



4th plinth

The fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square, London stands empty for the first time in decades. A pause in time due to the current state of the nation (of the world), the recent work by Michael Rakowitz taken down, awaiting a new commission by Heather Phillipson to adorn the table top.

The hope of this series of commissions is to make us rethink our space, to rethink what is around us. Contemporary artists in past years have challenged what it means to put something on a plinth, to the masculine and martial qualities that hang in the air (the other three plinths in the Square raise up 2 generals and a king - and of course Nelson on his Column).

Historically this enormous plinth stood empty since the mid-19th Century awaiting funds that never arrived for a bronze statue... until the late 20th, when someone deemed it an excellent way to bring contemporary art into a new context and challenge what we think these communal, social spaces are for. This column and these contexts have replicas all over the country, in every town and village where someone or something is 'raised above' to be lauded or given precedent.

There is obviously a relationship here between art, architecture, one informs the other you only have to think of Zaha Hadid and Frank Gehry... *why is art needed to 'liven up a space'? Is this belittling artistic investigation by making a spectacle of an artist's work? Do we need the questioning of these spaces (as it is public yet it is owned)? Is it simply a great opportunity for an artist to present something to a broad spectrum of society to make us think about the world differently?*

With these questions in mind and a temporary empty space to think about, **I would like you to put in a proposal for the fourth plinth**, as an extension of the visual studies 'colour' module we have been exploring on Fridays in connection with the 'safe house' project. Think about all your experiences you have built up with materials and concepts in the ceramics block and beyond.

This can be anything, think widely and broadly about what the plinth can offer us now, what we need to think about again in this particular moment.

Attached are some images to work from, you can even use your Laptop as a Lightbox to trace the plinth outline if you wish. But please, as I say be as reactive and as subversive as you like.

Submission date: 28th May 2020

Minimum Submission Requirement: 5 images and supporting text of no more than 500 words.

All selected work will be exhibited as a website/blog

Please email all submissions to: a.duncan@uwtsd.ac.uk



Reference images and ideas

Are you not entertained, Dominic Watson.



Like a rolling stone, Dominic Watson.



*I is ... (I), Ryan Gander; 2012 @ play well, Wellcome Collection
Marble and resin cast of a play-den made by the artist's child.*



A clean air mask is seen placed on the top of Nelson's Column by Greenpeace activists in London, on April 18, 2016. (Matt Dunham / AP)







