

# TINA



Cranford  
Collection

**Wed 8 Oct** (Private view)

18.00 – 18.30 Writer John Barlow in conversation with Olivia Plender, as part of Goldin+Senneby's project 'Gone Offshore'

19.15 – 19.45 'Prairial, Year 215' – a performance by Melanie Gilligan

**Sat 11 Oct**

14.30 'Prairial, Year 215' – a performance by Melanie Gilligan

15.00 Kim Einarsson (a freelance curator based in Berlin who has worked for a range of Swedish art institutions) in conversation with the artists

**Petra Bauer, Pablo Bronstein,  
Melanie Gilligan, Goldin+Senneby,  
Anja Kirschner, Ciprian Mureşan,  
Olivia Plender**

Conceived by Olivia Plender

9 October – 30 November 2008

Wed – Sun 12.00 – 18.00

Private view Wed 8 Oct 18.00 – 20.30

## TINA

In the 1980s Margaret Thatcher made the notorious statement 'There is no alternative' ('TINA' for short), which is often coupled with another famous declaration by the former British Prime Minister, 'There is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families'.

*TINA* is a project initiated by Olivia Plender that will take the form of a touring group exhibition, a seminar and eventually a publication (co-edited with Kim Einarsson). The exhibition begins at The Drawing Room, in the east end of London, less than a mile from London's financial district, known as 'the City'. Using this locality as a starting point, the aim of the project is to challenge the clearly hegemonic intent of Thatcher's statement 'TINA' and examine the contradictory relationship between capitalism and the idea of liberty from a historical perspective. Working in a wide range of media, from performance and film to text and drawing, the artists in the exhibition will explore how the 1980s renewal of the puritan creed of individualism has subsequently permeated all corners of everyday experience and social relations, from the global banking system to cultural production and the narration of history.

'Future historians may well look upon the years 1978 – 80 as a revolutionary turning point in the world's social and economic history', states anthropologist David Harvey in the introduction to his book *A Brief History of Neo-Liberalism*. The causes that he goes on to cite, in chronological order, are Deng Xiaoping taking the first steps towards liberalization of China's communist ruled economy in 1978, Paul Volcker taking command of the US federal reserve and Margaret Thatcher's election as British Prime Minister in 1979 followed by Ronald Reagan as President of the United States in 1980.

