

## **BALTIC Ryder Commission in collaboration with Blueprint - DesignCurial**

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Blueprint's search for a young architecture practice to work with an artist on a major new £40,000 commission is over, with Atomik Architecture and artist Alice Theobald being selected

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Following a four-month selection process, an architect and artist have been chosen for the £40,000 BALTIC Ryder Commission in collaboration with Blueprint.

An open call for architects went out in Blueprint at the end of last year. Ryder Architecture, ourselves and the gallery were looking for a young practice eager to collaborate on an installation at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead.

Atomik Architecture from London, was chosen from a strong global response following interviews with a shortlist of three. Artist Alice Theobald, also London-based, was subsequently chosen to collaborate with Atomik after the practice went to Gateshead to talk to BALTIC curators.

Atomik Architecture and Theobald will each receive £2,500 prize money, put up by Ibstock, while all of the £40,000 from Ryder and BALTIC will go towards the installation, that will open at the gallery on 11 December and run through until 13 March. Blueprint will, of course, be following their progress and bring you a full report on how the collaboration unfolds and what the final outcome is.

Founded by Mike Oades and Derek Draper, Atomik Architecture is a young practice of architects and designers working in the UK and Kazakhstan. The practice has a number of buildings, from residential to hotel, in the pipeline and its first completed building will be a pavilion and hub for this year's Artbat Fest urban art and culture festival in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Atomik Architecture also created a parametric art installation, on an island in a lake in Amiens, using 2,000 timber blocks, as part of the 2014 Art Villes & Paysage Festival.

'We suspect that we are totally unaware of what we have let ourselves in for!' says Atomik Architecture's Oades. 'Alice's work is multifaceted involving music, video and performance - very different to our largely static constructs. We're looking forward to the odyssey we are about to embark on, finding some common ground and testing how our processes come together to deliver a co-authored piece at BALTIC.'

Theobald, who graduated from the RA last year, employs a mix of pop and underground cultural references in her work that uses music, installation and video. She also often works with a cast of non-professional actors and performers, while using repetition 'as a strategy to interrogate the unstable relationship between art, communication and representation'. In February 2014 she presented: I've said yes now, that's it, at the Chisenhale Gallery's interim programme, and in 2013 she was selected for the International Performance Residency at Gasworks, London.

'I am really looking forward to working with Atomik to see how it will develop,' says Theobald.

'My performances, video and sound installations are very reactive to pre-existing spaces and places, so collaborating this way where the space can potentially be manipulated psychically feels like an interesting new challenge, yet a natural way forward.'

Peter Buchan, senior partner at Ryder Architecture, adds: 'We are delighted to have selected these two emerging talents for our jointly funded commission with BALTIC Centre For Contemporary Art.

We look forward to the process of co-authorship - a real sharing of ideas that creates something truly exciting.' You can see Theobald's work at London's Lisson Gallery, in The Boys The Girls The Political, 18 July to 6 September.