

The Brutalist Playground is an exhibition by 2015 Turner Prize winner Assemble and artist Simon Terrill, exploring post-war design for play. Originally commissioned by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), this touring exhibition has been reimagined for the Brutalist icon that is the Park Hill estate in Sheffield. Featuring a brand new commission based on Park Hill's original playgrounds built by architects Jack Lynn and Ivor Smith between 1957-61, it investigates the materiality and visual language of post-war landscapes through an immersive, climbable and conceptual landscape.

The exhibition takes its cue from the abstract playscapes that were designed into many post-war housing estates. Championed by architects and urban planners, these playgrounds were supposed to offer a safe and considered place for children's play, while giving 'free reign to the imagination', actively moving away from the 'toy-land whimsy' found in conventional playground design. Constructed from wood, brick and mostly concrete, these playgrounds were integrated into the surrounding landscape through their materials and form, often reflecting architectural preoccupations of the time. By the early 1970s, these designs were falling out of favour, receiving criticism from the architectural community and child welfare campaigners. As a result many playgrounds have been lost or redeveloped, deemed unsuitable for play.

A lesser-known aspect of the history of social housing, there is little material evidence of these spaces today, yet photographs, drawings and written descriptions can be found in archives and libraries. Consigned to the archive, they stand as a curious footnote in the wider narrative of post-war reconstruction. The Brutalist Playground seeks to establish a contemporary narrative for these objects and ideas. It shifts the focus away from the much debated post-war residential buildings, largely remembered for their social and structural failures, to the equally important playgrounds found at the feet of these structures, allowing for renewed understanding of the architects' original designs and intentions.

For this project, Assemble and Simon Terrill have used archival materials, drawings and photographs from RIBA's Collections to create an interactive installation that raises questions over design for play, from both a historic and contemporary perspective, with a focus on the element of risk. Large-scale fragments of four distinct 'Brutalist' playgrounds from Churchill Gardens, London, Seamount Court Aberdeen, Brownfield Estate, London and Park Hill, Sheffield, have been recreated in 1:1 scale for the exhibition offering an opportunity for audiences of all ages to immerse themselves in a surreal landscape of post-war play.

#### Assemble

Assemble are a collective based in London who work across the fields of art, architecture and design. They began working together in 2010 and are comprised of 20 members. Assemble champion a working practice that is interdependent and collaborative, seeking to actively involve the public as both participant and collaborator in the on-going realisation of the work. In 2015 they were nominated for and won the Turner Prize for their *Granby Four Streets* community project in Toxteth, Liverpool.

#### Simon Terrill

Simon Terrill is an Australian artist based in London who works with photography, sculpture and installation as well as large-scale public works involving many hundreds of participants. Following a BA in Sculpture and MA in Fine Art at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, he lectured in Critical and Historical Studies (2005-08) and at the Centre for Ideas (2003-08), both at the VCA. Recent exhibitions include *Tilt* at Sutton Gallery Melbourne, *The Piranesi Effect* at Ian Potter Museum of Art and *Balfron Project* at the National Trust's 2 Willow Road.

## EVENTS



**ARTIST TALK**  
Assemble & Simon Terrill  
Saturday 18th June / 3pm — 4pm  
Park Hill

Join Jane Hall from the architectural collective Assemble and artist Simon Terrill for a talk about their ideas and inspiration for The Brutalist Playground alongside the broader context of the project, followed by an audience Q&A.

FREE, BOOKING REQUIRED

#### PLAY SESSIONS

**Building Blocks**  
For 2 - 5 year olds  
Every Thursday / 10 — 11.45am

Dedicated playtime in the gallery for little ones with hands-on activities where children and their parents/carers can join in with stories, songs and lots of building and making.

DROP IN, £2 per child or free to residents from the Manor Castle ward\*, refreshments available

#### TALK

**Concrete Concept**  
In association with Sheffield Modernist Society and The National Trust  
Thursday 14th July / 6.30 — 8pm  
Lecture Theatre 6, The Arts Tower, University of Sheffield

Join author of *Concrete Concept: Brutalist Buildings Around the World* and novel *The Wall in The Head*, Christopher Beanland, for a talk about the world's most awe-inspiring and controversial Brutalist buildings, including Sheffield's Park Hill. Followed by a conversation with the National Trust's Joe Watson about what makes Brutalism such a hotly contested architectural style.

