the cultural sector in the capital. And further still, their proposed scheme, if the drawings are anything to go by, won't accommodate the needs of sculptors as the planned for spaces look much more 'tech hub' than 'sculpture workshop'.

Many London-based artists and arts organisations are struggling with the current over-reliance on meanwhile use space, with leases on suitable properties typically maxing out at two years. At the same historical moment when Giacometti's *L'Homme au doigt* sold at Christie's for \$141.3m, the highest price ever paid for a sculpture at auction,<sup>3</sup> most artists in London are more concerned with the desperate reality that studio rents have reached all-time highs. At the time of writing, Eat Work Art who own Netil House, Hackney Downs Studios and Old Paradise Yard were advertising a 340 ft<sup>2</sup> first-floor studio for the grand old sum of £1,200 per month.<sup>4</sup> That's £42 per square foot per year! This comes complete with an exciting creative community: musicians, photographers, fashion designers, web designers, a bridal boutique—there is even a pilates studio. But conspicuous by their absence here are sculptors and other fine artists. The Greater London Authority's (GLA's) *Artists' Workspace Study: Report and Recommendations - September 2014* pegs the average cost of studio rent at £13.70 ft<sup>2</sup>.<sup>5</sup> Yet if the example of Netil House is any indication, the GLA's figures are already hopelessly out of date in just over a year and/or deny the true spread of rent charged across the capital. Couple these with the spiralling cost of domestic rents and we begin to get a picture of the real costs of living and working in this context.

3. 'Alberto Giacometti statue breaks auction record with £65m sale', swissinfo.ch and agencies, *The Guardian*, 12 May 2015, [www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/nov/10/modiglianis-reclining-nude-fetches-second-highest-ever-art-auction-price](http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/nov/10/modiglianis-reclining-nude-fetches-second-highest-ever-art-auction-price).

4. Eat Work Art, [www.eatworkart.com/netil-house/studio-spaces](http://www.eatworkart.com/netil-house/studio-spaces), accessed 22 January 2016.

5. Greater London Authority, *Artists' Workspace Study: Report and Recommendations - September 2014*. London: Greater London Authority, 2014, 6, available from [www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla\\_caw\\_140911\\_web.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_caw_140911_web.pdf).

With more and more sacrifice required to call London home, artists and arts organisations are asking themselves and each other: fight or flight? Is the energy expended to remain here justified when public funding for critical art is disappearing and producing for the market seems the only way to remain in the game? This is assuming that you can secure representation. As promoters of sculpture who also aim to provide sculptors with space, service and other kinds of support, we at PSC want to believe that London is still a place where emerging and early-career artists can live and work. But with the mass exodus to more affordable and less pressurised places like Margate, now dubbed 'Hackney-on-Sea', there is growing evidence this may no longer be the case. Rumour has it that Open School East, the free study programme for emerging artists based in De Beauvoir Town, is packing up and shipping out. Should PSC follow suit? If the GLA and others are pointing to Barking and Croydon as future cultural quarters, it may well be that the lure of the suburbs or beyond is too much to resist. Or would knowing that Arts Council England is committed to allocating a minimum of 75% of the total Lottery Funding that it receives to initiatives outside of London prompt you to move?<sup>6</sup> Clearly, there are real incentives to shift. And there is much to be said for bedding down in an emerging cultural scene and shaping its development from the ground up and the inside out. Or perhaps the way forward is to pulse between London and beyond? At least in the medium term, artists will need a base here to meet with the market or other opportunities. Perhaps the future of provision is a kind of practitioner's equivalent to a shared pied-à-terre where they can occasionally stay as well as store and show their work. But realistically, even this would depend on subsidies. In the same way as Bildhauerwerkstatt (sculptors' workshop) in Berlin is supported by the Berlin Senate Cultural Affairs Department,<sup>7</sup> we believe similar subsidy should be offered to London artists. Heck, perhaps this would improve the conditions for freelance art fabricators in the capital, too.

Returning to the thought experiment introducing this text: If asked to reflect back on the most pressing developments in the practice of sculpture in London 2015, what would you say in twenty years time? One of the reasons why we titled the culminating exhibition of PSC's 2015 artists-in-residence programme *Which One of These Is the Non-Smoking Lifeboat?* was to flag our sense that survival does not depend on S-O-S signals alone. Ultimately, it's up to us as artists, curators and producers to put our creative compulsions to work, know our worth and together sculpt a more a resilient culture and context where creativity can flourish. This future will need to be both reflective and reflexive so we can make the most of opportunities, forge unlikely alliances and find new ways to distribute value that better acknowledge all those involved in producing it. The sensibility we are proposing is a worldly one that is alive to its own context. We hope this publication communicates how and why the pressing developments in the practice of sculpture in London 2015 have made such an approach a requirement for PSC and others to meet what lies ahead and forge a brighter future for the development of sculpture in London, the UK and beyond.

— Marsha Bradfield & Lucy Tomlins  
PSC's co-directors

6. Arts Council England, 'Catalyst: Evolve - Guidance for applicants', 2016, [www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Guidance\\_for\\_applicants\\_Catalyst\\_Evolve.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Guidance_for_applicants_Catalyst_Evolve.pdf) (accessed 27 January, 2016).

7. Bildhauerwerkstatt, [http://www.bbk-kulturwerk.de/con/kulturwerk/front\\_content.php?idart=210&idartlang=220&idc=46&changelang=7](http://www.bbk-kulturwerk.de/con/kulturwerk/front_content.php?idart=210&idartlang=220&idc=46&changelang=7) (accessed 29 January 2016).

## Unfolding in the Capital in 2015...

### —— Terrorist Targets

On 11 January - Major London landmarks, including Trafalgar Square and Tower Bridge, are lit in the colours of the French National Flag in tribute to the victims of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris. Six weeks later, the masked Islamic State militant who is known as 'Jihadi John' and is responsible for the beheadings of many Western hostages is named Mohammed Emwazi of West London.<sup>1</sup>

### —— Gift Horse

Godfather of institutional critique, Hans Haacke installs his *Gift Horse* on the Fourth Plinth. Could there be a better mascot for sculptors and other artists who are constantly giving their labour away for free?

### —— Conrad Shawcross

Conrad Shawcross's *Three Perpetual Chords* is unveiled as the long awaited replacement for the Barbara Hepworth that was stolen from Dulwich Park in 2011.

### —— General Election

Despite Labour dominating London in the May election by winning 45 of the capital's 76 Parliamentary seats, the Tories secure an outright majority.

### —— The Line

The Line opens. London's first dedicated modern and contemporary art walk, it displays works that are usually in gallery storage. Londoners and visitors can follow the Line between the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2, along waterways of East London and the Prime Meridian.

### —— Sarah Lucas

London Gallery, Sadie Coles HQ's artist Sarah Lucas represents the UK in the 56th Venice Biennale, offering an interesting but predictable take on the exhibition titled, *All the World's Futures* by exploring gender, death, sex and the latent potential of everyday objects.<sup>2</sup>

### —— Hot in the City

The justices of the UK's Supreme Court are unanimous in their decision: The government must take immediate action by reforming its ineffective plans to cut air pollution and deliver these by the end of the year. This follows a case brought by ClientEarth, a group of activist lawyers committed to a healthier planet. On 1 July a level three 'heat wave action' is declared by the Met Office, with 36.7° recorded at Heathrow - the hottest UK temperature in twelve years and the hottest July day on record.<sup>3</sup>

### —— Workspace Provision

Increasing incentives for workspace provision are made available by bodies like the Greater London Authority (GLA).<sup>4</sup> But should these opportunities and subsidised rents on council properties go to for-profit companies when there are so many not-for-profits looking for space?

### —— Solidarity with Refugees

12 September - Hours after being elected leader of Labour, Jeremy Corbyn joins tens of thousands marching across London in solidarity with refugees, with similar events taking place in other European capitals.

2. British Council, 'Sarah Lucas | I SCREAM DADDIO,' 2013, [www.venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/timeline/2015](http://www.venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/timeline/2015) (accessed January 27, 2016).

3. 'Hottest July day ever recorded in England,' *BBC News*, 1 July 2015, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-33324881](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-33324881).

4. Mayor of London / London Assembly, 'Mayor announces £20m fund to help develop London businesses & boost innovation,' 21 January 2016, [www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/new-20m-london-regeneration-fund](http://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/new-20m-london-regeneration-fund).

1. "Jihadi John" named as Mohammed Emwazi from London,' *BBC News*, 26 February 2015. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31637090](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-31637090).

### —— Section 106 Agreements for Studio Providers in Vogue

The GLA recently reported that within the next 5 years, 28% of artists' studios are under threat as operators do not expect to be able to renew leasehold/rental agreements. Only 17% of studio premises are freehold. Many providers have been operating on meanwhile use agreements to occupy sites short-term - the closure of ASC's Erlang House, Southwark, is a case in point - with these arrangements coming to an end. The more sustainable way forward is for provisions like these to be designed in to new developments at the planning stage. We just hope there are enough of these to go around to accommodate all the artists looking for studios. We also hope that 'affordable' means affordable for poor and messy artists and not just for decently-paid, clean and desk-based creatives.

### —— Shifting South

With the redevelopment of Nine Elms in full swing and unbuilt apartments planned for Battersea Power station already being flipped at a 40% markup,<sup>5</sup> the capital's focus is shifting south. With these big regeneration projects come opportunities for arts organisations and Matt's Gallery recently announced plans to relocate to the Bellway Homes development in 2019. This means they are leaving their Copperfield Street premises after 23 years. Astronomical rent hikes and a sweet deal facilitated by the Nine Elms Company and Wandsworth Council are, rumour has it, encouraging this shift.<sup>6</sup>

5. Anna White, 'Investors start flipping Battersea Power Station flats and they're not even built yet,' *The Telegraph*, 12 February 2015, [www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/property/house-prices/11407252/Investors-start-flipping-Battersea-Power-Station-flats-and-theyre-not-even-built-yet.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/property/house-prices/11407252/Investors-start-flipping-Battersea-Power-Station-flats-and-theyre-not-even-built-yet.html).

6. 'ARTNOTES,' *Art Monthly* 393 [February 2016]: 12.

### —— Newport Street

Damien Hirst's Newport Street gallery opens, a stone's throw from Beaconsfield which celebrates its 20th birthday this year. Let's hope this new cultural quarter is good for the charity's campaign. Having lost its Arts Council funding in the cuts of 2010/2011, Beaconsfield is looking to raise £250,000 per annum to realise its ambitions to become a self-sufficient, 'critically engaged locus operating beyond the mainstream'.<sup>7</sup>

### —— 'Blue-Chip' Public Art

Some of the biggest public art commissions in recent years are gifted to six blue-chip galleries of the commercial art world. In conjunction with the major Crossrail infrastructure project, The Crossrail Art Foundation will help deliver station-specific public artworks by internationally renowned artists represented by Lisson Gallery (Paddington), White Cube (Bond Street), Gagosian (Tottenham Court Road), Sadie Coles HQ (Farringdon), Victoria Miro (Liverpool Street) and PACE (Canary Wharf).<sup>8</sup>

### —— Turner Prize

For the first time, the Turner Prize is won by a non-artist and a collective to boot: the art/design/architectural practice, Assemble. Is architecture/design the new art? What does this mean for sculptors?

### —— Acme's 40th

Keystone studio provider Acme turns 40 this year. This birthday is celebrated with it becoming a self-sustaining organisation that no longer needs Arts Council revenue funding. How many younger arts organisations in London today are likely to reach this marker in the current climate?<sup>9</sup>

7. 'Support Beaconsfield,' [www.beaconsfield.ltd.uk/supportbeaconsfield/](http://www.beaconsfield.ltd.uk/supportbeaconsfield/) (accessed 22 January 2016).

