



Assembly Birmingham: Friday 15 June 2018

Eastside Projects, 86 Heath Mill Lane, Birmingham, B9 4AR

The second a-n Assembly event for 2018 will take place at [Eastside Projects](#) in Birmingham, an artist-led gallery space established in 2008. Working in collaboration with artist and curator [Antonio Roberts](#), Assembly Birmingham will address the increasing amount of development taking place across the city and the Midlands as a whole, exploring both the opportunities and the challenges this presents for the visual arts community in the region.

In 2017 Arts Council England invested £90 million in Birmingham-based National Portfolio Organisations, while the government's multi-billion-pound investment in high-speed railway HS2, which is due to open in December 2026, will reshape the city's landscape. Numerous artist-led galleries

and commercial creative industries, including Eastside Projects, have established a presence in the Digbeth area of Birmingham in recent years, taking advantage of low rents, large spaces and close proximity to the city centre. While an ongoing redevelopment scheme for Digbeth and the wider city reflects the city's ambition to grow and regenerate, what impact will these changes have for artist residents?

Through a mix of presentations, discussions, artist film and a specially commissioned soundwalk through Digbeth, Assembly Birmingham will explore these competing tensions, reflecting on the opportunities artists have already built for themselves, and consider what investment and change could mean in the future.

**For more info and to book visit:
a-n.co.uk/assembly/birmingham**

Welcome and introduction to the day 11 - 11.15am

a-n's External Programmes and Partnerships Manager Hannah Pierce gives a quick introduction to a-n and the Paying Artists Campaign.

Session 1: Opportunity Cost 11.15am - 1.15pm

Opportunity Cost invites Directors from four Midlands-based galleries and projects to reflect on the journey of establishing their spaces.

Through a series of short presentations the speakers will discuss what factors went into choosing where to set up their spaces and, with investment in redevelopment increasing, what challenges lie ahead. Speakers include: Karolina Korupczynska, Director at **Stryx**, Cheryl Jones, Director at **Grand Union**, Anna Francis, Director at **Airspace Gallery**, and Ryan Hughes, Director of **Coventry Biennial**.

Lunch 1.15 - 2pm

Time for a break and to recharge!

Vegan and gluten free options will be available.

Session 2: SOUNDwalk 2 - 3pm

Join **SOUNDkitchen** co-directors Dr Annie Mahtani and Ian Armstrong for a sound walk through Digbeth. Using sounds played through a bespoke phone app which are triggered via GPS, the walk will transport the listener to various landmarks in the area and encourage you to consider the multitude of uses that these spaces have been used for over the years.

To take part, you'll need a smartphone or MP3 player and headphones. The SOUNDwalker app is needed to take part and can be downloaded here:

iTunes App Store: <https://apple.co/2jodc1E>
Google Play Store: <http://bit.ly/2KxQFvV>

Coffee Break 3 - 3.30pm

Session 3: Forward 3.30 - 5pm

Chaired by Eastside Projects' Director Gavin Wade, this panel discussion will look to the future. Will artist-led spaces and initiatives be forced to relocate outside of the centre of cities? How can artists best prepare themselves for change, and do developers have a responsibility to the communities that they displace? Speakers include Craig Ashley of **New Art West Midlands** with more speakers to be announced over the coming weeks.

Session 4: Paradise Lost 5 - 7pm

We round-off the day with the screening of two artists' films which consider the modernisation of our cities, followed by an opportunity for informal discussion and reflection on the day over a drink.

In the name of progress a number of historic and culturally significant buildings and spaces are being lost. The loss of one such building, Birmingham Central Library, is documented in Andy Howlett's ongoing film project *Paradise Lost: History in the Un-Making*. Brutalist architecture, industrial areas and derelict buildings are purposefully made invisible and forgotten to further justify them being knocked down and replaced. From this loss communities are also affected. Libby Cufley's *Tower/Garden* explores this and highlights the views of those displaced from their property due to modernisation.

This is a full day event. Booking is required. Tickets are free for a-n members and £5 for non-members. Lunch and refreshments are provided as part of the day.

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