Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane, Souped Up Tea Urn and Amp / Teapot (Dartford) 2004. Photo: TATE collections

As part of the inaugural programme of the Tate Exchange, students and staff from the BA Interior and Spatial Design at Chelsea College of Arts (UAL) moved their studio into this new space, which occupies an entire floor of the new Blavatnik building (also known as the Switch House) at Tate Modern, Bankside.

Tea Exchange | Tate Exchange, Tate Modern | 22 February – 3 March 2017

Exploring and expanding upon the name of this new initiative, visitors to the museum were invited to share this studio space, taking part in workshops, talks and presentations as part of a curated programme involving with students, tutors and critics. Over the course of the week, participants designed and constructed eight full-scale cardboard teahouses. Exploring themes of social and ritualised behaviour as well as the architectural and cultural significance of tea, these structured considered tea as produce and commodity. Participants drank tea and exchanged ideas, discussing the historical, cultural, social and political significance of tea.

When the teahouses were almost complete, architect Rain Wu performed tea ceremonies that fuse fuse traditions of East and West, using a tea set designed as part of his 2016 artist residency at the Design Museum (down the river). The programme also included a guest lecture by Masayasu Tamiya, exploring the *Japanese Way of Tea*. On the final day of the Tate Exchange students were joined by a guest critic, who reviewed the Tea Exchange followed by a performative lecture by ISD tutor Marsha Bradfield – *Steeped: A Legacy of Tea* – on the history, culture and politics of tea.

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