BOOKING REQUIRED, £6 full price, £4 concession for members of National Trust or Sheffield Modernist Society, concessions and residents of the Manor Castle ward\*



**PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP**  
Brutalism and Parkour Photography  
Saturday 30th July / 10am — 4pm  
Park Hill

Led by established architecture and adventure sports photographer Andy Day, participants on this one-day workshop will learn the skills of architectural photography by shooting the iconic Brutalist Park Hill, as well as an opportunity to photograph the urban sport of parkour.

BOOKING REQUIRED, £50 full price and £40 concessions and residents of the Manor Castle ward\*

#### PARKOUR WORKSHOPS

**The City Is Your Playground**  
Parkour Kids (ages 6-11)  
Parkour Plus (ages 11+)  
Thursday 18th August / one hour sessions throughout the day  
Park Hill

Love the idea of learning how to move your body with greater precision and strength? Then come and learn the art of Parkour at Park Hill. Under the guidance of experienced instructors from Team Katalyst, children and teens can learn how to run, jump and climb like never before. Health and safety equipment will be provided.

BOOKING REQUIRED, £5 full price or free for residents of the Manor Castle ward\*

#### WEEKEND OF PLAY

**Bank Holiday Weekend**  
Saturday 27th — Monday 29th August

Join us for a weekend of play as Park Hill is taken over with an array of drop-in workshops, food stalls, live music and parkour demonstrations. The weekend will also see the launch of our new Sculpture Park at Park Hill. Please see our website for further details.

FREE, DROP IN



**FILM SCREENING**  
The Rise And Fall Of The High-Rise  
Thursday 8th September  
7.30 arrival for 8.30pm start

A very special outdoor screening in Sheffield's iconic Brutalist Park Hill estate. From the lowlife to the highlife and back again - a selection of films charting the evolution of the high-rise from the slums of 1930s Kensington to Sheffield's 'utopian' Park Hill Estate. All films are sourced from the BFI's archive. Please see our website for further details.

BOOKING REQUIRED, £8.50 full price and £6 concessions and residents of the Manor Castle ward\*

#### HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

**Brutalist Sheffield**  
Friday 8th — Sunday 11th September  
Park Hill and across the city

A weekend of talks and tours of Park Hill and other Brutalist and Modernist architectural gems in the city, organised by the National Trust and the Twentieth Century Society. Tours will involve special access to areas that are usually inaccessible to the public. A full schedule will be available on the website closer to the time.

FREE, BOOKING REQUIRED



## HOW TO BOOK

Bookings can be made via Eventbrite, which can be accessed through our events page [www.s1artspace.org/events/](http://www.s1artspace.org/events/)

For more information on any of the events, please email [events@s1artspace.org](mailto:events@s1artspace.org)

\*Some activities and events are offered at a concessionary price or free (where stated above) for residents of the Manor Castle ward on presentation of a utility bill.



18 June —  
11 Sept 2016

Part Sculpture  
Part Installation  
All Play

# The Brutalist Playground

Assemble &  
Simon Terrill

## MAP



## OPENING TIMES

Wednesday — Sunday  
12-5pm  
FREE ENTRY

## ADDRESS

S1 Artspace  
The Scottish Queen  
21-24 South Street  
Park Hill, Sheffield  
S2 5QX

The gallery is fully accessible and has disabled WC and baby changing facilities

## THANKS

S1 Artspace and the artists would like to extend its thanks to Marie Bak Mortensen, Corinne Mynatt and Nat Cary (RIBA, London), Mark Fielding, Emily Farlam and Jo Francisco (Yorkshire Festival), Tom Bloxham, Mark Latham, Simon Gawthorpe and Fiona Small (Urban Splash), Helen Fidler (ESCAL), Satwinder Samra (University of Sheffield), Emma England and Simon Green (RIBA, Yorkshire), Andrew Jackson (20th Century Society), Liz McIntyre and Joe Cutts (Sheffield Doc/Fest), Custom Foams, and Matt Tully and his team for all their support and advice.

THE BRUTALIST PLAYGROUND has been generously supported by

RIBA  
Architecture.com

LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported using public funding by  
ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

Yorkshire  
Festival  
2016

Welcome  
to Yorkshire  
yorkshire.com

All images used courtesy of RIBA archives  
© RIBA, Parkour image © Andy Day,  
Design & Art Direction: This Brutal House

urbansplash

The  
Elephant  
Trust

Sheffield Town Trust

The  
University  
of  
Sheffield

SSoA