8. Andrew Denspey, 'Heathrow Funding Major Artwork at Paddington Crossrail Station,' 28 October 2015, [www.crossrail.co.uk/news/articles/heathrow-funding-major-artwork-at-paddington-crossrail-station](http://www.crossrail.co.uk/news/articles/heathrow-funding-major-artwork-at-paddington-crossrail-station).

9. Acme, [www.acme.org.uk/aboutacme/news?year=2015](http://www.acme.org.uk/aboutacme/news?year=2015), (accessed 20 January 2016).

# 1

# Adventures in Material and Space

It was heartbreaking to recently hear a technician at one of London's most prominent art schools say that if, in the past, his remit was to assist students in applying newly acquired skills, today he's tasked with making their work for them. Growing student numbers and increasingly risk averse and stringent institutional health and safety policies mean there just isn't the time or freedom to train students in technical skills in the way there once was. It was with this firmly in mind that when devising PSC's 2015 autumn programme we took the decision to prioritise 'Adventures in Materials and Space' as one of our three key themes.

PSC's own adventures in these areas started back in 2013 when we, a fledgling arts organisation, were entirely nomadic and facilitated a hands-on practical workshop at an ACAVA studio. Together with a group of thirteen participants and led by Ken Wilder (Programme Director of Interior and Spatial Design at Chelsea College of Arts), we made a concrete arch to explore the application of architectural techniques to three-dimensional art practice. While delighted by the effusive response to the two-day programme, this confirmed our fear that rampant deskilling in art education doesn't set future artists up for success. Workshop participants conveyed their hankering for more affordable and accessible opportunities to experiment with materials and learn new skills. This desire can be difficult to manage when it presents itself after the doors of art school have been shut firmly behind recent graduates. Their former tutors and technicians, however eager to provide emotional succour and technical support, are forced to bar access to the workshops, owing to the ever-expanding class sizes that demand all their attention and then some.

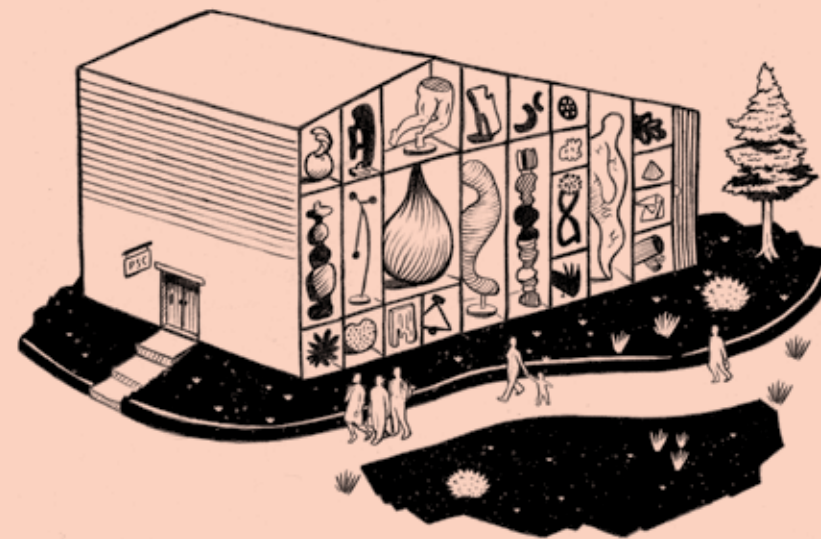
We explored this theme in a number of ways including piloting, through practice, some of our research into new forms of studio provisions that better reflect contemporary working methods, offering material and technique-focused training and providing technical support on the artists' residency. All this took place in a London Fields warehouse. Thanks to scouting and introductions by Liza Fior of muf architecture/art, we brokered a

deal with Albion Homes to occupy a unit at 45 Grandson Avenue at a peppercorn rent. This became our project space for nine months and here, many of our adventures in materials and space took place.

Walking through the doors it's hard not to be awed by the double-height ceiling that overarches the voluminous cavity, circa 2,500 ft<sup>2</sup>, that makes up the bulk of the unit. This post-industrial warehouse at the far end of a yard piled high with shipping containers in a nondescript industrial zone had just the right patina of grime to make it feel 'authentic', even edgy. Behind the unit's steel door sat two offices on either side of the entrance and above, on a sectioned mezzanine, there were three studios. These were let continuously over the course of our tenancy, and though their tenure was short, given the difficulty of securing anything affordable in Hackney these days, they were quickly filled.

Most studio providers wouldn't touch a building they couldn't secure for at least two years, if not five. With the upfront investment to set-up and make good a site, promote it, fill it, etc., anything less is too short to recoup the initial investment made and the ongoing running costs. PSC, as this publication seeks to demonstrate, has a different approach, preferring to seize opportunities that enable us to explore different facets of the organisation we are building on a finite, project basis. In a city that moves rapidly, opportunities come in and out of focus at speed. Focused on the long-term, our approach prioritises the journey, the process and knowledge gathered through practice. We knew that with the right funding mix (part rental income, part private and public funding), occupying this space on a fixed-project basis would give us a chance to pilot particular aspects of our provisions to the arts community. So with a decision based part on calculation and part instinct, we took a punt.

First up was the task of making the warehouse fit for purpose: clearing, cleaning, painting, making good and installing some new electrics. These things might fit neatly into the sentence you've just read but this belies the work actually demanded (see the panel on asbestos!). In an interview with PSC, studio provider Tara Cranswick of V22 told us



## Exploring New Forms of Workshop and Studio Provisions

At the time of writing, we are moving out of PSC's temporary project space. As this pilot comes to a close and before we launch into the next, it is interesting to reflect on how key insights from the summer workshop we ran with Liza Fior played out in practice. Two half-day sessions took place in consultation with a group of paid sculptor consultants and explored space and physical provisions for artists working today. What is clear is that an arts organisation's desire to be outwardly facing, to understand their neighbourhood and its ecology and locate practices productively within it, can chafe against a commitment to supporting artists' needs. Many often consider the studio an oasis for practice, a private territory for production, a place of escape. The pilot has also reemphasised to us the importance of time embedded in a place to the process of connecting the inside and the outside of activities in a worthwhile and meaningful way. This can be at odds with an often projectised way of working and associated short-termism. What this demonstrates is that the conditions have to be right for community integration to be meaningful to all those involved. It also reaffirms the importance of ongoing, sensitive and careful consideration when devising and implementing plans and programming—programming that opens the arts up to new audiences without making a spectacle of their production by putting studios and workshops on continuous display.

July 2015 - Led by Liza Fior of muf architecture/art



Artist-in-residence Byzantia Harlow in the metalwork area



Artist-in-residence Jamie Fitzpatrick in his pop-up spray booth



that when it comes to 'taking on' old buildings, whatever you do, *don't go anywhere near dodgy electrics!* Costs can spiral. And if you've had building work of any sort done in London, you'll know that it's the tradesmen who decide what jobs they'll take and, crucially, which they won't. So a substantial amount of labour went into securing an electrician. What was for us a big job at circa £3,000 was clearly not for them. Eventually, the electrics were 'renewed' by way of striking a delicate balance between what we would install in a more long-term site and what we could afford to offer given our nine-month tenure.

The main warehouse space was initially hired out for temporary projects, primarily for fabricating large commissions but also for temporary exhibitions. There was also stage set production and a subsequent film shoot. Once funding had been secured for our autumn

programme, PSC reclaimed the main space to host its activities. The initial exhibition, Taking Shape: Sculpture on the Verge presented works by the artists-in-residence as part of Art Licks Weekend 2015.

What quickly followed was the first in a series of space transformations that turned the main space back into a site of production: an open-plan studio for our seven resident artists for the six-weeks of the residency proper. This set up included workshop amenities for working in wood, metal and casting.

It was always PSC's intention to reconfigure the open-plan studio and workshop during the residency's production phase. We wanted to test how this might activate new drives, stimulate novel impulses and potentially create a rush of energy that would literally move practice. Would shifting things

around also encourage the artists to use the space differently and in doing so, enrich their experience and the potential of their projects? We scheduled biweekly check-ins with them in order to catalyse any shifts based on their developing needs. In reality, the process was much more organic and often in response to the additional activities we were hosting in the space alongside the residency. A key reflection on this process was this: The artists would feedback that they were generally happy with how the space was currently configured. However, when PSC made interventions based on our observations and understanding of the residency's needs, this often prompted the artists to follow suit and make changes in turn. These shifts helped to build the programme's momentum over the six weeks. It also triggered a new energy in the artists' activities. This, we

anticipate, also connected with the fact that our space-configuration meetings were bi-weekly and so marked the residency's passage by thirds.

PSC has a firmly held belief in 'making the making visible'. Seeing world class sculpture produced in your neighbourhood has the power to inform, inspire and bring new audiences to this art form. Our adventures in space therefore included piloting a platform of coextensive activity that involved running workshops and public talks within the residency's production zone and later, in the exhibition space. This also tested the idea that spaces can be successful in unexpected ways when conditions are created for more than one thing to co-exist. This thinking tracks with how muf architecture/art approach their practice. 'In each project muf seek to unearth what is of value in a

## Asbestos

Once upon a time, 45 Gransden Avenue was home to Arkay Chilled Foods Ltd. On its departure, the company left behind health and safety signage, a considerable amount of rubbish and several massive fridges. Thankfully both the fridges and most of the rubbish had been disposed of by the time we moved in, the fridges having been sold on to the second-hand electronic goods market on the African continent. What remained of said fridges however was a large raised pad, approximately 200 mm in height, of insulation foam covered in aluminium floorboards. Taking up around a third of the main space's footprint, the flooring was not in good condition and in effect dangerous and needed covering or removing.

A work party of PSC and friends gathered over a weekend in May of 2015. Our mission was simple: remove the pad, paint and clean. We accepted this with enthusiasm, buoyed by the satisfaction we would surely feel when the work was done and dusted and we could head to our local, The Pub on the Park, to toast our new home and watch the FA Cup final. But not long after we'd got stuck in, architect and long-term supporter of PSC Paul Beaty-Pownall asked us to follow him outside. Though he couldn't be sure without further testing, it seemed we'd struck asbestos tiles. They'd lain for who knows how many years undisturbed beneath the pad under the fridges. This news gripped us with shock, horror and disbelief. What did this actually mean? Frantic googling on smart phones ensued. While it's true that asbestos is so toxic that a single fibre, when lodged in the lungs, can result in painful death from a rare cancer called Mesothelioma that is linked almost exclusively with this group of minerals; and while it's also true that asbestos is a leading cause

of death in the construction industry, especially among demo men for obvious reasons; it's additionally true this stuff is so ubiquitous in older buildings that with London's rampant redevelopment, we're all exposed on a regular basis, in the cocktail of toxins that we breath in with our so-called fresh air. None of this information was especially reassuring at the time—especially in light of our intention to turn the unit into a publicly-facing space for sculptural production where we at PSC would be personally working for an extended length of time.

Abandon ship or start bailing? As you've no doubt guessed we persevered. After the tests came back positive for what is a low risk form of asbestos, a removal team was called and we returned once the pad was gone.

We recount this tale at length as a public service announcement and to remind you that working with materials comes with risks. Asbestos usage in the UK was prohibited by 1999. But if your building was built before 2000 there is a chance it is present. Whilst most contracts, if you're renting rather than buying, don't allow you to touch the fabric of a building without consulting the landlord, know that they might not make you aware of the risks. Equally, as in our experience, know that the asbestos might just as easily reside on top of a building's fabric. Lastly, even if your landlord shows you a certificate saying a building is asbestos free, remember, this doesn't mean it's true. Most asbestos surveys include a convenient disclaimer stating that they cannot guarantee their findings and additionally, that the surveyors can't be responsible for highlighting asbestos they couldn't see.

