

Alfredo Cramerotti is the Exhibition Officer with Quad in Derby and is coordinating The17 Project with Bill Drummond...

Please can you tell us a little more about the Quad and its aims?

QUAD is the new art, media and film centre in Derby, UK. It's a 10M project funded by both public money and private sponsorships, which will have an impact on the whole Midlands's area. Its goal is quite simple and ambitious at the same time: make art, media and film accessible to anyone.

My drive in joining this project was the chance to work effectively on middle-long term programme that makes a difference in how both the local and international community can access to cultural production, and have the chance to enjoy, discuss and learn at the same time. Bring together art, media and film under one roof is a rare chance for a curator and producer...

Where do Q Arts fit into the plans?

QUAD is the result of two realities that both have a long tradition in engaging audiences: Q Arts and Metro independent cinema. Q Arts had a strong participatory-oriented function; this is brought forward in QUAD's Participation programme, which complements the other two areas: Visual Art and Cinema. Each of them has a dedicated team of curators, programmers and producers that works with artists, institutions and audiences internationally.

Can you tell us a little bit about how the Bill Drummond installation came about?

Bill already worked with Q Arts a few years back, QUAD Director Keith Jeffrey and Senior Curator Louise Clements approached Bill to see if there was space and time to realize something special for the launch of the new QUAD building. Bill was already working on The17 project since some time, and was happy to propose, after a few visits and exchanges, a massive, extended version of his 17s Choirs. For a detailed history of The17 project, the reader can visit <http://www.the17.org>, or directly QUAD's website at <http://www.derbyquad.co.uk> and follow the link 'The17.'

So the idea developed: bringing together 100 groups of 17s, and have a massive performance in the Market Place, the main square of Derby, opposite the new building. We started to organize logistically the project back in 2007. The17 is a powerful performance event, which brings together about 2000 people working and living in Derby, from all walks of life. It involves a cross-section of the population for which QUAD has been built and will operate: QUAD belongs to the community.

At the moment the project involves a team of 8 people, including myself as the coordinator, Bill Drummond and John Hirst, who actually does the A/V recording of all the sessions with the groups. The final outcome of the

project is the playback of the sound piece lasting 5 minutes, made out of the 100 tracks (1700 voices!), for one time only, in the Market Place of Derby, on the 22nd August 2008 at 6:30pm. After that, the sound piece will be deleted forever. On the same day, the participants are invited to sneak a preview of the QUAD building (before the premises will be open to the public in September), to enjoy the exhibition of 100 large-size photographs of the groups (Sep 08-Jan 09), and a film (made of 100 one-minute video portraits of the groups) -- screened both in QUAD and on the BBC Big Screen in the Market Place. Finally, a book featuring the 100 groups will be available for purchase from August 22nd 2008, published by QUAD.

Will you be making any provision for emerging artists as well as internationally renowned big names?

Absolutely yes; QUAD commissions challenging and innovative art pieces to internationally renowned artists as well as emerging talents. Regarding the established, the first commission is by Jane and Louise Wilson with a new work related to Derby and Midland's industrial heritage and migration phenomena. It will be on show from September 08 till January 09.

Emerging and young talents have the possibility to develop their work and present it in a professional manner in- and off-site QUAD: this can range from special commissions to open calls for artists and curators, from the Format Photofestival 09 open submission (the call is downloadable at <http://www.formatfestival.com>) to studio visits by QUAD curatorial team, from Professional Development sessions and portfolio review to participatory arts projects, from Trigger electronic A/V live events to possibilities to do public presentations, and so forth. There is space for anyone working in the creative sector, and QUAD is the place where this can happen.

The Quad building opens at the end of September 2008
www.derbyquad.co.uk