

Exchanges around construction

An exhibition series curated by Andrew Bick

The idea of this new series of three exhibitions is to set up potential exchanges and dialogues with the wider history and legacy of British Constructivism and suggest ways that their work and thinking might continue to be re-evaluated in the light of current practice and thought.

This project celebrates the connection between Fitzrovia and the tradition of British Constructivism, which has its roots in the area. The site of artist Adrian Heath's studio at 22 Fitzroy St, where he hosted the original series of three exhibitions of the British Construction artists in 1952-53, is nearby. These historic exhibitions were among the first manifestation of what became an important and radical group for the development of abstraction in the UK. The group included

Robert Adams, Adrian Heath, Anthony Hill, Kenneth and Mary Martin and Victor Pasmore and reflected a dynamic relationship between art, design and architecture, giving this new short exhibition project licence to do the same. It is also a way to bring the constructive tradition, as an important and overlooked part of the history of British Art with roots in Fitzrovia, into a positive relationship with the proposed new developments for the area.

Andrew Bick is a practising artist and researched British Construction with support from a Henry Moore Institute Fellowship, 2008 and has also curated The North Sea, Legacies of Pier + Ocean, Laurent Delaye Gallery, 2009, Construction & its Shadow, Leeds Art Gallery, 2010/11, Anthony Hill, The Conversation, Peter Lowe, Jeffrey Steele, Gillian Wise, Galerie Von Bartha, Basel, 2011 & Norman Dilworth, Turnpike Gallery/Huddersfield Art Gallery, 2011.

Exhibition 1 -

16th March - 5th May 2012

The Slade School and Construction explores archive material from Jean Spencer's colour studies, the work of her partner Malcolm Hughes, who set up a pioneering art and computing MA at the Slade School of Art in the 1970s, recent work from Norman Dilworth (who studied at the Slade in the 1950s) and work of current Slade tutor and frequent collaborator in exhibitions of both Construction and Systems group artists, Gary Woodley.

All exhibitions will be open

Thursday - Saturday, 2pm - 5.30pm

at Derwent London Gallery

43 Whitfield Street,

London W1T 4HD

www.derwentlondon.com

Exhibition 2 -

14th June - 18th August 2012

Construction & Architecture;

Parallels connects the experimental artist/architect collaboration of Stephen Gilbert and Peter Stead with a work from the 2010 Huddersfield Art Gallery commission of artist Liadin Cooke. Cooke was invited to respond to one of Stead's modernist residential buildings, sited just outside Huddersfield. Cooke's sculpture responds in a lyrical way to both the architecture and its arrangement of domestic spaces, echoing Stead's work with a sculptural practice that converges on the constructive from outside this idiom.

Architects Hawkins\Brown have been working on the refurbishment of Park Hill in Sheffield, a noted and controversial social housing development by the city architects which originally contained a mural and play area designed by the Constructivist John Forrester, who also advised the architectural team on the grid and facade detailing of the building.

Exhibition 3 -

27th September - 24th November 2012

Designing an echo brings

the sculptural/installational experiments of design duo El Ultimo Grito into the gallery. The idea here is that their playful use of structures, reminiscent of Buckminster Fuller and more particularly of German-born Venezuelan artist Gego, are fully 'functioning' art works, but which echo the design questions El Ultimo Grito deal with in their more client-based design briefs. In this instance the parallel is blind, by chance, but demonstrates how echoes of Constructivism re-emerge in joyful and unpredictable forms and that a visual working out of a set of mathematical principles is not merely a dry sequential process of replication.