

Money Making Machine & Other Useful Contraptions



Social Art Map

Introduction to

This Social Art Map is intended as a starting point or resource for people interested in social art practice, including those engaged in the producing, commissioning, curating, collaborating and participating. By using the term 'social art' we refer to contexts where artists work with people in the co-creation of a public outcome.

This mini-resource focuses on five commissioned projects that took place in London within the field of social art practice in the last five years. By mapping the project's timelines we aim not to present a model of best practice, rather a range of portraits that provide a window into the different processes, hurdles, motivations and experiences of artists, commissioner/ curators/ producers and locals/ participants/ collaborators involved. Through this six month piece of research these labels were contested, as were the terms 'social art' and 'socially engaged art'. Rather than foreground these terms, we have therefore referred to the names of the people and the capacity in which they were involved with these processes. To avoid flattening out the complexities and nuances of the projects or squeezing them uncomfortably into a neat definition of social art, we have tried to maintain the detail, keeping the seemingly mundane aspects alongside crucial moments of decision-making. With this in mind, we hope to reflect the vital complexity of the processes involved and avoid one dominant version of events being told.

Emily Druff (Peckham Platform) and Sophie Hope (Birkbeck, University of London) came together, supported by funding from Creativeworks London, to do this mapping of commissioning processes in order to understand better these often hidden procedures. Over several meetings we made collective timelines of each project with the artist(s), commissioner/producer/curator(s) and local/participant/collaborator(s).

We hope you will use this document and the network of people that emerge from it, to inform your work, challenge assumptions and invite further critical conversations with practitioners, collaborators, researchers and educators.

Emily Druff and Sophie Hope  
July 2015

ARTIST

Kathrin Bohm

2012 Kathrin Böhm makes a proposal titled Money making machine and other useful contraptions which included references to the needs of Three C's to become more enterprising in light of financial climate.

2013 Kathrin delivers weekly sessions to 'design a useful machine for living' outside the 'art class' environment at Three Cs. Broad group of participants sign up. The group makes a visit to exhibition of contraptions in Greenwich. Workshops continue past agreed point in order to develop ideas further.

2014 Kathrin wants exhibition to be a production space for visitors like an extension of workshops and considered as social enterprise. Exhibition includes: Tim Hunkin machines; seed bomb making; Three Cs shop; Three Cs café; papier-mâché plate making, paintings and spin painting. Following on from this project was the International Village Shop and Movement Company Deals & Drinks.

COMMISSIONER

Emily Druff  
Peckham Platform

2012 Emily Druff (Director at Peckham Platform) meets Helen Shearn (Head of Arts Strategy at South London & Maudsley) via Mark Crawley (Director of Outreach at University of the Arts London).

Mark agrees to financially support a commission linking arts and mental health.

Helen links Emily to Dy Carsen (Manager Three Cs Crossway's Day Care Centre Peckham); they agree to work together.

Emily meets Errol Francis (Director of Anxiety Festival) and Barbara Rodriguez (visual Arts Curator, Anxiety Festival). They include the commission in the pan London Anxiety Festival 2014.

Emily, Dy and Barbara write the project brief and invite 3 artists to respond.

Selection panel (Anxiety, Three Cs, Peckham Platform).

Three artists invited to pitch, none selected.

Brief amended to integrate social enterprise, Kathrin Böhm invited to make proposal and meet the group, this was taken forward.

Gallery being used as a resource by mental health service users, Peckham Platform want to engage more.

2013 Peckham Platform avoids closure, gaining charitable status as a National Portfolio Organisation from Arts Council England independent from its founding institution, University of the Arts London. Emily Druff integrates arts and mental health objectives into 3 yr business plan with support from Richard Watts (Founding Chair at Peckham Platform)

Autumn 2013-Spring 2014: Kathrin Bohm's contract starts and starts weekly workshops at Three Cs.

Dec 2013 Dy Carsen leaves her role at Three Cs.

May-Jul 2014 Exhibition duration 10 weeks with a record 4,000 visitors.

The exhibition was an interactive format and helped attract new gallery visitors. Inclusion in Anxiety programme increases audiences from mental health sector.

COLLABORATOR / PARTICIPANT

Liz Ward

2013 'Kathrin asked us what machines would we invent to make our lives perfect.'

'We designed a machine to make money, coins and notes; did spin paintings.'

'You treated us like adults', 'we did not feel patronised'. Sharon (member of staff from Three Cs) wanted to test social enterprise café as part of exhibition.

