

Dyer Amazeen, Lauren. "Peter Liversidge: Ingleby Gallery," *Artforum*, Summer 2010.



EDINBURGH

## Peter Liversidge

INGLEBY GALLERY

Peter Liversidge experiments with what he describes as the "notion of creativity." For the past several years, his exhibitions have been centered on the practice of writing proposals for artworks and performances, some to be realized and some not. To commence, the artist sits at his kitchen table, typing a group of one-page proposals on an old manual typewriter, over a predetermined period of time. In most instances, the markings from any corrections are left visible. The proposals for each exhibition are made into books with such titles as *Festival Proposals* (2006); *Proposals for Barcelona* (2007); *Bloomberg Proposals* (2009); and now *Ingleby Proposals* (2009).

For the Ingleby Gallery exhibition "The Thrill of It All" (a title from Proposal No. 132), Liversidge wrote 160 proposals to Richard and Florence Ingleby "[s]tarting no sooner than 14th November and finishing no later than 20th December 2009" (Proposal No. 1). Through negotiation with the gallery and other parties, the proposals were realized—some as objects, performances, or happenings over the course of the exhibition; others not. Proposal No. 15, for instance, which suggested moving all the furniture from the Ingleby family home into the gallery, was not realized. Neither was Proposal No. 32, instructions to run a soup kitchen from the gallery.

Selected performances were announced via the gallery website and mailing list. Viewers had to search for or imagine where the artist "gently placed a beautiful piece of flint" somewhere in the center of Edinburgh (No. 114). Proposal No. 90 and Proposal No. 23 were put together as *Gin Performance*, 2010, followed by a motivational speech given by Liversidge to Scottish business leaders; for No. 70, the artist went cross-eyed; and for No. 87, Liversidge drove all the available rental cars in Edinburgh, in relay, to Glasgow—fifty miles away.

The original proposal pages were framed and exhibited throughout the ground-floor gallery spaces, together with seven realized works such as *A Pair of Winter Drawings*, 2010 (part of a series begun in 2003), which depicted trees using black masking tape on paper (No. 106), and 1,229 brightly colored dice handmade from ash, cherry, and oak and painted with acrylic and gouache (No. 64), scattered on the floor in the gallery entrance space. In No. 149, *Ten Trees, with Alistair Letch*, 2010, Liversidge gave over the power to fulfill one of his proposals. A Scottish woodworker (renowned for his exquisite renovation of the elegant Edwardian gentleman's yacht *Romola*) was invited to create ebonized black walnut trees based on the "Winter Drawings."

For Liversidge, proposals not actualized hold just as much impor-



Peter Liversidge, *Ingleby Proposals—Proposal No. 106: A Pair of Winter Drawings*, 2010, black masking tape on paper; two drawings, each 97 1/2 x 63 3/4".

tance as those that are, for they remain to be acted upon in the imagination of each viewer. Some are meant to be personal, some poetic: No. 44, "to come and visit from time to time"; No. 58, "to keep everything within arm's length"; No. 68, "to dress as a well worn path"; No. 89, "to roam in the gloaming."

At first the work seems almost innocent in its delivery. Yet a distinct rigor within the structure of Liversidge's process has become more evident in recent years. This underlying grammar gives an authority to the experimental nature of his practice. By exploring new site-specific propositions with each exhibition, repeating some proposals, and changing the interpretation of others, Liversidge builds credence in his belief that "in a sense they are all possible."

—Lauren Dyer Amazeen