

## ***glimmers in limbo: Tramway***

**Visitor interviews conducted in Tramway on 16 and 17 February 2008**

### **On interventions in Tramway 1**

'[They] built this wall and it kind of has no purpose but it's still here.'

'[It's] interesting to look behind where you're not meant to go. [I] got the impression of what it was like to be an artist, to prepare.'

'[We] felt more comfortable once we'd worked out that no one was going to come on and perform to us.'

'You're kind of standing back going "right, should we actually walk in here or not? Is somebody going to come in and tell us off"? [...] There are people sitting watching as if something's going to happen.'

'The lighting down the side of it masks the edge [of the projection] and sort of brings it back into the solidity of the wall.'

'[It's] an interesting navigation through technology again. [A] journey through technology and that older technology and newer digital technology. [It's] not demanding you to wonder how they did it.'

'It's like a big mirror of everything really. It's a mirror image of where the audience should be. They're onstage rather than backstage.'

'And here again – what seems on one level a sort of simple idea – it's just really clever. It just makes you think about a whole range of different aspects. So, that would make me more encouraged to come and see other types of exhibition – to see if I'd the same experience. [...] So I want to bring people here. I want to talk to them about it and give them that enthusiasm that I'm feeling.'

'The projection of the back of the Brook wall [...] I don't know – I don't really understand that one. I think, as well, I get the impression that they kind of want to show the backstage area of Tramway but because Tramway's not a traditional theatre a lot of the time things are stripped away. The spectator often sees cables and cherry pickers anyway. So, I don't really understand that.'

'Yeh, it's really interesting. Yeh, it was a good experience with the projection here. To me, um, there's a certain loneliness [...] rawness [...] like letting you see the skeleton of the physical site.'

## **On interventions in Tramway 2**

'It's fun. It's got humour – even though it's a serious piece [...] Trundling along the tramlines recreates the sound of the trams. [It's] nice to have a laugh at art.'

'[I] kind of noticed the tracks on the floor but never really thought about it.'

'Amazing. Unusual. [I] stood for ages just watching other people [...] thinking "how does that work?" [It gave] the impression of travelling and of being on a tram. It was definitely the impression of travelling or the view you get from sitting in public transport – seeing the view going past or being stationary for a while and other things moving.'

'Pushing the trolleys up and down was good fun.'

'It's got such an atmosphere with the sound. And there's just something so pleasurable about pushing as well. Like we get to interact with it. And just how you can stop the images. It's such a satisfying experience. And the shadows of the people when they overlap [...] It's really nice to think about the space and the history of it. Really nice to see places that you walk past everyday in this way [...] It makes you think, "oh – that was there."'

'It makes you think about a different way of looking at places that you know. [...] I like [...] all the different street names. Some of them are new and some of them are old and the buildings that they're stuck on are all very different. [...] Some of them look like they've been there for ever and are falling off – and some of them are brand new.'

'[It] feels very empty. Very different to how you would normally experience it.'

'I really like this. I like the sound. I like the way it all works together. I grew up in Glasgow. I don't live here – but I grew up here. I came here years ago when it was a museum. [...] It's really nice seeing something about such an interesting building and seeing the way the building's changed.'

'It was fun. [...] You watch it and you see and recognise places. I spent - y'know, I think it was a good fifteen minutes – pushing the trolleys up and down. So I really enjoyed that. It was great. I would have quite liked it if you could kind of re-wind by going backwards. Or also this thing that as you're pushing sometimes you're going with the movement [...] and then you're going against the movement. The sound is really great. As you're doing it you get this real tramway kind of sound.'

'[It's] quite humorous [...] pushing up and down. The beat changes as well. I really loved the mechanism – that people have to be moving to be able to see [...] The way it's breaking it down – it all allows them to very directly engage with that experience [...] Also, the photographs and signage on the wall. I really liked that. At first I looked at it and thought " hmmm..." Then just slowly following it along and also just seeing the history contained within those images and the development and the changing city within those images – cause it's just this little signage but it's on a particular type of wall and it's got a particular feel to it. It's just that [there's] a real sense of pacing throughout the city and pacing of change. [There's] a sense of engagement with the piece but also engagement with the city. [...] That rumbling sound [...] it's really very similar to the kind of trucks [...] Tramway 2 is quite hard to fill, in a sense, but these three sort of carts in a way fill that entire space. And it's really quite interesting just to walk in and potentially the space is empty apart from these carts and projections – it's actually very dynamic in that sense. I'm very into seeing advanced technology used in a very quiet way. It's not screaming about it. It's just happening in a certain way in front of you. I quite like not seeing the strings.'