2014 Participants Richard, Walter and Liz regularly use the gallery space during the exhibition as a social space and to make things.

Liz does a pop up cafe every weekend called the Queen of Cakes' as part of the exhibition using the Three Cs kitchen. There were discussions of this continuing.

'What was the connection between mental health and the exhibition?', 'Should the exhibition have said mental health exhibition outside?', 'Mental health not signposted, but that meant no stigma'.

Key

Money Distribution Machine and Other Useful Contraptions

Interactive installation resulting from workshops with people living with learning disabilities and mental health challenges at Three Cs, Rye Lane.

Commissioner: Peckham Platform  
Mapped by: Emily Druff (Peckham Platform)  
Kathrin Böhm (artist)  
Alison Love (Three Cs, Head of Inclusion)  
Liz Moreland (service user at Three C's, cake-maker, participant)

www.peckhamplatform.com

This is for you

A public performance on the pavements of Archway about being seen. One dancer and one local were watched by one audience member at a time through a shop window.

Commissioners: Islington Council and AIR  
Mapped by: Tilly Fowler and Anna Hart (AIR)  
Anna MacDonald (artist)  
Richard Thomas (Thomas Brothers Ironmongers, Archway).

www.amillionminutes.org

Werker 10 – Community Darkroom

Workshops, collective educational activities and installation on photography and labour with Werker Magazine and Justice for Domestic Workers.

Commissioner: The Showroom (Communal Knowledge)  
Mapped by: Louise Shelly (The Showroom)  
Rogier Delfos and Marc Roig (Werker Magazine – artists)  
Marissa Begonia (Justice for Domestic Workers – collaborators)

www.theshowroom.org

This Used to be Fields

A mural exploring a history of the Becontree Estate in Dagenham.

Commissioners: Create and Creative Barking & Dagenham  
Mapped by: Razia Begum and Marijke Steedman (Create)  
Chad McCall (artist)  
Matt Benjamin (local historian, participant)  
Biniam Ghide (mural artist, participant).

www.createlondon.org

Between You and Me / The Present Tense

A play and film by Edward Thomasson made with non-professional performers from East London.

Commissioners: Chisenhale Gallery and Create  
Mapped by: Hadrian Garrard (Create) and Laura Wilson (Chisenhale Gallery)  
Edward Thomasson (artist)  
Amy Bentley (volunteer performer)

www.chisenhale.org.uk

Reflections on Mapping Social Art Projects

The projects vary in length, between 3 and 18 months, often stretching beyond initial timeframes. Most of the artists (apart from Werker, who were invited directly) respond to a brief, written between an arts organisation and another partner or funder. While this sounds like a formal process, there often exist points of contact, shared interests and common ground between the artist and arts organisation which continue to emerge throughout the process. In all cases, the projects stem from the artists' existing practices and ideas and the commission becomes a platform for them to develop the work in a new way and in a different context.

There are inherent (healthy) contradictions in the processes being described, for example, between holding the uncertainty and being clear; between nothing being prescribed and having a clear goal. There is also a sense of push and pull between working to a brief and having an intuitive, responsive approach.

The artists here are being employed by public bodies (e.g. a council, community group or gallery) to make something with or for other people. These are people who use, or could use, a certain space such as a local archive or community centre or who share a common interest or concern such as acting or justice for domestic workers. The artists then design tools or a mural, create a space for people to invent machines, create scores for local performances or form an amateur theatre group. These are made for, with and amongst the artist, arts organiser and selected or self-selected volunteers. The wall, the street, the window, the community centre and/or the gallery become meeting points where production, rehearsal, making and experimenting takes place. In a few cases, making decisions in public and/or making the process and practice visible is important, but not always.

An approach an artist brings with them might be something new to people, offer an alternative view, a different way of doing things. It might take the form of a script, a template, a score, an invitation to invent, or could be in the shape of a question. This leads on to looking in different, forgotten places, disrupting dominant narratives or

putting something unexpected on a pedestal for a moment. It might involve a process of abstraction, juxtaposition or intervention in a familiar place to get us to look again.

It is not as simple as employing artists to provide services or frameworks for the engagement and entertainment of others. These encounters are often worked on, edited, choreographed, curated and/or directed in order to produce public, artistic manifestations that feed into the artists' own professional development and portfolio of work, weaving back in to their ever evolving practices.

