



BARTON HILL CHILDRENS CAMPUS

PUBLIC ARTS PROGRAMME

PHASES ONE & TWO – INFLUENCING THE DESIGN & ARTIST’S APPOINTMENT

BACKGROUND

A small group began to meet in the Autumn 2005 to consider the public art element of the Children’s Campus following confirmation that the education programme of Community at Heart had a budget of £40,000 set aside for public art in the new school.

By the second meeting in October 2005 the group comprised of representatives of BHIN, Cashmore, Architype, the Children’s Centre, Community at Heart and Creative Partnerships. The meeting focussed on the management of the public art project and what processes would be involved.

Following this meeting a Project Proposal Plan was drawn up which laid out a clear process set into three stages for the programme and timescale of the public art programme. Involvement of children is central to this process. This plan was subsequently agreed by members of the group at a meeting in November 2005 and was to be taken for comment to the steering group of the Children’s Campus shortly afterwards. Visits were made to the headteachers and staff of Cashmore Nursery and Barton Hill Primary in January 2006 who had been unable to attend the previous meeting. They also approved the draft plan and thereafter have been fully involved.

It was agreed to commission a facilitator to assist with Phase 1 of the Public Art Programme. This has been funded by Creative Partnerships, and the public art group duly commissioned Reckless Orchard for this role early in February 2006.

ROLE OF PROJECT FACILITATOR

Upon undertaking this commission Reckless Orchard outlined their role as such:

‘TO PROVIDE THE TOOLS, INSPIRATION AND VISION THAT ENABLES THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT GROUP TO DEVISE, DEVELOP AND MANAGE THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME FOR THE CHILDREN’S CAMPUS’.

PRINCIPAL TASKS OF PROJECT FACILITATOR

- i. To assist and advise the Arts Development Group through the inception stages of the development of the public art programme.
- ii. To identify opportunities, with the Group and other stakeholders, for integrated public art and other arts activities within the proposals for the Campus development.
- iii. To assist and advise on the selection of a lead artist or artists.

HOW TO ACHIEVE THIS

- a. Engage with the client participant group (ie. The Arts Development Group), children and other stakeholders through creative, inspiring, thought-provoking and meaningful dialogue. Also by listening.

The commission will therefore be broadly workshop/discussion based.

- b. Explore and research precedents and examples of good art practice and inspiring examples of art in the public realm; locally, regionally, nationally, globally.
- c. Explore and research the site and its context.
- d. Explore the participants understanding of public art, what it could be within the Campus development and

DEVELOP A CLEAR ASPIRATION FOR THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAMME AND THE MECHANISMS FOR ACHIEVING THIS.

- e. Assess the current architect proposals for the campus and, with the participant group, devise and agree a set of opportunities for art within the fabric of the new development.

OUTCOMES



By the end of all this it was anticipated that the Group will have the following:

- a. An Arts Manifesto (in the form of a written aspiration) for the Children's Campus. The manifesto will identify a number of opportunities for integrated public artworks within the development and potentially other process-based (eg. community events) that could be implemented as part of the Campus Art Programme.
- b. A clear understanding of what they want the Arts Manifesto to achieve.
- c. A short-list of 5 artists – each of whom have the qualities and capabilities to assist in the delivery of the aspiration.
- d. The tools to write the artists brief.
- e. A report outlining how we got there.

This report aims to fulfil items a. and e. above.

The artists brief and background to the project were drafted as part two of the public art programme. These documents form the appendix to this report.

PROCESS

Reckless Orchard introduced the project to the schools by facilitating an assembly at the Primary School. Images of their work together with some examples of public art were shown to the participants; including Jeff Koon's 'Puppy', Christo's 'Running Fence' and Thomas Heatherwick's 'B of the Bang'. The assembly provoked some lively interest from the children who were then set a challenge to produce some drawings of the kind of artwork that they felt would be appropriate for the new Campus building.



The children who had produced the best work were invited to form a Pupil Commissioning Group. This group subsequently comprised of pupils from both the Nursery and Infants and the Primary School and met regularly with Scott Farlow of Reckless Orchard to discuss public art for the Campus. As well as this the group gave some consideration to the kind of qualities that an artist should have to take on the public art commission.

