



Mark Hutchinson
Escape from Studio Voltaire

12 November – 19 December 2004

Studio Voltaire presents *Escape from Studio Voltaire*, the first solo exhibition in London by Mark Hutchinson. The project consists of two integral parts: an installation in the gallery and a booklet to be taken away.

The claustrophobic is [...] an amateur escape artist. He needs in order to physically survive, to be ingenious about his exits and entrances. - Adam Philips

The scene in the gallery looks chaotic and interrupted. It is full of tables and chairs, with barely enough space to walk amongst them. They are laden with large sheets of paper, which overlap and overflow the bounds of the tables. Some have fallen to the floor. These papers are drawings, diagrams and information showing how one might leave the gallery, should leaving by the door through which one came in be inadequate. The plans of escape range from the simple and practical (routes through neighbouring streets), to the elaborate and fanciful (escaping from the roof in a hot air balloon).

The other part of the project, the booklet, is available in the entrance space to the gallery. It contains two main essays. One is an extract from an old case history of a self-declared claustrophobic artist by New York based analyst Jennifer Bird. In the second essay Mark Hutchinson uses the symptoms of claustrophobia to elaborate on the difficulties of being a critically and politically engaged artist. The artist, like the claustrophobic person, can feel constricted by surrounding structures. For both it is the possibility of escape, however unlikely in practise, that needs to be kept alive through a process of vigilance and imagination.

In recent work, Mark Hutchinson has set up reflexive relationships between elements of installation and text. This starts from the wish to dramatise and affect the relationships between art, spectator and gallery, as well as to implicate reading in the process of looking.

Supported by Arts Council England, London and Roger Le Borde.

About the artist:

Mark Hutchinson is a nominated artist for *Pilot London* and will also be showing at Ship Gallery, Cable Street, in November. He has previously exhibited at Collective Gallery, Edinburgh; ICA, London, Chisenhale Gallery and at Bank's gallery Poo Poo. Curatorial projects have taken place at the Chisenhale Gallery; Djanology Gallery, Nottingham and London Print Studio.