

AAC Requested Review of Alternatives, Art and change.

By Paul Stewart

Can art suggest change? Yes, it can suggest change and it can produce action. But it does not produce action independently; it is not until it has effected conversation and debate on the subject in question that change or reform at any scale can take place. Actions such as the creation of free and independent schools of thought are a direct example of the manifestation of change. The relation of the free schools to utopia is how it creates an alternate scenario, but in this instance it is acted upon rather than just theorised. Islington Mill, Alternative Strategies, Alternative Art College, Arts School UK and The University of strategic Optimism are just to name a few. Each of these creates an 'alternative' space for conversation on the topic of the 'alternative' and creates a basis for change. "Change life! Change Society! These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space."¹ The alternative can be conceived as normality in contemporary society and a space that is equally mainstream as its institutionalised opposites, but as the quote above suggests, the production of a space even in the name of alternative needs to be created to attempt to *change life and society*.

¹ Pinder, David (2005). p. 1