



A project by Paul Cooper and Cliff Gorman

'Toys of Innocence and Experience' is a participative exhibition which unashamedly carries a title borrowed from the English poet, painter and visionary, William Blake.

Blake's illustrated 'Songs of Innocence and of Experience' is, perhaps, his most popular book of poems.

He frequently used child-like verses as a vehicle for satire and social comment.

We use toys.

These we construct using traditional materials. They clearly have the appearance of toys and indeed they can be safely played with in the normal manner.

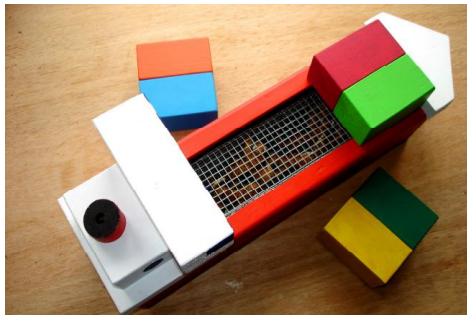
Toys are associated with innocence and the un-tarnished imagination. However, our playthings may seem harmless enough on the outside, but scratch the surface and there is a serious, and usually disturbing, message just waiting to be discovered about issues concerning 'adult' society.

The exhibition is suitable for adults and for children from eight upwards. None of the works are visually offensive and are created to be 'appreciated' on two levels: simply as toys or as toys with a meaning.

All the 'toys' are accompanied by supporting documentary information.



The Little Red Cargo Boats highlight the world of illegal trade, a practice that includes wild animals, human trafficking, and armaments...Remove the colourful toy containers to reveal the smuggled goods, within.



THE LITTLE RED CARGO BOAT (No.1) "It is estimated that there are more tigers in American backyards than in the wild." WWF



This 'Golly' is available from Amazon.

THE LITTLE RED CARGO BOAT (No.3) Modern day slavery: This 'cargo' refers to the creation of a refuge in Bristol for black African women, who as young girls were brought under false pretences into the UK from villages in Nigeria and Kenya etc to act as sex slaves. They endured a harrowing journey, locked away, out of sight in trucks and ships.

INTERACTIVE TOYS



The Willendorf Barbie is concerned with gender stereotyping and the portrayal of the female form. The Venus or Woman of Willendorf dated circa 25,000 B.C.E was found near village in lower Austria in 1908. The original stands about 4" high.



Shopping Trolley...The provisions carried in the Toddler Trolley represent three days worth of tinned, dried and essential food based on the TRUSSELL TRUST FOOD PARCEL. In **food bank** Britain, a quarter of million are surviving on food handouts. Oxfam and Church Action in poverty put this figure as half a million.



KEEP 'EM OUT THE WALL GAME... Get to play on both sides of the fence
In a game that puts your conscience and competitiveness to the test.
Originally motivated by President Trump's obsession with building a wall

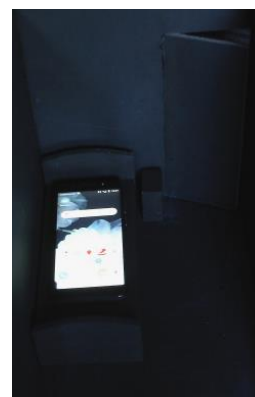
"If Uncle Sam sends the illegals home
Who's gonna build the wall?"

Who's gonna build your wall boys
Who's gonna mow your lawn
Who's gonna cook your Mexican food
When your Mexican Maid is gone"

TOM RUSSELL

But of course he's not the only one...

INTERACTIVE TOY

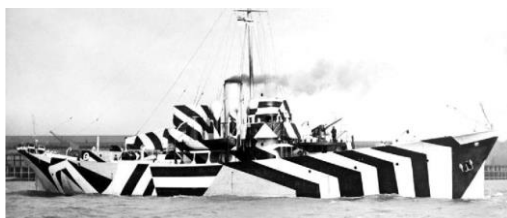


A Dark Place is a phrase that is commonly associated with depression. What appears like an ordinary, suburban style doll's house sits on a table. You want to open it and to look inside, but your access is blocked. It is secured and impenetrable. You peer through a window but inside it's pitch black. After a while your eyes adjust to the darkness and furniture is discernable. Then a light flashes on in the small bedroom. The source is a mobile phone screen; it is the same size as the toy single bed it rests on.

