

BETTS PROJECT

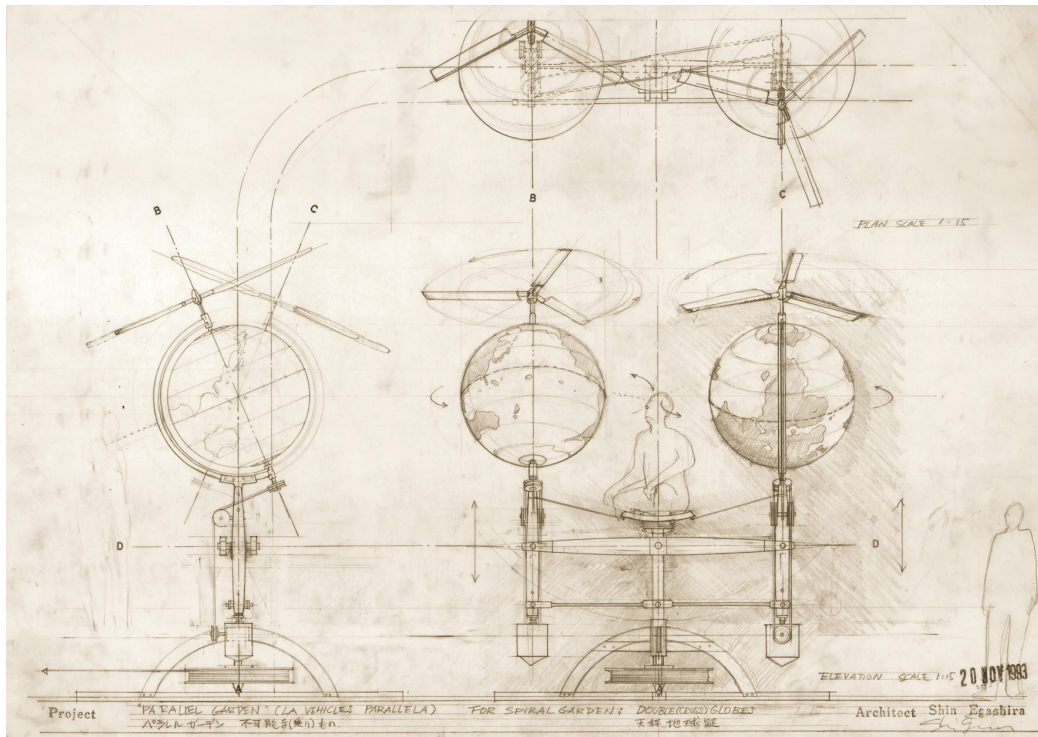
Press Release

Shin Egashira Beautifully Incomplete

Opening Reception:

Friday 7 June 2019, 6 – 8 PM

8 June – 27 July 2019



Betts Project is pleased to present *Beautifully Incomplete*, the first exhibition with the gallery by London based Japanese architect and artist Shin Egashira.

The exhibition showcases a series of objects and drawings that altogether point to the power, prevalence and activity of non-human entities within the places we inhabit. Through a careful selection of new and old works made between 1988-2019, *Beautifully Incomplete* allures audiences into the unusual mind of Shin Egashira and ventures into a realm of the absurd, and seeks to reveal his attempt to consider a new possibility of living amongst the things that surround us.

In 1988 Egashira obsessively began selecting and stockpiling various scrap parts from the streets of London. Successions of routine walks and rides on his Suzuki GT from skip to skip, car breakers to scrap yards, building sites, electrical junkyards, and a joiner's rejects yard were made over the course of five years. Items included parts to window frames, doors, cornices, record players, record vinyls, gears, springs, radio speakers, a walkman, railway sleepers, motors and hinges, floorboards, steel angles, cast iron pipes, ceramic tubes, glass and London bricks.

For Egashira these items each behold a story and represent a post-punk era London that was as societally and consciously fragmented as its residing objects, spaces and buildings. It was an era when popular culture was being continuously re-identified and recycled through the fusion of diminished

sounds, aesthetics, colours or technologies; everything felt like it existed in a state of incompleteness, striving for the necessary or appropriate parts to be fulfilled.

The graphite drawings in the exhibition depict these various scrap parts and their synthesis into new models and machines. Each drawing belongs to one of three previous installation projects conceived by Egashira: *Objects Viewed from the Erased City* (Camden Art Centre, 1991; AA Gallery, 1992), *Parallel Garden* (Spiral/Wacoal Art Centre Tokyo, 1993) and *Beauty of Our Pain* (Bennington Collage, US 1995; Art Front Gallery, Tokyo 1996). The “Beauty of Our Pain” (1993) series, which also manifests as a new model on display entitled “Untitled as Box” (2019), illustrates a contraption inspired by the diverse design of pre-industrial torturing devices combined with post-industrial bodybuilding equipment. The drawing “Parallel Garden: Double (Cross) Globes” represents Egashira’s interpretation of a time travelling machine instructed in Alfred Jarry’s text *Practical Construction of the Time Machine* (1899), and presents itself in physical form in “Double-Globe” (2019) in the centre of the space. Other machines of Egashira comment on how domesticated entities in our lives often remain entirely separate yet determinant agents upon our behaviour and sense of place in the world. For instance “Cat Machine” (1991) is a small animal-like machine which would hop up and down in the space, and references how cats often sit and seemingly moderate our social behaviour differently to ourselves. Similarly the model “Fish Cabinet” (1993), the first of a large series, represents the form and movements of domesticated fish which also preserves and records the memory, history and identity of elements of the erased city. Altogether these drawings and constructions are neither proposals for buildings nor mere forms of entertainment. Instead these works symbolise rooms, houses and inhabited sites reduced to their essence, and, in the mind of Egashira, ultimately contain the soul and spirit of architecture.

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Opening Hours

Wednesday – Friday, 12 – 6 pm
Saturday, 12 – 5 pm
or by appointment

About Betts Project

Betts Project is a London-based contemporary art gallery specialising in architecture, founded in 2013 by Marie Coulon. The concept behind Betts Project is to introduce both a specialist audience and wider public to new ways of discovering and thinking about architecture, through the exhibition and promotion of materials integral to architecture – largely drawings, but also models and other forms of representation. It aims to support and promote work by established and emerging international architects, as well as lesser known or overlooked practices still very much relevant to the contemporary discourse.

The gallery is also driven by the desire to introduce architectural objects as works of art. To do so, it organises high calibre exhibitions for new and established audiences and participate to art fairs, and thereby brings unique collectable works to the market at an affordable price.

Over the past years the exhibition programme has featured solo shows by established international figures such as Günter Günschel, Denise Scott Brown, De Vylder Vink Taillieu architects, Florian Beigel + Philip Christou, Caruso St John, Alexander Brodsky, Lars Lerup, Tony Fretton, Fred Scott, Studio Mumbai, Richard Goodwin, Peter Märkli alongside artist Hans Josephsohn, Pier Vittorio Aureli, and OFFICE kgdvs with photographer Bas Princen.

To find out more visit: www.bettsproject.com and sign-up to the Betts Project e-newsletters.

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