Eastside Projects Manual Draft #2

This is a manual for Eastside Projects—it explains what the space is made of, how it was set up, who it is for, how it can be used and what it can offer. Spaces do not often come with instruction manuals. Eastside Projects was designed from experience and speculation on future publics, inhabitants and workers of the space, to expose its specific context and encourage its use. As would be necessary for operating a machine or learning a subject a manual may be necessary for the full use of Eastside Projects. In this way we seek to open Eastside Projects to new forms of engagement.

Situation

Eastside Projects is an artist-run space, a public gallery for the city of Birmingham and the world. It is organised by a founding collective comprising Simon and Tom Bloor, Céline Condorelli, Ruth Claxton, James Langdon and Gavin Wade, who first conceived and now runs the space.

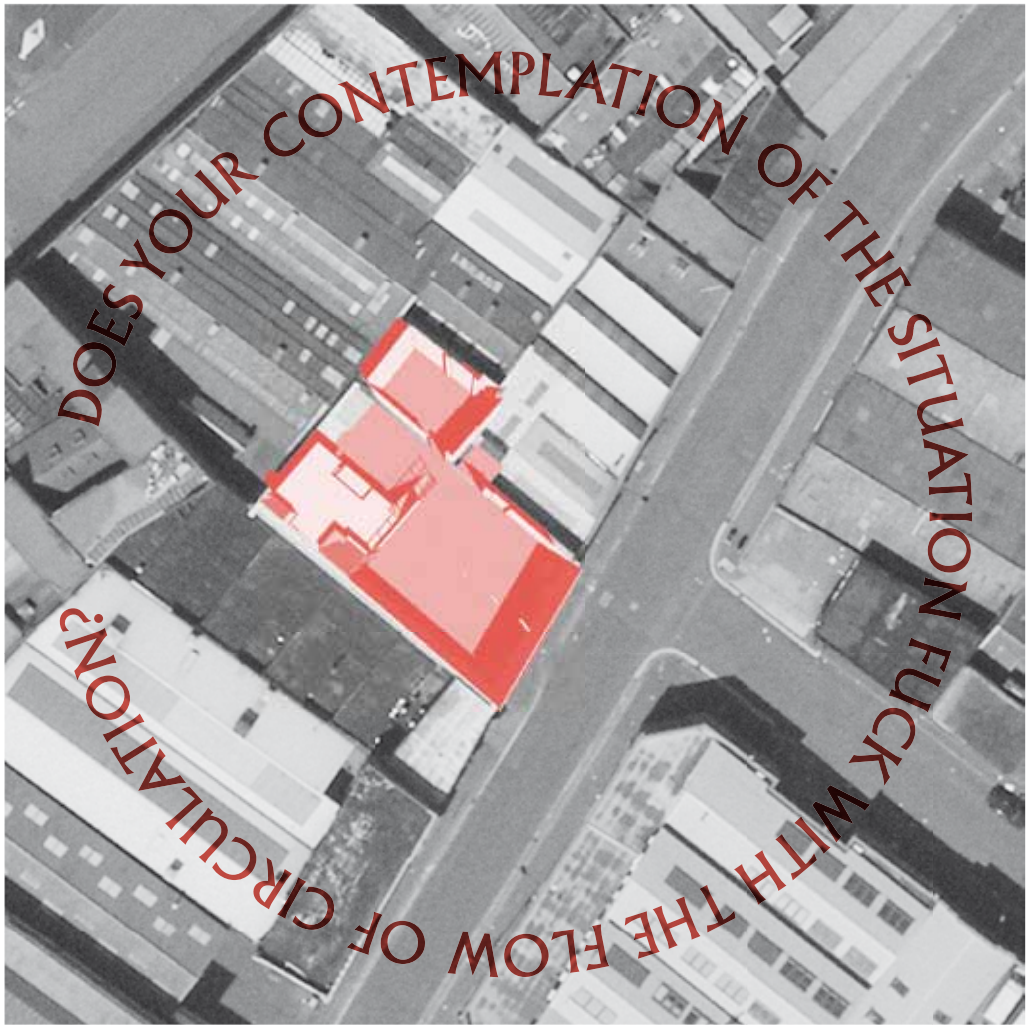
Eastside Projects seeks to question the role and function of art within the urban environment by inviting and presenting experimental contemporary art practices,and fully participating in and supporting the cultural activity of the city both inside and out. Eastside Projects is free and open to the public, as well as to multiple forms of involvement from artists and other practitioners.