'I'm afraid I'm a bit disappointed [...] in the films - the way the trolleys look – the way the technology works.'

'It's quite interesting. The way you interact as you work out what's going on. [It] gradually becomes more familiar so you approach it and go "ooh what's this, should we be here?" and then gradually you work your way in, which I quite like. It's almost like performance art, not just visual art. Everyone becomes like a performer. Which is what a lot of the stuff here's been about. If you think about it, making these trams [...] then the museum here – generations of Glasgow kids coming to the museum and now this. I think the sound is fabulous. I like the way the projections cross over. Even my father who's eighty-odds found it really interesting.'

'Trying to spot whereabouts in Glasgow. You recognise places.'

'It's a road I've been up and down many, many times. [...] I would take the bus and I would walk it and I would cycle it. I think it's interesting because of the fact that it's a historical route. [...] It's obviously a contemporary representation of a historical route and how [it] changes and stuff. I mean even this is probably historical. It's summertime. [...] Say, for example, the people standing outside the pub. They wouldn't be doing that as much just now – the weather's not really right for it. There's a difference – the green in the trees. So, for me it's a memory even though it's quite recent. [...] One of the things that's interesting about it is, for me, coming from Glasgow and travelling quite a lot on these routes. I don't drive so I take public transport a lot on these routes and they're still the same. The main bus routes are similar to what these would have been even then. But it's interesting – one of the things it really makes me think about is how broken the urban fabric of Glasgow is. That really comes through. [...] There's these three main routes and then how often it breaks into a very fractured urban kind of landscape. I think it's something about memory and city which is complicated because if you live in the countryside or you live in one part of the city everybody kind of knows it. In the city everybody will have their own personal interpretation. But in a city like – so many people don't know each other so we can't share and form an understanding of the same place. I'm a town planner. So a lot of this stuff – the historical map, the evolution of the different areas - the relationship between the tram route and [...] One of the things about Glasgow [...] is how much it's structured around these arterial routes. So the historical development – the space around these tram routes - is still really important even though we've got motorways and cars. If you look at where all the centres and communities are – where the old areas that people remember are [it's] still the way many people feel about the city – it's still dictated by these arterial routes. They really structure the city and they really structure people's minds as well because this is what you see. [...] Like the facades – that's what you move along – like canals or something.'

'People will come into this exhibition and move up and down and everyone's going on the same route. There's something great about that.'

'If you think about how people live in the city, there's such a diversity of experience. One of the things that I find in my work is that people who drive a car – their mode of transport is the car – and people who don't have a car it's like a massively different way of experiencing the city. The bus is a true public space. You have no determination who's going to be sharing that. You get a fixed route but every time is different. There's a different society in the bus than the wider world. There's a different social strata of people, [a] different ethnic mix in the bus. [...] So there's something about that in it as well – about public transport, traces that were there. Old people in Glasgow really are nostalgic about trams. And we got rid of them. [...] There's a lot in it.'

'I think this kind of work is really accessible and interesting. Some of the things [I find] a bit esoteric – not particularly accessible for people. So, but, the moving image next door is just absolutely brilliant. It's a superb piece of art. You could go and spend time there and, y'know, experience the whole of it over again in different ways.'

'The pushing carts [...] I enjoyed a lot. I liked it. "How do you say?" Yeh, it touches me – deeply, deeply. [...] It's kind of visceral. Equips me to [know] the Glasgow sort of culture and identity. I would say I feel I know Glasgow a bit more through the work. There are road signs, images and the moving images which are interactive with the viewer so you are, like, engaging with the artwork as if you are driving the car. Pushing it giving the [...] view of Glasgow.'

'At first we thought "God, this is a very big space – there's not much work in it". We didn't realise. [...] Interacting with the work in the space you become a bit more involved, don't you? It makes you look – interact, I suppose, really with the history of this place – kind of using the tracks and stuff. [...] I wasn't really looking at the images I was looking at the effects and how fast and slow it went. [...] I suppose it's quite good from a tourist point of view because you wouldn't normally see kind of the outskirts 'cause when you come into the city it's just the city centre that you see. [...] The street names as well. I mean they mean nothing to me, but what struck me was the different architecture on each one. [I] kind of get a whole idea of what the city's like from those names. Don't bother with a bus tour, just come to Tramway!'

### **On interventions Throughout the Ground Floor**

'I loved exploring the building [...] the way the lines led you places you might not normally go.'

### **On Tramway**

'I wouldn't have looked at the place twice from the outside. [...] Inside it's really wonderful.'