

Dear Artist

I have recently been appointed by the Arts and Culture Team at the ODA to work as the Artist in Residence on the Olympic Park. My brief is to develop work which directly relates to the Park, the site's history and future use, the construction teams and venues as they are being built and to make that visible to a wider off-site audience. Working alongside me as project manager is Sam Wilkinson [Insite Arts] with the intention that the work produced will be made visible in late 2011 / early 2012

One of the aspects I am specifically interested in using as a focus is the previous Acme, Carpenters Road Studios. As one of the more than five hundred artists who worked at Carpenters Road I am very keen to outline what I have in mind in the hope that it may be something you are willing to contribute to.

In 1987/1988 whilst at the RCA, I began making a series of temporary works on the site of a derelict and demolished paint factory on Carpenters Road. Using the brick and concrete rubble, the work was a direct response to that discarded landscape. At the same time my wife Joan had a studio in Carpenters Road and developed a number of works largely influenced by the easy access to shredded waste paper from the paper recycling unit on the ground floor. So it is a site with which I have a good deal of personal history.

Trying to find my way back to that same location rekindled a chain of thoughts. Part of Carpenters Road is still visible although it has been shifted nearer to the railway line. The site of the studios is now lost under the remodelled landscape and the Aquatics Venue and much of area alongside the canal and river have been completely re-landscaped.

As the focal point of the 2012 Olympics there is a tremendous commitment to recycling, sustainability, the creative developments of each venue, in particular, the regeneration of the area for the future beyond the games. What is in danger of being forgotten however is how dynamic and creative a place it was historically, not least whilst artists were in occupation.

With that in mind I am keen to make visible the conceptual thinking and creative works inspired by the experience of being based in the Carpenters Road Studios. What was the impact on the artists who used them and the ideas generated by the experience of this specific piece of London?

I am writing asking you if you are willing to respond to some of the questions outlined below and if you are willing for me to contact you in the future.

- o How much the landscape of the studios and their immediate surroundings might have influenced your practice and in what ways?
- o How much the materials found in the immediate area shaped your work, thinking or practice?
- o What were the ideas or directions your work took whilst you were at Carpenters Road? Did they change much and was that in any way connected to the experience of those studios?
- o Do you have anything visual, a notebook, simple drawing, small object made whilst you were in the studios which perhaps addresses some of the above?

Based on the initial response the intention is to create an archive of objects, drawings, photographs, writing or other memorabilia that specifically relate to the Carpenters Road. The archive would then be used as the basis of a touring exhibition although this is yet to be determined by the ODA, Acme and all those involved. As the project develops the intention is to continue to work very closely with the team at Acme as a collaborative venture between themselves, the ODA, myself and we hope you.

Many thanks,

Neville Gabie

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