School girl **Molly Russell** committed suicide. Her father holds Instagram responsible for her death.

Anyone seen the Zebra? JOSEPHINE COOPER

The toy ARK was inspired by the 'Dazzle Ships'. A form of camouflage exploiting optical illusion to disguise war ships in world war one and two. If there was ever the need for a modern day ark, it would also have to be camouflaged considering the number of endangered species that would be on board



OPT IN INTERACTIVE: WITH OP- ART BASED ACTIVITY



Disposing of the Disappeared... A wooden toy dumper truck (with Syrian registration plate) 'driven' by a wooden man disposes of 'his' load of wooden detritus and wooden toy people. Everything is made of the same stuff. We are all made of the same stuff.

Syria: Over 100,000 of its own citizens (men, women and children) have been 'disappeared' by the authorities since the conflict began in 2011. Some were taken in home raids; to be held in detention camps. Many were subsequently murdered and their bodies dumped and disposed of, according to the United Nations.

'Disappearing' is an activity not exclusive to Syria. Other nations accused of 'Disappearing' civilians since the WW2 include: **Argentina, Bangladesh, Bosnia Herzegovina, Chile, Columbia, Iran, Iraq, Northern Ireland (IRA), Russia And perhaps surprisingly, CANADA**



MIRO'S MOTORS



IMAGINATION NOT INCLUDED

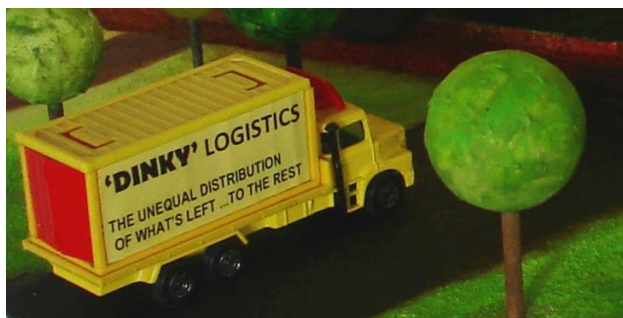
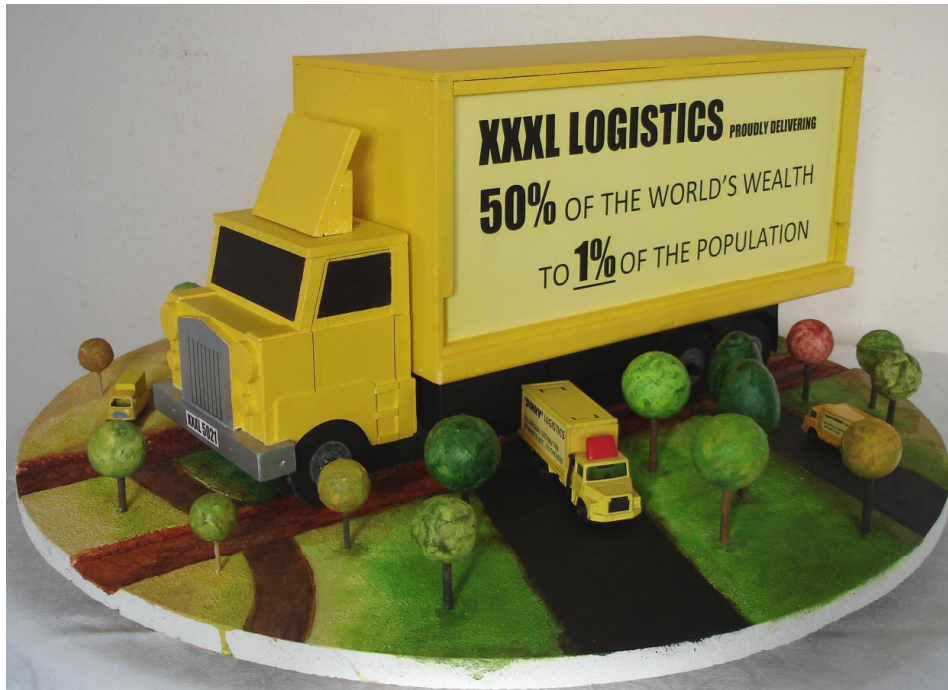


'Cars' made by children at ['Toying with Art'](#), The Rolle Centre, Exmouth

Miro's Motors is the antithesis to most modern construction sets where creativity is confined to the original designers of the toy. Simple boxes of LEGO bricks are hard find; toy shop shelves dominated by movie film related kits and where STAR WARS remains the most popular. Little imagination is required to create these models

A Miro's Motors box set includes twenty-four different coloured slabs of Plasticine and twelve sets of wheels and axles. Children can create their own 'fantastic' cars...or what ever they want.

