

News release

To be released: Immediately
Date: 3 September 2008

Let Us Pray For Those Now Residing In The Designated Area (Art and the New Town) Harlow, Essex 4 November – 22 December 2008

A series of temporary visual art projects and public panel discussions for Harlow New Town, Essex curated by Roman Vasseur, with artists Diann Bauer, Amanda Beech, Chris Evans, Alison Gill, Pil & Galia Kollektiv, Wayne Lloyd, The Serendipity Group and Mike Ricketts.

Harlow was built after the Second World War to master-plans designed by the late Sir Frederick Gibberd. It is an example of urban design as a total artwork and was inspired by Utopian democratic ideals. One of a series of new towns, it is renowned for having the largest municipal collection of post-war sculpture in Britain (including works by Moore, Hepworth and Chadwick), and for being the location of Britain's first pedestrian precinct and residential tower block.

With the support of Commissions East, Harlow Council and Harlow Renaissance, Roman Vasseur was appointed by Essex County Council to act as lead artist for the town over a two year period. Vasseur selected artists for a series of temporary commissions taking as his starting point words from the town's 1948 service of dedication "Let us pray for those now residing in the designated area" - a conflation of theology and policy that hints at aspirations for the town that were nostalgic and modern, radical yet conservative.

This project is part of Essex County Council's Genius Loci county-wide project to promote a spirit of place through the commissioning of art and the involvement of artists in planning and design initiatives.

Commissions

- The Harlow Temple of Utopias

Commissions East

St Giles Hall, Pound Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AE

T 01223 356882 F 01223 356883 E info@commissionseast.org.uk W www.commissionseast.org.uk

Registered charity number 1045657. Company registration number 2802661. VAT registration number 636778589.

A temporary building and gallery clad in designs by Diann Bauer and Roman Vasseur that reference current, fictional and demolished architectures.
(Venue: Market Square)

- **Statecraft**

A video work by Amanda Beech that was filmed in Harlow and explores the impact of idealism on social freedom.
(Venue: TBC)

- **Nu Town**

A series of three performances and a comic produced by Wayne Lloyd that address how cultural heritage and identity can be formed by 'film lore'. The three featured films are 'A Clockwork Orange' – Kubrick's cult masterpiece that was filmed in Harlow; 'The Fountainhead' – a story of 1940's corporate architecture starring Gary Cooper; and 'Mon Oncle' – a 1960's comedy about a family's move to a modern housing development in Paris.
(Venue: St Barnabas Hall, Playhouse Square and in the Market Square exhibition space).

- **The Serendipity Group and Friends**

A collection of paintings of the buildings and spaces of Harlow by artists working locally accompanied by a facsimile of Gibberd's notes and sketches.
(Venue: Market Square exhibition space)

- **New Sculpture – Welcome to Elsewhere**

An exhibition of sculpture and proposals for monuments by Chris Evans, Alison Gill and Pil & Galia Kollektiv that examines how public art can be a means of instituting private values as public sentiment.
(Venue: Market Square exhibition space)

- **Reverse Consultation (Old New Town)**

Mike Ricketts revives a study of Harlow that he wrote ten years ago and published by artists collective Inventory. The text will be revised and re-presented following a consultation process.
(Venue: Market Square exhibition space)

Public Panel Discussions

- **Do You Want Or Need Public Art?**

4.00pm on Saturday, 8 November 2008
St Paul's Town Centre Church, Playhouse Square

Artist Bob & Roberta Smith, art historian Iris Balijs and freelance curator Matthew Poole explore the nature and necessity of public art and questions of what makes public art public, and how and if public art benefits the public who live with it.

- **Is Community the Fantasy of Architecture?**

4.00pm on Saturday, 22 November 2008

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St Paul's Town Centre Church, Playhouse Square

Harlow New Town has an illustrious historical position as one of the model modern new towns in England of the post-war period. The modernist architecture was conceived and designed to knit communities together in a new way that would promote equality and cohesion. This panel will look at historical and contemporary case studies of social architecture to address how Harlow's past dreams and aspirations could be the key to developing its future.

Booking telephone number for performances and talks programme:

01279 431945

For more information contact:

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