

PRESS RELEASE APRIL 2012



## UP PROJECTS CELEBRATES ITS TENTH BIRTHDAY!

*UP Projects believes in challenging perceptions of what public art can be. Operating as a gallery without walls, we are inspired by the complexities of the public realm to create a programme of artists' commissions, projects, strategies and multidisciplinary events for the broadest possible public audience.*

UP Projects' entered the world in September 2002 with **Shine**, an exhibition of light works in the magnificent (and then disused) St. Pancras Chambers, by new and established artists including Martin Maloney, Tracey Emin, Julian Opie, Martin Richman and Toby Ziegler. It attracted 14,000 visitors during its 2 opening days.

Since 2002, UP Projects has attracted considerable attention and acclaim for its innovative commissioning programme. Highlights include **The Other Flower Show**; ten artists' installations in ten sheds in the V&A Garden in 2004, **Portavilion**; a series of temporary artists pavilions launching in 2008 across central London's most prestigious parks, with highly acclaimed contemporary international artists Dan Graham, Monika Sosnowska, Toby Paterson and Annika Eriksson. The sixth commission in the Portavilion series, 2011's **The Floating Cinema**, was created for the neighbourhoods surrounding the new Olympic Park; a unique refurbished barge designed and programmed by Studio Weave and Somewhere navigated the waterways of East London showcasing an innovative programme of indoor and outdoor screenings, workshops, talks and tours. Alongside Portavilion, **The Secret Garden Project** launched in 2010 with an ongoing series of permanent and temporary artists commissions and events that draw attention to the ecological value of urban parks and green spaces across London.

This 10 year celebration coincides with UP Projects achieving **National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)** status from the Arts Council, England. UP Projects is one of only 49 visual arts organisations to be in receipt of NPO funding in London, which is a mark of excellence, and one of only 7 organisations to be newly awarded this year.

UP Projects is headed up by Founding Director and Curator **Emma Underhill**. Emma has over 10 years of experience in leading ambitious art projects in the public realm. She has built a solid reputation as an established curator and strategic consultant and has extensive expertise in directing large scale complex projects in public spaces. In 2008, Emma's work and commitment was recognised with a Cultural Leadership Programme 'Woman to Watch' award. Emma has just returned from a British Council residency in New Zealand which saw the delivery of the 7<sup>th</sup> Portavilion commission for Splore Festival in Tapapakanga Regional Park with Auckland based artists Cut Collective.

For 2012, UP Projects will deliver a number of exciting new additions to its portfolio, including 'Common Knowledge' a project by Jacques Nimki for the **Secret Garden Project**, and the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> commissions in the **Contemporary Art at Festivals** programme, created for the **London Pleasure Gardens** in Newham (previous installations have appeared at Glastonbury and The Mayor's Thames Festival) and a new iteration of **Portavilion: The Floating Cinema**.

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[www.upprojects.com](http://www.upprojects.com)

**ENDS**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **UP Projects**

UP Projects believes in challenging perceptions of what public art can be. Operating as a gallery without walls, we are inspired by the complexities of the public realm to create a programme of artists' commissions, projects, strategies and multidisciplinary events for the public audience. Since our first project in 2002, our work has consistently attracted considerable press and public attention. As a small team with big ambitions we often work in partnership to enable us to deliver projects to their full potential and incorporate different specialisms and approaches. Through extensive practical experience we have become specialists in the complexities of producing art projects and events in parks & green spaces with the ability to develop strategic solutions as well as support clients in the practicalities of project delivery. Audience engagement is also vital to our work, and we consistently seek to find new ways of reaching the widest possible audience, through high visibility marketing and promotional campaigns, accessible events and related education programmes.

UP Projects has recently become a National Portfolio Organisation, receiving regular funding from Arts Council England from April 2012. We also seek funding from a broad range of partners from both the public and private sector (ranging from Foundations and Local Authorities, to corporate sponsors and private patrons) on a project-by-project basis. All of our supporters are vital partners in our work.

**[www.upprojects.com](http://www.upprojects.com)**

**NB.** See additional document: *10 Years of UP Projects*

### **Portavilion**

Portavilion is one of the most ambitious contemporary art projects to take place in London's public realm. This ongoing project explores the possibilities for temporary, large scale public art, and is as much a celebration of the city's most treasured open spaces as it is a cultural event. Curated by Emma Underhill of UP Projects, it launched in 2008 with four temporary pavilions by internationally renowned artists in some of London's most popular parks. In 2010, raumlabor\_berlin developed a mobile, inflatable pavilion that toured thirteen London parks and public spaces presenting a diverse programme of cultural events and activities produced in partnership with leading cultural organisations. In 2011, the Floating Cinema with Somewhere and Studio Weave took the project into a new, water based territory. This extraordinary, customized narrow boat hosted a varied and vibrant programme of on-board screenings, quirky canal tours, talks and workshops. It also presented larger scale outdoor film events for canal side audiences and informal drop-in 'Open Thursday' screenings. The Floating Cinema is set to continue from 2012-15. In February 2012, UP Projects was invited to commission its first international iteration of Portavilion for Splore Festival in New Zealand, working with artists Cut Collective to create a temporary structure which hosted a programme of cultural activities for the festival.

**[www.portavilion.com](http://www.portavilion.com)**

**[www.floatingcinema.info](http://www.floatingcinema.info)**

### **Secret Garden Project**

The Secret Garden Project is curated and produced by UP Projects. It focuses on London's lesser known green spaces including hidden gems such as Cremorne Gardens in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and Tibbey Place in Islington, with new, artist's commissions and site specific projects of varying scales that respond to the ecological and historical context of the sites and raise awareness of the ecological and social value of green spaces in city life.

**[www.secretgardenproject.co.uk](http://www.secretgardenproject.co.uk)**