

# EXHIBITION GUIDE

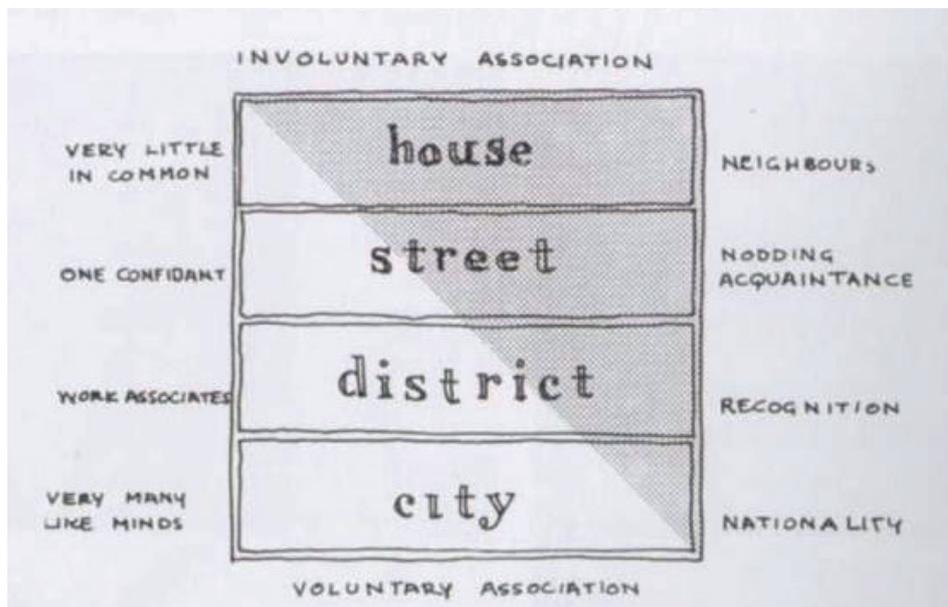
## Sophie Warren & Jonathan Mosley

A Nodding Acquaintance, 2017

'Any coming together is cluster  
– a new system of relationships.'  
Peter and Alison Smithson<sup>1</sup>

Alison and Peter Smithson were fascinated by the form and occupation of city streets, particularly those in the East End of London where everything from daily exchanges to street parties took place. The Smithsons were driven to facilitate these interactions and encounters through spatial design, creating 'cluster' housing blocks with 'streets in the air'.

*A Nodding Acquaintance* overlays a street party on the space of the gallery. A live, but unrecorded overhead view is presented, writing the viewer into the architectural plan. In this setting, visitors are invited to become active protagonists in a shifting choreography of objects, bodies and architecture. A timber structure for talking or idling whilst sitting, leaning or standing, is inspired both by the architectural plan of the 'streets in the air' within the Smithsons' cluster housing block, and furniture brought out into Victorian terrace streets as captured in Nigel Henderson's photographs of post-war East End street parties. Union Jack bunting, partially erased and dismantled, raises questions of the shifting values of nationhood and sovereignty between the post-war period and the present day.



*Hierarchy of  
Association, 1953*

The title, *A Nodding Acquaintance* is taken from the Smithsons' diagram 'Ordinariness and Light' as 'Hierarchy of Association' 1958. This was an illustration which summarizes their studies into voluntary and involuntary relations between people in houses, streets, districts and cities. They formulated the 'cluster' concept as the 'invention of an architecture that is structured by notions of association'<sup>2</sup>, applying the principle to the strident and monumental, yet ultimately un-built design for Golden Lane Estate in London. Warren and Mosley realise the cluster at another scale as a framework for the body, and continue the Smithsons' desire for architecture at all scales that engenders human relations.

