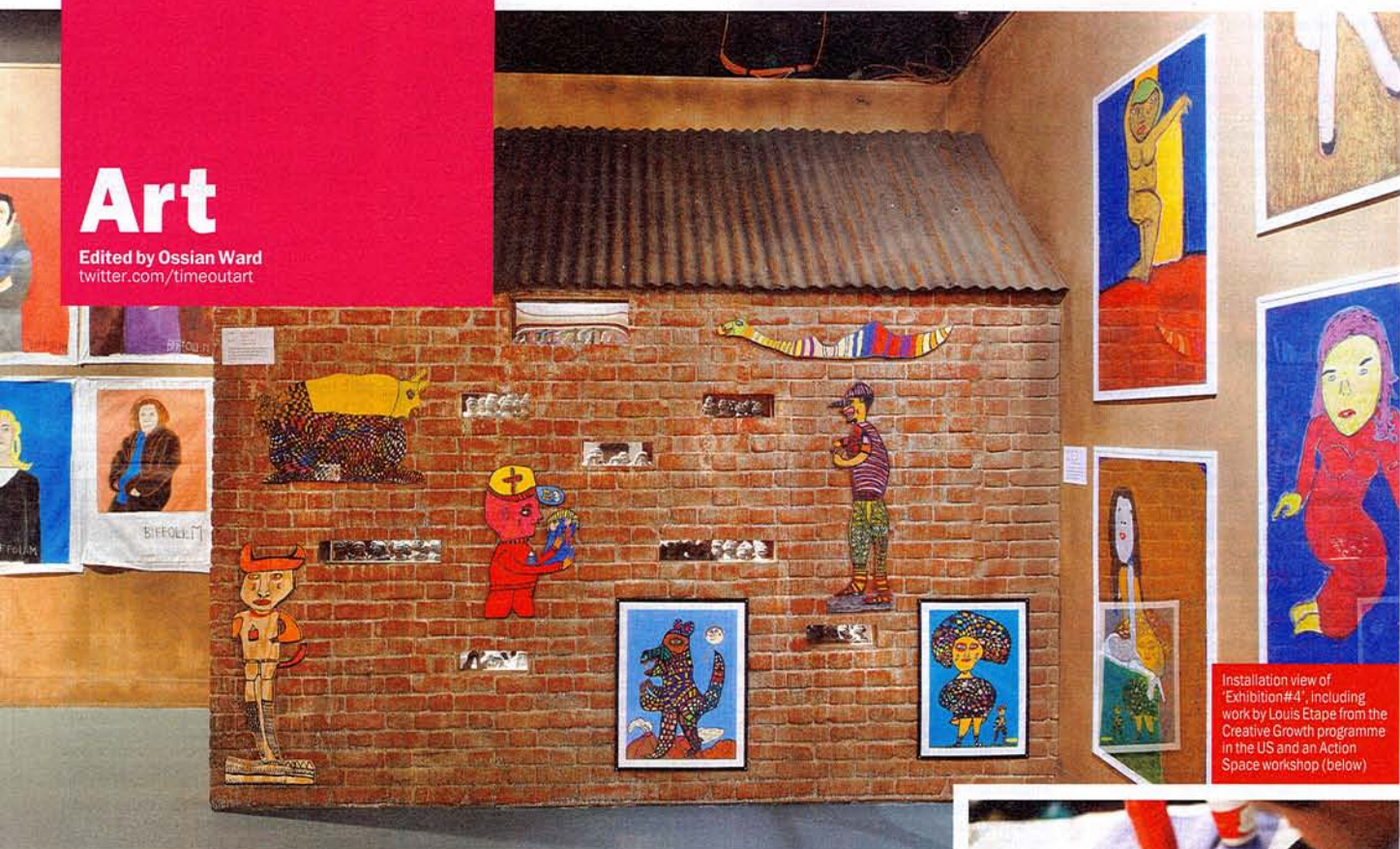


Art

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Installation view of 'Exhibition#4', including work by Louis Etape from the Creative Growth programme in the US and an Action Space workshop (below)