1. Expressed in a press biog of Katherine Clarke, artist and founding partner of muf architecture/art, available from [www.pangaeasculptorscentre.com/doing-it-in-public/](http://www.pangaeasculptorscentre.com/doing-it-in-public/) (accessed 22 January).



situation and to build on those assets to create extended social spaces that are inclusive of difference and where more than one thing at a time can happen'.<sup>1</sup> Something that made it tricky to accommodate both the artists' and PSC's respective needs was that not all these things could be anticipated in advance. Whilst the planned interruptions were diarised from the get-go, art making is a fluid process and hence subject to change. The interruptions most successfully embedded were those closely connected to the artists and their work, and the themes explored in the residency. The decision to offer an open-plan production space, rather than one neatly split into studios, proved generative. Some of the artists chose to demarcate and occupy an area for the duration of the production phase whilst others pooled this resource and worked side by side on shared tables, moving around and between the space to different zones depending on their activity. This largely self-organised approach was driven by their artworks' process-based needs and an interest in how they might support or rub against each other. Neither an urge to colonise space nor the sense it should be equally split ever seemed an issue.

Melting aluminium was central to David Rickard's metal sculptures and the miasma it created meant this production had to happen when others weren't around. Living nearby meant David could come early in the morning, late at night or at the weekends. As Jamie Fitzpatrick needed to spray paint his cast Jesmonite caricatures, a booth was quickly erected. More intrusive than the booth was the noise of his air compressor. On the odd occasion this work couldn't take place during downtimes in the studio, the other artists donned ear defenders. All the residents understood that multiple needs had to be accommodated simultaneously to maximise the benefit of the experience for all.

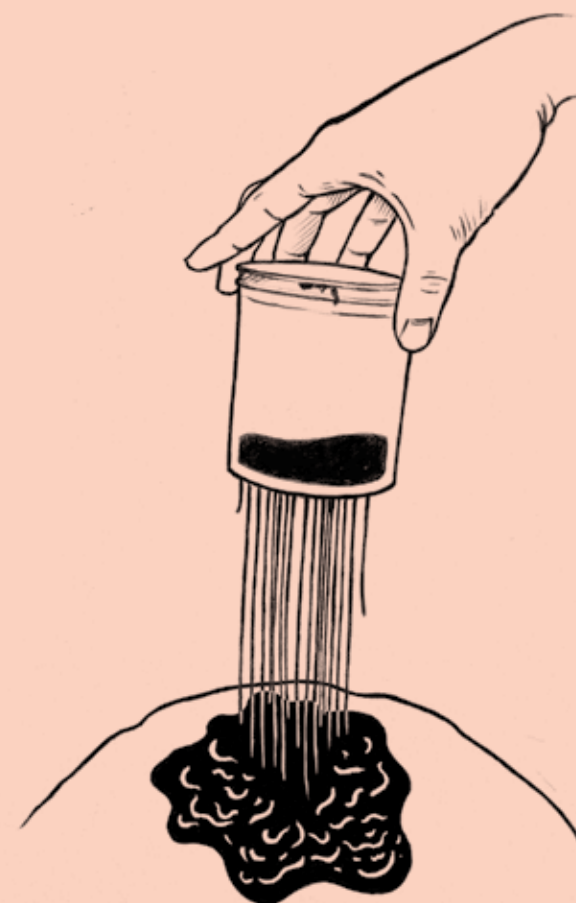
Even though the residency was unpaid, its offer of technical support appealed to many artists. This demonstrates that artists need ongoing support to learn techniques and material manipulation over their careers. Those selected for the residency all proposed projects we felt our facilities and programme could support well.

Handling brings materials to life.

Handling also often brings the handler sensuous pleasure, an experience that cannot easily be captured in words, making it difficult to convey specific qualities after the singularity of the event. The touch, the feel, the resistance: These sensations go some way to broadly describe the physical act of creation. But there is a lot more to transforming materials into artworks than the pleasure of process. While sentimentality is tempting, the truth is that you also need techniques and skills, and at PSC we believe that the broader or deeper an artist's repertoire, the more scope and confidence they'll have to push their practice. For this reason, 'a making mindset' was something the residency aimed to foster as part of its commitment to adventures in materials and space. With access to technicians Ian Daniel and Leila Smith, residents could push their practice materially into new territory with knowledgeable advice and guidance.

Casting proved a common process among the artists on this residency, with several using this as an opportunity to acquire more technical skill. Casting may sound a straightforward activity but does in fact include many choices and processes.

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## Notcutt Rubber

The first of PSC's public events was a session with Arthur Manzo from W P Notcutt Ltd, leading supplier of mould making and casting materials, and Tim Sharman from Jesmonite. They demonstrated tips and tricks for using materials like rubbers, foams, resins and Jesmonites in different contexts. The packed house was enthralled by a combination of showing and telling as it moved between the science behind these materials and how to use them practically.



PSC's project space played host to numerous fabrication projects over the summer - from public sculpture commissions, to theatre set building and furniture fabrication.





Before you can cast you must take a mould. Before you can choose a material for your mould, you must know what you are taking a mould from, and what material this is made out of. Ideally, you'll also know what you will cast your replica out of - though sometimes this isn't possible, especially if you're experimenting. Both these things will impact what you make your mould out of. You'll also have to consider release agents to ensure the mould comes away from the original or the cast. Again, which you choose will depend on the properties you're working with. In essence, casting is a lengthy and potentially costly process. Rubbers and resins and other common casting materials can be expensive. There are plenty of stages where mistakes can be made and work ruined, right up to the last one. As Emily Motto, Revital Cohen and Tuur Van Balen demonstrated with the work they produced on the residency, there is room for experimentation and happy accidents. But casting is also a process that comes with rules you need to know before you start. Research is important. Even better is the embodied knowledge that comes with experience and practice. Making mistakes may often be hard and costly (in time and money) but this is also a way of learning that ensures you never forget.

Of the residency's three areas of interest, 'Adventures in Material and Space' was bar none the most demanding, requiring both physical and conceptual labour. In retrospect, we might well have called this strand of programming, 'Experiments with Materials and Space', as this better captures the kind of activity that animated the autumn programme overall. For the artists-in-residence, this was a time/space punctuated by exciting discoveries but also devastating disappointments. This is not said with negativity or regret. In fact, for us, this marks a sign of success. The residency was conceived and resourced in a way that actively encouraged trial and error. We wanted to pilot a particular model of production and the feasibility of supporting multiple makers at the same time. We also aim to encourage and aid the artists to take risks and push the envelop as they developed their ambitious projects. By working outside our comfort zones we hit our limits but in doing so, also learn where these can be stretched, identifying new horizons to explore in future.

## Workshops for Emerging Artists

Education is central to PSC's remit, taking the form of workshops like Installing Artworks beyond the White Cube, which was led by PSC's technician, Leila Smith. The premise was simple: More and more artists are showing in alternative spaces (offices, warehouses, airports, forests, etc.) and some of the most exciting ones working today are creating meaningful encounters that are often shaped through how their artworks are installed. There is a brave new world beyond the white cube so why default to the conventions of installing artworks in this context? This one-day workshop aimed to knock the installation of sculpture off the plinth, taking it to another level. Laced with practical guidance and group discussion, it was pitched at emerging artists wanting to expand how they think about and practice the installation of their art. Despite the cold and some scheduling glitches, the workshop was well attended and the feedback positive.



## 2

# Public Sculpture, Public Art



Because what follows concerns public commissions, it's important to preface this by acknowledging the many and varied artists who are self-initiating and self-funding projects to explore public space. These practitioners take seriously their responsibility as members of the public to use and benefit from the public realm. From Lottie Child's *Street Training*, which is prompting greater awareness about how we engage our surroundings;<sup>1</sup> to Critical Practice's *#TransActing: A Market of Values*, which brought together some 64 projects to explore non-financial value production on the Rootstein Hopkins Parade Ground,<sup>2</sup> artists are critically and creatively exercising the public realm in a myriad ways and to a greater or lesser extent of fanfare. Central to this practice is the worry that if you don't use it, you may lose; it's often only through activating public space that we grasp both its potential and, crucially, the limitations thereof.

Many of these artist-initiatives, however, are relatively low in their visibility, one-offs or fleeting gestures and performances by individuals. But most of London's public sculptures and public artworks that are making the headlines and lodging in the wider social conscience point to the growth in both temporary and permanent art interventions as placemaking for cultural regeneration. Public art curation/production agencies and placemaking agencies are on the rise. They are proving vital in facilitating substantial investment in public art commissions and programming across the capital that is increasingly funded by the property developers, who through redevelopment and gentrification campaigns, are shaping our city and our lives in profound ways.

Consider, for example, Alex Chinneck's *A Bullet from a Shooting Star*. PSC's autumn programme included a site visit to this ambitious sculpture, which is located on the Greenwich Peninsula, against the backdrop of Canary Wharf. Commissioned by London Design Festival in collaboration with Knight Dragon, the Hong Kong-based property developer, *Bullet* - which is as much design as it is art - landed with a champagne-fuelled bang on a site where Knight Dragon is currently developing a new district for London with 15,000 new homes.<sup>3</sup>

1. For more information visit [www.streettraining.org](http://www.streettraining.org).  
2. For more information visit [www.criticalpractice.org](http://www.criticalpractice.org).  
3. For more information visit [www.alexchinneck.com](http://www.alexchinneck.com).

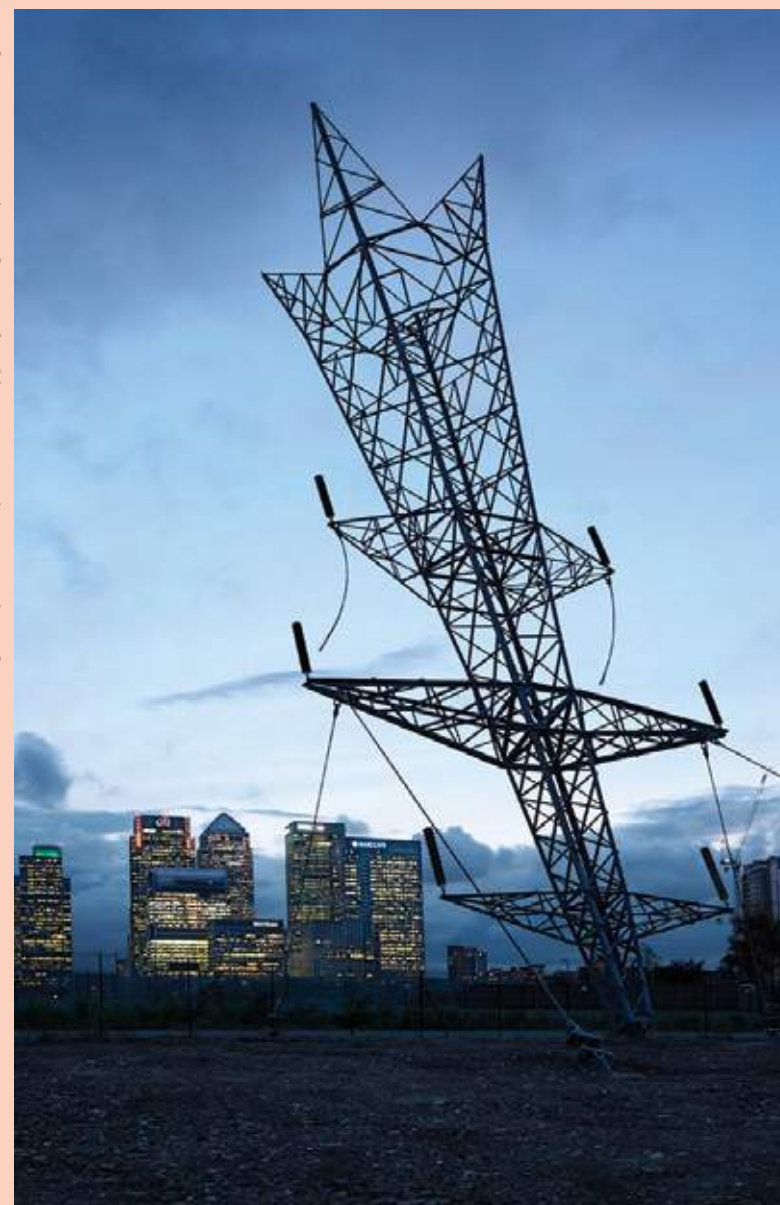
Something striking about projects like this one are their catalytic functions. They create platforms, occasions and opportunities for things to happen that outstrip a phenomenological encounter with the sculpture. These artworks may be tools to activate a space in a particular way or to encourage a change in how it is perceived and used. Unsurprisingly, big-name artists from big-name galleries most often author these big-budget, bold-statement projects. It's a potent cocktail for success and hence appealing to largely risk-averse commissioners who want guaranteed quality and deliverability, whilst maximising the bang for their buck in terms of publicity for these very public works and the property developers who fund them. This makes for a good story in the press and many public artworks photograph well. As artist Conall McAteer pointed out in our recent symposium, *The State of Sculpture*, 'The commissioning process can lead to ... increasingly this shiny mirrored surface that you see everywhere. This sought out concept of public interaction, on a base level, could be defined by someone seeing themselves in the reflective surface and taking a picture of it. Posting it on their Twitter or Instagram, just because it makes for a nice photograph. It's become familiar, but whether that makes for good work, I'm not so sure.'<sup>4</sup> Selfie with sculpture, anyone?

