



University of the
Arts London
Camberwell

KEY IDEAS 03

The Design Area Discussion Forum
10.00 > 16.00. Wednesday 11th May 2011
Wilson Road Lecture Theatre, Camberwell College of Arts

Speakers:

Mark Davy, Adrian Holme, Almir Koldzic, Fabiane Lee-Perrella & Hannah Lewis.

Workshop leaders:

Fabiane Lee-Perrella & Karen Richmond.

Introduction

Society is the title of the 3rd Key Ideas Symposium engaged in the exploration of a range of critically important issues and themes relating to design, art and society. The aim of the day is to create an intellectual platform for students, creative practitioners and thinkers to develop an interdisciplinary conversation on the role of the art and design in and for the society. Through a series of provocations the purpose of the event is to bring to the table notions on the role of the artist/designer in the creation, growth and shaping of our built environment, communities and cities, through an exploration of theoretical concepts and practical approaches. The day will include talks, discussions and a practical workshop.

This occasion is intended as a space for critical debate, investigation and experimentation of ideas and concepts that relate art/design and their many contexts to society — in the public realm, environmentally, as notions, as a subversive tool, as utopias, on the streets and in communities.

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Adrian Holme

As designers, we are largely concerned with how to create communication, product, or experience that fulfills our intentions. However, with globalisations, digitalisation, and virtualisation, we begun to realise the need of a bigger question, which is, how artifacts /the facts of art/ define us as humans. As designers we have influence on how humans maneuver and shape the environments and rituals through implements - homo faber; how chairs alter natural ways of congregating; to ethical concerns of how participation in the design process empowers marginalised communities.

Perhaps there is a fundamental swing slowing underway redefining how artist and designers are recognized in and by society. Validation is being widened and is beginning to embrace practices which include ways of working that until relatively recently, were maintained on the boundaries of the accreditation narratives. Within a fluid social field new creative practices are negotiating their merits through interactions, collaboration and even frictions.

“The legacy of disconnection between contemporary art and society is being challenged by a wider rediscovery of the emancipatory nature of the art process /true of art’s function in the longer story of human societies/, which is collaborative, participatory and communal, not limited to, or by, lonely agency of the individual artist.”

*Prof. Declan McGonagle /2007/ It’s art... but not as we know it!
In: Art of Negotiation. Cornerhouse Publications: Manchester.*

The scope of KEY IDEAS 03 is deliberately broad and ambitious. Our times demand nothing less. However, the day also embraces the specific areas of expertise of our panel of speakers with practical examples of ideas in situ.

With an academic background in art and biology, Adrian has interdisciplinary research interests in art, science and culture. He recently presented a paper ‘Alchemy, image and text in the late Renaissance’ at Shadow Play: Alchemy, Redolence, Enchantment, Illustration Symposium Cardiff, November 2010.

Adrian is a practising artist, in performance and installation art as well as drawing and digital prints. He is a member of the Lime house Arts Foundation where he maintains a studio. In 2010 he began a collaboration with colleague and film-maker Gareth Polmeer, resulting in a film and other work arising from a walk from Greenwich to Maidstone (July 2010). Other research interests include the work of William Blake, Romanticism and science, and Neo-Romanticism.

Art, design, society, and agency – some questions

Do we, as individuals or collectively, really have agency?

Are we truly responsible for the made world around us?

Should we, or can we, control the development of technologies, and to what end?

Is profit and capitalist production the only way of deciding on the value of objects, images and other designed entities?

If intelligent informatics and robotic systems continue to develop in power and complexity, do we realise the sci-fi dystopian fear of loss of human agency to ‘machines’?

Or are we entering a ‘post-human’ world, in which we embrace the available technologies, merge into the networks and surrender any remaining Renaissance notion of the private individual endowed with free will?

Mark Davy

Mark Davy has developed an arts-led model of culture and regeneration that places the arts and design at the heart of contemporary urban experience. Futurecity has grown to become the UK's leading cultural consultancy, providing / mostly private sector / clients with access to contemporary culture as part of a 'place-making' process. Davy has established the use of comprehensive cultural strategies as a vital ingredient to establishing new communities, particularly when developing residential developments on former brownfield sites. As a result of his substantial work across the property sector, Davy has termed the combination of public art programmes, the creative industries, art, design and cultural partnerships as Cultural Masterplanning'.

Cultural Masterplanning is now a key part of the planning process for property developers across the UK and Futurecity are currently working on over 50 major schemes for numerous property clients. Collaboration is at the heart of Futurecity's approach — bringing together painters, typographers, illustrator or carvers with designers, architects and developers in unexpected ways. Under his guidance Futurecity has established itself as a groundbreaking cultural organisation capable of unlocking major new funding for the arts outside of the public sector and persuading private sector companies of the importance of the culture in establishing new communities.

Mark Davy was elected to the Academy of Urbanism in 2006, the RSA in 2007 and formed a joint venture partnership with Arts & Business the same year. Mark is Head of Deptford X, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a Fellow of the Academy of Urbanism and a Research Fellow at London Metropolitan University.