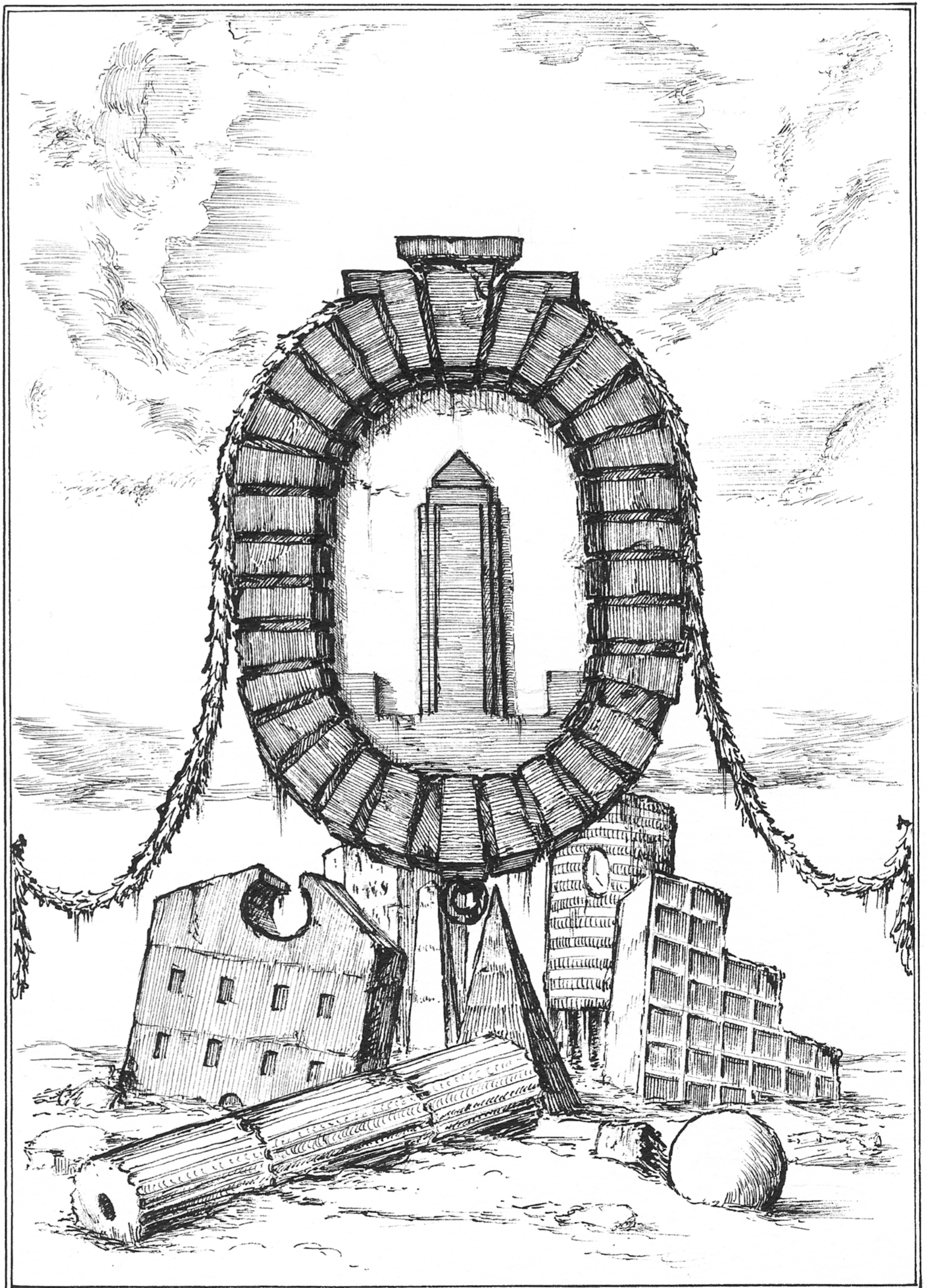
During this brief two-year period neo-liberalism, a previously marginal economic doctrine (known in the nineteenth century as *laissez-faire*), shifted from the wings to centre stage. Henceforth, according to Thatcher and Reagan, the role of government was to be strictly limited to protecting private property, free markets and free trade, heralding a new era of individualism. The ideas of Milton Friedman replaced Keynesian economic theory, which in the West had created the climate for the historic compromise between capitalism and communism in the twentieth century that was social democracy. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1980s, as has been well documented in Harvey's book and elsewhere, believers in free market capitalism had cause for celebration, whilst the underlying meaning of Thatcher's 'TINA' would appear to have been fulfilled.

The phrase 'the individual' in its modern sense dates from the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century, following the Protestant Reformation. In England 'City doctrine', as the puritan ethic of self-help and individualism was then termed, began to spread throughout society (as more of the country was brought into a single market) and was subsequently exported around the world as England began to pursue a policy of colonial expansion in America, India and elsewhere.

Today 'the City' is home to both the Bank of England and the London Stock Exchange, financial institutions that were created by the Dutch Protestant William of Orange, following the 'bloodless' Glorious Revolution of 1688. As the new King he oversaw both the birth of parliamentary democracy and the importation of the Dutch system of a national public debt. With the new financial innovations, long-term bonds could easily be bought and sold and for the first time it was possible for the government to raise large sums, with 'imaginary money' (a seventeenth century name for credit) kick-starting the age of empire building.

Amongst the many changes that have occurred as a result of the more recent 'revolutionary turning point', in the UK we

CONTINUED OVERLEAF



Pablo Bronstein, 'Canary Wharf', 2006, ink on paper, 26.8 x 23 cm. Courtesy Herald St, London

CONTINUED FROM OVERLEAF

can include the restructuring of the economy by Thatcher's Conservative party (and the subsequent New Labour government). The immense expansion of the role of finance capital in the global economy in the last decade and the deregulation of the financial markets has led to a renewed importance of 'the City', as the financial services have become one of the UK's major industries. But with capital increasingly circulating through immaterial companies incorporated in secretive tax havens offshore and the recent innovations in the derivatives market (currently under scrutiny) apparently divorced from any connection with underlying assets, 'the City' has become an increasingly elusive space dealing in fictional value.



Petra Bauer, 'Deleted Swedish stories', 2008, performance lecture, Gasworks, London

## Petra Bauer

As part of the second phase of *TINA*, at the Hatton Gallery in Newcastle, Petra Bauer will develop and update her performative lecture *Deleted Swedish Stories*, in which she argues that societies are to a large extent constructed on information that has been consciously hidden, forgotten or overlooked by history. Such discussion can be applied to any society, but Bauer draws on events from the 1960s and 1970s in Sweden in order to make parallels with situations unfolding in the present day. In a previous version of the lecture she used, as an example, the disappearance of a scene from the Swedish film print of 'The Battle of Algiers', which was imported in 1967. The missing footage focuses on the ideological reason as to why the Algerian National Liberation Front used violence during the struggle for independence from the French. Since the film was never censored, the logical conclusion is that the company importing it removed the scene. Bauer discusses how this act can be read and analysed, and how it can be related to other tendencies in Swedish society of that time. In her opinion every action, which in these specific instances aim at deleting, suppressing or marginalising events, can be connected to prevailing ideological convictions in both present and past Swedish society. The updated version of this lecture will include recent trans-national examples.