It is hard to overestimate the role that property developers play in the economies and ecologies of London's artworlds. In 2014, the GLA released a report that estimates that as many as 30% of artists will lose their places of work in five years.<sup>5</sup> Add to this the loss of project spaces, production spaces and others occupied by artists and arts organisations - coupled with the redevelopment of low-cost housing, effectively pushing these low earners further out of London where they can afford rents and we begin to grasp how bad things really are. Many property developers would argue, however, that this boom is actually creating opportunities for artists and arts

4. Conall McAteer, comment made at Public Sculpture: From Process to Place, Shortwave Cinema, London, 28 September 2015. For more information visit [www.pangaeasculptorscentre.com/public-sculpture-from-process-to-place](http://www.pangaeasculptorscentre.com/public-sculpture-from-process-to-place).

5. Greater London Authority, *Artists' Workspace Study: Report and Recommendations - September 2014*, London: Greater London Authority, 2014, 5, available from [www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla\\_caw\\_140911\\_web.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_caw_140911_web.pdf).

Alex Chinneck, *A Bullet from a Shooting Star*, 2015; courtesy of the studio of Alex Chinneck



**What gives this sector the credentials to select the artworks 'given' to the public by being sited in public spaces? What functions do the works selected serve within the development agenda? Is creating better communities the bottom line for these commissioners or is it selling more flats? Are these things mutually exclusive?**

organisations, too. Section 106 planning agreements are mechanisms designed to mitigate the impact of development by creating community resources: a library, a recycling provision, a sculpture centre. 'Development contributions' as they're often termed, typically involve investing in the culture or infrastructure of the sites they're transforming. With so much development in London, it's little wonder the property business is now a leading commissioner of art. This creates interesting and problematic situations, begging the questions: What gives this sector the credentials to select the artworks 'given' to the public by being sited in public spaces? What functions do the works selected serve within the development agenda? Is creating better communities the bottom line for these commissioners or is it selling more flats? Are these things mutually exclusive? And who's considering the art in all of this?

During the recent Frieze talk, Off-Centre: Can Artists Still Afford to Live in London?, Anna Strongman, senior projects director for Argent LLP, observed that for the developer, 'there's always a commercial driver' and 'that sometimes the dialogue is

not always as in depth or as meaningful as it could be [in the process of commissioning]'.<sup>6</sup> This notwithstanding, there is no question that in principle, integrating cultural offers into building schemes is a good thing. In the case of sculpture, this has led to a veritable explosion of public art commissions in and around the capital. And PSC also recognises the significant, potential benefits of the GLA's and borough councils' engagement with the promises and provisions of 106 agreements, especially when this creates webs of accountability that would not otherwise be in place. Further, we could not be more supportive of initiatives that offer real opportunities for artists to develop their skills, advance their practices and earn above, or at least, a living wage.



The reality is, however, that many 106 agreements are often little more than 'commitments' to culture that never come to fruition. As such they point to 'art washing' as a growing trend. Take the Regal Homes one-off public sculpture commission on Cremer Street, Hackney, that PSC protested against in 2015.<sup>7</sup> In the same breath the property developer applied to bulldoze over a hundred artists' studios, they offered a £1,000 cash prize for the production of a public artwork.<sup>7</sup> It's a measly

7. Ella Jessel, 'News / 29 July, 2015, 'Artists Slam Sculpture Competition Launched by Developers,' *The Hackney Citizen*, 29 July 2015, [www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2015/07/29/cremer-street-artists-slam-regal-homes-hackney-road-sculpture-prize](http://www.hackneycitizen.co.uk/2015/07/29/cremer-street-artists-slam-regal-homes-hackney-road-sculpture-prize).

sum for a project that could take months to complete and easily incur substantial installation and maintenance costs. A modest artist fee from a not-for-profit is one thing. But from a property developer? Would Regal Homes expect their plumbers or electricians to work for such low pay? The answer is obviously, no. So why should their artist-winner do so? So much profit is being made from London's regeneration. Why isn't more trickling down to the artists who helped to create it?

These seem pressing questions when producing, installing and maintaining sculpture is such a big ask, especially when it's in public space, replete with the requirements of this realm: site specificity, safety, durability, impact, inoffensiveness and so on. The rise of public art curators/producers, such as Delcroix Pinsky, and placemaking agencies, such as Futurecity, is testament to this. They play an important role in the delivery of today's public art commissions by straddling two worlds.

On the one hand, they understand artists and the significance of process and sensibility in the ways they work. These facilitators also appreciate that artists aren't always well-versed in the business of art. This is unfortunate, a placemaker recently observed to us, as even a little knowledge pays dividends when trying to engage people, cultures and systems in the commercial sphere. While attitudes and awareness are changing as art schools and the Arts Council foster the professionalisation of practice, there are still many practitioners who haven't worked in this way before. On the other hand, placemakers are, well, well placed because they understand the language of property. They know how to negotiate with the developers and engage their agendas. Many public art curators and producers are also adroit in proposing ideas, not only to exciting potential commissioners and other patrons but doing so in ways that deliver on their business needs. Strongman, for instance, observed on behalf of Argent LLP in the Frieze talk referenced previously that, 'Working with artists and curators is a challenge, as our cultures are so incredibly different' and that, 'embracing art and culture in a way that has meaning for both sides is not easy'.<sup>8</sup> Public

8. Strongman, comment made during, 'Off-Centre,' recording available from [www.friezeprojects.org/talks/detail/off-centre-can-artists-still-afford-to-live-in-london](http://www.friezeprojects.org/talks/detail/off-centre-can-artists-still-afford-to-live-in-london).

art curators and producers also support artist-commissioner relations by facilitating contracts and other legal considerations, supporting the fabrication and installation process and encouraging fair payment for labour. In effect, through their track record, they underwrite the project's deliverability and quality. The continuity and reassurance these cultural actors provide enables them to promote more risk taking and in doing so, create something innovative—or at least that's the ideal.

**A modest artist fee from a not-for-profit is one thing. But from a property developer? Would Regal Homes expect their plumbers or electricians to work for such low pay? The answer is obviously, no.**

It's clear that many public artworks are commissioned today to perform certain functions above and beyond their artistic ones. These include, to a greater or lesser degree, enacting the commissioner's brand and, in the case of property developers, doing so in keeping with their vision for their site. It's true that artists who find this unsavoury will struggle to work with their client's marketing teams. Would this branding be easier to swallow if reframed as audience engagement? Impact is high on the Arts Council's agenda. While there are many problems with how this has been instrumentalised, there is much to be said for being relevant and populist, too. Culture is of growing interest to the 8.6 million who live in London<sup>9</sup> and for sure, many of the 17.4 million international visitors<sup>10</sup> annually as well. muf architecture/art make this point neatly in the following declaration: 'Access is not a

9. Duncan Smith, 'London's Population High: Top Metropolis Facts,' *BBC News*, 2 February 2015, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-31056626](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-31056626).

10. 'London welcomes 17.4 million international visitors in another record-breaking year for tourism,' *London & Partners*, Wednesday 20 May 2015, [www.londonandpartners.com/media-centre/press-releases/2015/150520-london-welcomes-174-million-international-visitors-in-another-record-breaking-year-for-tourism](http://www.londonandpartners.com/media-centre/press-releases/2015/150520-london-welcomes-174-million-international-visitors-in-another-record-breaking-year-for-tourism).



Andrew Ranville, *Perch (Rabbit Island)*, 2012-14; Rabbit Island artists-in-residence are invited to use the installation as an open-air studio and research platform; courtesy of the artist



Andrew Ranville, artist and executive director of the Rabbit Island Foundation, shared his experiences of public sculpture at PSC's discussion on public art, *Doing It In Public*, 12 Nov 2015. One of the topics that surfaced was the growth in sculpture as a platform to host other activities.

In her presentation for *Doing it Public*, Katherine Clarke of muf architecture/art spoke about gently intervening in Altab Ali Park in Whitechapel. As part of their ongoing exploration into social responsibility and the public realm, muf created a raised walkway that follows the footprint of a church that once stood on the site. This new seating transformed the park, with this expanded territory hosting an ongoing 'festival of hanging around', to use Katherine's turn of phrase. Here the religious and the secular, the foreign and the local and natural and built environments come together in a matrix that shapes individuals and communities.

Altab Ali Park, 2011; photo credit: Cristina Monteiro





## Of Soil and Water: The King's Cross Pond Club

2015 saw a series of temporary commissions in, and in keeping with the redevelopment of King's Cross. On behalf of the property developer Argent, art curators/producers, Delcroix Pinsky commissioned artists and architects to create a range of public artworks to celebrate the area's heritage and future. Unfolding over three years, these commissions are also part of a programme designed to ignite new public usage of the vicinity that is in line with the developers' design for its future life and inhabitation as a major mixed-use commercial and residential area.

In *Of Soil and Water: The King's Cross Pond Club*, Berlin-based artist Marjetica Potrc and Rotterdam-based architectural duo Ooze celebrate the power of nature to regenerate itself and to modify human behaviour in the heart of the capital. The UK's first ever man-made freshwater public bathing pond, it's located in the middle of King's Cross. *'Of Soil and Water* posits the fragility of building sites as places in transformation in contrast to the self-regenerative power of nature, thus addressing the value of land versus that of nature in the contemporary global city and the equilibrium human beings need to find between the two.<sup>11</sup>



Courtesy of John Sturrock

11. Delcroix Pinsky, 'Of Soil and Water – Marjetica Potrc & Ooze', [www.delcroixpinsky.com/of-soil-and-water-marjetica-potrc-ooze/](http://www.delcroixpinsky.com/of-soil-and-water-marjetica-potrc-ooze/) accessed (27 January 2016).

concession but the gorgeous norm; we create spaces that have an equivalence of experience for all who navigate them both physically and conceptually. muf deliver quality and strategical durable projects that inspire a sense of ownership through occupation.<sup>12</sup>

Contextualising public artworks depends on this kind of awareness. While community consultation may be an embedded aspect of the commissioning process, the truth is that often the artwork in question has been signed, sealed and even delivered before this ever takes place. The ethics of this aside, many artists would surely struggle to pay lip service to a process that actively curtails the responsive development of their artwork to its immediate environment. Public consultation is often most successful when it supports artists in the early phases, cultivating their artworks' site specificity. This can generate something that garners a stronger sense of community ownership, too.

