

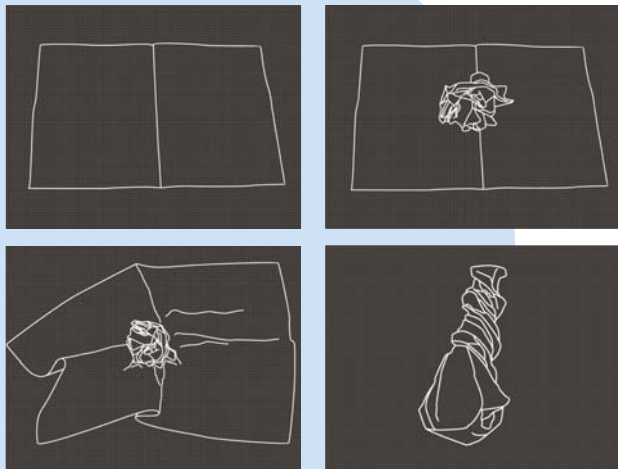
ART at LSE

The lost horizon – a work in progress.

This, and the front cover image, are the result of joint work so far between artists Matthew Cornford and David Cross, Stephen Emmott of LSE's Business Systems and Services division, and Irina Sidelnikova and Matt Spittle of American Express Financial Services Europe Ltd. The images were produced using Bryce 5 (Corel) with materials from Bruce MacLeod (Watchful Eye). The peaks are the values of a share through time, while movement left or right is a function of how the stock's value has changed. The final screensaver image will be available on LSE's PC screens in early 2003.

In 2000 the School established Art at LSE, an initiative to enrich the student and staff experience through more cultural and artistic events and connections, and promote the interaction between a laboratory of the social sciences and various forms of art application. The programme aims to encompass permanent art commissions as well as temporary artworks, exhibitions and events at the School. It also reflects a growing trend of artists working away from traditional gallery spaces, and collaboratively with other disciplines.

Two years on, four art projects are reaching completion. **Ben Eastop**, Art at LSE coordinator for the projects, explains more.



Illustrations from Cleo Broda's *Missile Construction Manual for the LSE* – a handbook of opinion-expressing objects.

We began with the intention of involving people at the School in contemporary art through a series of artists' residencies – professional artists coming in and working with LSE staff to develop their ideas. Many artists these days are looking at society from very particular and unusual perspectives, so they could potentially benefit from contact with academics working in these fields.

The other strand of the art programme was to integrate art into the physical environment of the campus through various estates improvements underway, collaborating with architects and engineers to create unique places at the School which are aesthetically and intellectually stimulating.

So how did we start? London-based artist Cleo Broda and two internationally established artists Matthew Cornford and David Cross, who have worked as the partnership of Cornford & Cross for ten years, were selected as artists in residence, as part of the UK Arts Council's Year of the Artist 2000-01, with a grant from London Arts.

Cornford and Cross researched a number of options before focusing on an interest in the language of finance and how this is often visually articulated through advertising with images of mountain peaks and outdoor pursuits.

David Cross explained: 'References to mountains are often made by financial commentators describing the success and failure, ascent and descent, of market activity. The concepts of risk and security in trading are often visualised in commercial images of heroic individuals taking risks, conquering the heights of some unspoiled wilderness, in a way which corresponds to the recent expansion of mountaineering as an aspirational lifestyle statement.'

Working with the School's Business Systems and Services team and sponsors American Express, Cornford and Cross have created a virtual landscape of mountain ranges, using 3D software from economic data following a number of stocks. The landscape evolves each day as the stock market changes and a new screensaver version will soon be downloadable on to computer terminals via the LSE network.

The project will be launched this spring in the School's new Student Services Centre, and the screensaver will be available on all LSE computers for a year.

Cleo Broda's research has resulted in proposals for a book, *Missile Construction Manual for the LSE – a handbook of opinion-expressing objects*. Through a series of interviews with staff and students, she has created a collection of designs for objects that express people's views. The idea was triggered by the spectacle of LSE students hurling paper missiles at speakers in LSE Union General Meetings as a way of expressing their opinions.

Meanwhile, Ruth MacLennan spent a year as artist in residence at the archives of the Library, funded through the Leverhulme Trust. She used the residency to speculate on possible roles for artists in institutions, finding and redefining temporary spaces for discussion and for making art. She began her residency with an exhibition in the Library, *The Archives Project: Part 1*, which included a video of interviews with the School's archivists, a poster and a graphic assemblage of diagrams and drawings from the archives. The exhibition explored the structure of the archive as a memory retrieval system that is both a subjective construct and under the sway of institutional concerns and obligations. In a subsequent video, *Dialogue #3 (That's not for me to say)*, an actor paces around the Director's Dining Room at LSE waiting for a meeting to convene. In the video, extreme emotions erupt despite the constraints of official language and the mechanisms of control in the workplace.

This work resulted in participation in a symposium and exhibition, *Potential: ongoing archive*, curated by Anna Harding, at John Hansard Gallery in Southampton, and then at TENT, in Rotterdam. As part of her residency, Ruth organised a series of well-attended and fascinating artists' talks on campus, Out of the Archives, featuring artists Volker Eichelmann, David Mabb, Richard Wentworth (now dean of Ruskin School of Art) and Monica Ross. Through Ruth's initiative, Art at LSE joined with LSE's Cities Programme to screen Patrick Keiller's film *Disappointed Dwelling*. Patrick Keiller also attended and spoke after the film to a capacity audience in the Hong Kong Theatre.

All the artists in residence have now completed their tenures. The result of Ruth MacLennan's and Cleo Broda's residencies will be shown in spring 2003.

Finally, artist Bruce Allan has collaborated with MJP architects on the design of the new John Watkins Plaza outside the Library. Bruce's intervention is a series of lines 'drawn' in blue LED lighting strips across the plaza, defining the space as in a map drawing and influencing the orientation of the features, which include a new café. Construction of the plaza is now in its final phase.

For Art at LSE information, contact Gabi Lombardo on +44 (0)20 7955 6444.

To find out more about the Cornford and Cross screensaver, see www.lse.ac.uk/art ■



Photographs from 'Proposal For a New Industrial Psychology in Practice' by Ruth MacLennan and Bridget Crone, artists' project for The Office of Utopic Procedures.