

EXHIBITION GUIDE

Assemble and Simon Terrill

The Ostrich and the Kipper, 2017



The Ostrich and the Kipper is an installation where layers of contrasting visual references overlap to create a portrait of two of Britain's most recognized modernist architects – Alison and Peter Smithson (A+PS) and draws attention to their collaboration with the artists Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi.

Assemble and Terrill's investigation adopts the Smithson's 'As found' approach to explore what is known of A+PS beyond their architectural reputation, asking questions of character and representation via a selection of documents and archival materials. The arrangement includes fragments of found footage, photography, raw materials and sculpture producing a collage or 'glitch' aiming to offer a new perspective on these modernist figures and their overlooked connection with prewar Surrealism.

The 'As found' was a design process developed through their collaborative projects with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi while they were all members of the Independent Group. Using the quartet's seminal exhibitions *Parallel of Life and Art* (1953) and *Patio and Pavilion* (1956) as points of reference, *The Ostrich and the Kipper* revisits an attitude and design approach that emerged in the immediate postwar period.

Photograph showing Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paolozzi, Alice and Peter Smithson, seated in an unidentified street c.1949–c.1956
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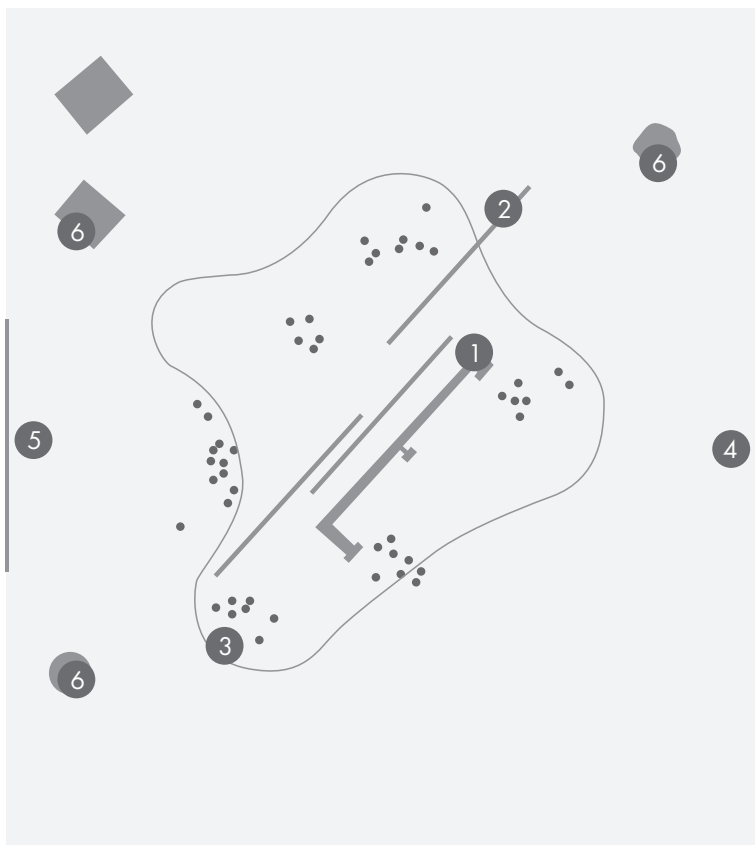


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Biography

Assemble: Assemble are a London-based collective who work across the fields of art, design and architecture. They began working together in 2010 and are comprised of 18 members. Their practice focuses on exploring how places are made and employ a collaborative and interdependent approach to connect the public to the process. They were awarded the Turner Prize in 2015 for projects including the ongoing collaboration with local residents and others in the Granby Four Streets, Liverpool.

Simon Terrill: Simon Terrill is an Australian artist based in London. His work is a photographic and performance based engagement with groups, communities, crowds – and the spaces they occupy. As well as sculpture, video, drawing and installation work, his practice often takes the form of large-scale stage-managed events in his ongoing Crowd Theory project. In 2008 Terrill was awarded the Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship. Recent exhibitions include; *Nouns of Assembly*, Sutton Gallery Melbourne (2016), *South of the River: Crowd Theory*, National Portrait Gallery London (2016) and *Crowd Theory Thamesmead*, The Link Thamesmead (2017).



Selected elements

- 1 Reproduction of façade fragment taken from Robin Hood Gardens, 1966-72, Alison and Peter Smithson.
- 2 P– A ‘glitched’ portrait of Alison and Peter Smithson using imagery taken from the 1970 BBC documentary ‘The Smithsons on Housing’ which followed the architects through the construction of their housing project, Robin Hood Gardens.
- 3 Ceramic heads referencing techniques of intuition and chance developed by the Smithsons, Henderson and Paolozzi in their collaborative work.
- 4 “It’s as if we were a country of ostriches!” – Alison Smithson, paper collage printed on Hahnemühle Photograp, 109cm x 150cm, 2017. Constructed from Google image search, referencing dialogue from the 1970 BBC documentary ‘The Smithsons on Housing’ and Henderson’s ‘Head of Man’ (1956).
- 5 “You never know when a ruin, even a bit of wall, may come in handy” Alison Smithson as quoted in ‘A lyrical Architecture Appropriate to the City full of Holes’, 1977, type C print, 137x180cm, 2017. Quote inserted into tiff code before printing.
- 6 Four chairs – referencing photograph showing Nigel Henderson, Eduardo Paolozzi, Alison and Peter Smithson, seated in an unidentified street [c.1949 – c.1956]