## Olivia Plender

Olivia Plender will present *Set Sail for the Levant* a board game inspired by the 16th century Royal Game of the Goose. This social satire reflects the fortunes and misfortunes of the commoner through the centuries: players face the various perils and opportunities that come their way in their historical journey, from agrarian society to the cities of the Industrial Revolution and post industrial society structured around a knowledge economy. Equipped with dice, cards and counters, the commoners are initially expelled from their land by enclosures and forced to migrate to the city. The aim of the game is



Olivia Plender, 'Bring Back Robin Hood', 2008, video

In the early modern period the new spirit of individualism was evident in the cultural sphere with the development of more realistic portraiture and sculpture, just as the neo-imperialist culture of the industrial nineteenth century gave birth to the novel form and the historical narrative in which emphasis was placed on the importance of subjectivity to historical time. Alongside the more concrete economic outcomes that impact on daily life, the renewal of 'City doctrine' has undoubtedly had an effect on the symbolic order and modes of representation. Based in the UK, Sweden and Romania, the artists in the exhibition will explore these effects from different geographical vantage points and multiple historical perspectives.

## Pablo Bronstein

Pablo Bronstein will show drawings from his recent publication *Postmodern Architecture in London* in which he charts the rise of PoMo as the preferred architectural style of the Thatcher era. The drawings document how Post-Modern architecture has been used to manipulate a sense of scale and history in the English capital, through the re-appearance in the 1980s of such architectural conventions as the façade and the piazza. What is highlighted here is disguised private space, with the look and appearance of the 'public' or 'civic', trumpeting the heritage and dignity of banking but ever haunted by the fear of economic crash. These works will be accompanied by a film, also by Bronstein, focusing on the Bank of England's neo-classical façade designed by the architect John Soane.

IMAGE OVERLEAF



Ciprian Mureșan, 'Pioneer', 2005–2008, lithograph, 29 x 21 cm. Courtesy Kontainer Gallery, Los Angeles

to seek education, money and land in order to make a fortune and win a social position. However, despite the players attempts to organize their labour power into unions and incite a revolution, they are repeatedly forced into debt by the banking system and so ultimately the game is impossible to win without resorting to criminality.

## Melanie Gilligan

Melanie Gilligan is an artist and writer based in London. For *TINA* she will present a performance titled *Prairial, Year 215* a dramatic dialogue exploring the aesthetics of politics, the politics of aesthetics and the political economy of both. The inherently theatrical character of modern representational democracy is dissected (like a corpse), then reanimated by a shot of Rancièrian partage. Counterposing the French Revolution (financial bubble and great art) to the current hedge fund revolution (financial bubble and great artmarket), the sensible is redistributed, but there is still not enough to go round.

