

IKON

Exhibition Guide

Surasi Kusolwong *Bangmingham (Come as You Are)*

18 August – 10 September 2006

Ikon Eastside

Thai artist Surasi Kusolwong encourages audience participation, blurring lines drawn conventionally between art and life. He makes large-scale, interactive installations combining sound, sculpture and everyday objects. For the first week of this project, the artist takes up residence in the old factory space, offering visitors an opportunity to meet him and discuss his practice, as well as see his work develop.

Eventually Kusolwong's Eastside installation will consist of simple wooden structures on which the public can sit, stand or climb, either fixed directly onto walls, elevated from the floor or suspended from the ceiling. With seating areas and various instruments, including guitars, piano and drums, they are places to encourage visitors to join in a cathartic, if somewhat disjointed, musical improvisation.

Combined with neon work and fluorescent lighting, Kusolwong creates an atmosphere of collective play and experimentation. The project recalls spirits, memories of history relating to music and visual art, and expands the freedom of performance and artistic practice. This installation incidentally pays homage to the cultural history of the West Midlands, in particular a local tradition of rock music that has produced such influential bands as Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, Slade and Deep Purple.