As well as workshop-based activities and discussion with the children Reckless Orchard visited each of the schools on a regular basis. Meeting informally with the staff to inform them of the process and, as ideas began to emerge for the focus of the public art, to show them images of work by some of the artists on the long-list.

On a freezing grey mid-March day the Group went on a trip to Bristol to explore art in the City. They went to the Architecture Centre to see the 'joinedupdesignforschools' exhibition and were given a short talk by the Centre's director, Gillian Fearnough. This was followed by a wander around Millennium Square to see the water features and sculptures and finished at the Arnolfini art gallery. The exhibition in the Arnolfini was extremely inspiring with strange light installations and a very interesting projection and sound track.

The trip, and the Arnolfini in particular, helped to provide a focus for the themes for the Childrens Campus public art project. The children agreed that light, colour, sound and projected images could all be utilised to form the basis of the art. In addition it was felt that the entranceway into the building would be the most appropriate location for the artwork because this will be the area that all pupils, parents, staff, users and visitors will see and experience. This should be a welcoming space and not simply an entranceway; it will provide the first reaction of visitors to the Campus culture and ethos and the artwork could really help to create a sense of place and convey the right sort of message here.

Other ideas to have emerged include the use of water, patterned glassworks, 'welcome' signage and general signage throughout the building and applying interventions in some way to the large façade of the new building on Avonvale Road.

Essentially the children felt that the artist must be a good communicator to people of all ages and abilities and they must be a good designer. Additionally, the artist must be creative, inspiring, inventive and expressive, an attentive listener, have experience of working with a range of stakeholders and experience of working as part of a design team

With this information collected Reckless Orchard was able to draw up a long-list of artists whose practice met the criteria broadly described above. The long-list included Bristol-based and non Bristol-based artists and included artists with skills in using light, glass, colour and moving image and projections. The long-list was drawn up in consultation with members of the art group some of whom contributed with artists of their own.

The artists on the long-list were:

Annelies Egli
Ann Smyth
Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop
Blackout Arts
David Cotterrell
Jo Fairfax
Joe Cooper
Louise Block
Martin Donlin
Martin Richman
Michael Pinsky
Peter Freeman
Rod Harris
Walter Jack

ARTISTS SELECTION



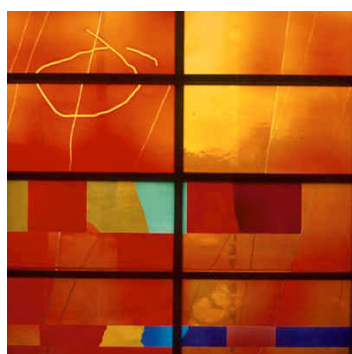
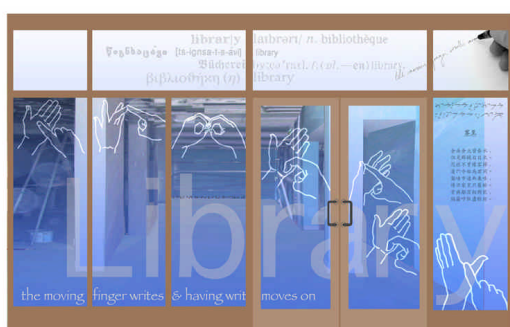
Reckless Orchard put together a slide show to illustrate examples of each of the artists work. This was presented at various selection meetings and a short-list began to emerge through discussion and debate. The eventual short-list was agreed with Simon Robinson. The artists that were invited for interview were:

Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop
David Cotterrell
Louise Block
Martin Donlin
Rod Harris (replacing Jo Fairfax who cannot attend the interview on the 19th June and will not be available until the end of July).

The interviews took place on Monday 19th June at the Nursery and Infants School. Unfortunately Martin Donlin was not able to attend and he was withdrawn from the process.

The interviews were in two parts for each artist. A formal interview lasting 45 minutes where each artist presented their work and practice and described how they might work with the campus community (and children in particular) and how they might approach the commission. The formal interview had a panel comprising Scott Farlow, Simon Robinson, Nikki Richards (Nursery and Infants), Jan Kershaw (Childrens Campus Manager) and Kim Tilbrook (Creative Partnerships).

