

RUN

3Things

An exhibition made by Donald Smith

Including: Phyllida Barlow, Peter Blake, Marcel Breuer, Gavin Bryars, Brian Dawn Chalkley, Paul Davis, Eddie Farrell and Michael Wedgwood, Alice Finbow, Four Corners Books, Maya Hewitt, Isokon, Neil Libbert, Alex Lifschutz, Shoko Maeda, Bruce McLean, Neil Stewart, Dudley Sutton, Mark Titchner, David Toop, Suzanne Treister, Richard Tuttle, Kirsten Weiner, Jah Wobble, Gary Woodley, Sori Yanagi.

10th June - 31 July 2007

Opening preview 29th June 2007

The architects Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands said there should be 3 good reasons to justify any project.

How should one respond to an invitation to organise a group exhibition? First say thank you. Next ask the question "what is a *group show*?". I didn't want a bunch of isolated incidents, one thing after another, an audience checking off a list of names and objects. If artists showed 3 things we could create rhythms, to introduce us to their work but then come across it a second, a third time. Reconsider, review, return.

What about 3 generic things - 3 videos, 3 pieces of music, 3 chairs? And then there's the triptych. I invited artists, architects, actors, designers, photographers, musicians. Some of the work is from the 1930's, 1950's, 1980's, some things were made especially for the show. Perhaps the range of stuff might appear "a bit random" but it's the six degrees of separation thing, everything/everyone in the show I have had some connection with in the past twelve months, so I suppose there is an autobiographical or anecdotal element to the selection process (isn't there always, to some extent?). The repetition of something that has already been said is thought of as an error of style but I have always liked the notion of tautology, of cyclical rhythms, and also the idea that previously unconnected strands can get tangled.

Still mystified by the nuances of *curating* and the role of the *curator* I prefer Robert Storr's term: *exhibition maker*. "an exhibition made by..." seemed to allow for an intuitive, aesthetic approach: 3 things as an open structure rather than an imposed theme. In a recent show at RUN there was quite a lot of discussion about the role of the curator, that curating should be more than just arranging the chairs. I brought my own chairs to arrange (Isokon (1933), Yanagi (1954), and Woodley (2004), and 3 tables by Marcel Breuer (1936), beautiful, simple objects and, it has to be said, relatively cheap for great art (don't forget RUN is a commercial gallery). I always remember Hal Foster talking about curating, he said "It's like Godzilla landing on Bambi". Let the artists/artworks do the talking.

By happy coincidence RUN is a 3 letter word and is a gallery run by a gang of 3. The gang of 3 said they had a big space and a small space. I wanted to make a big show in the small space. Of course, at the time of writing this is all in my head, I know it will be great but there has to be room for chance or, dare I say, error. There's a lot of generosity and trust from all of the brilliant people involved, it's much appreciated.

3Things from Samuel Beckett's *Worstward Ho*: "Try. Fail again. Fail better."

Donald Smith
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RUN
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