The projects are labour-intensive, often stretching budgets, and timescales to make things happen. The invisible administrative work of logistics necessary for these projects to take place happens behind the scenes by assistants, arts organisers and others. There is emotional labour that goes into this process of making something happen, such as dedication, commitment, generosity, persistence, enthusiasm and patience. These emotions are not flowing in one direction, they criss-cross, infect, deplete and move along.

The conditions in which art is made are often hidden, so as to foreground the artwork itself. Maybe the glorious final outcomes of these messy processes should be left to stand for themselves, without us dredging up their back stories. Not all art is treated with the same magnifying glass. However, I feel an urge to keep poking my head behind the curtain, to check the scaffolding, to see who, what, why and how it is being propped up. This is how all things should be treated, in my view, not just publicly funded projects.

Through this investigation, we are making visible the processes so as to understand them better collectively, to counter-act the drive to compete and instead be open to the potential for radical solidarity and sharing amongst peers. The stresses and strains public sector organisations are under as they are forced to restructure or close, is reflected in the experiences of people here. There are different pressures, approaches and concerns over how to secure and allocate funding, for example: who gets paid and for what, when various

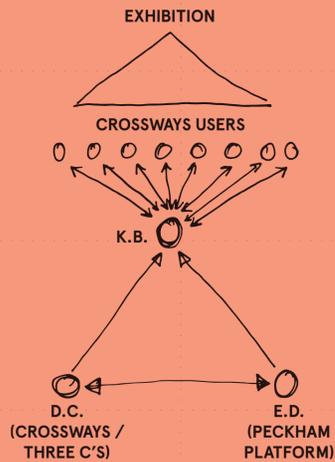
expertise are acknowledged as being necessary for a project to happen. The funding used in these various projects is complex, sometimes with conflicting agendas. While the arts organisation and artist might be able to hold open a space for uncertainty, to what extent is this uncertainty valued by the funders?

The mechanics of the processes mapped out in these timelines are complex and multi-layered; there is no simple way through, no step-by-step account or formula for best practice that can be drawn from all of this. There are multiple layers of timelines for each event, we have only collated three strata out of hundreds that exist for each project. In this process of selecting and editing voices are left out.

Endings and aftercare are a feature of the timelines. It is like an endlessly flowing river, as one of the contributors puts it. This sense of things not having a neat end is shared amongst others, but there is also a sense of the need for end points, or at least a question of how to deal with them, as individuals move on and partner organisations close.

The need for links of solidarity between those who remain standing in the current economic and political context seems urgent and necessary. Sharing resources, ideas and tactics whilst retaining eclectic approaches and inherent contradictions seems necessary if we are to help each other hold on to spaces of uncertainty whilst continuing to make things happen.

Sophie Hope.



These reflections are based on the recorded discussions we had as we mapped the timelines of each of the invited projects on long rolls of paper. Looking over these maps and listening to the audio, I clustered words, drew diagrams and scribbled connections in an attempt to identify the thoughts and ideas that emerged from the different perspectives.

Common to all five projects is an arts organisation supporting a paid artist(s) working with other people in a process of making something together. Throughout each project there are a lot of meetings - in person, via Skype, in groups, one-to-one, constructive, heated, informal and formal. All of this time spent talking becomes part of the process of building chains of trust that seem necessary for anything to happen.

The subjects being explored are diverse: domestic space, the street, local histories, amateur theatre groups, mental health; resulting in a play, a mural, a performance, an exhibition and a set of campaigning tools. The physical aspects of production come through in the mechanics of making and material touch of practice as people apply and share their expertise in the process. The role of amateur and professional collide, sometimes switching, providing new perspectives.

COMMISSIONER

**Anna Hart & Tilly Fowler**  
AIR

2007 AIR was founded at the Byam Shaw School of Art in Archway asking "What happens when we stay?"

2012 AIR commissioned by Islington Council to produce A Million Minutes. Open calls to musicians, dancers and fine artists.

Aug 2012 223 applications received for 'Windows One' commission.

Selection by Anna, Tilly and Pete Courtie (Islington Council). Long, extensive, difficult but constructive discussions. Outlaw words including 'stories'.

Artists using this as testing ground for developing a public practice. Understanding where the work is potentially opening up and whether we can support that process.

Anna Macdonald one of ten selected for interview and seven commissioned. "There is an enquiry, relevance, honesty. Felt like she was asking something slightly different."

Nov 2012 Secure the shop space used for the Windows programme.

Oct 2012-Apr 2013

Conversations between AIR and Anna M via skype about 'being seen'. This is formative to a strong working relationship.