This was followed by an informal activity of the artists choice with the children's art group lasting about 30 minutes. The informal activity was observed by James Dick (Nursery and Infants), Ana Nikolaidis (Primary School), Celia Bradshaw (Cashmore Nursery) and Isla Russell (Community at Heart).



SELECTION OF ARTIST – CRITERIA AND SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

ARTIST'S PRESENTATIONS

From these the panel should ascertain:

- *CRITERIA 1 – TRACK RECORD AND EXPERIENCE* and
- *CRITERIA 2 – ARTISTIC QUALITY, ORIGINALITY, INNOVATION*

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FROM THE SELECTION PANEL

CRITERIA 3 – AWARENESS OF THE PROJECT'S AMBITION, EXPECTATIONS AND TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS

What appeals to you about working within a context like Barton Hill in Bristol?

The Commission Brief describes a number of opportunities and constraints. What are these and are they acceptable to you?

CRITERIA 4 – INTEREST IN AND EXPERIENCE OF COLLABORATIVE DESIGN AND PLANNING

Can you outline something of your experience of working with other design professionals/as part of a design team?

How do you establish a collaborative approach to working with different members of the Design Team?

How would you like to develop the opportunities for artists identified in the Commission Brief?

CRITERIA 5 – EXPERIENCE OF AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ENGAGING COMMUNITY GROUPS IN THE DESIGN/CREATIVE PROCESS

Can you give your favourite example of how you engaged a residents group (or similar) in a design process and what were the outcomes of that process?

CRITERIA 6 - AWARENESS OF FINANCIAL THRESHOLDS AND TIMESCALE

Can you give an example of how you have advised a client on the cost of an artwork?

Are you comfortable with the suggested fee structure and timescale?

Once the interviews and activities are completed both sets of panel members will meet to select their preferred artist.

OUTCOMES

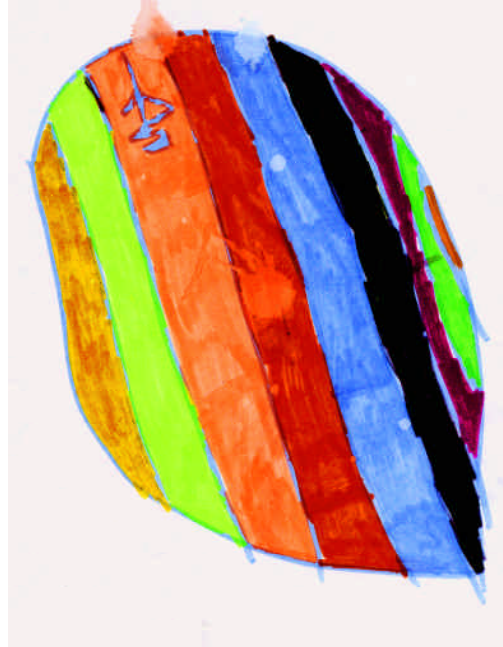
At the end of the interview process both panels met at the Primary School. The children described the activities that they had undertaken and they voted for which activity had been the most enjoyable.

The adult panel subsequently met and it was agreed that both Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop and David Cotterrell were strong contenders. Whilst possessing excellent child skills neither Louise Block or Rod Harris had the appropriate creative qualities or level of experience for this commission.

After much debate it was finally agreed that Annie and Mac should be offered the commission. This they have duly accepted and will commence their work with an Art Day in the schools in September 2006.

The letter offering them the commission is attached to this report together with some images of their work.