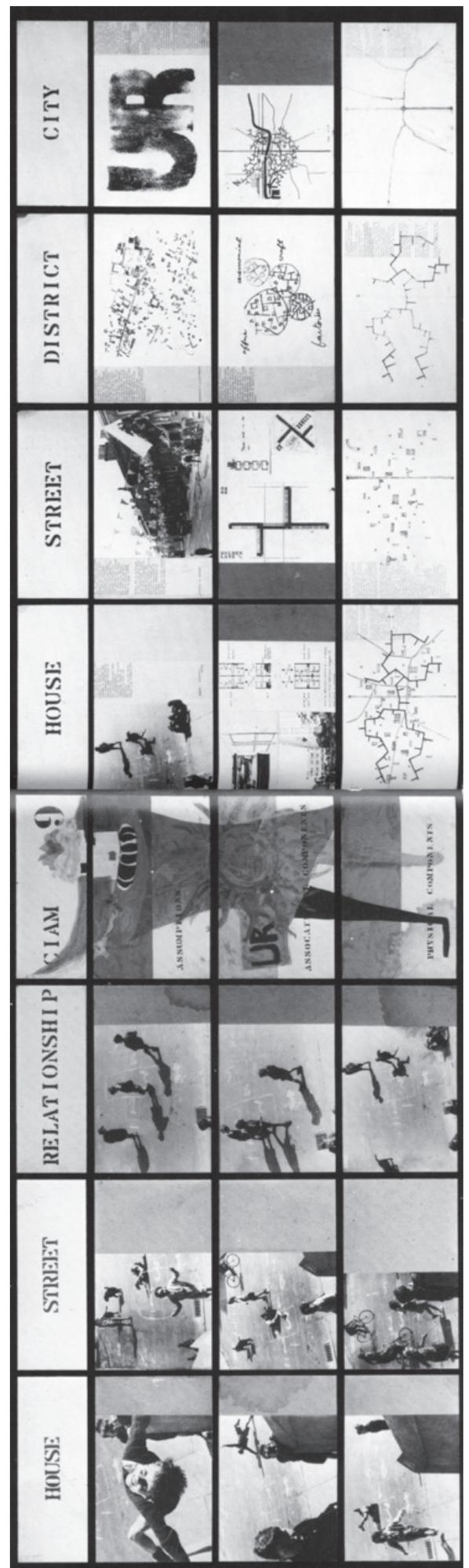
The Smithsons presented their diagram 'Hierarchy of Association' together with their 'Urban Re-Identification Grid' at Ciam 9, Aix-En-Provence, 1953. It was prepared with their colleagues at the Modern Architectural research group – Bill and Gill Howell, and served as an update to the Athens Charter published by Le Corbusier in 1943.

## Biography

Sophie Warren is an artist and Jonathan Mosley is an architect and Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of the West of England, Bristol, UK. Their work creates physical and imaginary architectural settings for occupation and negotiation by participants, generating a social choreography of movement, encounter and gesture. Previous projects include: *Rogue Game* (with Can Altay) a series of hybrid games forming solo exhibitions at Firstsite, Colchester (2015), Spike Island, Bristol (2012), Casco, Utrecht (2011) and event at The Showroom, London (2010); commission *Doing Things Separately Together* for Arnolfini, Bristol (2014); event series *Utopian talk-show line-up* at Santral Istanbul, Istanbul (2014), Moderna Museet, Malmö (2014), Eastside Projects, Birmingham (2013); publication 'Beyond Utopia' (Berlin: Errant Bodies Press, 2012) presenting a provocative planning application for an imaginary architectural vertical common for the City of London. In 2016 they were Institut français laureates at the Cité internationale des arts and are now artists in residence at the French Communist Party Headquarters in Paris developing their forthcoming project *Architecture of We*.

<sup>1</sup> Alison and Peter Smithson, 'The Charged Void: Urbanism' (New York: Monacelli Press, 2005) pp32

<sup>2</sup> Alison and Peter Smithson, 'Ordinariness and Light' (London: Faber & Faber, 1970) pp11



Urban Re-Identification Grid, 1953