

Oriel Gelf Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

OFFSITE / ODDI AR Y SAFLE

A Shed for Vetch Veg

Vetch Field

July - September 2012



Glynn Vivian Art Gallery is delighted to announce a new project as part of our exhibitions programme, whilst the art gallery is closed for a major redevelopment. For the past 8 months, Swansea based artist Owen Griffiths has been working closely with Sandfields residents on a project to develop and transform a section of the historic Vetch field into community vegetable garden, Vetch Veg. Vetch Veg is organised in association with Adain Avion, managed by Taliesin Arts Centre in partnership with Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, City and County of Swansea and the Environmental Forum, Swansea.

A Shed for Vetch Veg has been originated by Glynn Vivian and Owen Griffiths as part of our off site projects which will take place over the next two years. From July to September, Glynn Vivian has commissioned Owen Griffiths to construct a shed which will be used to hold a series of talks and events taking place in September, as part of their offsite exhibitions programme. Local and international artists and cultural commentators have been invited to share their ideas about the significance of the Vetch Veg and similar projects currently happening globally. The aim is to discuss the relevance of "relational" and "socially engaged" work in a much broader, global, social and political dialogue about art and social spaces, and how the Vetch Veg

project relates to conversations about sustainability, creativity, urban utopias and changing communities.

The shed itself will be no ordinary construction both in design and its materials. Owen recently discovered that the 'Glynn Vivian Home of Rest for the Blind', built in 1904, was to be demolished. The residential home was developed by Richard Glynn Vivian, industrialist son and benefactor of the Gallery, who himself went blind in 1902. At the bottom of the home's gardens lies a shed which Owen will use the materials to construct the new structure, as well as using materials gleaned from the Vetch football ground upon its demolition last year, including billboards and debris from the seating banks. This combination of materials represents the poetry and flow of ideas which underlies Vetch Veg. The demolishing of the Home for the Blind and the construction of the shed will be documented by Swansea based photographer Paul Duerinckx.

Before he went blind, Richard Glynn Vivian travelled the world extensively, collecting and returning with numerous artworks. He believed that art could transform a community and through art, you could create a Utopia. Whilst the shed is being constructed, the Gallery begins its major redevelopment, symbolising the future and the understanding that art can be challenging, provocative, beautiful and touching and has a vital role in its local and global conversations and relationships.

Owen leaves the Vetch Veg project at the end of September but it's hoped that residents will continue their thriving community. The Sandfields community residents may decide to use the shed as a library with books about gardening, art, fiction, cooking or as a quiet space to sit and think, as an ongoing archive of information about the project, or as a tool shed and somewhere to shelter when it rains.

"The shed...could house books about gardening, cooking, utopias, dystopias like Ballard and Atwood...it's a place of shelter, children will play inside it, people will talk there. Tai chi and yoga classes could happen in and around it, people will eat lunch, discuss ideas about the future of the plot and the possibility of food markets...use it as a retreat, a common space. It will have a veranda or platform where speakers can voice their opinions about the past, present and future..."

Owen Griffiths June 2012

The Vetch Veg project is a participatory and interdisciplinary social artwork, in association with Adain Avion, part of Wales's 'Artists taking the lead' commission, funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council of Wales, included in the London 2012 Festival and part of London 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

For more information including short films and documentation please visit the Vetch Veg's website.

www.vetchveg.tumblr.com

www.adainavion.org