THE ARTIST RUN SPACE IS NOT A STOP GAP

Eastside Projects is to be considered intrinsic to the structure of the city and part of the sphere of public support through government subsidy. This is correct and proper as part of the fight to keep at bay the monopoly of cultural homogeneity. It works to establish the artist-run space as a public good.

Eastside Projects is a not-for-profit organisation, and works in partnership with Birmingham City University; it is revenue funded by Arts Council England West Midlands.

Gavin Wade, proposal for Eastside Projects (2007).



Joanne Tatham and Tom O'Sullivan, slogan and exhibition title, Eastside Projects (2009).

Place

Eastside Projects is set within an industrial building, originally a cabinet makers, in the centre of Eastside, Birmingham, and in close proximity to other art production and exhibition spaces Ikon Eastside, the Custard Factory and Vivid. The building was renovated using Arts Council England West Midlands funds and includes a large main gallery space, 225 m^2; a second smaller gallery, 70 m2, (equipped for video projection); and an artists' residency studio. Birmingham City University's Visualisation Research Unit (VRU) offices and studios for image and sound editing are also onsite Building renovations and development of the exhibition space were led by Support Structure: Céline Condorelli and Gavin Wade.

Purpose

If previous gallery structures tend to lull you into passivity then Eastside Projects demands, through its design, that you are active. This activity is a prompt for further work beyond the public space of the gallery into and onto the public sphere. This should be the purpose of the gallery.

Simon and Tom Bloor, adapted from Lady Allen of Hurtwood (1897–1976), (2009).

Not offer a standard but a model to be adapted and exploited

Display Device

The exhibition space was developed from the following questions: How do architecture and design support exhibition-making alongside the curation process? Can architecture and design be used as a form of curation as part of a gallery programme? Can we imagine a context that actively and explicitely produces exhibitions and exhibition-making, rather than embody or represent them? Can exhibitions also display means, relationships, and underlying ideologies in the representation of space?

The gallery becomes a project-making machine, the artist-run space a space of production: of sensibility, of exhibitions, and of a specific understanding of objects, context and experience. In this way the exhibition space enters a discourse of performativity, with a constructed context that engages in its subject rather than merely offering it for consumption. Eastside Projects is a display device designed specifically with and in support of a programme, in order to work alongside it as a form of curating, with the design and building language supporting its process.

Such an art space is being imagined in order to produce critical questions on the production of art, its perception, consumption, and possible engagements through the filtered display of the art space.

Above: form derived from Herbert Bayer's concept of an expanded field of vision as a mode of exhibition design.
Below: logo from Shezad Dawood's 'Feature' exhibition (2008).

Feb 22—
226 days work:
477 sq. metres

Function by Gavin Wade
Design by function
Execution by Simon & Tom Bloor, Ruth Claxton, Céline Condorelli, James Langdon and Gavin Wade

Materials: Wood, Scaffolding, Stirling Board, Shuttering Plywood, Mild Steel, Pyrok, Corrugated PVC, Polycarbonate, Valchromat, MDF, Plasterboard, Mineral Fiber Insulation, Glass, Concrete, Plaster, Nails, Screws, Varnish, Paint.

We have joined together to execute functional constructions and to alter or refurbish existing structures as a means of surviving in a capitalist economy.

Adapted from Peter Nadin, Christopher D'Arcangelo, invitation card to 'The work shown in this space is a response to the existing conditions and / or work previously shown within the space', New York, 1979.

Artworks as Existing Conditions

Eastside Projects considers design, organisational structures and architecture to be an integral part of its programme; each aspect of the gallery is in process and constant evolution. Existing conditions are constructed through and with the exhibition programme. Artists are invited to set the existing conditions for the gallery. Work may remain. Work may be responded to.