AIR are interested in the position of skill and expertise of 'local' people who live or work in the area and artists being present in a place.

Apr 2013 Anna M.'s first visit to Archway. She was touching the pavement. The material touch of a practice is so important.

Jun 2013 Anna M. and seven other dancers travel from Manchester and stay in Gill Clarke's house for ten intense days: rehearse for six and perform for four.

There's a certain kind of questioning that only comes when you start making the work.

The 'local' would ask the 'watcher' how they want the performance to end (given two choices), allowing them to feel they have some control over how it ended.

2014 AIR move to Central Saint Martins in King's Cross, asking "What of Archway do we bring with us?".

COLLABORATOR / PARTICIPANT

**Richard Thomas**  
Thomas Brothers

1921-2014 Richard Thomas is one of the Thomas Brothers; a family run ironmongers in Archway that served many Byam Shaw art students and staff.

"Working things out together, you weren't just selling something... If I could give the young artists small inputs of ideas and things, even if it's just drilling a hole... I've contributed in some small way."

May 2013 Richard meets Anna M. He proposes to set up his key cutting machine on the street as part of the performance (belonged to his grandfather).

Spends a lot of time on Google maps, looking at the roads and the place.

Apr 2012 Sees commission advertised about a piece called 'Windows' and applies. It has more local engagement than she is used to.

Apr 2013 First visit to Archway. "Anna H. sits in the shop and I dance in the street." Call-out to get involved, asking "do you feel seen?" but gets nothing back.

May 2013 Day of talking to people about being seen. "People willing to talk but not be in an artwork. AIR take me to contacts they already have, one of whom is Richard Thomas."

Jun 2013 Anna M decides to dance in the piece (rather than act as host): shifts from the visual to the kinesthetic; felt embedded, responsive.

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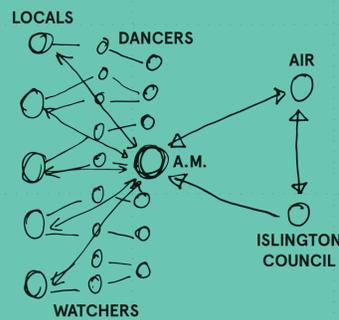
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2014 Editing two versions of the film documentation. Writes for AIR publication and contributes a piece to AIR's Everything Must Go exhibition in Thomas Brothers shop.



COMMISSIONER

**Laura Wilson & Chisenhale**  
**Hardian Garrard**  
Create

2009 Hadrian meets Polly Staple (Director, Chisenhale Gallery) and they talk about the possibility of working together in the future.

2010 Chisenhale Gallery's Offsite programme starts and residency becomes part of this.

Funds from local authority and Arts Council (via Create) rather than project specific funding, meaning there wasn't the pressure on outcomes or press coverage.

Mar 2012 Conversations continue between Chisenhale Gallery and Create, they want to do something 'long-term and careful' post Olympics.

Jun 2012 They propose an 18-month residency, without the pressure of public presentation. Chisenhale Gallery and Create work closely together to write a brief and discuss a long list and short list of artists to invite to make a proposal.

Jan 2013 Edward and Laura auditioned 25 volunteers, approx. half are selected.

Feb 2013 Edward writes the script and songs. Soosan Lolovar composes the music.

Feb-Jul 2013 The group meet 6 times, once a month to workshop/rehearse. Process of active storytelling.

18 Oct 2012 5 Artists are interviewed and Edward Thomasson is selected.

Nov 2012 Residency artist is announced. Thomasson's proposal is to form an actors group comprised of local people through an open call.

Jan 2013 Open call for people who were interested in performing and working on a long-term project with Thomasson. Posters circulated locally to recruit volunteers.

Two audition days followed by monthly workshops with those selected.

Mid Apr 2013 Create publicise their summer events, including Edward's work.

Jul 2013 3 performances of 'Between You And Me' at Glass House Community Centre.

Oct 2013-June 2014 Second stage involves production of film with most of the actors group. Thomasson consulted them at stages regarding the script

3 Jul-24 Aug 2014 Exhibition of final film at Chisenhale Gallery: 'The Present Tense'.

ARTIST

**Edward Thomasson**

Sep 2012 Invited to make a proposal in response to the brief to work with people local to the gallery in the context of east London after the Olympics.

Wanted to work with the model of an amateur theatre company for some time so proposed this. "There wasn't a lot of shoe-horning into a socially engaged construct".

