

A process of living

11 July to 30 August

Preview 6pm to 8pm 10 July 2008

John Latham, Michael Craig Martin, Bruce McLean, United Nations Plaza, Copenhagen Free University, Annika Ström, Glenn Boulter, Ellie Harrison, Tenant Spin and Measure by Measure

In 1897 The American philosopher, John Dewey, remarked *that education should not be a preparation for future living, but a process of living*. In this spirit The City Gallery has built an exhibition exploring the relationship between education, artwork and daily life. The project also reflects the growth of interest in the relationship between visual arts and education amongst both artists and legislators.

A century after Dewey's observation Dalry Primary School, an exemplar of this progressive approach to education, opened. This was the culmination of a decade long project initiated by Bruce McLean to build a primary school. A team of artists, critics, architects and designers including Mel Gooding, Will McLean, Bruce McLean and Gary Woodley spent the past decade working towards the development and realisation of a primary school. Working in partnership with North Ayrshire Council Dalry School opened in Autumn of 2007.

The school houses the work of artists including Gary Woodley, John Hilliard, John Aiken and Edward Allington, whose preliminary drawings will be shown at The City Gallery. There will also be a selection of architectural drawings and elevations, models, portraits of the school as it now is and a series of Bruce McLean's original concept drawings for the project.

Dalry Primary School provides a centre of gravity in this exhibition for further works by international artists exploring the ways in which art and education can intersect. These works explore a whole range of approaches to education ranging from formal schools based practice to new institutional practices.

United Nations Plaza, whose exhibition as school model began life in Berlin, and has since travelled to Mexico City and New York. It is an open-ended idea of learning and discussion closely related to notions of the art school. In this exhibition we present *A crime against art*, a film by Hila Peleg (produced by United Nations Plaza), documenting *The Madrid Trial* in which Anton Vidokle, Jan Verwoert, Tirdad Zolghad, Charles Esche and a host of other art world luminaries perform a mock trial. It seems that some kind of crime has been committed against an equally nebulous idea of art. Inspired by Andre Breton's mock trials of the 20's and 30's it provides a platform for the discussion of various areas of concern within contemporary visual arts practice.

Its reflective and self referential dialogue is aimed at a highly arts literate audience and was performed at an art fair. It seems to be a very different interpretation of learning that underpins the work of United Nations Plaza and the team behind Dalry Primary School. At Dalry artists have worked with an institution whilst United Nations Plaza attempt to avoid the strictures of institutional working. Along this axis from a school for infants to a radical global pedagogy we explore a range of other artistic approaches to education.

John Latham is represented by one of his paintings, *Relief 2*, 1959 embodying as literally as possible the collision between language based academic learning and the somatic experience of visual art. The assemblage of books, wire and plaster suggests the artwork as tangible repository of knowledge.

Copenhagen Free University have become one of the most influential organisations to explore the role of education in relationship to visual arts and institutions. They ran their university from their flat in the Danish capital until their activities ended in 2007. They are represented by an installation entitled *The ABZ of Copenhagen Free University*, exploring the ways in which it is possible to meaningfully document transient educational activities.

Annika Ström shows documentation of her ostensibly sentimental, but darkly subversive, *Call for a Demonstration*. The event took place in the summer of 2006 in which the artist invited and arranged for children to demonstrate in Hove, for a museum of contemporary art to be built. It plays on notions of the complicity of the young participants that underpin much discussion regarding artists working in educational settings.

The City Gallery puts theory into practice by handing over its educational program for the duration of the summer to artists group Measure by Measure for a newly commissioned project from them. This group works as artists exploring the possibilities for the production of practice within educational settings. They produced a large project, *Five plus Two*, in response to Dalry Primary School, and here at The City Gallery will be creating a project entitled *School on Paper*.

This will consist of an environment built to enable audiences to explore notions of what a school could or should look like. They will then run a series of workshops and events that form the backbone of The City Gallery's learning programme.

