

Jeremy Deller has never been that interested in academic rules and has always preferred to work with people and their habits, symbols and social rituals. His practice has introduced radical changes to the themes, forms and public function of contemporary art, and yielded a body of work thoroughly informed by the anthropological and ethnographic gaze he casts on Western society in general, and British society in particular. Folk or 'popular' culture attracts his interest because it combines wit, inventiveness and creativity in a way that distinguishes it clearly from mass culture. Deller works as an assembler of components, as 'director' of collective actions, organising parades that reconstruct historical events, making films, curating exhibitions and intervening in public space. Through a combination of boldness and a focus on current events, Deller finds new ways of exploring the social landscape.

The exhibition *Joy in People* provides a great overview of the artist's multi-faceted work and incorporates almost all of his major works to date, including installations, parade floats, photographs, videos, posters, banners, performance works, and sound pieces. It features, moreover: a reconstruction of *Open Bedroom*, the artist's first exhibition, held in 1993 in his bedroom in his parent's house; *Exodus*, a 3D video shot in and around a bat cave; and 'My Failures', a section that gathers a number of Deller's unrealised projects. The exhibition reflects the witty playfulness, the generosity of ideas and the intelligent provocation characteristic of his work.

Deller was awarded the Turner Prize in 2004. His works can be seen at a numerous museums and biennials around the world.

Born in London in 1966, Jeremy Deller studied Art History at the Courtauld Institute and at Sussex University. After meeting Andy Warhol in 1986 he spent two weeks at the Factory in New York. He began creating artworks in the late 1980s, often making fleeting and subversive interventions in everyday situations. In 1993, he learnt silkscreen printing and made a series of exhibition posters and editions. Later that year, while his parents were on holiday, he secretly used the family home for an exhibition titled *Open Bedroom*. Four years later he began making art in collaboration with other people and produced *Acid Brass* with the Williams-Fairey Band, which has been performed at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall and Tate Modern, as well as at the Louvre in Paris and at many large music festivals across Europe.

Deller staged *The Battle of Orgreave* in 2001, bringing together almost 1,000 people in a public re-enactment of a violent confrontation between coalminers and police during the 1984-5 Miners' Strike. In 2004 he was awarded the Turner Prize, dedicating it to 'everyone who cycles in London, everyone who looks after wildlife and bats, the Quaker movement and everyone I've worked with.'

Since then, he has continued making collaborative and participatory works.

Among other projects, he has commissioned the building of a bat house in London, organised urban parades and a crosscountry journey across America in which, along with an Iraqi citizen and an U.S. war veteran, he travelled with a bombdestroyed car from Baghdad.

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