Occupying the existing building with a very thin and fragile layer—a lining—with a temporary, ad-hoc aesthetic the first exhibition This is the Gallery and the Gallery is Many Things forms the first response to the site, and sets the initial alteration to existing conditions. This is clearly added on to the building, like a scaffolding, and as such allows further possibilities for change. In order to accumulate experience and put the building through a learning process, some traces should remain from what has happened previously. The gallery is a collection. The gallery is an artwork.

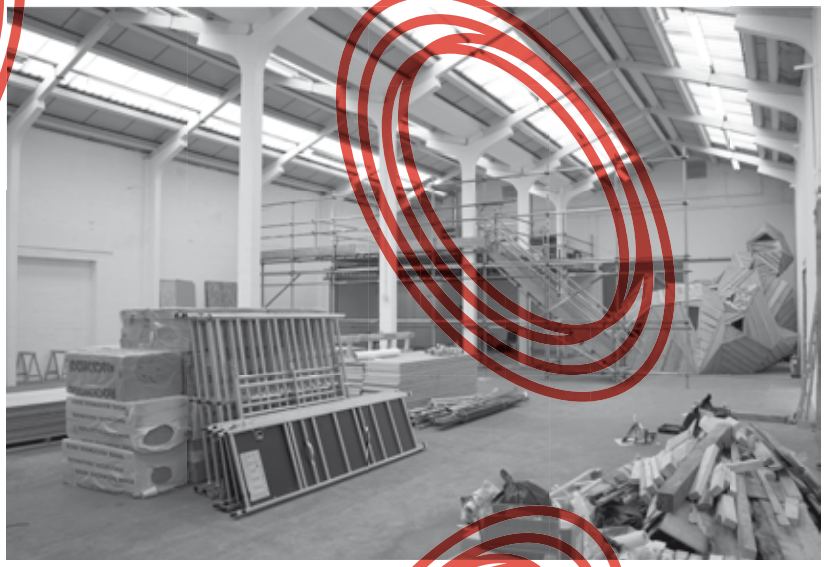
ASLONGASITLASTS

Question the concept of a default setting

Lawrence Weiner. Work #716 (1992/2008). Long term installation at Eastside Projects.

Functional Configurations / Constructions
Support Structure:
Céline Condorelli and Gavin Wade

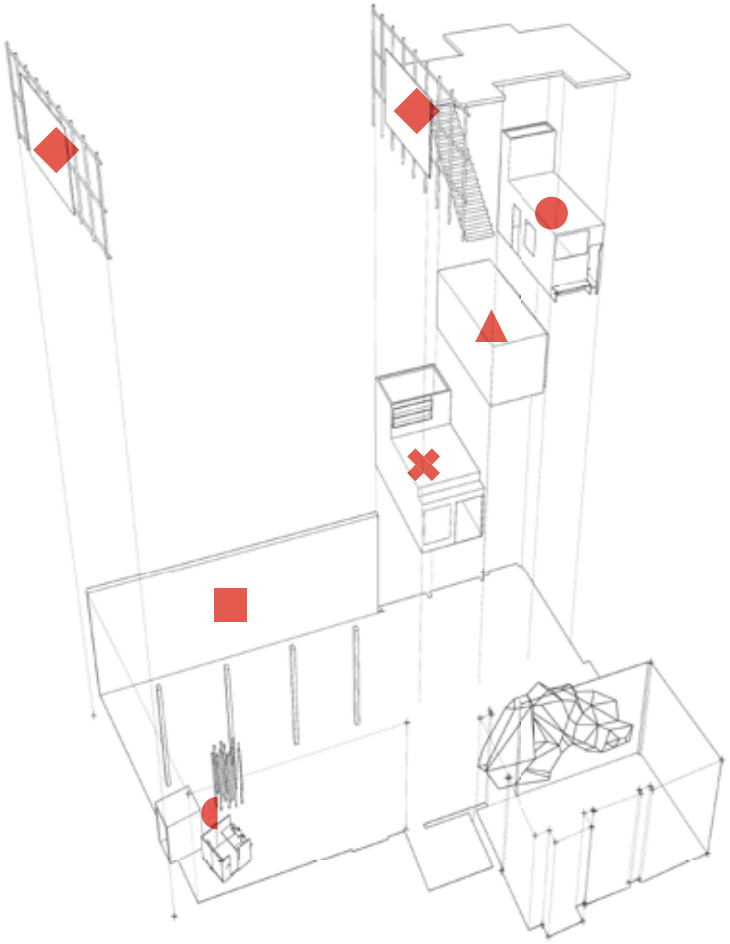
Encourage cumulative processes in order to generate new existing conditions



Form derived from the statement 'Eastside Projects is an artist-run space as incubator of ideas and forms'.

hatnets»
licio de
stración han
lo abiertas...