## Ciprian Mureșan

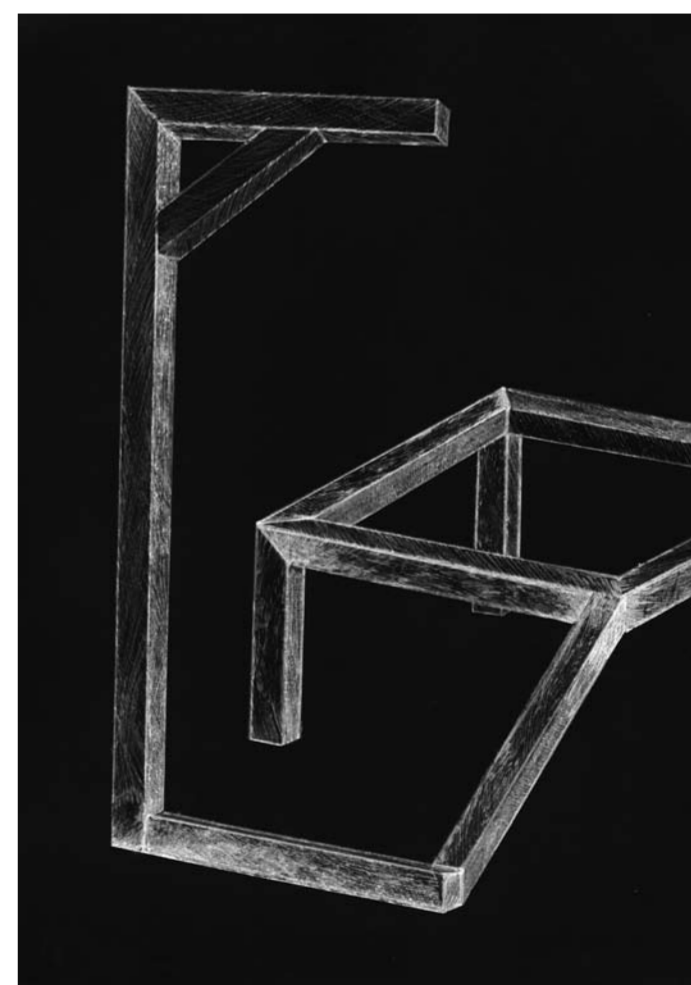
The common theme that runs through Mureșan's works is entanglement in the patterns of social behavior, cultural uniforms and the experience of history. By switching roles and changing the context of the works, gestures or events to which he refers, Mureșan shows maladjustment and misunderstanding as emotions which permanently accompany our lives in the post-global world. A number of works also allude to Romanian history and culture, showing the characteristic moment of confrontation between the memory of the recently overturned communist utopia and the new reality of global capitalism. This often finds its embodiment in children, who are frequently the heroes of his video works and the series of drawings titled 'Pioneers' that he will present as part of the exhibition. Drawn in the realist academic style that was the dominant mode of representation throughout the Soviet Empire under communism, these images represent members of the communist youth movement cut adrift in the fragmented society of Romania today.



'Prairial, Year 215', a performance by Melanie Gilligan

## Anja Kirschner

Anja Kirschner's most recent video film *Trail of the Spider*, made in collaboration with David Panos, questions and reimagines the Western genre's portrayal of the 'Vanishing Frontier' and extends the metaphor to the material and psychological conditions of the present. Recreating the epic 'Wild West' panoramas on landfills, wastelands and gravel pits linked to the construction of the 2012 Olympic Park, the film allegorises the shifting and shrinking space for collective social and political agency in an urban reality increasingly dominated by volatile financial speculations, private interests and the spectre of the Olympic gold rush. For *TINA* Kirschner presents a series of plans for a future film set, part of a project dealing with the legendary eighteenth century criminal Jack Shepherd and his inferred relationship with Daniel Defoe, the ghost-writer of his 'autobiography'. The drawings combine elements from constructivist theatre design and early eighteenth century prints, showing an environment to be constructed during filming. It will eventually form an integral, sculptural part of a final work, indicating the development of a systemic relationship between workshop and prison cell, bourgeois home and gallows.



Anja Kirschner, 'Baumuster, weiss auf schwarz, No.10', 21 x 29.7 cm, white pencil and paintmarker on black paper. Courtesy Hollybush Gardens, London

## Goldin+Senneby

Goldin+Senneby will present *Gone Offshore* the latest instalment of an ongoing investigation into an offshore company incorporated in the Bahamas called Headless Ltd. as well as Acéphale (Headless), a secret society founded by George Bataille in Paris in the late 1930s. As they explore how the juridical construction of offshore financial centres can be seen as performative acts of fictionalising place and staging realms of invisibility, Goldin+Senneby feed their sinister findings to a novelist based in Spain whom they have never met. John Barlow, who is writing a docu-fictional murder-mystery novel based on their investigation, will be making his first public appearance in the UK on behalf of the artists at the exhibition's opening in London. He will describe his recent trip to the Bahamas in order to look for Headless Ltd.



Goldin+Senneby, 'Gone Offshore', 2008, in collaboration with John Barlow (writing), Johan Hjerpe & Anders Jandér (graphic design), Anna Heymowska (scenography), mixed media installation with printed matter. Conversation between John Barlow and Övül Durmuşoğlu at GAMeC, Bergamo, Italy (29 May 2008)

Directions: Old Street then buses 55 or 243 or Liverpool Street Station then buses 149, 26 or 242

Forthcoming exhibitions:

Monika Grzymala, 19 February – 5 April 2009

Drawing 2009 – Biennial Fundraiser, Auction 20 May 2009

Alejandro Jodorowsky's, 'Dune': An exhibition of a film of a book that never was, 16 September – 25 October 2009

Cornelius Cardew, 5 November – 13 December 2009

The Drawing Room Founding Patrons: Stephen Barber, Marie Elena Angulo, Henry Zarb, Patrick & Sigrid Wilkinson. Corporate Patron: John Jones.