Recalling muf's interest in 'ownership through occupation', this resonates quite differently in the case of this year's Fourth Plinth commission, Hans Haacke's *Gift Horse*, which surveils Trafalgar Square with lofty seriousness. Established in 2005, the Fourth Plinth is arguably the highest profile platform for public sculpture the world over. Those surprised by this year's selection include the artist himself, who has said he never expected his proposal to be chosen, given the critical nature of his practice.<sup>13</sup> For sure, works like *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, A Real Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971* actively critique the nexus of city, power, property, money and art, in this case based on the shady real estate dealings of Harry Shapolsky between 1951 and 1971. But *Gift Horse*? Drawing on Stubbs's paintings of horses, inspired by the long tradition of equestrian statuary and dressed up with a ticker showing London's latest stock prices, this huge bronze sculpture signifies ambiguously. Is its message free advertising for the corporations featured on the ticker or a sad reminder that all too often art is a gift horse or, more accurately, artists are, when they give so

12. muf architecture/art, [www.muf.co.uk/profile](http://www.muf.co.uk/profile) (accessed January 26, 2016).

13. Hans Haacke, comment made at Looking Gift Horse in the Mouth: A Symposium on Hans Haacke, ICA, 7 March 2015.

much of their labour and value away for free.

If sculpture was ever the province of sculptors these times have gone. With its increasing crossover with architecture in the public realm combined with the professionalisation of the field today, this art form is attracting the interest and expertise of not only artists more broadly but also an increasing number of designers and architects. Moreover, artists aren't only competing with these non-artists for public art projects, they're also losing to them. Witness the case of the art/design/architecture collective Assemble winning the Turner Prize this year.

In addition to innovative projects, designers and architects produce slick and effective proposals. They're often beautifully laid out and narrated with clear cost projections outlining the budget and contingency and thorough risk assessments. We learned this first-hand when judging VITRINE's 2015 Bermondsey Square sculpture commission. Ultimately, and regardless, this year's selection panel chose sculptor Frances Richardson for the commission. Her sensitive proposal prioritised the phenomenological encounter and alluded to the grandeur and elegance of classical art, while the artwork also declared its affinity for modern minimal sculpture and contemporary material

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technologies. Suffice to say, had the judges been different, the result may have been too. The confidence inspired by the designers' and architects' canny interpretations of the brief may have easily won the day.

A scribble on a napkin still holds a magic in many artworld contexts. But as we've sought to observe here, aura is only one aspect of public art. The message to artists in 2015 is that operating in the public sphere takes more than creativity. Grit, charm, determination, diplomacy, organisation, cunning, resourcefulness, likeability, project management, strong communication skills, a knack for collaborating and a respect for administrators and the work they do. These are some of the qualities required to survive in the world of public art commissions. Those with a sculptural sensibility should be very good at this, as it turns on negotiating relationships as well as the constraints and practicalities of production: managing time, sourcing materials, dealing with suppliers and learning new processes. The world of sculpture is rarely one of isolation in the studio. It instead involves working with a range of other people in the course of an artwork's production.



Frances Richardson, *Loss of object and bondage to it*; Fig. 2, 2015; courtesy of VITRINE and the artist





## 3

# Ambition and Afterlife

Our interest in ambition and afterlife dates back to PSC's inaugural event: an artist-led visit to Richard Wilson's *A Slice of Reality* back in June 2013. Assembled on the banks of the Thames, beside this substantial public artwork at its mooring on the Greenwich peninsula, we listened to Richard discuss the chunk of ocean-going sand dredger, exploring subjects from the repurposing of a ship retired from industrial usefulness, to the remaking of this readymade for artistic service, to its life since its launch as part of the Millennium celebrations.

*Slice's* hefty form enjoys serious sculptural presence. All that metal conveys a gravitas that is profoundly experiential, aptly matched with its symbolic significance as a 'lament to the river', to use Richard's turn of phrase: a recollection of its bygone days as a hive of maritime trade. Times have changed for the Thames and so too for *Slice*, whose future is uncertain. Wilson explained that although the ambitious artwork was the result of a funded commission, payment for the artists was differently made. 'Basically they said, there's no fee but you get to keep the work'. Of course, artists are accustomed to having their paintings, sculptures, installations, etc. returned after exhibition. But a chunk of ship? *Slice's* mooring is assured, thanks to Richard having the ware with all to negotiate a licence in perpetuity from the London Port Authority, something that wasn't part of the initial deal. But there is so much more to this public artwork's life cycle and longevity than simply having a shore to call home. This casts into relief a host of issues that primed the third theme in PSC's 2015 autumn programme, 'Ambition and Afterlife'. The following reflections, written as PSC makes ready to move out of its project space on Gransden Avenue in London Fields, aim to both synthesise and disseminate some of the learnings related to this theme we'll be taking with us when we go.

It's been said that architectural waste takes up 40% of landfills. And artworks? If the aftermath of college degrees shows is any indication, it's not trivial. Once cherished by their student-creators, prized above all else in the lead-up to assessment and exhibition, the vast majority of these final projects are unceremoniously dumped—and in the brazen

light of day, no less. Their plinths and other structures of display are discarded without sentimentality. While terrific pickings for next year's students, the reality is that most of this crap meets its maker as compacted waste. Mercifully, some art schools are beginning to take this gratuitous squandering in hand. Chelsea College of Arts, for instance, has recently introduced the requirement that as part of their project proposals, graduating BA and MA students must consider their project's afterlife by anticipating how they'll dispose of their work.



But what about all the artworks produced over the course of an artist's career? The reality is that far more are made than will ever be collected or kept long-term in some other way. With a bit of luck, the vast majority that don't make the cut for whatever reason can evade the skip for a few years in the purgatory of some friend's or relative's distant garage. But more often than not their fate is sealed before they're even made.

For space-poor-London-based artists, this brutal fact must inform their decision-making process vis-à-vis the kind of works they create. Many will be familiar with the internal dialogue this involves: Do I shy away from expensive materials and labour-intensive processes, anything too heavy or large, a particular kind of investment and attachment, knowing that not even adoption may be an option after birth? Faced with these dilemmas, some artists are embracing planned obsolescence, though not in the way

we usually think about this, i.e. that something will cease to function in a set period of time due to technological advance. Rather, planned obsolescence as we are understanding it here refers to the reality that an increasing number of artists recognise their artworks may not survive in the material forms they are initially created. Some artists are even capitalising on this, with it reflexively informing their production from the get go.

This is something that Kirsty Ogg keyed into during her group critique with the artists on PSC's 2015 residency programme. The director of New Contemporaries flagged that a growing number of artists today are 'making artworks that are camera ready'. This outstrips the practice of photo-documenting for the purpose of archiving a process or outcome. It instead points to the trend that sculptures are being created to be consumed as images online.

If historically there was widespread regard for the failure of photo-doc'ing to capture the experience of encountering sculpture in the round, today a new species of this art form is foregoing this engagement entirely, pitching itself as effectively flat. The content of two-dimensional artefacts, this sculpture often dematerialises and rematerialises through the Internet. It is a provocative thought that this is now bar none the biggest site for exhibiting sculpture. Problems can arise, however, when 'artworks that are camera ready' are re-presented in face-to-face space, subsequent to their digital dissemination. When these versions are radically different but the artist, curator, art historian etc. claims they are one in the same, it's a classic case of simulacrum: a copy without an original. So quite aside from the environmental costs of creating-documenting-discarding when the artworks' content isn't repurposed, this trend is disconcerting because it often leverages photography in the age of Photoshop. Mimesis outstrips 'sheer depiction' when the 'document' actively improves on what real stuff looks like in real space.

For sure, sculpture has variously mutated in the life cycles of modern and post-modern art. It may, for instance, be useful to think about the rampant digitalisation we are today observing as the progeny of art's dematerialisation in the 1950s to 1970s.

Whether pithy sculptural works privileging concepts over material and formal expression or online images of sculptures produced to be experienced and consumed anywhere with Internet access, it behooves us to remember that these things still depend on significant resources for their materials, production, documentation and dissemination. This was a central concern in how 'Ambition and Afterlife' was explored in PSC's 2015 autumn programme.

**It's a classic case of simulacrum: a copy without an original... Mimesis outstrips 'sheer depiction' when the 'document' actively improves on what real stuff looks like in real space.**

What responsibility do artists have to how their artworks are stored, shown, re-shown, conserved or disposed of? Where does the work reside? Does it reside in the work that we look at? Does it reside in the idea of the work? Who takes decisions about an artwork's care after it leaves its artist's orbit? These were questions that Dr Jo Melvin (Reader at Chelsea, Camberwell and Wimbledon Graduate School) engaged in her contribution to Life Cycle, Continuous, an evening of public talks and discussion facilitated by PSC to explore the theme of 'Ambition and Afterlife'.

Jo has spent the better part of three decades investigating the interconnections between the archives of artists, critics, museums, galleries and magazines from the 1960s to the present day. In her talk, The Conundrums of Remaking Sculptural Practices and Their Legacies, she considered specific conundrums with re-presenting the work of Naum Gabo, Barry Flanagan and Christine Kozlov. Consider, for instance, the exhibition



Kirsty Ogg, director of Bloomberg New Contemporaries, discusses works-in-progress with the seven artists-in-residence, including Jamie Fitzpatrick (left) and Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau (right) pictured

of Gabo's *Kinetic Construction (Standing Wave)* at MOMA in 1968. When the artwork, owned by Tate, proved too fragile to travel, the possibility of whether it might be remade in the US became a pressing concern. Gabo agreed on the grounds that like *Kinetic's* previous iteration, this new one should be made from materials that were 'ready to hand'. Crucial here is the artist's specification. For as Jo observed, without clear instructions about what conditions must be fulfilled for an artwork to be remade or represented, ambiguity pervades. NB, sculptors: Write these up before it's too late.

We would all benefit from a world where matter matters. Certainly this was reaffirmed to us by Helen Pheby, lead curator at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, on her studio visit with our artists-in-residence. She expressed a feeling that artists and curators should be working together much earlier in their careers,

and together prioritise archiving and cataloguing for the benefit of those involved in the artworks' production as well as how it resonates in the world. Accounts like these will help to advance sculpture as both an art form and an industry as it unfolds across multiple contexts to produce plural and conflicted histories. With 'legacy' becoming a household word in the UK following the 2012 Olympics in London, there is growing interest in what this actually means. Environmental impact and personal contribution are just two of many ways that we think about our legacy while attempting to make sense of our lived experience and its significance for generations to come.

Dealing with our present reality in relation to our future one comes onto a seemingly simple but actually profound question that, having cycled through our 2015 programme, has become more acute as PSC

## Anne Hardy's Fields

On 3 December 2015, PSC hosted Life Cycle, Continuous, an evening of talks and discussion that considered the life cycles of artworks alongside the legacy of their artists, exploring in particular how these things transform, evolve and transition across platforms, people, places and time. One of the three invited speakers was Anne Harding (represented by Maureen Paley). The artist initially gained attention for a series of large-scale photographs of her constructed spaces. Labouring over their creation for weeks if not months, these built environments were never shown in the round and once photographed, they were deconstructed.

Photography remains an integral aspect of Anne's practice today. But it may not be accidental that with so much interest in the spaces featured in her earlier works, she increasingly creates built structures and immersive landscapes to be experienced directly, as three-dimensional forms. These 'fields', as the artist terms them, often respond to the site-specificities of the spaces where they are created and shown. Aptly titled, her 2015 exhibition FIELD at Modern Art Oxford is a case in point. An audio component represents the sounds of the fields in the throes of their production as a kind of site recording that captures traces of this process that would otherwise be lost. This in turn animates Anne's work as we encounter and move through it in the gallery. By combining the readymade, the repurposed and the recycled with ambiguous effect, the artist opens up new space for us to contemplate how we relate to and value material forms as they structure and give meaning to our lives.



