

live art garden initiative



Introduction

The Live Art Garden Initiative is to conceive of, set-up and develop an art, architecture and ecology project.

The project will involve the creation of new garden-farm environments in which site-specific live arts will be created and receive an audience.

The research and practice directions of the Initiative are guided by transdisciplinary research.

- Biophysics, acoustics, sound and ecology.
- Landscape, media & interactive architecture and sustainability.
- Live art practice and performance research.
- Contemporary philosophy and critical studies.

Aims and objectives

The Initiative aims to...

Enable and support new and experimental live arts practice through supporting its situation in pioneering garden-farm environments that integrate media architecture, and are created both through the practice they host and in order to support this new practice.

Imagine, investigate and create new garden experiences that will involve realising experimental garden design methods.

Respond sensitively to ecological needs and issues.

Become established as a sustainable, long-term initiative able to offer job security to staff members and to impact positively upon local economies, communities and the environment.

Facilitate the sharing of transdisciplinary arts and research practice.

Provide educational project activities and resources.

Develop participation in the arts and transdisciplinary research.

Our work

The Initiative will engage through its research activities and art programmes with:

- Arts practitioners.
- A range of community and professional organisations.
- School and higher education sectors.
- Local and non-local individuals or organisations for project activities involving partnership.

The initiative is committed to:

- Offering a programme of year round outdoor performance events in experimental garden environments; and developing live arts practice through supporting its situation in these environments that hold potential for artists wishing to engage with different site-specific parameters that will enable new directions in live arts practice to be realised and explored.
- Developing a garden-farm environment that is intended to evolve dynamically over time; and become of outstanding architectural, horticultural and botanical interest.
- Offering an annual programme of architectural interventions which will provide innovative forms of shelter.
- Enabling opportunities for transdisciplinary collaborations particularly involving scientists, philosophers, gardeners, architects, new media, film, sound and movement artists pursuing live arts practice.
- Striving to realize an ethical and ecological approach (reflected in practice across the whole initiative including

activities involving propagation and growing of organic produce) addressing issues, such as protection of biodiversity; use and generation of renewable and environmentally-friendly energy and materials; education needs relating to environmental pollution, eg use of gm biotechnology (for instance, dangers of terminator seed technology).

- Supporting the Initiative's Associate Artists (resident and visiting) in developing and presenting new collaborative and solo works.
- Increasing the membership and development of the Live Art Garden Initiatives' Collective (members can offer and gain support through their involvement and participation).

Activities involving live art practitioners and shared with audiences will include:

- An ongoing programme of new work by the Associate Artists.
- An annual programme of visiting international performance companies.
- Opportunities to observe site-specific performance-research activities *in situ*, such as training exercises and experimentation.
- Artist-led workshops for professional and open level.
- Artist-led reading, study or discussion activities.

History

The Live Art Garden Initiative commenced in 2004, following related research and projects since 1994, and is directed by Lauren Goode. The organisation is currently informally constituted and a voluntary initiative.

Current stage of development

Research and development has been facilitated through an intensive schedule of live art practice sessions involving *in situ* exploration at contrasting gardens, parks and other outdoor landscape environments; and through the *Artist Review Series* – six symposia events at Goldsmiths, University of London. The current focus of project work is on developing the Site Pilot Project concept and implementation. Main activities have included:

- Experimentation and piloting of ideas.
- Development and presentation of new work.
- Creation and production of publications and resources.
- Prospective site visits and feasibility assessments.
- Business/organisation start-up research and consultation.
- Short and long-term planning; and fundraising.
- Developing the *Informal Collective* (a network of practitioners interested in the Initiative's project).

Where

The location for the site project has not yet been decided. Feasibility issues are being considered and site visits to various prospective sites are being undertaken. It is anticipated that the site will:

- Be easily accessible by train (under 2 hours from London).
- Provide an exceptional level of quiet.
- Contain various ecosystems, including woodland with a mix of young and mature trees, and meet soil standards for the growing and selling of organic produce.
- In size, be about 15 acres or more; include flat and gradient land areas.
- Offer access to, or include, buildings suitable for providing flexible space for performance, studio-work and accommodating visiting performance companies.
- Offer suitable utilities access for media architecture interventions.

Current research and practice directions

[Lauren Goode. Last updated: 15 October 2005]

The research and practice directions of the Live Art Garden Initiative are guided by transdisciplinary research.