INTERACTIVE TOY



The Scale of it... The large toy truck is delivering 50% of the World's wealth to 1% of the population. The Dinky toy and two Matchbox toys are distributing what's left to the rest of us...unequally.

The arithmetic: Large truck volume: $18 \times 9 \times 8$ inches = 1296 cubic inches. One percent of this is 12.96 or 13 cubic inches. The volume of the Dinky Toy truck is 10.5 cubic inches. The Matchbox toy truck is 2 cubic inches and the very small Matchbox van is 1.25 cubic inches. The total for the three small vehicles is 13.25; approximately 1% of the large truck.

The large truck is delivering 50% of the world's wealth to 1% of the world's population. If the other 50% was to be distributed equally amongst the other 99% of the population (which of course it isn't) the three smaller trucks would be capable of delivering what the rest of the population would expect to receive.



Child's Play... one of a series of images made from a random selection of children's building blocks. Perhaps a comment on the gun laws in a certain well-known country?



Army in a Bag is about the trivialization of war in children's toys. A bag of plastic toy soldiers is accompanied by an identical bag full of the mutilated and charred remains of the same under the heading: RETURNS.

“Over 7000 British servicemen have returned home in body bags since the end of the second world war” (BBC NEWS)

Dispersal... The Sycamore Tree **DISPERSES** the fruits of its labour. In this way unnecessary competition is avoided and the sustaining riches of the earth are shared more equitably. This helps the Sycamore species to survive and thrive; but what of the human species?

The Sycamore helicopter is made from two pieces of folded card glued together. The 5p coin nose weight and dart like form means that the aircraft can be propelled some distance into the air before it begins its slow and meandering descent. Any draft will extend the distance it will fly.



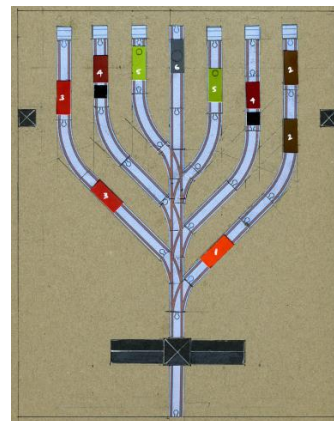
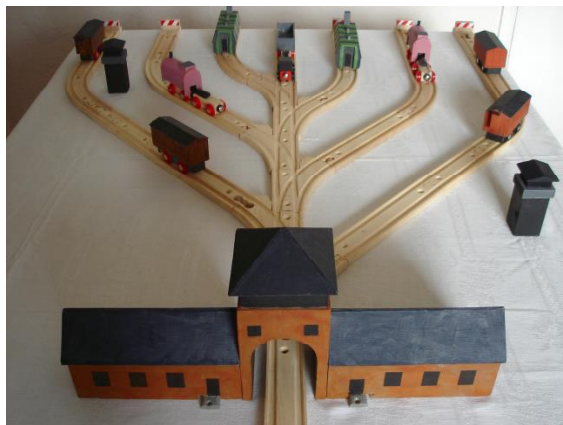
White version of helicopter in flight

