

Press Release 16 June 2010

Secret Garden Project

an up projects production



The Secret Garden Project continues to grow...

Last month, **up projects** launched the **Secret Garden Project** - a new pan-London programme of temporary commissions and pop up art events by young and established artists created especially for a trail of London's secret gardens, lesser known green spaces, and urban corners.

This varied programme of sculpture, performance, planting projects, artists' walks and literary works taps into environmental themes; creating new habitats for wildlife, revealing the parks' ecological characteristics, and bringing a touch of green to greyer sites around the capital.

The first commission to launch on 29 May was the *Mobile Picnic Pavilion* by artist **Francis Thorburn** - a mobile vegetable patch and picnic area that travelled Islington's streets pulled by a merry band of performing gardeners. On 6 June the *Mobile Picnic Pavilion* made its second outing at St Luke's Community Centre where visitors could picnic upon this unusual mobile green space and talk with the artist.

July highlights...

Throughout July there is a rich line up of new commissions and art events across two central London boroughs.

On **Sunday 4 July** the nomadic *Mobile Picnic Pavilion* tours once more from St Luke's Community Centre on Central Street EC1V to Highbury Fields N1 as part of Islington's cultural festival *Go Islington*, where it will provide an entertaining luncheon experience for festival visitors from 12.30 onwards. The pavilion procession sets off from St Luke's at 11am. Free to attend.

From July onwards, artist **Margot Bannerman** will create *Bee Stops*, a green roof along the balcony of a parade of shops that provides a raised meadow of resilient nectar rich wild flowers for bees on Holloway Road, near Archway. The garden-inspired commission will be in place until the end of September.

From **5th July until 31 July**, **Shane Waltener** will create *The Hanging Garlands of Tibby Place*, an ongoing weaving project around the iron work ruins of the former Tibberton Baths in Tibby Place, off Greenman Street, N1. Waltener will create a 'hanging garden' throughout the month, with participatory workshops and drop in sessions for members of the public to contribute to the web-like structure which will also house plants in hand-made hanging baskets. On **Thursday 15 July**, a dance troupe will create a May-pole style performance specially for Tibby Place from 6pm-8pm as part of a wider event on Greenman Street celebrating the opening of the new SPACE Studios at Peabody Yard. Free to attend.

Art and architecture collective **London Fieldworks** will launch *Pleasure Garden for Birds* across two locations in Islington and Chelsea; in Duncan Terrace Gardens, Islington N1 on **12 July**, and Cremorne Gardens off Links Road, Chelsea SW10 on **19 July**. London Fieldworks are developing a sculptural 'habitat' for both sites that will contribute to the lifecycle of birds. The sculptures will reflect the forms of the surrounding local architecture; a combination of Georgian town houses and 1960's social housing. On **Tuesday 27 July**, the project Writer in Residence **Sarah Butler** will present a story walk event at Cremorne Gardens responding to the *Pleasure Garden for Birds* and inviting creative responses from the public. 12.00 – 2.00 and 2.00 – 4pm.

Later in the year, **Tony Heywood** will create a horticultural installation called *000*, a secret garden for an area on Caledonian Road, Islington; and Writer in Residence, **Sarah Butler** will continue an ongoing series of literary works are being developed for the **Secret Garden Project** website.

The **Secret Garden Project** is curated by **Emma Underhill** and **Sarah B Davies** and will evolve across different London Boroughs from May 2010 onwards. For 2010 we are working in partnership with **Islington Council** as well as the **Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea** as part of their *InTRANSIT Festival*.

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www.secretgardenproject.co.uk



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Notes to Editors

The Secret Garden Project is one in a series of ongoing 'Park Art' projects developed and produced by UP Projects. Building on the success of UP Projects' *Portavilion*, which began in four major Central London parks in 2008 and continues in 2010 (www.portavilion.com); Secret Garden Project focuses on London's lesser known green spaces including hidden gems such as Cremorne Gardens in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and Tibbey Place in Islington, with new, artist's commissions and site specific projects of varying scales that respond to the ecological and historical context of the sites and raise awareness of the ecological and social value of green spaces in city life. The Secret Garden Project is curated by Emma Underhill, Founding Director of UP Projects and Sarah B Davies, Assistant Curator UP Projects.

up projects believes in challenging perceptions of what public art can be. Operating as if a gallery without walls, they are inspired by the complexities of the public realm to create a programme of artists' commissions, projects, strategies and multi-disciplinary events for a broad public audience. Since their first project in 2002, their work has consistently attracted considerable public attention. www.upprojects.com

Francis Thorburn is a London based emerging artist who has been developing ambitious, sculptural vehicles to form a series of works called the *Alternative Transport Network*. Since graduating from Camberwell in 2008, he has developed work with Hannah Barry Gallery and The House of Fairytales.

London Fieldworks is a London-based collective formed in 2000 by artists Bruce Gilchrist and Jo Joelson as an umbrella organisation for creative research and collaboration at the art, science and technology intersection. Typically, their projects engage with the notion of ecology as a complex inter-working of social, natural, and technological worlds. www.londonfieldworks.com

Shane Waltener lives and works in London and operates within the crossover between craft and fine art practice. He has exhibited works internationally and developed a broad range of collaborative projects both for gallery contexts and public spaces. www.shanewaltener.com

Tony Heywood is an installation artist who creates horticultural, garden-inspired installations in unexpected locations, including neglected urban corners and indoor spaces. Once the Head Gardener for the Hyde Park Estates, Heywood is now a widely exhibiting artist receiving a variety of international awards and commissions. www.tonyheywood.com

Sarah Butler writes about people and the relationships between them; inspired by unexpected meetings and complicated interactions, places and people's relationship to the places they live, work and breathe in. As well as writing, she runs a consultancy called UrbanWords which manages literature based projects that engage with the process of urban regeneration. www.urbanwords.org.uk and <http://secretgardenproject.wordpress.com/>

Islington Council's Greening the Grey strategy is a scheme to "blur the boundaries of the park" taking the green into a variety of other spaces. It offers an innovative approach to tackling climate change and creates an interesting contribution to the green spaces debate. www.islington.gov.uk

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's InTRANSIT Festival is a summer programme of interventions, performances and commissions which will animate streets, parks, neglected and forgotten spaces from 19 to 1 August 2010. Events are suitable for all ages and range from self-led trails and podcast guides through to artist led walks. www.rbkc.gov.uk/intransit

Margot Bannerman is a practicing artist and senior lecturer at the Byam Shaw School of Art at the Byam Shaw at Central St Martins (University of the Arts London.) She is currently engaged in research into vertical growing in urban contexts.