

Simon & Tom Bloor
As long as it lasts

Eastside Projects
21 February – 4 April 2009

Eastside Projects proudly presents Simon & Tom Bloor's first large scale solo exhibition in their home city. *As long as it lasts* consists of a body of new works inspired by the artists' interest in (public) modernist sculpture and flawed utopias set amongst an indoor grove of Silver Birch trees.

The Bloors have produced a series of new sculptures as unrealised proposals for public artworks inspired by the concrete 'play sculptures' of artists Bryan Blumer (1925-1981) and John Bridgeman (1916-2004), commissioned in the 1960's by the City of Birmingham Public Works Department as part of the landscaping schemes for the new housing estates and redevelopment areas in the city. The Bloors' interest in the utopian potential and the failed reality of such development projects has further led to the use of sculptural elements within the exhibition as plinths and planter forms surrounding twenty Silver Birch, a tree often planted around urban development areas and a 'pioneer species' (a plant that colonizes waste ground). Echoing civic parks, urban waste grounds & regeneration zones, the works in the show explore layers of urban play by alluding to young people's custom of colonizing open spaces, claiming them as extensions of play areas and hangouts.

The Bloors further explore the layers and filtering of the reception of artworks through a series of ink drawings on day-glo paper of extant & lost 1960s public art in the Birmingham area. These will be displayed alongside a series of gouache on paper works that recreate details from 1950's and 60's newspaper cartoons depicting Henry Moore style artworks. By appropriating these cartoon images and representing them in a new context the Bloors neuter their satirical or critical power, reclaiming them in the name of Art.

The title, *As long as it lasts* is taken from Lawrence Weiner's text sculpture *AS LONG AS IT LASTS* (2008), a semi-permanent wall work installed at Eastside Projects for the galleries' inaugural exhibition. Whereas in the past the Bloors have used found texts & quotes as elements within their own artworks, the artists are 'claiming' the Weiner text as the title for the show, - a knowingly presumptuous move, particularly in light of Weiner's status in the international art world.

The exhibition also includes an exterior billboard and limited edition print designed by James Langdon quoting Lady Allen of Hurtwood (1897 - 1976) a landscape architect and child welfare advocate who championed adventure and 'junk' playgrounds.

Simon & Tom Bloor (b. 1973, Birmingham) live and work in Birmingham. Recent solo exhibitions include *The Ballad of Gunpowder Joe*, MOT International, London, 2007; *Modes of Civic Life*, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow, 2006; *Various Positions*, Het Wide Weten, Rotterdam, 2006. They also recently exhibited in *Folkestone Triennial: Tales of Time & Space* Folkestone, Kent, 2008 (with Nils Norman and Gavin Wade) and completed a residency at The New Art Gallery Walsall, 2008.

A book of the project, *Simon & Tom Bloor: As long as it lasts*, is published by Eastside Projects and supported by The Elephant Trust.

21 February – 4 April 2009
open Thursday 12-7pm, Friday to Saturday 12-5pm

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