Las «whatnets»
del edificio de
administración han
quedado abiertas...



Scaffold as Declaration of Altered Conditions
5 x 12 x 0.3 m and 5 x 12 x 10 m
Temporary external and internal façades, scaffold tubes, scaffold fixings, scaffold boards, billboard hoardings constructed of timber, paint, electrical fittings for outdoor lighting.

Functional Construction: Wall
5 x 17.5 m
Stud wall, plywood, plasterboard, plaster, paint, sockets.

Functional Construction: VRU Office
700 x 300 x 270 cm
Stud wall construction, exterior cladding Pyrok, interior plasterboard. Single door to kitchen, access to recording studio.

Functional Construction: Residency Studio
740 x 330 x 275 cm (475 cm skylight)
Stud wall construction, exterior dove grey and clear corrugated PVC sheets, interior plasterboard, double doors to common area.

Functional Construction: Recording Studio
650 x 279 x 230 cm
Offset double stud wall construction, exterior cladding anthracite coloured MDF, interior plasterboard. Separate recording booth, single soundproof door.

Functional Configuration
Gallery entrance: front door, lights, mobile front desk.

Long Term Works

The Eastside Projects office is the artwork 'Pleasure Island' by Heather and Ivan Morison. The structure is built from harvested red wood trees from a wood in Wales belonging to the artists. Originally commissioned for the Wales Pavillion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007, the building has been adapted for Eastside Projects as a long term commitment to exploring the nature of artworks within the space. New features within the structure include a kitchen, desks, shelving and a larger entrance. The artists will present a series of puppet shows within 'Pleasure Island' as part of the gallery programme. The first show at the launch of Eastside Projects on 26 September 2008 was titled 'I Love You Pleasure Island' and performed by Owen Davies and Suzy Kemp.

Other long term works have been installed by artists Matthew Harrison, Peter Fend, ISAN, Mark Titchner, Lawrence Weiner, Barbara Holub, Scott Myles and Susan Collis.

Form derived from Heather and Ivan Morison's 'Pleasure Island' (2007 / 2008).

Promote the idea of art and other spatial practices as important forms of alternative knowledge production

Locate and utilise radical historical positions

References as existing conditions

THIS IS THE GALLERY AND THE GALLERY IS MANY THINGS

At least three exhibition precedents have provided references and an underlying ethos for the first exhibition and continuing evolution of the gallery as an ongoing artwork.

1. El Lissitzky's 'Abstract Cabinet' (1926/1930), at the International Kunstausstellung Dresden and Hannover Museum represents a clear and radical emergence of the artist-curator generating a constructed environment for artworks by Piet Mondrian, Naum Gabo and Lissitsky himself. It functioned as an artwork in itself, intertwined with the selection and integration of other artists' works.

The 'Abstract Cabinet' can be used as a model for an art space, a display device designed specifically to support different directions in a programme. We might think not of El Lissitzky's aesthetics but of gallery his approach to spatial design as a form of curating, the building and graphics supporting and producing the curation process.

2. Peter Nadin Gallery (1978–1979), New York, by Peter Nadin, Christopher d'Arcangelo and Nick Lawson, which had a continuous exhibition titled 'The work shown in this space is a response to the existing conditions and / or work previously shown within the space'. Artists included Daniel Buren, Peter Fend, Dan Graham, Louise Lawler, Sean Scully and Lawrence Weiner. The artists directly responded to each others' work, developing a cumulative environment. Two of the artists (Fend and Weiner) contributed semi-permanent works to the first exhibition at Eastside Projects. Nadin et al's 1978 project began with the text "We have joined together to execute functional constructions and to alter or refurbish existing structures as a means of surviving in a capitalist economy." The text forms the starting point for Eastside Projects' gallery policy and strategy. Just as Nadin et al's exhibition started with the 'empty' gallery space, 'This is the Gallery and the Gallery is Many Things' followed suit in an unravelling of function, design and execution by the practitioners forming the gallery and the artists.