Anne Hardy, *Pitch Black, a smooth echo / A scoop with a shelter*, 2015; copyright Anne Hardy, courtesy Modern Art Oxford and Maureen Paley, London



Barry Flanagan, *heap 3 67/68, 1967/68* (foreground) & one ton corner piece '67, 1967 (background) installed at Cullinan Richards, London, January 2015; credit: The Estate Of Barry Flanagan



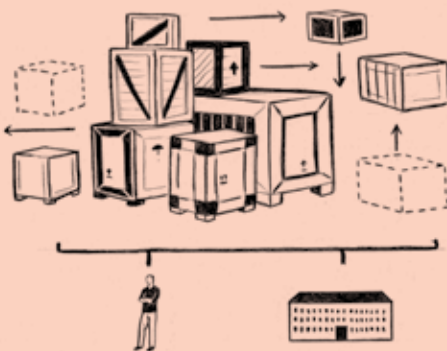
prepares to move: What do you keep and what do you chuck? Through practice we have come to think about this by way of two responses. The more obvious one relates to stuff but the more interesting one to stories.

When it comes to stuff, there are, of course, the practicalities to consider. Storage may not be a sexy subject but as one of the fastest growing industries worldwide it's hard not to take it seriously. And because sculpture involves stuff and stuff requires storage this seems to be an obvious requirement for this art form, as many sculptors will surely attest.

However, people aren't the only ones struggling with storage. The question of What to keep and what to chuck? is no less of an issue at market level and for our national institutions, with their substantial investment and infrastructure struggling to prioritise storage, archiving and conservation of national treasures and valued commodities alike. National institutions like Tate find themselves in an interesting dilemma. They are often the recipients of artworks, unsolicited 'gifts to the nation', from the public, donated for the public good. These may or may not be works of quality or interest but nor are these easy value judgements to make. Regardless, what moral responsibility do our institutions have to the benefactors of the artworks or the public who may or may not appreciate them? What are the rationales for difficult decisions? And about the art? Where do its needs fit in? How long should it be cared for and under what conditions? It's not as though you just pitch out an acquisition when you grow tired of it. Like toxic waste, these things have to be sensitively and suitably disposed of.

Though the Internet of Things may change this in future, at least for now once physical stuff is skipped or sent to the charity shop, it's gone. While breaking up can be hard to do, it's especially tough when it comes to discursive disregard. Reputation is something that increasingly needs curation in our age of social media, with the legacy of a rash tweet often having devastating long-term consequences that could never be anticipated in advance. This comes at the question of 'What to keep and what to chuck?' from the angle of stories, especially the narratives that we tell

ourselves and each other about who we are, both as people and practitioners, and about our work. Perhaps the most wide reaching way of disseminating these accounts is via more or less stable inscriptions published online or elsewhere as artists' statements, project and production notes, etc. But more intimate and often more important are the face-to-face conversations that propel the life cycle of both creative and institutional practice.



It's too soon to tell what kind of afterlife this year's artists' residency will have for either PSC or the artists involved, or how we have influenced one another through both formal discussions and informal chats, or what sorts of opportunities will arise from the relationships we have begun building. What is beyond doubt, though, is that by working together we have entered in to an unspoken social contract marked by mutual responsibility. For six weeks, our project space served as an open and intimate workplace where the artists produced their art and we produced PSC. Something that surfaced towards the end of the process, and is also central to this publication, is how both our individual experiences and the artworks that were created are represented in the future. How will these things be recollected and remade going forward? And more concretely, on what terms will the artworks be transformed in other contexts, including as documentation, both in images and texts? Influenced by Liza Fior and Katherine Clark of muf architecture/art in particular, we have come to conceptualise our response to these questions as the practice of 'aftercare'.

Unless you have been living under a rock you will, by now, have heard someone

Pablo de Laborde Lascaris, *Side by Side*, 2015



Pablo de Laborde Lascaris undertook a micro-residency to challenge his practice through exploring the process of bricklaying. This began with an experimental performance to construct a panopticon-inspired tower for #TransActing: A Market of Values at Chelsea College of Arts, July 2015. Afterwards, this form was dismantled and the 500 bricks, sponsored by Wienerberger, shifted and reconfigured by the artist to create *Side by Side* (featured). But when PSC moved out of its project space, the temporary construction also had to go and the circa 1.5 tonnes of bricks were broken down again. Thanks to Freecycle, they found a new home.



Inside Heatherwick Studio exhibition, National Design Centre, Singapore, 2015; credit Fabian Ong



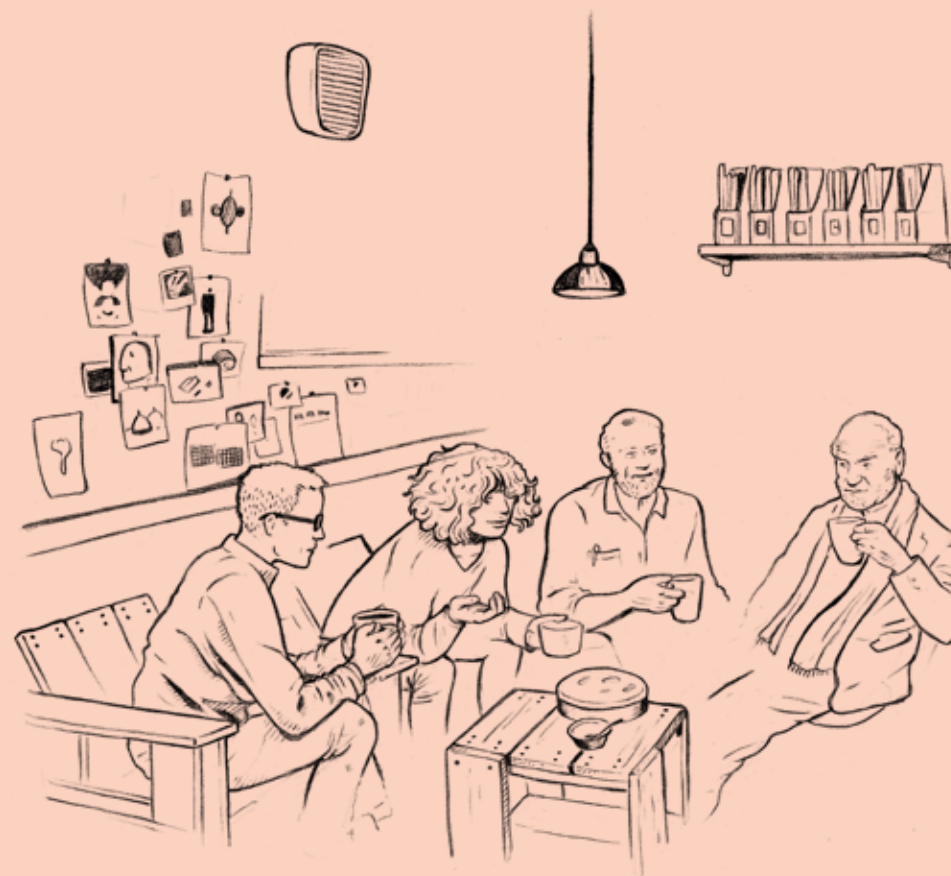
Heatherwick Studio provided an exclusive, behind-the-scenes tour of its archive to PSC and those quick to sign up for the limited places. Archivist Alice O'Hanlon and Conservator Georgina Wesley gave an overview of their approach to the collection and care of the studio's physical legacy, tracing the history of its projects through objects ranging in size from a grain of sand to 1:1 mock-ups, made in a wide range of materials. The more ephemeral of these, often used for early design work and made of materials that degrade, present interesting practical and conceptual challenges for conservation, especially when considering when to intervene or repair.



## Anthony Caro's Tea Room

While often dismissed as mere chitchat, informal conversation should instead be valued as a precious resource for creative practice, opined Jenny Dunseath in her contribution to PSC's public talk *Life Cycle, Continuous*. Jenny, an artist and senior lecturer at Bath Spa University, focused on Anthony Caro's legacy as expressed in interviews she has been conducting with his assistants-cum-apprentices, with Dunseath herself being one once too.

There are, of course, many remarkable things about Caro, not least of which is the formidable body of work created over his lifetime, albeit with significant and sustained help, which the artist was always quick to acknowledge, even if this wasn't explicitly attributed. But something we learned from Jenny about Caro is that regular but informal conversation featured centrally as a method in his practice. Teatime at his studio, for instance, was a productive and essential pause. A break from the task in hand enjoyed with a cuppa, it was also an excuse to chat. Time was set aside twice a day for the studio to be together discursively, not in the spirit of an agenda-led meeting, though it probably served as such from time to time. Rather, taking tea together occasioned an informal exchange during which the artist and members of his team could get to know each other and each others' work better and this, according to Jenny, had profound implications for all parties involved. The assistants brought with them and shared their respective skills and insights, exposing Caro's practice to new influences. His staff was influenced by the artist in turn, with this resulting in a legacy that was sometimes tough to shake. As Jenny explained, many who worked in the studio had to fight the impulse to create Caro-like artworks in their own practice, a drive that often lasted months and even years after their tenure was up. Art history tends to prioritise the influence of an artist's work on that of future generations. But for Caro's assistants-cum-apprentices it seems the informal dialogue that webbed together their relations has proved an equally if not more profound bequest as both personal and reciprocal experience.



tossing this term around. It's moved beyond the wings of hospitals and the playrooms of BDSM and is today used, often insistently, by those wanting to think about all the affective and other forms of labour that happen post, as in: 'We need to anticipate the aftercare of PSC's 2015 autumn programme, now that it's over'. In a nutshell, aftercare for PSC refers to attending to the heterogenous aspects of practice as they accumulate over a practitioner's or organisation's life span. This includes tending their relationships, archives, storage, sensibility, energy and other resources, etc. As we have come to appreciate through experience, aftercare has particular consequences for those committed to creating ambitious artworks and other kinds of practice. Aftercare, as a commitment to integrity through homeostasis, can chafe against the demands of ambition as a drive to create something that is exceptional, inspiring as a technical or conceptual feat or, ideally, both.

This publication is shot through with references to ambition because it's central to PSC's ethos and enterprise. For us this is not simply a case of 'bigger is better', or 'more, more, more', but refers to a sustained commitment instead. The artists on PSC's 2015 residency programme seemed to share this sense of ambition, with their aspirations manifesting in different ways. It was fascinating to observe where each one chose to invest their time and energy and in doing so, identified particular commitments in their work. For some it was about mastering materials through dogged practice and experimentation. For others, it was about probing how their artworks signified through their materials and forms, references and evocations. Still for others their ambition was most acute in how they deftly negotiated their network, making new contacts and nurturing future opportunities. None of these ambitions were mutually exclusive. Though what became apparent over the course of the residency is the extent to which sacrifice is a day-to-day reality for jobbing artists like these. This is all the more so when, driven by ambition, they aim to prioritise their practice above all else. It is noteworthy, therefore, that so many on the residency threw themselves into the six-week programme, despite this

resulting in financial hardship and opportunity and other forms of cost. What are we to make of this dedication? Too often ambition is collapsed into talent or self-belief, neither of which acknowledges all the work that being ambitious actually entails. But rinse ambition as a psychological state and focus instead on the myriad decisions and actions that comprise outstanding outcomes, and we get a better sense of how this seemed to operate through the residency: not as a hallmark of success for the sake of it but rather as a commitment to practicing art that is regularly renewed by a slow and steady process of making - artwork, artist, arts organisation.

What we are proposing here is a sense of practice that is intrinsically motivated but also highly contextualised and as a result, rigorous and relevant. Something else the residency clarified for us was a way of thinking about the interplay between ambition and afterlife in our practice as PSC. As our projects accumulate and our network grows, our organisational ecology will become more complex and interdependent. Sustainable development can be expressed as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs of the future. We'd like to think that by cycling through periods of production and reflection we're pioneering an holistic approach to the practice of running a sculpture-forward organisation, that is ambitious because it takes its own sustainable development seriously, as part of its broader commitment to supporting that of sculptural practice.

