

Project proposal

We would like to propose *Better Out Than In*, our first solo exhibition, for Tag Team's open call. This ambitious show would draw together work from across our diverse practice, including performance for the gallery, sculpture, video, photography and sound works.

Our interdisciplinary practice is restless, playful and opportunistic. Sensitive to the materials and contexts that surround us, we understand our work through the questions and concerns of distinct disciplines. Over the past four years of collaborating, we have amassed a sprawling body of work, generated through a playful irresponsibility. With the gleeful principle that it's 'better out than in', we test ideas wilfully and with speed. Our practice is driven by questions of 'what is enough?', 'what if it was just that?' - leading to surprising, critically articulate and deeply poetic gestures.

Better Out Than In embraces excess, and would provide a unique opportunity to platform works which we are deeply proud, but have yet to find a suitable public context. As interdisciplinary artists interested in minor and tangential gestures, our work often struggles with awkward and unsuitable conditions of exhibition. This project would offer us the opportunity (and challenge!) to create our own context - a framework that suits both each individual work, and the practice as a whole. An ideal time for us to mark and consolidate our enquiry, this exhibition would experiment with the ways in which live performance can be exhibited alongside material works; to foreground their connections; and to generativity reveal questions and contradictions which might open future avenues for our work.

The title of the exhibition, *Better Out Than In*, links the curiosity and irreverence that characterises our fidgeting practice (the child's giggle at their spontaneous and irrepressible belch or fart), with the vulnerabilities of making visible the inner workings (and minor works) of an artistic process. Undercutting the possible arrogance of the 'early career retrospective', the exhibition would be infused with the childishness, humour, stupidity and generosity with which we undertake all of our work - and makes a case for speculative and playful practice.

The exhibition might include: a series of precarious objects, suspended off the ground; a photographic enquiry that literalises the question "what's up their sleeves?"; a video of a someone dropping an endless succession of things; a slapstick film in which man endlessly searches for somewhere to rest a ladder, wandering across empty fields; the sounds of two people attempting to recreate a dawn chorus, substituting each individual bird call for the poor substitute of their own whistles, trills and gurgles. Each afternoon would feature a different durational performance work for audiences to stumble across or drop in and out of: a performer 'haunting' the gallery in a crude ghost costume; a dancer endlessly warming up for a performance perpetually delayed in the future.

While deeply ambitious in scope, the majority of these works have already been constructed, rehearsed and presented; most are readily transportable, or else easily remade using common construction materials that we can source locally. The bursary attached to the exhibition would give us the means to undertake this project with the materials and support necessary. This opportunity would give us the time and resources to install the work properly; freeing us up to present the performances as performers, rather than stressed artists preoccupied with numerous other works.

Exhibiting at Tag Team would offer the opportunity to encounter artists and institutions outside of the UK within a supportive and critically engaged network. We feel strongly informed by, yet removed from, the contemporary performance practice taking place across Europe, and its surrounding discourse. Through presenting our work in Bergen, we would seek to make new friends, and gain an understanding of how our work and values might connect to, or form dissensus with, a distinct arts scene. We hope this might open up new contexts in which our practice might place itself, or new ways to orient ourselves within spaces in which we are already situated.

We believe Tag Team would initiate a new stage in our practice; to become more reflective and empowered in our choices; and to support us in feeding back our ideas, work and research into the international artist community.

Artist Statement

The collaborative practice of Rohanne Udall and Paul Hughes, Timber & Battery's work takes place across choreographic, performance and visual arts contexts. Trained in fine art and philosophy, our interdisciplinary practice is an enquiry into meaning and meaninglessness that continually questions itself, and the contexts it finds itself within.

Our playful and gestural artworks mediate on questions we face as artists; how to collaborate? (*Floorplan*); how do we present one work beside another? (*Pointing the Finger*); how do we frame ourselves? (*Finding the Frame*); what does it mean to choose this, over that? (*Some Possibilities*); what does it mean to memorize pre-set dance movements for an audience? (*Empty Gestures*); what is our relation to the spectator? (*VVVV*)

Over the past four years, our collaborative practice has prioritized momentum and plurality of gesture - undertaking numerous works, sometimes light and fleeting, across diverse contexts. Rather than committing ourselves to the development of hefty, singular pieces, we have been preoccupied by the process and aesthetic qualities brought about by a fidgeting enquiry and oblique questioning. As we plunge further into the contradictions of this weak aesthetic, of being serious about meaninglessness, about valuing waste; we align a legacy of critical conceptual practice with the figure and physicality of the clown.

Website: <https://timberandbattery.wordpress.com/>