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PRESS RELEASE | Mar 2018

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**N.b The location of Upgrade SKIP Gallery x Richard Woods has been changed to: Hoxton Square, N1 6PB, London**

## UPGRADE

SKIP Gallery x Richard Woods  
1–30 June 2018



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David Shrigley was the first to get in. Gavin Turk followed him. Ben Eine got inside with a bunch of art students. Milan football club AS Velasca squeezed in too. And now, [Richard Woods](#) is climbing in to build a summer house. Since its debut appearance during Frieze art fair in 2016, artists [Catherine Borowski](#) and [Lee Baker](#) have developed [SKIP Gallery](#) from a whimsical one-off to an ever-evolving international collaboration, inviting a roster of contemporary artists to exhibit in their mobile public gallery space, otherwise known as a skip.

On **1 June**, in a parking space in **Somers Town, North London**, Richard Woods will open the (strictly metaphorical) doors to **Upgrade** – a month-long site-specific installation that engages with its immediate setting and surrounding neighbourhood to explore issues of housing and urban regeneration in one of London's most rapidly changing neighbourhoods.

Like Wood's contribution to the **2017 Folkestone Triennial**, Holiday Home (which saw six cartoonishly colourful bungalows appear in unlikely places around the harbour town), Upgrade uses the form of a graphic three-dimensional caricature of a house to bring a fresh perspective to its urban location. This time, however, the house acquires further meaning by being framed by the walls of the skip in which it sits – perhaps representing the elements of a home that are discarded or abandoned in the process of renovation, regeneration and upgrading. With Upgrade, the gallery becomes part of the artwork.



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One of Richard Woods's six bungalows, installed for Folkestone Triennial

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*'I had been filling a skip with all the leftover material that we had used to build the Holiday Homes on the Folkestone Harbour Arm, and it struck me how potent an image it made – having bits of window or chimney poking out of the skip. In the studio, we chatted about whether it would be possible to expand the idea and make it into an object – and then out of the blue Lee emailed and introduced the project. We quickly realised we'd both had the same idea. It was the easiest pitch I have ever had to make...'*

- **Richard Woods**, Artist

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**Somers Town** was chosen as the location because it has always been a residential district in transition. Shaped over the centuries by the influence of the railway termini of **Euston, King's Cross** and **St Pancras**, the area has evolved from an 18th-century middle-class enclave – sometime home of political radicals, refugees from the French Revolution and literary figures such as Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin and Charles Dickens – to 19th-century slum, before being dominated by social housing in the 20th century, and transformed again by the right-to-buy initiative of the 1980s. Today, as the arrival of Eurostar has reshaped St Pancras, the King's Cross redevelopment is changing the landscape, and HS2 promises upheaval in and around Euston, Somers Town is still in flux.

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*'In the late 1980s I was a student at the Slade School of Art, just south of Somers Town. During that time I spent many hours walking the streets pulling scrap timber out of skips, dragging it back to the Slade and then using it to make sculptures. My memories of that time are of an area that was always seemingly in transition and I imagined then that its proximity to three large railway stations gave the area that feel. The area still feels like it's changing – there are a number of forces pulling and pushing, trying to redefine the area once again into its latest manifestation.'*

- **Richard Woods**, Artist



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The location of Upgrade in Somers Town

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Deposited in the heart of this urban transition, **Upgrade** invites residents and visitors to consider the cycle of change in the city, highlighting the effect of gentrification without passing judgement or being front-loaded with meaning.

Aptly, coinciding with the **London Festival of Architecture**, Upgrade's launch will be accompanied by a series of talks and events exploring its relationship to the architectural and social history of Somers Town.

By presenting a playful, resonant and visually high-impact artwork in a London district that has traditionally attracted little attention from the art/design establishment, **SKIP Gallery** demonstrates its unique ability to exhibit anywhere, constantly reinventing itself – and the artwork it contains – in new contexts.

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*'Richard's work has a very strong relationship with architecture so it felt like a natural fit. The history of Somers Town is fascinating, and there are some amazing examples of post-war housing estates which are rarely seen by fans of design and architecture. It's not so much a case of changing perspectives in regard to the place, but of bringing a new audience to an area of London that's not often seen through the eyes of design or art.'*

- **Catherine Borowski**, co-founder, SKIP Gallery

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For more information on SKIP Gallery and the Upgrade exhibition, please contact Dorothy Bourne at [dorothy@zetteler.co.uk](mailto:dorothy@zetteler.co.uk) or on (0)7939 200519.



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Note to Editors

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### **Upgrade**

Date: 1–30 June

Address: **Hoxton Square, N1 6PB, London**

### **About SKIP Gallery**

In 2016, London-based artists Catherine Borowski and Lee Baker re-conceived the idea of the exhibition space, presenting the London public with an ongoing series of collaborative, site-specific artworks housed in skips in everyday public locations. With their associations of mundanity, disposal and renovation, skips are a ubiquitous but frequently overlooked reminder of the throw-away culture of the city, lending a playfully profound irony to the exhibition of artwork within them. Since then, Borowski and Baker have collaborated with some of the biggest names in contemporary art, including David Shrigley (Look At This, June 2017), Gavin Turk (Transubstantiation, November 2017) and Ben Eine, as well as 'the world's most artistic football club' AS Velasca in Milan. Their mobility allows SKIP Gallery to exhibit anywhere there is a parking space, bringing unexpected eruptions of art into the everyday urban landscape, anywhere in the world. Since its beginnings, the gallery has become more than a mobile exhibition space; it is a continuous, transitioning artwork in itself, connecting artists around the world through an ongoing programme of collaboration.

[skipgallery.com](http://skipgallery.com)

**Instagram** [@SkipGallery](https://www.instagram.com/SkipGallery)

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### **About Richard Woods**

Trained as a sculptor at the Slade School of Art, Richard Woods has become renowned for his architectural interventions with the surfaces of existing structures, the vibrant colours and graphic geometries of his work, and the playful pointed commentary it makes on the culture of DIY and urban improvement. Woods' commissions include the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in South Korea, Comme des Garçons' flagship store in Osaka, and Cary Grant's former home in LA, now owned by art dealer Jefferey Deitch. His works held in worldwide collections including the Saatchi Collection, Arts Council England, the British Museum, the V& A, and MoMA.

[richardwoodsstudio.com](http://richardwoodsstudio.com)

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