

Blurred lines: Yuri Pattison questions the viability of live/work spaces

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Chisenhale Gallery in east London presents a new commission from Yuri Pattison called 'user, space', in association with community-focused creative agency Create. Pictured: installation view

Information

'Yuri Pattison: user, space' is on view until 28 August. For more information, visit the Chisenhale Gallery website

Photography: Andy Keate. Courtesy the artist, mother's tankstation limited, Dublin; Helga Maria Klosterfelde, Berlin; and Labor, Mexico

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At first glance, Chisenhale Road near Mile End is unassuming and suburban. Look a little closer and it becomes a lively corner of east London's vibrant artistic community. Earlier this year, Wallpaper* visited Chisenhale Primary School, where Asif Khan created his space-making double-decker playground. Now, we return to the street, to explore its decommissioned warehouse-turned-exhibition space, which has been filled with an extraordinary installation from London-based artist – and 2016 Frieze Artist Award winner – Yuri Pattison.

Like Khan's playground, Pattison's work considers the city's evolving use of space. 'London is being strangled,' the artist says, reflecting on his exhibition the morning after it opened. 'Particularly for hobbyists, craftsmen and technologists. The way we are using our city is changing.'

We're living in the age of transparency, Pattison believes, and privacy is being disrupted. London today brims with open-plan offices, live/work spaces and glass walls; when we finally do close the doors, we turn to our social media networks and break down the barriers virtually. Pattison's new commission – the result of a two-year residency with community-focused art agency Create – uses digital media and sculpture to critically address this transparency and what it means for London's future.

During his research, Pattison ingratiated himself in a skill-sharing, grassroots workspace called London Hackspace. 'Their workshop is a stark environment, but the personal, creative projects scattered within the space give it a warmth. I wanted to emulate this at Chisenhale.' To do so, he employed harsh lighting, industrial shelving units and rows of empty plastic crates, but provided moments of respite with a green plant garden and two paintings that look like works-in-progress. It's as if he has transformed Chisenhale Gallery from a contemporary exhibition space back into the working warehouse it once was. 'I wanted it to feel like a place in transition,' explains Pattison, 'so I left the Eames-replica chairs in their packaging.' Instruction manuals for the furniture's construction are upturned for viewers to peruse like bleak artworks.

What's more, abstract films on screens of varying size are dispersed throughout the room. They showcase a variety of futuristic, experimental live/work spaces – often plush, luxurious and attractive, in contrast with the unsettled, cold room they're displayed in.

Whether Pattison is criticising or encouraging London's increasingly transparent nature is part of this exhibition's mystique. Either way, the artist is engaging with one of today's most prescient issues, and provides a fascinating insight behind the translucent screen of London's tech-city.