The space to experiment: week five of six in the open-plan studio / production space at PSC





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 Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau - Artist  
 Alice O'Hanlon & Georgina Wesley -  
 Heatherwick Studio  
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Artists' Residency

01 OCT — 09 DEC 2015

**PANGAEA**  
**SCULPTORS'**  
CENTRE

# Introduction

Pangaea Sculptors' Centre's (PSC's) autumn 2015 artists-in-residence programme aimed to support excellence, innovation and the critical practice of three-dimensional art. It provided a platform for the seven selected artists to realise a pre-existing idea: a proposition, notion, desire, etc. that had been waiting patiently to be brought into being. This keys into the reality that the germ of an idea is often born through the realisation or exhibition of previous work, with this providing a springboard for the creation of new projects as part of an ongoing and evolving process of research and exploration. The residency was an opportunity for each of the artists to realise a project that they had been thinking about, but for one reason or another had not had the right impetus, support, space or some other criterion to develop it further until now. The specifics of each project were not promoted to the artists-in-residence at the onset of the process and nor were they asked to talk about their proposals or practice through formal presentations. In this way, this opportunity aimed to promote a more organic production, where the residents could get to know each other and their ambitious projects through making them, side by side.

Emerging and mid-career visual artists with a sculpture/three-dimensional art practice in any medium were encouraged to apply for this opportunity. The open call was pitched both nationally and internationally, but with a tight turnaround between when PSC secured funding for the programme and our lease on the project space expiring, there was insufficient time for potential applicants to apply for funding for travel and living expenses away from home. As a result, London-based artists were the predominant respondents to the open call and all the successful applicants were local, too.

The programme consisted of a six-week production phase and took place at PSC's project space at 45 Gransden Avenue, London, E8 3QA, UK. Each of the residents received technical and curatorial assistance in the realisation of their ambitious new project, a ground-

floor space to use as a studio and a shared workshop complete with tools and equipment.

Although two exhibitions bookended the six-week programme, the artists were discouraged from making for display. What for us at PSC was more important was that they focused on experimentation by testing and developing their techniques and processes. In this way, the programme aimed to challenge the 'just-in-time production' that is running roughshod over contemporary work and life, prioritising instead gradual innovation and slow specialisation: obsessive depth instead of spreading breadth. Whilst diverse in their sensibilities, the artists in residence shared a commitment to relentlessly exploring and recalibrating their practice.

Existing artworks that anticipated the residency were presented at the onset in a four-day exhibition, *Taking Shape* (1-4 October), which was part of the 2015 Art Licks Weekend. At the end of the six-weeks production phase, the project space was again transformed into a place of display, with the residency culminating in *Which One of These Is the Non-Smoking Lifeboat?* This three-week show ran 19 November to December 3.

Between the two exhibitions, the residents engaged in dialogues with leading art-world professionals that challenged and pushed their practice. These exchanges also acted as professional development opportunities as they introduced the artists and their work to new curators, collectors and commissioners.

The artists selected for PSC's autumn residency 2015 were Revital Cohen and Tuur Van Balen, Jamie Fitzpatrick, Byzantia Harlow, Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau, Emily Motto and David Rickard.

Marsha Bradfield & Lucy Tomlins  
PSC's co-directors



# Taking Shape: Sculpture on the Verge

Part of the Art Licks Weekend, Taking Shape launched PSC's 2015 autumn artists-in-residence programme with an exhibition featuring sculpture as an ongoing series of evolutions, reassessments and recontextualisations. To explore this, we chose not artworks but artists and set them a common task: to each re-present and/or reconfigure one of their recent three-dimensional artworks so that it drew attention to the conditions of its own (im)possibility—the terms of its existence and promise of its potential as it takes shape in the world.

Through material gestures, the exhibition wondered: To what extent is there still demand for gradual innovation in artistic practice that insists on a slow but also eccentric specialisation? All the artworks featured shared a gravity of purpose as each one asked, in its own way: What are the possibilities of bucking the pancake flatness that threatens to suffocate us with its dull genericism?

As an exhibition, Taking Shape took up these questions with the express purpose of insisting on other approaches to sculptural production, ones that trace progressive understanding as it iterates across artworks, accumulating through an artist's practice. In this way, the exhibition speculated through lines that might manifest in the ambitious projects the artists would produce as part of the residency's mandate to explore, experiment and explode practice in unexpected ways.

**Private View: 1 October 6 – 9 pm**

**Show ran: Fri 2 October – Sun 4 October 11 – 6 pm**

**Location: PSC's Project Space, 45 Gransden Avenue, E8 3QA, London**

(Clockwise from bottom left)

Emily Motto, *Extruded Form with Heavy Head*, (detail) 2014;

Byzantia Harlow, *Diffuse Glow*, (detail) 2015;

Jamie Fitzpatrick, *The King*, (detail) 2015;

Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen, *Sensei Ichi-go*, 2014;

Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau, *Cheesedough Series*, 2015;

David Rickard, *UnGestalt*, 2014.



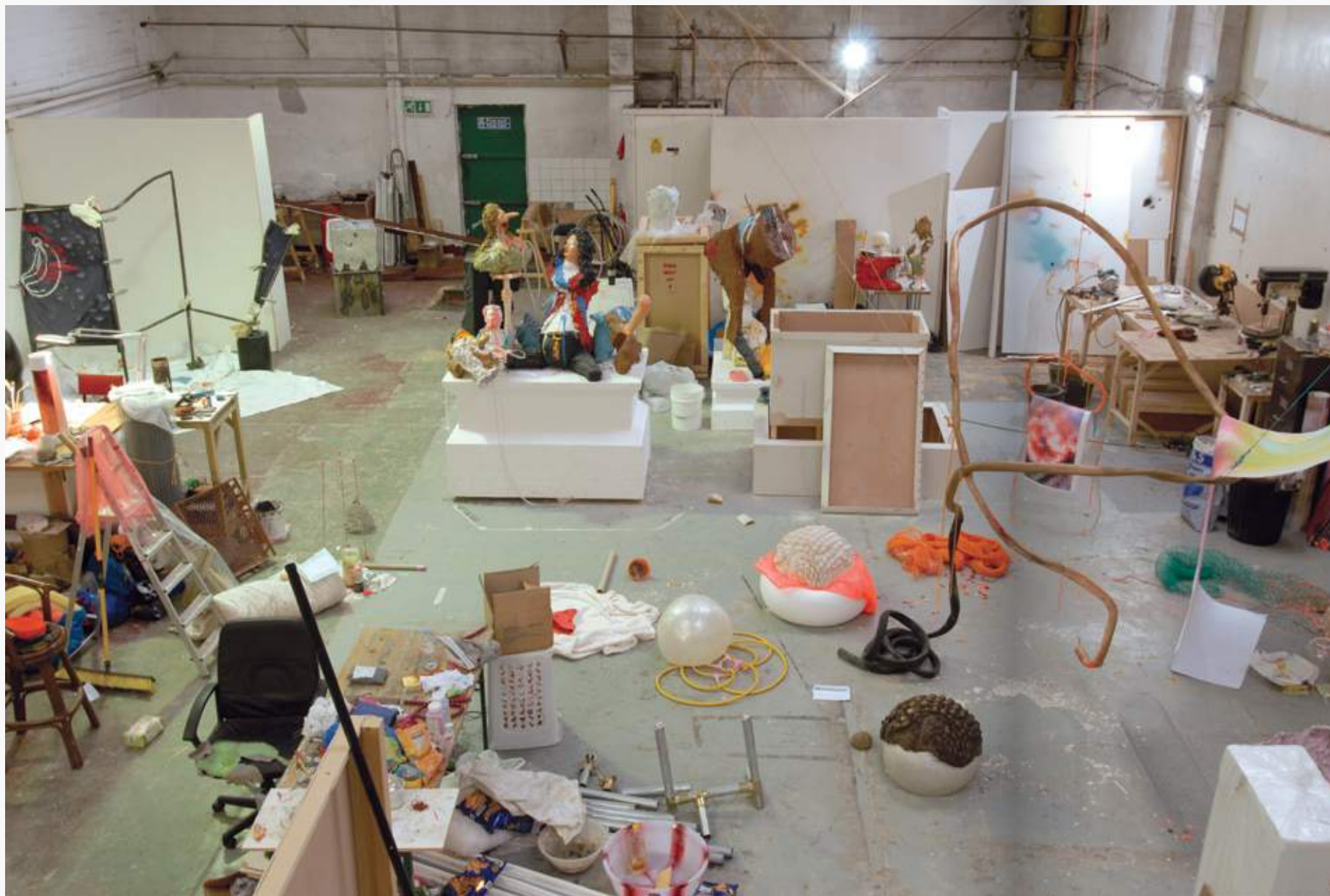
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NOV 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 DEC 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9



# About the Residency Period



## — Professional Development

Seminars, crits and dialogues with leading art-world professionals proved especially popular with the residents. We would like to thank all those involved for their indispensable feedback throughout the process: Elizabeth Neilson (Director, Zabłudowicz Collection) Helen Pheby (Lead Curator, Yorkshire Sculpture Park) Kirsty Ogg (Director, New Contemporaries) Hayley Skipper (Curator, The Forestry Commission) Ossian Ward (Head of Content, Lisson)



OCT 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

## — Public Programme

A public programme of talks and workshops ran in the production space in parallel to the residency. This siting exemplifies PSC's commitment to 'making the making visible' to the wider public. Three themes organised this programme: 'Adventures in Materials and Space'; 'Public Sculpture, Public Art' and 'Ambition and Afterlife'. These circulated through the residency, including reflexively influencing how the artists' ambitious projects were conceptualised and discussed.



## — Fabrication

Two part-time technicians, Ian Daniell and Leila Smith, were on hand over the course of the residency. Specialising in metalwork and mould-making, they supported the residents by providing assistance with producing their artworks. Power tools were also available, including a mig welder.

## — Space

The large 2,500 ft<sup>2</sup> open-plan warehouse was an ideal space for making sculpture. Situated on the ground floor, it had six-metre high ceilings, great natural light from skylights and roller-shutter access. The project space also had single phase, 32 amp C-form sockets and 3-phase.

In support of PSC's own research into new forms of studio provision that better reflect contemporary working methods, we experimented with an open-plan approach to organising the residency's production space.

NOV 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 DEC 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9



## Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen

Revital Cohen and Tuur Van Balen began collaborating after graduating from the Royal College of Art's Design Interactions MA in 2008. In keeping with their long-standing interest in the manufacturing and positioning of animals as objects, the duo's residency proposal was to create a sculptural installation and video about Heck cattle. These extraordinary animals were 'designed' by German zoologists Heinz and Lutz Heck in the 1930s as part of the brothers' broader programme to bring the extinct 'aurochs' back to life through back-breeding. In the south of England, a farmer is currently rearing Heck for his 'wildlife photography centre'. This fascinating history offered an implicit backdrop to the eventual installation, which featured generations of foam rubber casts with a plaster mould made from the skull of a Heck cow. Producing the casts proved tricky and time-consuming; not all the iterations were positive mutations. The bone white skull-like

forms that the artists chose to display were animated by a work of moving image that presents Heck as photographic objects. The green screens that provided a staging for the cattle in the video were also part of the installation, highlighting both video and casting as a ways of capturing impressions.

Having delayed a trip to China to undertake the residency, Revital and Tuur began making plans to travel there soon after it was complete. In the interim, an exhibition of their work is scheduled to open in June 2016 at Pearl Lam Galleries in Hong Kong.