- Biophysics, acoustics, sound and ecology.
- Landscape, media & interactive architecture and sustainability.
- Live art practice and performance research.
- Contemporary philosophy and critical studies.

The live art practice directions are to:

- Carry out *in situ* experimentation in contrasting parks, gardens, and other outdoor landscapes, sensitively engaging with unique environments and contingent events.
- Consider the site as one's body in extension and not separate – a connected live architecture unfolding – a multiplicity of actual and virtual dimensions.
- Work directly with the context and event of the 'live' situation attending to it as a moving phonic surface – of speeds and affects – and not as a representational 'setting'.
- Evolve the focus of the performance-research from concentrating explorations in the medium of movement: that of the performers in connection with the moving surfaces of spatial and temporal landscape – an energized 'live' canvas.

- Explore processes that involve establishing movement qualities that embody intensity and poetry. Examples: of movement include passages, stillness, leaning, rotation and meditation; and of techniques are oscillation, repetition, momentum, concentration, improvisation and the breath (to affect propulsion and physiology).
- Create durational work using intensity to embody connections that are interwoven with unfolding fields of movement in the specific vicinity.
- Create performance work that disrupts perception – the performers and the audiences – by a meditative and sensual poetry operating through non-verbal consciousness (although words are not necessarily excluded).
- Explore ideas that are concerned with dissolving the figural rather than depicting characters or subjective expressivity but remain open to incorporating coincidental narrative and absurdity.
- Develop the potential, observed in recent video documentation of practice, for new projects to comprise of performance events, video installations and cinematic film works.

Organisation

It is intended that the Live Art Garden Initiative will start as a small artist-led organisation responsible to a Board of Directors and guided by an Advisory Board. It is expected that long-term development will see the organisation supported by a core staff of between 20–50.

Legal entity

Current long-term governance planning points towards constitution as a registered charity with affiliation to a 'community interest company' entity; or formation as a social enterprise cooperative.

Funding

The Live Art Garden Initiative will be funded by income from:

- Friends and membership access schemes.
- A programme of education events and workshops.
- A programme of transdisciplinary events and activities.
- Producing and selling a range publications; artists editions.
- Propagating and selling a range of plants, trees and organic produce.
- Entrance fees to visit gardens.
- Hire of vicinities within the garden.
- An organic cafe.
- Grants; and/or business equity and/or business start-up loans.
- Sponsorship from media partners.

Roles

Initiative Director

Lauren Goode*

Associate Artists

Charlotte Bernstein, Lauren Goode, Maria Llanderas, Fabrizio Manco, Helen Palmer. Carla Vendramin.*

Additional roles required

Associate gardeners (plant specialists); associate architect (lighting); associate architect (acoustics); associate architect (media & interactive); associate artists; project directors; finance and fundraising director; accounts manager; legal adviser.

Consultants: architecture; botany, horticulture and ecology; farming and rural enterprise; renewable energy installation (wind and biogas).

Assistants (admin, gardens and technical support)

Board of directors; and Advisory board

To be appointed.

*Currently on a voluntary/honorary basis

Biographies

Lauren Goode Theory and trans-interdisciplinary practice, including performance collaborations, guided by further study (philosophy – particularly Deleuzian – and landscape architecture).

Maria Llanderas Performance and live art practice. Experience as an actor in physical theatre. Now works within live art practice. Interests: site-specific work in natural environments.

Charlotte Bernstein Video, audio and live art practice. Interests: time-image, multiplicities, human design in relation to artist strategy. Exploration through dynamics of time, space and motion.

Fabrizio Manco Visual and live art, experimental theatre and video projects. Interests: body and 'place'; the experience of theatricality in relation to physical vulnerability; becoming; Tarantism and Butoh.

Helen Palmer Visual and live art practice. Exploration of: time and presence; theatricality within art; displacement of signifiers in relation to motives and structure of events.

Carla Vendramin Performance, movement, dance. Research develops from issues concerned with transitions and affects of corporal states; and time as the focus of perception.



Contact us

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www.liveartgardeninitiative.org.uk

Visit our web site to access resources, find out more about us and the Live Art Garden Initiatives' Collective including how you can join our mailings and discussion lists.

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From documentation of project work in the woodland grounds of Heath Mount School. 2005