Hannah Lewis

Hannah Lewis is a social entrepreneur with a focus on grassroots community development. She is project manager of Brixton Reuse Centre / BRC, a local hub for enterprise, training and creative projects based on reuse of waste materials, planned to open in autumn 2011, which is being designed in partnership with the architectural charity Architecture for Humanity UK. BRC proposes an innovative model for reuse, a "mini industrial estate" based in a converted garage block, with storage spaces and workshops housing around ten reuse enterprises /including designers and artists/ working with different types of reusable materials. BRC has been awarded £100,000 through Lambeth Council's "Your Choice" public voting project, and will operate as part of the new London Reuse Network — offering an alternative to throwing away bulky waste such as furniture, appliances, bikes, wood and textiles.

For the last two years, Hannah Lewis has been a community activist with Transition Town Brixton (TTB), a group organising local action on climate change and energy issues. She co-ordinates Remade in Brixton, a working group of TTB that promotes waste reduction, reuse and recycling. She is also currently facilitating Active Citizens, a series of workshops that provide local community activists with training and a network of support for successful projects.

Previously, as a co-founder of the Brixton Pound (B£) local currency — launched in 2009 and now accepted by 140 local independent businesses — Hannah project managed the graphic design of the B£ notes and publicity materials. Other projects she has delivered with TTB have included the Work-Shop — a pop-up shop in Brixton Market, selling products from local designers and makers working with reused materials — and Brixton Skill Share, a space showcasing skills and crafts that can contribute to a more sustainable way of life. She has also been involved in recruiting and supervising a Waste Prevention Adviser for Lambeth council's Brixton Low Carbon Zone project.

Almir Koldzic

*Inspired by *Insomnia* seven years ago, Almir has worked ever since on developing and creating various cultural programmes relating to refugees. The programmes have included: *Refugee Week* — a UK wide festival of events that celebrate and promote refugee contributions to the UK; *Simple Acts* — an award winning, UK-wide programme that encourages young people to use simple, everyday actions to change perceptions of refugees; and *Platforma* — a national network that brings together individuals and groups interested in the arts by and about refugees.*

Almir has studied literature, anthropology and creative writing. His talk will be based around his work on various cultural programmes relating to refugees, particularly focusing on strategies and concepts that have been used to make a hugely diverse cultural, artistic and economic contribution of refugees become a more recognised and welcomed aspect of the British history and culture.

The questions that will inform his presentation / provocation include:

How can we use more creative and playful ways of engaging with refugee experiences?

Can the process of meeting the other be made more simple and fun?

Should the supporting and welcoming of refugees to the UK be left to dedicated refugee agencies?

How can the creative sector help shape the future debate around this subject, and problematise the stereotypical image of refugees as persecuted, helpless and needy victims fleeing down a dusty road?

Fabiane Lee-Perrella

At Flour we are practicing artists, experienced designers, exhibition organizers, tutors and photographers, but most importantly we are fun, passionate, dedicated creative individuals who love working with people. Flour has created and managed a variety of projects engaging communities and neighborhoods through art, design, new technologies, education, lighting, film, photography, workshops and events, encouraging people to become aware that they are agents of transformation of their own environment, communities, spaces and most importantly themselves. Our work is recognized for the engagement and positive impact it has on the people involves. Through an honest approach to participation we are devoted to producing fresh and imaginative artworks for shared and/or public spaces that people can feel proud of taking part. Our knowledge and persistent research into new technologies, production, materials and techniques is extensive and constant. We are however also interested in age-old traditions, crafts and skills and many of our projects combine the two.

Flour belongs to an emerging generation of creative people redefining conventions of how, why and with what things are made. Emphasis is placed on learning from both traditional craft based practices alongside the cutting edge of scientific and technological innovation combined with a deep understanding of the complexity of promoting sustainable regeneration, cultural systems and communities proud of their shared spaces.

Currently Fabiane Lee-Perrella is the driving force behind Flour. She is an artist and designer and also a lecturer at the 3D Design Program at Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts. She is also a researcher exploring the landscape of collectively created art for public spaces.

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Programme of the day:

10.00	<i>Welcome</i>	Darryl Clifton
10.10	<i>Introduction</i> <i>Presentation of speakers and outline of the themes for the day's discussion</i>	Fabiane Lee-Perrella
10.20	<i>Provocation 01</i> <i>Art, design, society and agency.</i>	Adrian Holme
10.30	<i>Provocation 02</i> <i>'Cultural Masterplanning': an arts-led model of culture & regeneration</i>	Mark Davy
11.00	<i>Provocation 03</i> <i>Design for the Back Loop: Roles and Realisations for Creative Practitioners</i>	Hannah Lewis
11.30	<i>Provocation 04</i> <i>Narratives, Simple Acts and Spaces of Encounters</i>	Almir Koldzic
12.00	<i>Open Discussion</i>	All Speakers & Audience
12.30	<i>Lunch</i>	
14.00	<i>Practical workshop:</i> <i>Re-Act: Introduction of activity</i>	Fabiane Lee-Perrella & Karen Richmond
14.20	<i>Public Intervention</i>	
15.45	<i>Presentation of Interventions</i> <i>Conclusion</i>	

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