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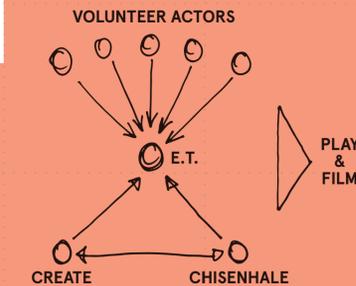
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COMMISSIONER

**Marijke Steedman & Razia Begum**  
Create

Oct 2013 Historypin and Create develop a project about the Becontree Estate in Barking and Dagenham - once London's largest social housing estate.

Mar 2014 On Marijke's first day at Create she delivers a presentation about the history of murals in London to an interview panel from Creative Barking and Dagenham (CBD). CBD and the Arts Council (via the Barbican) fund the project.

Apr 2014 Publicly owned mural site selected at local museum and archive, Valence House, in a park with fishing and sport enthusiasts, young people and dog walkers.

May 2014 Razia starts to support Marijke on the project with hands on stuff like wall rendering, health and safety etc.

3 Jul 2014 3 artists shortlisted. They make presentations to a selection panel of 15 Dagenham residents. Intense day with interesting conversations.

Mid Jul-Mid Aug 2014 Chad chooses to work in Becontree in a studio in Valence House. He immerses himself in local gossip and rumour to shape mural content.

Mid Aug 2014 Rough colour guide and a complete drawing scanned into the computer but problems with transferring to larger scale. Council architects department helped out by printing out the whole thing full size.

Mid Aug-Oct 2014 Started painting. We were quite desparate because time was short.

23 Oct 2014 Mural completed two days before launch. Morale is pretty high.

25 Oct 2014 Launch of mural. There is talk about making mural tea towels and postcards.

The Council will be responsible for future upkeep of the mural. Create hand over conservation instructions.

ARTIST

**Chad McCaill**

May 2014 Gets an email from Marijke inviting him to make a mural.

Always wanted to do a mural and keen to make work in public domain, outside the gallery (it's a class-ridden set up): 'I'm a populist, making work for a wider audience.' Orders books about the history of the area.

14 Jul 2014 Moves from Scotland to the area and stays until mural is finished.

Spends the whole time meeting with people locally in studio at Valence House. Steve Rolling from Historypin helps set up meetings with local groups.

Begins to pick particular incidents to represent periods on the timeline. Drawing mural in studio while people offer stories about what happened: 'it's very organic, informal, easy and relaxed.'

'I was definitely working to a brief - it was a design job... It was being commissioned by Create, but also the people of Becontree themselves. Onus on me was to listen to what people were saying and respond to what they really wanted.'

Mid Jul-Mid Aug 2014 Matt helps Chad use the archive and map history of Becontree.

Mid Aug 2014 Historypin introduce Chad to Biniam, an experienced painter from Eritrea living in the area. He was paid as a professional artist to help make the mural.

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25 Oct 2014 'Incredible to see it in its full glory.'

COLLABORATOR / PARTICIPANT

**Matt Benjamin & Biniam Ghide**

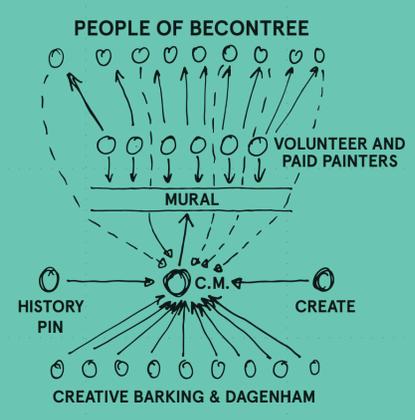
Jun 2014 Matt, a history student and local resident, meets Historypin at an event and is invited by Create to sit on the selection panel for the mural.

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COMMISSIONER

**Louise Shelley**  
The Showroom

2009 The Showroom moves to Edgware Road and their Communal Knowledge programme is developed with a focus on their neighbourhood.

Discussions evolve about domestic space as site for political questions such as personal struggles around the cuts, overcrowded homes, childcare issues.

2012 Tate Modern's Adult Learning department work with Unite and Justice for Domestic Workers (J4DW) on United Migrant Workers Education Project. Nora Razian (Tate Modern) introduces Louise Shelley to J4DW who then get involved with a project with artist Andrea Francke around issues of childcare and invisibility in summer 2012.

12 Sep-27 Oct 2012 Grand Domestic Revolution Goes On (GDR) project with CASCO Office for Art, Design and Theory in Utrecht, the Netherlands comes to The Showroom.