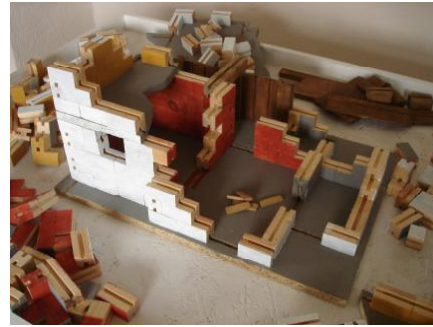
AN INTERACTIVE TOY COME AND MAKE YOUR OWN



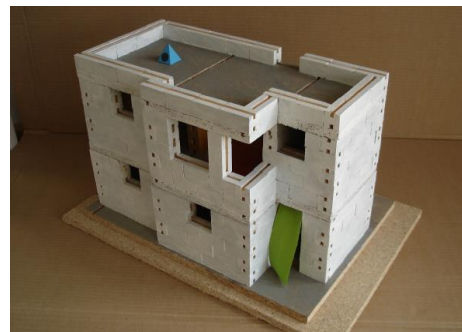
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Marshalling Yard appears to be a child's wooden toy railway set laid out on a dining room table. On closer inspection it's more sinister. An architectural feature identifies it with the Auschwitz / Birkenau concentration camp; the toy rolling stock has been modified to form gas chambers and cremation ovens. A shunting engine takes away a truck of charred remains. The track layout takes the form of a Jewish candle. As extreme right wing politics begins to emerge once more ...it is intended as a poignant reminder.





Rubble is a **Reconstruction puzzle** that challenges the participant to re-build a bombed house from a box of random, simulated remains



To imitate '**Rubble**' the 'puzzle' consists of coloured individual wooden toy bricks, random irregular sections of 'wall' (consisting of 2 or more bricks) and fragments of roof and floor. A groove and 'biscuit' (a small strip of wood) system allows the house to be put back together. The 'design' of the house is based on the traditional Syrian / Palestinian vernacular style. Most modern versions are built with concrete blocks.

INTERACTIVE TOY



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THE MODEL SETTLEMENT CLIFF GORMAN

Many of us a child played at making toy towns, villages or farmsteads. Inhabited with toy people and animals we used our imagination to live out their lives. Model Settlement can be played with in a similar way, but for adults it poses a more serious challenge...



The Model Settlement kit can simply be used to layout and build a small model village. But it can also provide a challenge for older participants.

The word 'settlement' carries two meanings: Either a place which is newly inhabited OR an act of coming to an agreement.

Played in a more considered manner, the various colours of the slot-together buildings and of the 'settlers' represent different cultures and lifestyles. How the 'settlers' want to live is represented through the choice of colours used for their house and garage. The colours of the figures represent families from different ethnic backgrounds. Only two of the six figures are indigenous with the same or similar culture.

You must choose how the settlement should look?

In short The Model Settlement kit can be used to create alternative models of how people of different cultures or ethnic backgrounds can live harmoniously together.

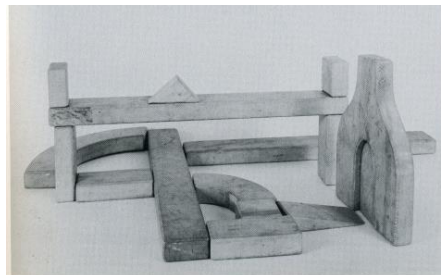


INTERACTIVE TOY

Folly: A toy wooden construction kit is left incomplete...



Painted version



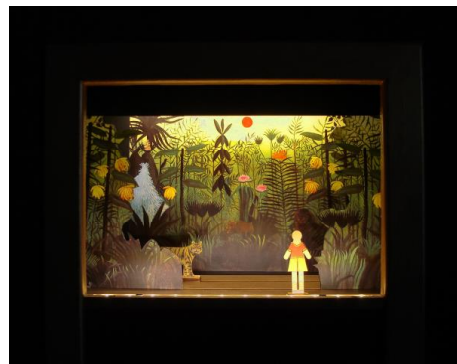
Unit Blocks
A 19th century American Construction toy

"Today extreme right wing politics are gaining ground. There are neo-Nazi parties in most of the EU countries promoting an ideology which seems entrenched within the very 'fabric' of society..." The Guardian



Hanging by a thread: Four slender strings support the Rhino...a tug of a fifth pulls the 'bloodied' (hardwood) horn from the Rhino puppet's head. *"Nola, a female northern White Rhino died in San Diego Zoo aged 4; this leaves just three remaining on the planet. All of them live in Ol Pejeta"* (Ol Pejeta Conservancy). There is now just one!

The Toying with Art Puppet Theatre...Is a fully operational puppet theatre which comes complete with a play to perform. Or participants can invent their own story about a tiger and a child in the jungle.



