‘Works from the Archive’
An Exhibition of Paintings by Will Alsop

Statement

It is a great opportunity to show some work from the archive in a gallery that is local to my home town. The work on show has some of this town in it even though it explores other towns and visions which belong to other places. Northampton is part of my archive.

This was a town where I first became aware I wanted to become an architect. This was a town that taught me to draw - Henry Bird, George Donnelly, Frank Cryer and Tom Robinson.

This was a town I learnt about sculpture - Malcom Pollard.

This was the town of my first job - Rex Bryan.

This was a town that shaped a large part of me.

This was the town.

Review

Who was it who said 'you can't do that'? Certainly not Will Alsop, thats for sure. If you find him difficult to pin down then your on the way to discovering just a little bit of the magic and unexpected mystery this man is capable of bringing into your lives. Architects are generally thought of as being somewhat dour creatures - a little like the grey image of poor old John Major depicted in 'Spitting Image', pushing peas aimlessly around his plate. Well, Will Alsop belongs to an alternative breed of thinkers and doers - an elite band of famous like minded people whose sole reason for living, it seems, is to introduce us mere mortals to a new and exciting approach to design. Then there is the additional benefit of actually being able to live and work within their creations.

Possibly the most important and enduring quality of Will’s constructions is that they contain pretty much all of the vitality of the first sketched idea. Very little is lost throughout that difficult journey from sketchbook to finished building, even though thousands of mundane structural decisions must have been made in order for them to exist at all. The freshness of his designs continue to shine out and exude a sort of cheeky humanity that embraces us all.

How does Will achieve this? Perhaps the answer lies somewhere within the great breadth of his interests from his undoubted talent of interacting with people on the outside of his profession and his sponge like ability to absorb any kind of information, however irrelevant, and store it in that cavernous library within his head where, in company with many thousands of other observations, it will remain until needed for the next visual experiment.

Not for Will is the traditional architects environment with drawing board and computer terminals. His 'office', is quite simply an artists studio in which you are surrounded by a cacophony of ideas. Sketches, photographs, paintings, models and sculpture are the only furniture allowed in this space. Sometimes, all to infrequently, a collection of Will's ideas manages to detach itself from the studio and find its way to a public gallery. Such a rare event is about to occur in Will’s home town of Northampton where Sue Brooks, the owner and curator of the beautiful Jgallery in Moulton, is about to show a series of seventeen of Will’s large paintings from 14th. September through to January 2008.

This is truly an extraordinary show where the complete gallery is literally filled to bursting point with his work. You have an overwhelming feeling of walking through an open door into Will’s mind and having the privilege of sharing his creative breath. This is an exhibition that has to be seen. Will has opened the door and it is beholden to all of us to enter his world and enjoy every moment.

Brian Dunstone

‘Works from the Archive’ at the Jgallery, 25 West Street, Moulton. from 14th. September to January 2008