

David Cotterrell: Realty : London (v)

Date: 30th May 2006

Dimensions(m):1.5, 2.0, 2.0

Materials:

Wood, Acrylic Pipe, Chain and Anchor

For Sale or Lease, Bijou Property with 360 degree views of water

When legislation grows weak, morality degenerates; but in such cases the judgement of the censors will not do what the force of the laws has failed to effect. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, 1762.

An intervention originally created in 1995 by Cotterrell for installation in a Winchester waterway, and then recreated at a prime location on the Thames in 2006. Realty is produced as an easy to assemble flat-pack, which can be quickly transported and erected at desired locations with a minimum of disturbance. Recalling 'Reclaim the Streets', whose covert but highly organised actions transform urban centres into protest-based street parties, Realty is an uninvited installation seeking a response. Its temporal nature, the fact that it can be moved around in the back of the artist's car and erected in less than 10 minutes, suggests a multiplicity of sites, and onlookers are invited to consider their own choice of location. Cotterrell placed an ad in local Hampshire papers when Realty was sited in Winchester. Inviting bidding for a 'Desirable bijou property boasting 360 water views', Realty exposed the absurdity of assertions of ownership over the natural world. The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) has ensured the recognition of the legality of the commodification and marketing of water around the world. The US Supreme Court recognises water as an article of commerce; the European Court acknowledges it as a 'good'. Cotterrell first conceived Realty after an extended trip to Canada. His experience of this autonomous nation, which claims 20% of the worlds fresh water resources, but only 0.5% of the global population, and is bound by its NAFTA compact with the US to selling water rights, gave Cotterrell the impetus for his anarchic piece of protest art.



Proposal Image Credit: DC



Running out of time Credit: DC



Realty forms part of the landscape Credit: DC



The postcard view Credit: DC