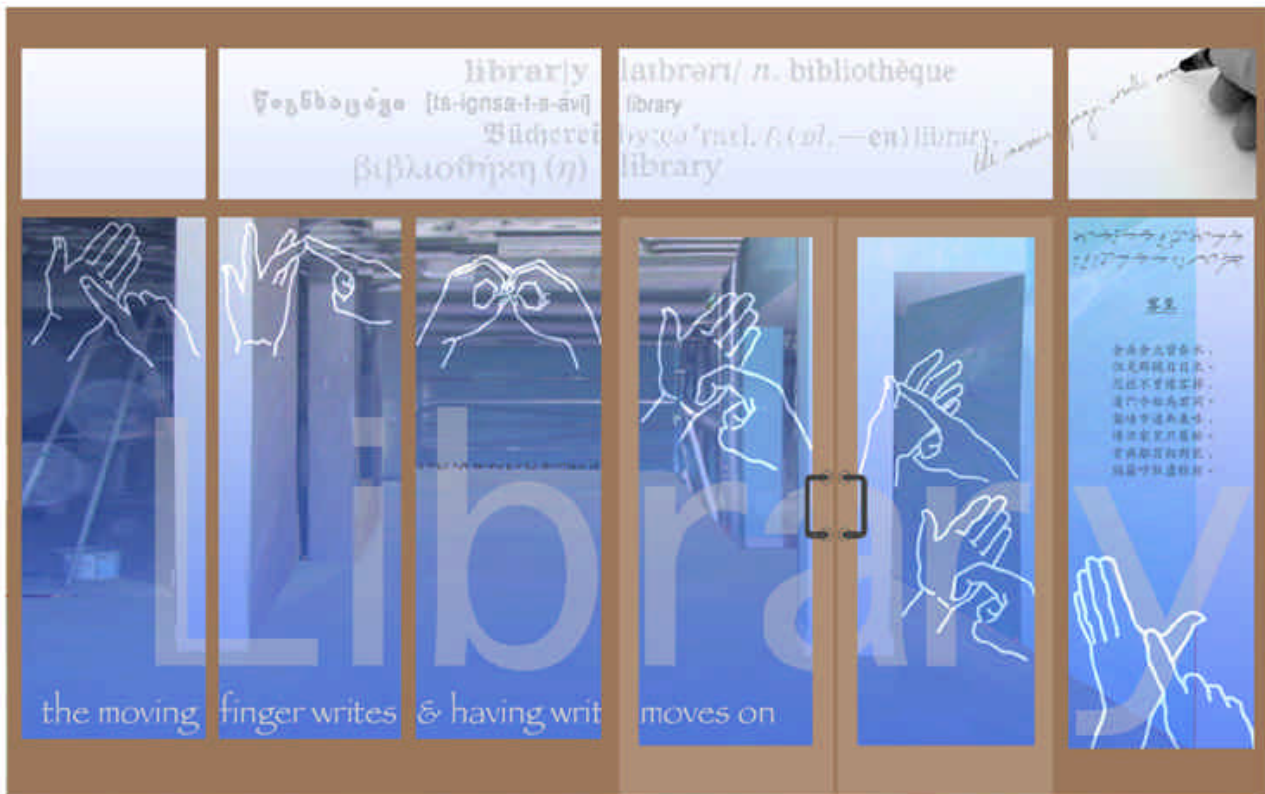
It is worth noting that from the overall public art budget identified by Community at Heart of £40'000 it was agreed that Annie and Mac's commission should be £30'000. The remainder has yet to be allocated but it likely to be utilised to commission other artists to undertake more process-based work directly with the schools.



Thank you.

Scott Farlow
Reckless Orchard
11.07.06

Some work by Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop



sketch of Library glazing approached from main entrance

Reckless Orchard



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22nd June 2006

COPY LETTER

Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop
98 Romney Avenue
Lockleaze
Bristol
BS7 9TJ

Dear Annie and Mac

BARTON HILL CHILDRENS CAMPUS – PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

Many thanks for attending the interviews on Monday 19th June at Barton Hill.

As discussed over the telephone the client group is delighted to be able to offer you this commission and thus very pleased that you have accepted.

You should note that your client will be Community at Heart as they are the budget holders for this project and key stakeholders in the overall Childrens Campus development. I am sure that they will contact you very soon to discuss your contract and the associated programme.

As you will know my role in this project is all but complete other than a last hurrah that I have provisionally scheduled for Friday 7th July. I will meet the schools tomorrow to clarify this and confirm it with yourselves by email over the next day or so. Will you be free to attend a school assembly and an informal tour of each of the three schools on this day?

I understand from the new head, Simon Robinson, that you will 'line-managed' by James Dick and Nikki Richards, both of whom you met at the interviews. They are the new Arts Strategy Managers for the schools and subsequently the new Campus when it opens its doors next September. Likewise I am sure that they will be contacting you very soon.

May I wish you the very best of luck with this exciting commission and I look forward to seeing some beautiful and inspiring outcomes.

I also look forward to perhaps working with you on other things in the future.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely Scott Farlow