**'[We] work with objects, installation, film and photography to explore manufacturing processes as cultural, ethical and political practices.'**

— Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen, Autumn Residency Application 2015





# Jamie Fitzpatrick

Jamie was catching the eye of art worlders even before his MA degree work at the Royal College of Art in the summer of 2015 secured him a place in XL Catlin 2016, along with various praise from the art press. PSC first worked with him earlier in 2015, with Jamie receiving a micro-residency at Flashback Records. Part of PSC's 'Residency in a Record Store' programme, this opportunity aimed to help Jamie to introduce sound components into his work. Unfortunately, he was unable to complete and exhibit this body of work as planned. PSC's 2015 autumn artists-in-residence programme was therefore a chance for us to work together again.

This unfolded with Jamie evolving aspects of existing sculptures from wax, his material of choice to date, into painted Jesmonite. The fragility and impermanence of wax as a material had become all too clear when recently, several works were damaged when being shipped to exhibitions. The result: repairs on arrival. Jamie therefore wanted to explore whether Jesmonite would offer a more suitable solution to this problem whilst retaining the important immediacy and hand-worked quality of his previous works.

The two artworks that Jamie produced during the residency are both conspicuous in their garish colour palettes, affecting rhetorical bombast. *A Crown is Just a Hat That Lets the Rain in* successfully coupled his trademark aesthetic of drips and globs with an inflatable pool and a tangle of tubing spraying murky water, suggesting a curious public fountain that is part handmade and readymade. *Sing Me A Song to Bring Tears to My Eyes* experimented with sound and robotics to animate sculptural form. Even though these aspects did not manifest in the way Jamie intended, their cords, speakers and other apparatus were retained in the sculpture's exhibition in the residency's final show, *Which One of These Is the Non-Smoking Lifeboat?* In this way they acknowledged and even celebrated the risk of failure in producing ambitious works of art.

At the time of the residency, Jamie's work was also featured in Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2015 and in UK/raine: Emerging Artists from the UK and Ukraine, a collaboration between the Firtash Foundation and Saatchi Gallery.



**'I propose to use the space to create, develop and install a group of new works based on the idea of the public fountain, to be viewed as islands in the round, continuing to focus on how particular types of artistic rhetoric are used as a way of imposing forms of power, authority [and] nationalistic ideological ideals upon the viewer...'**

— Jamie Fitzpatrick, Autumn Residency Application 2015





**‘I have an interest in artworks as prompts for social interaction, artworks that form relationships rather than solely operating as objects.’**

— Byzantia Harlow, Autumn Residency Application 2015

## Byzantia Harlow

Byzantia Harlow joined the residency having completed her MA in Painting at the Royal College of Art in June 2015. She had been preoccupied for much of this programme with producing artworks that both investigate and subvert social situations and human interactions. In these enquiries, the objects she creates often function as prompts or triggers from something more participatory and experiential to take place. *Diffuse Glow*, the installation she exhibited for her degree show, also catalysed the focus of her residency. The work uses the infrastructure of street markets, as they bridge manufacturing and distribution, integrating surfaces saturated with corporatised cultural identity.

Further to presenting this work in the residency’s launch exhibition, *Taking Shape*, Byzantia used the following six weeks to transform the market stall’s frame into a sculptural installation. Taking advantage of the space, time and technical support available, she prioritised a material and process-based exploration to distort and collapse both the physical and conceptual aspects of *Diffuse Glow*. Byzantia challenged herself technically by experimenting with diverse processes, including heat treating metal, ceramic modelling and resin casting in the construction of her work, *What You Know About Fresh!*

Following her time on the residency, a selection of Byzantia’s artworks appeared at Beers London in February 2016 as one of the ten finalists selected for Contemporary Visions VI. She then heads to St Louis, Missouri to undertake her first international artist’s residency at the Luminary Center for the Arts in April. There she will work with a Native American textile maker and stage a public-facing event at the local market in St Louis. In this new context she will continue to probe the subject that has become pivotal to her practice in recent years.



## Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau

Matt is a busy man. He runs The Bad Vibes Club, is part of Radio Anti and collaborates with Ben Jeans Houghton as the ARKA Group. He also recently undertook a residency at Modern Art Oxford, an ARKA Group exhibition as part of the Zabłudowicz Invites season and another ARKA Group show at Space in Between. This was a stone's throw from PSC's project space, which was handy as his exhibition there opened at the same time as the residency's Taking Shape, with both being part of the Art Licks Weekend 2015.

With the clue being in the name, we were interested to see how Matt's proposed project, *The Infinite Shallows*, would play out in relation to the residency's focus on specialisation marked by depth of practice over breadth. When on site the artist spent much of his time combining readymades with manipulated forms. He explored cultural abjection by integrating materials cast off from the body, such as

human hair, in combination with reformed synthetic foodstuffs, like cheese flavoured corn puffs, and composite images from the surfaces of cheap, high street fashion pieces printed on Lycra. Often working intuitively with what was immediately to hand, he also went to great lengths to source the Lycra on eBay.

A self-confessed grifter, Matt approaches practice by simultaneously operating across art forms, platforms and opportunities with a high metabolism. He pulses between ideas with rapid periods of material synthesis. There is a machine-gun immediacy and finiteness to his decision making when executing his work. Breaching his residency with PSC was his next project, Interruptions, The Bad Vibes Club's new research-based enterprise commissioned by Field Broadcast.

**'It occurred to me that something was happening in the consumer objects of fashion garments that was analogous to the food materials I had been working with previously, but slightly different. Just like the foodstuffs, there was a collision of taste, class, economics, technology and global labour, but it was occurring on the surface of the clothes, and was itself being presented as the desirable face of the consumer object.'**

— Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau, Autumn Residency Application 2015







## Emily Motto

Emily Motto was the only one of the seven artists-in-residence not to have undertaken an MA. Having finished her BFA at the Ruskin School of Art in 2014, she also presented standout work in Bloomberg New Contemporaries that same year.

Time plays a fundamental role in Emily's working process, as does her choice of materials. Her sculptures perform and evolve throughout, and beyond, her creation of them. Materials such as playdough and yeast respond to their environments. They crystallize, distort, expand and collapse once the artist has set the stage.

Emily seized the residency as an opportunity to expand her technical skills, maximising the support provided by technician Ian Daniell in mould-making. Together they experimented with casting her dough forms in more permanent tactile materials, such as silicone and Jesmonite. This, in effect, froze them in flux. In *An Arena*, the tableau she exhibited for Which One of These Is the Non-Smoking Lifeboat?, we saw a sensitive combination of found readymades

and handmade organic forms. The latter present as distorted replicas, exploring how more controlled manifestations might sit within her practice as they feature in the environments that she creates.

What struck us about Emily's playful yet dedicated approach was the importance of spending time constructing and evolving her installations. Constant reworking, tweaking and reassembling creates something that seems so accidental. What should not have surprised us, though, is that the artist was so drawn to the malleability and materiality of the moulds themselves. Interest in these by-products of the casting process brings her full circle to an approach more often than not inspired by a material's behaviour. Emily is an artist who needs plenty of space and time to gather, collect and play. With property prices and rents in London going higher, let's hope she can continue to secure them.

**'My work usually begins by fiddling with materials - handmade, domestic and convenient - and playing with their properties to explore what forms can be created. Materially-lead, the work is defined by my surroundings, instincts, and physical limits, yet tangled amongst aesthetic decisions, motivations and controls.'**

— Emily Motto, Autumn Residency Application 2015



# David Rickard

Born in New Zealand and trained as an architect, David Rickard has been exhibiting internationally since 2008. The artist embraced the residency as a pocket of time and space to further an existing body of work: an upcoming commission for the new Luxembourg University Campus in Belval. For this, waste aluminium will be collected from the local community over a period of several months, with each contributing individual and institution becoming a ‘shareholder’ in the resulting work. After collection the aluminium will be melted to form a public sculpture, to be sited in a central Belval plaza for several years, before it is re-melted into a large edition of small cast objects for redistribution back to the original shareholders. In this way, the project examines the fluid nature of aluminium: its beauty, ubiquity and malleability as it moves through different states of being and use.

During the residency’s production phase, David realised a dramatic series of pours that were animated by molten metal throwing plumes of scented smoke. Metallic outcomes appeared and disappeared around PSC’s project space. David calls these small-scale works, ‘swaps’, as they involve transforming everyday aluminium objects from an existing function into a site-specific response in the studio. Of the swaps produced during the residency, *Hyperextension* proved a favourite, especially amongst those of us working in the production space day to day. We appreciated the artwork’s site specificity and playful inversion. Where an aluminium ladder had once rested to fix a hole in the warehouse’s leaking roof, a delicate cascade instead appeared, stretching down from the ceiling, almost to the floor: fluidity suspended.

‘Until recently aluminium was used once to create a product and then discarded. However with ever increasing levels of recycling, aluminium has developed chameleon-like qualities as it is constantly re-invented from one purpose and form to the next.’

— David Rickard, Autumn Residency Application 2015







## Which One of These Is the Non-Smoking Lifeboat?

Marking the culmination of PSC's 2015 artists-in-residence programme, Which One of These Is the Non-Smoking Lifeboat? showcased the resulting sculptural artworks and experiments realised over the six-week production phase leading up to the exhibition.

PSC's project space played host to both the production of artworks, in an open-plan environment, and their final exhibition. Working in the same space for an extended period and with no clear definition between production and installation phases, the artists came to understand how their works resonated in relation to each other. The evolving artworks and their production site were co-responsive. An artist-driven and thus curatorially light approach by PSC aimed to make the most of this particular situation.

Within the confines of the residency's parameters, the exhibition was collectively understood as a moment of public display through which to reflect on each artist's chosen impulse, pushed to its full potential within the given time frame. It was a moment of pause in the ongoing evolution of their respective enquiries and as such a potential catalyst for developments, as yet unknown, to seed and emerge.

Private View: Thurs 19 November 7 – 9 pm

Show ran: Fri 20 November – Wed 9 December 11 – 6 pm

Closed Mondays & Tuesdays

Location: PSC's Project Space, 45 Gransden Avenue, E8 3QA, London

(Clockwise from bottom right)

Jamie Fitzpatrick, *A Crown Is Just a Hat That Lets the Rain in*, (detail) 2015;

Byzantia Harlow, *What You Know about Fresh!* (detail) 2015;

David Rickard, *Post-Revolution #1*, 2015.

Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau, *Abs Are Made in the Kitchen*, 2015;

Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen, *Models (83 Years of Progress)*, 2015;

Emily Motto, *An Arena*, 2015.





**Curated/Produced by**  
Marsha Bradfield & Lucy Tomlins

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**Alex Chinneck** - Artist  
**Katherine Clarke & Liza Fior** - muf architecture/art  
**Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen** - Artists  
**Ian Daniell** - Technician for PSC's 2015 Programme  
**Jenny Dunseath** - Artist; Bath Spa University  
**Jamie Fitzpatrick** - Artist  
**Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau** - Artist  
**Alice O'Hanlon & Georgina Wesley** - Heatherwick Studio  
**Anne Hardy** - Artist  
**Byzantia Harlow** - Artist  
**Dr Jo Melvin** - Chelsea, Camberwell and Wimbledon Graduate School, University of the Arts London  
**Emily Motto** - Artist  
**Elizabeth Neilson** - Zabłudowicz Collection  
**Kirsty Ogg** - New Contemporaries  
**Helen Pheby** - Yorkshire Sculpture Park  
**Megan Piper** - The Line  
**Andrew Ranville** - Artist; Rabbit Island Foundation  
**David Rickard** - Artist  
**Andrea Shortell** - Programme Administrator  
**Hayley Skipper** - Forestry Commission England

**Leila Smith** - Technician for PSC's 2015 Programme  
**Ossian Ward** - Lisson  
 Jonathan Williamson  
**Cathy Wills** - Trustee Contemporary Art Society and independent curator

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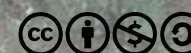
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