The in-store outsiders

For its latest exhibition, The Museum of Everything has taken over Selfridges. **Helen Sumpter** gets some art and retail therapy

While mid-morning Selfridges shoppers browse the Vivienne Westwood collection on the women's fashion floor, away from public view in a room a few metres away a lively artists' workshop is in full swing. Nena is creating a layered abstract drawing, Pardip is orchestrating a collaborative performance and Danny is painting a stylised portrait of James Bond (pictured). This is the first in a series of weekly workshops run by London-based visual arts organisation Action Space in conjunction with The Museum of Everything's 'Exhibition #4'. The sprawling show is currently colonising Selfridges storefront windows and the Ultralounge space with a vibrant display of more than 200 drawings, paintings and sculptures by artists from progressive studios around the world, like Action Space, whose members each have their own unique way of depicting the world. All of the artists in 'Exhibition #4', like everyone attending today's workshop, have some form of learning disability.

Exhibiting artist Mary Ogunleye, 48, is an Action Space artist who creates complex threaded sculptures made with pieces of foam and other materials. Ogunleye, who is severely autistic, is one of up to nine artists who

work every Friday at a studio rented by Action Space in Studio Voltaire's complex in Clapham. Rather than make work 'with' its artists, as might happen in a therapeutic workshop, Action Space employs dedicated artist-facilitators who, along with a team of volunteers, get to know individual artists' needs and behaviours and allow them to create in their own way, with whatever materials they choose.

While the workshop breaks for lunch I head down to see the exhibition. Since its launch only two years ago, the peripatetic Museum of Everything, headed by collector James Brett, has become something of a powerhouse in championing the work of outsider artists, such as Ogunleye, who are untrained, unintentional artists and often socially marginalised. Brett has staged two high-profile displays in a former dairy in Primrose Hill and one at Tate Modern's tenth birthday weekend. But 'Exhibition #4' is his most ambitious enterprise yet. He has sought out unknown artists by visiting studios and workshops around the world

which are sympathetic towards artists with developmental needs.

Among these are Barrington Farm in Norfolk, Incurve in Japan, Creative Growth in the USA, Gugging in Austria and Herenplaats in the Netherlands. And there are some amazing discoveries.

Mario Jambresic creates talismanic drawings of authority figures which

he cuts out and folds away in his pocket until they are ready to be seen. Alan

Constable's colourful paintings of people facing a barrage of paparazzi-style media are accompanied by a collection of oversized cameras that the artist has sculpted in ceramic. Constable is registered blind.

Stefan Häfner's interior-lit, architectural models of tower-block living spaces act as utopian or escapist refuges. To add some context, the exhibition is also interspersed with film clips of the artists at work in their respective studios.

While it could seem an uncomfortable fit to present marginalised artists in such a



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commercial setting, Brett has maintained the Museum's respectful approach to the work and appropriately quirky styling. Those familiar with the quaint but slightly down-at-heel vibe of the Primrose Hill venue will find a similar atmosphere cleverly recreated in the spaces here. The idea is that the Museum will reach a new, non-art audience and the show was certainly enticing in plenty of Selfridges shoppers while I was there.

The Museum hasn't been bashful about its own retail initiatives either. To generate funds for future projects—all exhibitions to date have been free—its own in-store outlet, 'The Shop of Everything', is stocking branded books, tea towels, limited-edition artists' prints and a fashion collection designed by Clements Ribeiro. It has made a big splash with its signage too. To find the Museum, just follow the arrows and cardboard signs stuck on sink plungers placed on counters all round the store.

'The Museum of Everything Exhibition #4' is at Selfridges until **Oct 25**. Got to www.actionspace.org for details of Action Space workshops. www.timeout.com/art