

ASSEMBLE + SCHOOLS OF TOMORROW: THE PLACE WE IMAGINE

7 May – 4 September 2022

The Place We Imagine began with a drawing of a fantastical playground by the Italian-Brazilian architect Lina Bo Bardi (1914–92). This colourful design from 1968 imagines a series of vast structures in front of the Museum of Art, São Paulo (MASP), which she had recently designed. As though imagined by children, they loom over the museum. This utopian play-space was, however, never built.

Inspired by this drawing, and together with the design collective Assemble, we began to wonder: What would Bo Bardi's vision look like today? What if children could be the architects of their own play? Could their language be used to challenge how public space is owned and occupied? How then can we reimagine galleries, play and education?

Three years ago, we embarked on a journey with Assemble and children from our Schools of Tomorrow programme – which includes eight schools from across Nottingham – to explore these questions and bring Bo Bardi's vision to life. Assemble worked closely with resident artists and children at three schools, while engaging more broadly with the enquiries of the wider Schools of Tomorrow programme. Children's actions, ideas and responses were at the heart of these conversations.

In the galleries, you will find three play sculptures, surrounded by echoes of the children's voices and experiments. The structures we have called the 'Big Red' and the 'Menagerie' were directly inspired by Bo Bardi's drawing, while the 'Fun House' was developed in collaboration with these local schools. These are designs both for and by the city's children. So, let's go and play.

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Curated by Lisa Jacques, Amanda Spruyt and Nicole Yip, assisted by Niall Farrelly.

Developed in collaboration with:

Jubilee L.E.A.D. Academy and artist Gillian Brent
Nottingham Nursery School and artist Sian W Taylor
Robin Hood Primary School and artist Laura Eldret

With additional contributions by:

Edna G Olds L.E.A.D. Academy and artist Charlotte Tupper
Huntingdon L.E.A.D. Academy and artist Sian W Taylor
Melbury Primary School and artist Peter Rumney
The Milford Academy and artist Laura Eldret
Southwold Primary School and artist Charlotte Tupper

Exhibition graphics by Stinsensqueeze.

The 'Big Red' is a co-commission with The Bentway, Toronto, where it was presented from 19 June – 26 September 2021.

For more information about the exhibition, related events and learning programmes, and for a full list of Schools of Tomorrow participants, visit nottinghamcontemporary.org

All of our programmes are made possible through the support of our audiences. If you enjoyed visiting today, please consider supporting. Suggested donation £3.

BIOGRAPHIES

ASSEMBLE is a multi-disciplinary collective working across architecture, design and art.

SCHOOLS OF TOMORROW is a four-year learning and research programme funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, which places artists in residence at eight local schools to support creativity in and beyond the classroom through a process of action-led enquiry.

RELATED EVENTS

Walkthroughs

Fri 13 May, 12pm

Welcome Walkthrough

Wed 8 June, 2pm

Wednesday Walkthrough by Karen Chantrey Wood, School of Education, Nottingham Trent University

Workshop: Reimagining Nottingham

Sat 14 May, 2pm

The Adventure Playground: Architectures of Contemporary Play

A series of talks by Aberrant Architecture, Gabriela Burkhalter, Beatriz Colomina & Mark Wigley and Sol Perez-Martinez – please see our website for dates.

Supported by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art.

PLAY AND LEARN PROGRAMME

Free Family Activities

31 May – 2 June

Half-term activities

2 – 25 August

Summer programme, with an immersive environment created by Southwold Primary School

Pick up one of our Family Explorer Bags from Reception to support a sensory experience of our exhibitions.

***The Place We Imagine* is a dynamic environment. Throughout the exhibition, our partner schools may leave prompts for different activities and ideas in the galleries.**