

C R A T E .

Jeremy Deller and Fraser Muggeridge talk to Charley Vines about English Magic Re-Mix

CV We should recap on how this started.

JD It was when you wrote to me asking if I would like to do something, it was quite a long time ago...

CV It started with the banner, I read the Guardian article.

JD The story was wrong, about the banner, which is the 'Prince Harry Kills Me' banner. I felt that tonally, it was incorrect for the Venice show and took it out months before it opened. Its like if you're making an album and you have 11 really great songs and then you've got the 12th song that actually doesn't fit with the album.

CV Yes so having thought that it was banned, I approached you about showing it at Crate.

JD Except it wasn't actually the case although it did make me think it would be nice to do a show of new work, as part of English Magic, because the show has toured for a year now and is ending at Turner Contemporary.

CV And you decided to collaborate with Fraser.

FM We worked on the graphics for Venice, and we've done a few other bits with work that exists in a graphic form, so we had an excess of imagery and ideas that we loved.

JD Fraser has a lot of ideas, some of which are really good... Also I knew that we could have a bit of fun with it. So that's why I thought we should just do it.

FM The show is a graphic re-mix, with elements of the original that have either been pulled apart, or kept or added to. In a way the show is also a pastiche of graphic design.

JD Exactly. The 're-mix' is important, because it is definitely a new version. Also, the show becomes so familiar after a year of touring that I really needed to invigorate it. But also English Magic is quite a serious show so this show is also a way to prick its possible pomposity or something.

CV The idea to wrap the exterior of the building in posters, where did that come from?

JD It is an idea taken from the Factory Records thing, where they covered the whole of the building with the poster for a Happy Mondays album. I like that idea of wrapping a building in print.

FM we should acknowledge that this (Crate) is an artist run space, and it's important to support artist run spaces, it's pretty obvious why, and there's no reason why we shouldn't do something here.

JD It makes total sense.....is that fish an chips in a box?

FM We should talk about this building wrap poster. I think that nowadays, with the development of graphic design, it's easy now to make a poster look quite good, quite nice...

JD that's a lot of chips, oh there is fish under there...

FM The idea of this poster is that it's almost everything about that. Rather than using what a lot of larger galleries have which is a corporate brand. But they're beautiful you know... whereas the idea of gig or party posters will be that you just put the thing as big as possible on the poster.

JD If you see posters from the Victorian era, of like a musical or something, it's just completely different fonts.

FM well there was no such thing as graphic design back then, it was wood-type. They would go along and just make the stuff as big as possible, and they would get either thin type or fat type and just blow it up. And this in a way is a similar idea, it's about filling the spaces so if you have a bit of space, you put like a flint there, you don't kind of make it all clean and tasteful.

JD Are you having some chips Charley?

FM The art of the poster is, for me, something that has changed a lot. There used to be poster designers that would just design posters.

JD Well you know the problem now is that you can't stick posters up in the street, in the way that you could. So you don't get that skill and that art and culture of posters being seen for gigs and records... so you don't actually know what's going on. I find that really sad in a way.

FM Because you see the poster now on an iPhone screen. And that's the design. Whereas maybe what we're trying to do here is something different. Essentially this poster could have been designed twenty, thirty years ago.

JD The best thing about looking at old photographs of London is the gig posters in the background, things like Blondie playing the Hampstead Palais in 1979 and all that, you don't see that now if you take a picture in the street. It's just advertising.

FM So do you think that is actually a real statement to have this building covered?

JD It's pro-poster, that's what is important.

FM What made you approach us to do the show?

CV I suppose, when I saw that English Magic was coming to Margate, I thought I'd just if you would want to do something. I thought that obviously that would be really fun, but also it could be a way of starting or at least playing with the idea of shows and events bouncing off one another across the town, between different types of organisation.

CV So Margate, Turner Contemporary, is the last stop on the tour for English Magic isn't it?

JD Yes, the last one, and then the show is dismantled.

FM You described it to me once as this being the end, the death...

JD This show is the death of English Magic really. It's like good riddance, it's a way of killing it, to satirise and plagiarise the show. It's taking the piss out of it. A little bit. You have to kill Ziggy.