28 Oct 2012 ASKI, a group of cultural workers allied with domestic workers in the Netherlands (which Werker Magazine are a part of), are invited by The Showroom to do a reverse graffiti action with J4DW as part of their campaign to restore visas for domestic workers.

24 Feb 2013 Werker do a Bilderkritik workshop with J4DW at The Showroom to collectively analyse photographs.

21 Apr 2013 Work Like This: A public discussion around precarious labour, visibility and domestic work off-site at Tate Modern. J4DW and Werker both contribute to the event.

12 Jul-17 Aug 2013 Communal Knowledge's summer exhibition Ricardo Basbaum re-projecting (London) part of which J4DW do a public event on 28 July 2013.

2 Oct-30 Nov 2013 Artist Clara Phillips works with J4DW at The Showroom

Jan-Jun 2014 Using funding from Mondrian, Paul Hamlyn and Esmée Fairbairn Foundations Werker and J4DW do 4 workshops together and make 2 visits to May Day Rooms to visit the Wages for Housework archive and do a workshop in Stockholm.

9 Jul-16 Aug 2014 Werker and J4DW use the gallery for 6 weeks for public presentation and production of campaign materials, including 9 new posters.

21 Jul 2014 Is This Working? Public discussion event with Werker and J4DW.

Aug 2014 Louise joins Development Group for J4DW.

'We learn so much from collaborating with J4DW, it exposes blind spots we haven't quite acknowledged in our thinking... it really doesn't feel like a participant relationship.'

ARTIST

**Marc Roig & Rogier Delfos**  
Werker Magazine

2011 Domestic Worker Issue 3 started, using amateur photography to document work at home to bring to attention and question the invisibility of domestic space, developed Bilderkritik workshops to analyse the images with groups.

2012 Werker is part of Grand Domestic Revolution through ASKI Through that group we started to collaborate with domestic workers and the union of cleaners in Amsterdam. "We were already dealing with these issues... it became natural to continue together and learn from each other."

24 Feb 2013 Bilderkritik workshop.

Jan-Jun 2014 J4DW realised a need to archive their campaign activities. The Living Archive is a tool for workers to develop new forms of activist photography.

'I don't think we are making social art - I am working with workers. We are building networks of solidarity and we are sharing ideas and self-organising.'

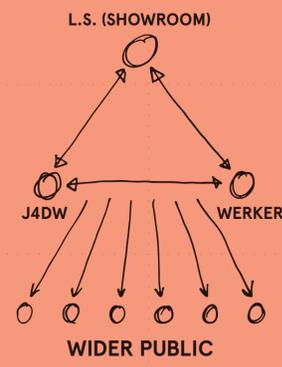
Mar 2015 Format Photo Festival in Derby (J4DW are also involved)

Jul 2015 Exhibition in Madrid at Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo using similar methodologies process.

2015 Banners from The Showroom included in protest.

'It's like an endlessly flowing river.'

'The work that we've done already will always be taken to the next point. We don't consider we are making an artwork that is closed and finished.'



COLLABORATOR / PARTICIPANT

**Marissa Begonia**  
Justice 4 Domestic Workers (J4DW)

2009 J4DW established as a self-help grass-roots organisation made up of multi-national migrant Domestic Workers in the UK. "Collective work with artists has helped us to grow - to discover and explore."

Funding is a big problem - "we do feel that whoever we work with it is never acknowledged and that we need some money to run things."

Oct 2013 J4DW present at the City of Women festival in Slovenia, part of the ongoing GDR project between The Showroom and CASCO.

Jan-Jun 2014 40-60 members of J4DW attend the workshops. They take photographs of themselves at work for the living archive. "We don't look at the things around the house, for us it's just part of our work, daily living. We also need to value that, for others to value us... It should begin within us."

"We only have Sundays off work when we have language or IT classes, arts and other training courses, plus we have to campaign and run the organisation."

"Whoever we work with, they have to have the patience to understand the vulnerability of the domestic worker. Werker - they totally understand the domestic worker - the respect is there, the appreciation is there."

The visits to the Wages for Housework archives 'was for us to learn what was the campaign before and the situation before and now'.

16 Jun 2014 Rally outside Houses of Parliament to restore domestic workers' rights using the banner from the Clara Phillips workshops and the Werker Living Archive.

2014 Exhibit in Tate Modern as part of Home Workers. J4DW now have regular Sunday meetings at the May Day Rooms and are registered as an education provider.

Between You And Me / The Present Tense

This Used to be Fields

Werker 10 — Community Darkroom