

News Release

Invent slogans and make badges through a new art commission in Milton Keynes



View of proposed pavilion for *Citizen Ship*, Free and Modern Architect, 2017

For City Club, a city wide programme of new art, performances, family activities, commissions, happenings, events and talks, Free art collective and Modern Architect have produced a new mobile artwork called *Citizen Ship*. This portable pavilion resembles Milton Keynes' bus shelters and is part laboratory, part kiosk and part meeting place. *Citizen Ship* will engage visitors in the production of collective artworks that will be displayed in and on the structure.

Free will work with passers-by at five locations in Milton Keynes to generate conversations through which the artists will support the production of new slogans for badges, ribbons, vinyl and posters.

Speaking about *Citizen Ship*, Free said "Our recent works have seen us looking at the potential of kiosks as a place in which we can exchange opinions. We have been considering how kiosks can operate as temporary meeting points in the public realm in which the passer-by can develop their political ideas. *Citizen Ship* is the biggest and most ambitious structure we have built to date and it has been designed to accommodate a number of people."

Free are interested in consensus and dissensus, so the participatory methods they employ are directed at political exchange and opinion formation; 'we are engaged with how collectively we decide what we believe, considering different cultures and the social political moment we find ourselves in'.

Citizen Ship is a temporary structure. It will be located in a series of sites around Milton Keynes starting at *MK CityFest* in Middleton Hall, centre:mk (26-29 June), followed by *Art in*

the Park (1 & 2 July), Milton Keynes Arts Centre, Great Linford (3-8 July), and Margaret Powell Square, Milton Keynes (10-14 July). *Citizen Ship* will return to Milton Keynes for dates in September and October.

Inspired by the original cultural plans for Milton Keynes, City Club celebrates the city's 50th anniversary, through enabling thousands of people throughout Milton Keynes to explore, enjoy and be inspired by their surroundings. Led by MK Gallery and delivered in partnership with the city's arts and heritage organisations, the project takes its name from the unrealised national leisure complex proposed for the city by Milton Keynes Development Corporation in the 1970s.

For further details visit www.cityclubmk.org.

Notes to Editors

City Club During 2017, MK Gallery is bringing together artists and arts organisations from across Milton Keynes to celebrate the city's 50th anniversary. This will take the form of specially commissioned installations and events that reflect the city's unique environment and its dynamic population across six decades. MK Gallery is undergoing a major expansion. Once work is completed, City Club will also be a permanent physical space. For now, it's a pop-up space in different parts of the city; a virtual space through its own website; and an imaginative space for the people of Milton Keynes, a spur to individual creativity. The project has received support from Arts Council England through the Ambition for Excellence programme and from MK Council and is an integral part of MK50, a year-long cultural celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the city.

City Club Supporters City Club is supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, by MK Council as part of the MK50 anniversary celebrations, the Ernest Cook Trust, The Open University, and the University of Northampton.



Freee is a collective made up of three artists, Dave Beech, Andy Hewitt and Mel Jordan, who work together on slogans, billboards and publications that challenge the commercial and bureaucratic colonization of the public sphere of opinion formation. Freee's recent practice is concerned with the way in which opinions are produced and form core social values. Their recent works have included systems, constructions and kiosks that facilitate conversations and enable the exchange of individual views. They are preoccupied with the idea of the collective and ways and methods in which we can all act more collectively within the public domain.

Recent exhibitions include the solo show *Freee-Carracci-Institute*, NN Contemporary Art, Northampton, *Taking Sides* for the project *Part of the Game*, nGbK, Berlin. *Twice Political*, for the exhibition *Critical Machines*, AUB Art Gallery, Beirut. Freee were also included in the 13th Istanbul Biennale in 2013 and the Liverpool Biennial in 2010.

Dave is Professor of Art at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, Andy is Associate Professor at University of Northampton, UK and Mel Jordan is Head of Contemporary Art Practice and Reader in Art and the Public Sphere at the Royal College of Art, London.

Modern Architect is the architectural practice of artist and architect, Sean Griffiths. Sean was a founder member of the art/architecture practice FAT until it's dissolution in 2014. FAT's work drew on the relationships between architecture, art and popular culture. It represented the UK at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale, creating an exhibition about British new towns, which featured some of the original drawings of Milton Keynes alongside two of the city's famous concrete cows. FAT is also known for a number of architectural projects in Britain and Europe, including A House for Essex, designed in collaboration with the artist, Grayson Perry and the New Islington social housing project in Manchester.

Since 2014 Sean has exhibited numerous installation works including, *Sliding Gate* at the South Bank Centre in London, *Distant Drumbeat* at Lyme Park, Cheshire and *Another Mountain, Another Forest* at the Kunstforening, Tromsø, Norway.

MK Gallery Established in October 1999, MK Gallery presents free, changing exhibitions of world class art. MK Gallery, 900 Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3QA.
www.mkgallery.org

MK Gallery Supporters MK Gallery receives core funding from Milton Keynes Council and Arts Council England.



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Press Information

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Ends / Date of issue 23 June 2017