3. 'This is the Show and the Show is Many Things', 1994, Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Ghent, curated by Bart de Baere. The exhibition included Honore d'O, Fabrice Hybert, Louise Borgeois, Suchan Kinoshita, Jason Rhoades and Luc Tuymans, who collectively planned the exhibition as a joint enterprise, defining relationships between each other and redefining functions of the museum space. The title of the first Eastside Projects show, 'This is the Gallery and the Gallery is Many Things', is adapted from this exhibition and also functions as a policy and slogan.

CONCEPTS
SPACE
WORKS
INFORMATION
PROCESSES

Adapted from 'This is the show and the show is many things' exhibition, curated by Bart de Baere, Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Ghent (1994).

Adapted for 'Abstract Cabinet Show', Eastside Projects (2009), from 'When Attitudes Become Form' exhibition subtitle, ICA, London (1969).

Continuously question our status as an organisation and respond to the pressures towards becoming an institution

List of groups and individuals who have worked with Eastside Projects

Gavin Wade
Céline Condorelli
James Langdon
Herbert Bayer
Adrienne Wade
Simon Bloor
Tom Bloor
Ruth Claxton
Liam Gillick
Peter Fend
Andrew Reilly
Heather Morison
Ivan Morison
ISAN
Don Hoo
Elen Bonner
Matt North
Elizabeth Rowe
Fay Khan
Matthew Harrison
Laureana Toledo
Lawrence Weiner
John Butler
Gregory Sporton
Yasmeen Baig-Clifford
Stuart Whipps
Kelscaff
Robert Hepburn-Scott
Lara Ratnaraja
Henrik Schrat
David Burrows
Simon O'Sullivan
a.a.s.
Zoo Art Fair
Freee
Chris Poolman
Richard Woods
Keith Wilson
Joseph Hallam
Kelly Large
Chen Shaoxiong
Ben Kinmont
Mithu Sen
Mark Titchner
Bill Drummond
Spartacus Chetwynd
Marte Eknaes
Marc Bijl
Iain Forsyth
Jane Pollard
Magnus Quaife
Rain Li
Jimmy Fantastik
Barbara Holub
Book Works
Walid Glaied
Helen Grundy
Nicki Lupton
Lisa Dawn Metherill
Joe Welden
David Miller
Apexa Patel
Antonio Roberts
Tim Stock
Harry Blackett
Rachel Clarke
Gene George Earl
Beth Fisher
Rita Fletcher
Sarah Farmer
Harminder Singh
Terry Robinson
Nami Patel
Shezad Dawood
Access Local
Asia Alfasi
Hans Christian Dany
Stefan Heidenreich
Karin Kihlberg
Reuben Henry
Plastique Fantastique
Olav Westphalen
Lee Stowers
Helen Brown
Kate Pennington-Wilson
Mark Essen
Dave Rhodes
Jo Masding
Robin Kirkham
Nick Balmforth
Keely
Elle Cole
Cliff Collins
Richard Cresswell
Ben Dawson
Beatrice Gibson
Flatpack Film Festival
The Elephant Trust
Barcham Trees
Wysing Arts Centre
Leeds Met Gallery
Suki Bansi
Gill Whitting
Ikon
British Artists Football
Lorne Stott
Nav Haq
Athanasios Argianas
Art and Language
Mel Bochner
Susan Collis
Michael Dean
Tatiana Echeverri Fernandez
Lothar Hempel
Torsten Lauschmann
Marko Lulic
David Medalla
Scott Myles
Elizabeth Price
Tommy Støckel
Sue Tompkins
Franz West
Joanne Tatham
Tom O'Sullivan
Supersonic Festival
Alberto Arsie
Robin Aurora
John Taylor
Mithu Sen and friends
Grizedale Arts
Para/Site Art Space
David Osbaldeston
Shedhalle Zurich
Michael Takeo Magruder
Bedwyr Williams
The Hut Project
Malgras and Naudet
Stan's Café
Freee
Daniel Salomon
Juneau Projects
Stone Canyon Nocturne
DJ Simpson
Clarke and McDevitt
The Event