

Ali Eisa

They had to do it by their hands

Vilniaus g. 31, Vilnius 01402, (LITHUANIA)

2 – 8 July 2015

They had to do it by their hands is an exhibition of new work by Ali Eisa produced during his time as artist-in-residence at Rupert, center for Art and Education. Having recently completed an MA in Visual Sociology at Goldsmiths, University of London, Ali has been using unconventional (and conventional) means of sociological study to explore, expand, complicate and re-imagine cultures of 'making'.

Ali's interrogation of 'making' encompasses not only the physical construction of goods but also the production of communities, structures and ideas that shape society. *They had to do it by their hands* both presents, integrates and challenges the processes by which futures are understood and shaped. These works question existing narratives and design possible alternatives blurring the distinctions between art and non-art activities, objects and communities, professional and amateur contexts. Ultimately the role of making and its possible uses is pushed beyond the futures dictated by predefined aesthetics and ideas of contemporary art, technology and information.

Projected onto a large chipboard screen at the center of the exhibition is a film focusing on the activities surrounding Rupert in its many uses as a 'cultural incubator', most specifically the construction of Laure Prouvost's *Burrow Me*, a public art commission dug using rudimentary building techniques into the building's grounds. Subjects, or characters, of the film include the architects and self-described engineers involved in the production the tunnel alongside a cast of service staff and conference attendees and other inhabitants of the building as well as the camera's own omnipresent first-person narrator, the artist-in-residence.

Reframed behind this is a selection of instructional cartoons of how to construct and dig a swimming pool taken from a do-it-yourself manual found by coincidence at a local market. These mirror the technique used for the tunnel construction. The manual continues to instruct the user on lawn maintenance to complete the utopic home swimming environment. These continue onto the gallery's left wall next to a selection of illustrated instructions detailing how to construct your own tools at home

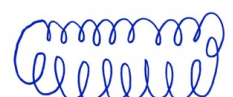
Mounted to the ceiling by copper pipes is a *HD Vision Visor*, again sourced from a local market, inviting visitors to view the exhibition in high definition day or night.

Opposite is a series of artifacts, both made and appropriated, ranging from a cast of the artist's foot made using an online tutorial (and an cast of his knee using the same technique yet with the absence of YouTube's guidance) to a *face roller* – as seen on TV!

Alongside this a second, higher plinth displays a series of casts taken from the anthropomorphic head of a mannequin, a literal embodiment of the post-human possibilities of technological integration. *Soap Magic* ("the hands free soap dispenser") is placed on a concrete cast that recalling the shape and material of *Burrow Me*. Uniting these found objects is overbearing planned obsolescence, as sense of technology for technologies sake, antiquated at best and useless at worse, even at the time of their conception

Amongst the rubble of the exhibition's construction and remains of the space's previous tenants found in the gallery's storage cupboard, a cheap radio, as used in outdoor DIY situations, plays sound clips from a USB drive. The recordings document a workshop Ali organized at the Vilnius *Technarium* (a hack-space) where participants considered the possibilities and role of technology in shaping the future.

A selection of Ali's research material from Rupert as well as previous related projects is available to view at the gallery's desk.



Ali Eisa (b.1987) is half of **Lloyd Corporation** (with Sebastian Lloyd Rees). He graduated with an MA in Visual Sociology in 2013 and a BA in Fine Art Practice in 2010, both Goldsmiths, University of London. Recent exhibitions of Ali's work include Mirror City (curated by Stephanie Rosenthal), Hayward Gallery, London (2014)**, This is Visual Sociology, Goldsmiths, London, Austerity & the Body, Autotalia South East, London (2014)*, Flow (with Eric Bell and Kristoffer Frick), Peles Empire, London (2014)**, Competing Temporalities, Carlos/Ishikawa, London (2013)**, Consume, Henry Kinman Gallery, London (2013), When People are Silent Stones Speak, GIG, Copenhagen, Denmark (2012)* ** and Speak, Memory, N/V Projects, London (2012)**.

*denotes solo.

**denotes collaboration as Lloyd Corporation.

Emalin is Leopold Thun and Jasmine Picot-Chapman, two friends living and working in London, UK. This exhibition marks the culmination of an on-going collaborative project between Emalin and Rupert contrasting and combining commercial art practice with Rupert's institutional residency.

We are located inside the arcade at Vilniaus g, 31, Vilnius 01402, Lithuania. Open times: July 2 – 8, 12 – 6pm. Trouble finding us? Please call [+447753362658](tel:+447753362658)

→ www.emalin.co.uk

→ www.rupert.lt

