

SqW:Lab Background

Inspired by encounters on a recent week long trip to Mumbai and by the conversations had everyday with India based artist Vishwa Shroff and London based artist Tash Kahn while there, London based curator Charlie Levine began developing a new process of thought regarding collaborative working. The three spoke in depth about process versus inspiration and what impact each has upon a creative process. They discussed how site specificity reflected in Tash and Vishwa's practice, sometimes to make a piece of work be very specific and in other cases to let places merge with others and the imagination, which made Charlie question how do we do this as curators? The three talked about that recent visit and it's long-term aim to encourage continued cross over working and opportunities. It was discovered all three had a love of 'play' and discussed how encouraging a sense of trial and error can help develop creative's approach to projects.

Charlie goes on to explain: "All of these thoughts came together one evening into a new programme of work we'd like to realise, entitled Square Works Lab (SqW:Lab) – a place where 10 creatives from all of the world can come together, play, work site responsively, showcase their process in the form of drawings, doodles and notes, and be inspired by each other.

SqW:Lab is to be "an "active space," a hybrid structure that [is] part art school, part community centre and part artistic laboratory."¹

Inspired in part by Hans Ulrich Obrist's *do it*, a series / archive of instructions for artists to 'do' with a set of 'rules' that travelled the world, ever expanding as new contributors got involved, "*do it* tried to develop exhibitions that built a relation to their place, that constantly changed with different local conditions, and created a dynamic, complex system with feedback loops. It changed places and places changed it."² The SqW:Lab Play Projects will want to work in a similar way, each instruction or game changing depending on the players and the space it is being performed.

This 'play' period will be bookended with exhibitions, the first looking at the drawings of processes and what links everyone together, the final show being an exhibition of the products of the Play Projects.

This is my participation in the SqW:Lab project, which will ultimately be multi faceted and layered with thanks to the other four core partners, my host artist Vishwa Shroff, her husband and collaborator, architect Katsushi Goto, artists and DOLPH Gallery Director Tash Kahn, and curator and writer Rosanna Van Mierlo, who has hosted Vishwa and Tash at Swiss Cottage Gallery, London. Each of the five key partners will invite a single other creative talent to join in the conversations, exhibitions and Play Projects with my selection being US based artist, John Ros.

This is thought to be a three month project with exhibitions taking place at SqW:Lab gallery, in Vishwa's home in Mumbai and to take place over India's summer period, November 2018 – February 2019. If this project is successful then the plan is to roll this out, with 10 new participants each year. "

¹ Theatre of Exhibitions, Jens Hoffman, 2015, p. 79

² Ways of Curating, Hans Ulrich Obrist, 2014, p. 20