

SUSTAINABILITY & SERVICES



Making waves ***Post-Works' Writtle*** ***Calling/2EmmaToc*** ***radio station.***

A temporary radio station installed throughout September in the grounds of Writtle College, Essex, recalls the birth of broadcasting in the UK. The project, by artist Melissa Appleton and Matthew Butcher of architectural practice Post-Works, involved both the design and construction of the radio

station and programming a week's worth of live broadcasts by artists, writers, musicians and scientists.

Named Writtle Calling/2EmmaToc, the temporary structure was located near the site of the UK's first regular radio station, launched in 1922, which broadcast from an ex-army hut in a field near the village of Writtle under the call sign 2EmmaToc.

The 2012 structure took its form from the original hut as well as agricultural vernaculars 'sampled' from the local area,

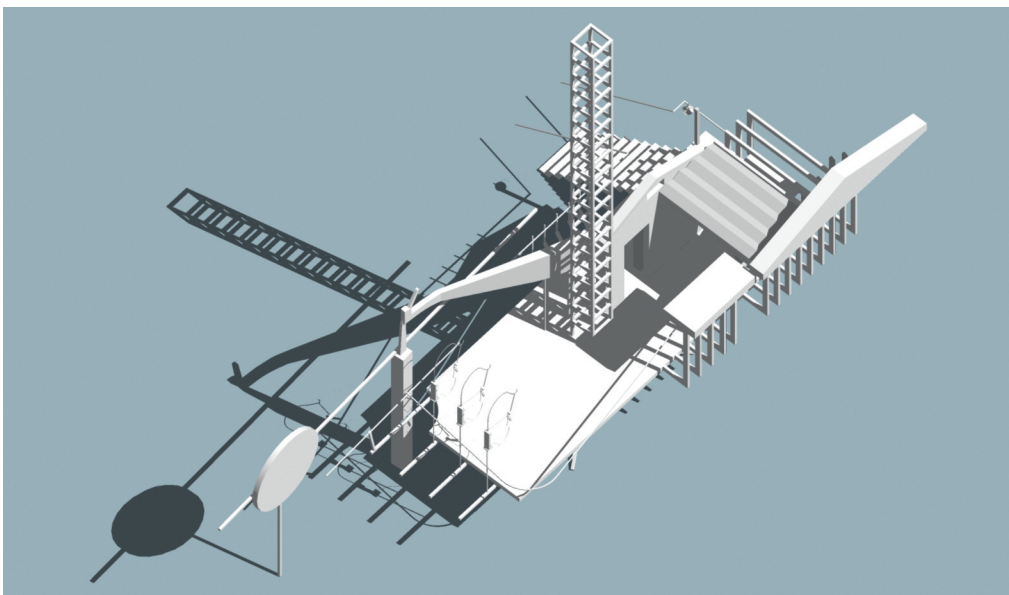


including eighteenth century barns, gate posts, temporary structures formed of scaffolding and signposts. Appleton and Butcher processed their survey photographs of these buildings to make silhouette-like images that informed the composition of the radio station, which was clad in materials common to the

area – bitumen shingles and weatherboard.

Radio shows were broadcast every evening for a week, and included contributions by artists Mark Leckey, Pablo Bronstein and Edwin Burdis, science fiction writer Gwyneth Jones, paleontologist Jan Zalasiewicz and radio historian Tim Wander. The broadcasts were loosely curated around themes including Underground, Ground, Horizon/Sky and Ether, and are archived at writtlecalling.co.uk.

Broadcasts were transmitted by two 'feeds' – one on-line, powered by a streaming program on a laptop and hosted by Radica Radio, and an FM radio feed using a transmitter and an aerial nine metres above ground level,



Top The radio station at Writtle College (ph: Tim Brotherton/Katie Lock).

Above Photographs of vernacular structures were turned into silhouettes that informed the composition of the radio station. 'This process was used to create an architecture that resonated with the immediate landscape, creating both a familiar, yet unfamiliar, object,' says architect Matthew Butcher.



Left, below *The materials and forms of the temporary radio station were drawn from agricultural buildings seen by the designers while travelling between London and the site, near Chelmsford (ph: TB/KL).*

Project team

Artist: Melissa Appleton; architect: Matthew Butcher (Post-Works); engineer: Arup; scaffolding platform: Vantage Event and Media Structures; offsite fabrication: James Mullord; sponsors: The Centre for Art and Design in the Environment (CADE), The Arts Council England, University College London, Essex Arts.



giving coverage over an area with a radius of about 10 miles. Also broadcasting from the structure was a sound work by artist Max Eastley. His Aeolian Arcs, bow-like structures with nylon strings, were fixed to the main mast and 'played' by the

wind, then amplified by contact microphones. The sounds of the harps were broadcast between the live content, and when no programming was scheduled.

The scaffold structure was designed by Arup, which donated its time to the project. The

building was prefabricated to ensure easy construction and to allow it to be re-assembled at other locations in the future. It was fabricated by James Mullord, and assembled on site over a three-day period on a temporary scaffolding platform

assembled by Vantage Event and Media Structures. The radio equipment and mast were installed once the build was complete. The mast was attached to a scaffold ladder tower at the centre of the station.