INTERACTIVE TOY



TIGER, TIGER

A puppet play for two children or grown-ups



There are two characters, a tiger and a child, girl or boy

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

A Young child, Girl or Boy (G/B) and Tiger

A girl / boy enters stage left

G/B: What a beautiful place the jungle is; what amazing plants and flowers...but where are the animals?

A Tiger enters stage right and growls...

Tiger: We 'ARRR' right behind you

G/B: Oh my gosh, it's a Tiger!

Tiger: Well spotted young person... although I'm not spotted of course; I would be a Leopard if I was ...ha...ha...

G/B: You're a funny tiger

Tiger: You wouldn't think me funny if I decided to eat you.

G/B: But why would you want to do that?

Tiger: Cos' I'm a bit peckish... haven't caught anything today and you would make a nice snack...put me on, as you people say. I could finish you off in one bite...

G/B: That would be very unfair...I don't mean you any harm.

Tiger: You personally, possibly not...but it's the rest of you lot that are the problem. Your grown-ups are driving my kind to extinction. Did you know that there's not a bit of me that you humans don't exploit? At least if I ate you there would be a few bones left.

G/B: That's awful...everything you say?

Tiger: Yes, everything...if your kind got hold of me there be nothing to bury. No grave with my remains that my friends could visit.

G/B: That's very sad...

Tiger: One day, me and the rest of my species will be gone without a trace...save for a tiger skin rug or a trophy head on a wall.

G/B: But I don't want that to happen. I don't want to kill you...

Tiger: Well, there's no chance of that, is there...not with my sharp claws and big teeth

G/B: You're such a beautiful animal. I can't imagine a world without you.

Tiger: Well, I would start imagining... Anyway, you'll change your tune when you get older. You'll probably have a gun for a start.

G/B: I hate guns ...and I would never ever want to shoot you.

Tiger: How can I be certain of that, eh? No, the way I look at it is this: It would be best if I gobbled you up now, whilst I've got the chance, just to be on the safe side. Young meat can very tasty...yummy, yummy.

G/B: That's horrible. I'm going off you.

Tiger: Sorry, I didn't mean to upset you, but you must understand my position.

G/B moves centre stage

G/B: But if you eat me you'd be killing your future saviour. When I grow up I want to be a conservationist. I want to help to save the planet and all the wonderful animals like yourself.

Tiger moves centre stage

Tiger: You're just saying that to save your own skin.

G/B: Why would I be wandering alone in the jungle if I didn't like animals? I love all nature's creatures...not to eat of course.

Tiger: Vegetarian are you.

G/B: No, not at the moment, but thinking about it... Anyway you're not. So why should I be?

Tiger: It's in my nature to eat the likes of you. Leaves are for Pandas...grass is for Zebras...Zebras and little children are for big cats...it's the way it goes. It would ruin the natural order if I ate grass...and anyway I don't have the stomach for it.

G/B: I'm not asking you to become vegetarian

Tiger: I should think not ... But getting back to the matter in hand, I'm getting hungry, and to put it bluntly it's either you or a Zebra. And since trying to catch a

Zebra usually involves an exhausting chase you represent my best bet. (*He licks his lips*) Nothing personal you understand...

G/B: No, of course not

Tiger: You're being very calm about it. You should be screaming for help and at least **trying** to run away.

G/B: Well there's something I ought to tell you before you eat me...

Tiger: What's that then?

G/B: You're being watched. My father's a wildlife cameraman; he's making a documentary and he has placed camera traps everywhere...You'd be caught in the act. Not good viewing for an animal facing extinction.

Tiger: Ah...

G/B: It would be PR disaster for all you Tigers if it was discovered that you had eaten an innocent defenceless child. You need public opinion on your side to have any chance of survival

Tiger: Hmm... Yes well, you might have point there...okay I'll let you go...just this once. Zebras are still okay are they?

G/B: We've all got to eat...but thank you, Tiger... I will never forget you; it was an honour to meet you.

G/B begins to retreat stage left

Tiger: Cameras everywhere you say...I must make sure your dad gets my best side...full face or profile what do you think?

G/B: You don't have a bad side.

Tiger: Oh...yeah, right yeah...thanks. But be careful how you go...you won't find the wild dogs so accommodating... awful creatures they are...you certainly wouldn't want to keep one as a pet.

The Tiger retreats stage right.

END