A process of living is not intended to be a manifesto but a showcase of possible relationships between education, art and society. It is a timely survey of the complex and blossoming relationship between art and education.

Ends

Notes to editors

Bruce McLean is head of graduate painting at the Slade School of Fine Art, and has a distinguished international career as a painter.

unitednationsplaza is an exhibition as school instigated by Anton Vidokle in the wake of Documenta 6's cancellation. Structured as a seminar/residency program in the city of Berlin (2006–2007), it involved collaboration with more than 100 artists, writers, theorists and a wide range of

audiences for a period of one year. In the tradition of Free Universities, all of its events were free and open to all those interested to take part. unitednationsplaza was organized in collaboration with Liam Gillick, Boris Groys, Martha Rosler, Walid Raad, Jalal Toufic, Nikolaus Hirsch, Natascha Sadr Haghghian and Tirdad Zolghadr. While its program in Berlin is now finished, the project is travelled to venues in other cities around the world including Mexico City and New York

Michael Craig Martin was senior lecturer at Goldsmiths University and established his reputation as a conceptual artist best known for his work Oak Tree. *Kids Stuff 1-7* has been kindly loaned from the Arts Council Collection.

John Latham (1921 – 2006) helped establish Artists Placement Group in 1968, described as ‘one of the most radical social experiments of the 1960s’ he is also painter of international standing. *Relief 2* has been kindly loaned from the Arts Council Collection.

Annika Ström is an artist based in Hove and Berlin. She is currently showing at *Hamsterwheel* curated by Frans West, Malmö Konsthall, *Walls on the street* at Museum of contemporary art Belgrade and is preparing 4 solo shows this fall in Sweden, Berlin and Oslo.

Copenhagen Free University have become one of the most influential organisations to explore the role research and knowledge production in relationship to visual arts and institutions. They ran their university from their flat in the Danish capital from 2001 until their activities ended in 2007. They are represented by an installation entitled *The ABZ of Copenhagen Free University*, which was open ended and non-linear dictionary of this self-organised university aiming at building a new vocabulary for learning and autonomous knowledge production.

Tenant Spin is a project set up by FACT in Liverpool with the Danish artists collective Superflex. It works as an organisation with a range of artists and the tenants High Rise buildings across Liverpool to produce a community television channel. It provides the skills for those aged 50 and over to access and use film and new media technologies.

Ellie Harrison is an artist and curator based in Nottingham exploring the aesthetics of information. She has previously shown at Welcome Collection, Aspex Gallery and Angel Row.

Glenn Boulter based in Cumbria. He creates artists books such as 'Walks in Leicestershire', 'The Negative Album' and 'Census' taking specific, geographical areas as starting points for investigating themes of locality and memory. He is currently artist in residence at Barrow Football Club.

Measure by Measure are an artists group based in London. They have worked with Bruce McLean, under whom they all studied, on the Dalry Primary School project and are all interested in notions of collaborative practice and education. Their most recent project was The New Curriculum which was a series of events taking place in Berlin during 2008.

For you or your children to participate in some of the many activities and events organised by Measure by Measure please visit the city gallery website, call the city gallery on 0116 23 2060, email citygallery@leicester.gov.uk or call in at the gallery and order one of our associated learning brochures.

Ellie Harrison and Glenn Boulter are artists whom have worked in The City Gallery's Creative Partnerships school, Imperial Avenue Infants School to create the works for this project.

Arts council collection loans:

Kids Stuff 1 – 7, 1973, Michael Craig-Martin, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, 2008
Relief no. 2, 1959, John Latham, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, 2008

For further press information and images please call Hugo Worthy on 0116 223 2063 or email: hugo.worthy@leicester.gov.uk

The City Gallery is directly managed by Leicester City Council's Culture and Regeneration Department and receives grant aid from Arts Council England, East Midlands.

The City Gallery, 90 Granby Street, Leicester LE1 1DJ Tel: 0116 223 2060 Admission Free.
Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 11am – 6pm Saturday 10am – 5pm

REF:PRAPAPOL1