

PRESS RELEASE

Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad
Work-Leisure

Friday 24 – Sunday 26 September 2021
Hatton Metalcraft,
12 Trading Estate Road
Park Royal, NW10 7LU

www.work-leisure.uk

From the whimsical to the functional, *Work-Leisure* (2019 – 2021) is a survey of objects made in leisure time by industrial workers in west London's Park Royal.

One of the largest industrial estates in Europe, Park Royal is home to more than 2,000 businesses and 40,000 employees. Over several months, London-based designer Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad visited hundreds of Park Royal businesses and met with workers to catalogue what was being made after-hours and in between tasks on the estate.

The resulting visual archive contains a diverse range of personal, playful, and practical objects which, although made within an industrial context, fall outside of supply and demand. Each of these projects – from a tyre dealer's rubber chair to a metal technician's welded flowers to a glazier's decorative mirrors to an office manager's feminist embroidery – demonstrates alternative uses of materials, processes, and techniques within Park Royal's workspaces.

Work-Leisure exists as an exhibition, a publication, and a website. In the publication's introductory essay, writer and archivist Matthew Harle writes:

Where do the boundaries between work and leisure lie in Park Royal? What do its workers create outside of the demands of commerce? Research into this question required a project which knocked on studio doors, made enquiries at front offices and tentatively approached busy workers unaccustomed to discussing their labour outside of their trade. ... What started as a nascent collection of images has emerged as a multifarious cross-section of place and everyday life at Park Royal. Work-Leisure isn't claiming that its subjects are necessarily artists, nor grouping their work as a cohesive form of industrial folk art. Instead, each object is a creative manifestation of a moment where the boundaries of labour, time and self-expression collide – where work becomes leisure.

Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad recalls in his interview with Matthew Harle:

Work-Leisure documents objects that are primarily about their makers and fall outside of supply and demand. They can't be sold by their employer, but they do use the resources and skills of their workplace. It's important to know this was made in the context of industry, that it's by a worker who has temporarily overthrown the demands of production and decided to say something about themselves and their materials. Each one is a flash of life. Such practices are not only alive but vital within the rapidly changing landscapes of industry.

Begun in 2019 and completed once the estate's businesses reopened in 2021, *Work-Leisure* seeks to complicate our understanding of the dynamics between occupation and recreation.

An exhibition of the photographs will be presented alongside the *Work-Leisure* publication at Hatton Metalcraft from 24 – 26 September as part of London Design Festival.

The work also exists online at www.work-leisure.uk

Notes for editors:

Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad is a London-based designer. His studio produces work ranging from design for the public realm to workshops, games, spaces and objects. He has worked with cultural and educational institutions, the public sector and local authorities to develop tools and methodologies that proactively engage publics in design processes.

Hashemi-Nezhad has developed projects, exhibited and conducted masterclasses both in the UK and internationally, including with the Serpentine Galleries; Greater London Authority; Victoria and Albert Museum; Tokyo Metropolitan Government; Shanghai Biennale; Liverpool Biennial; and Service Design Network, Singapore. He is the recipient of international design awards, research grants and fellowships and has trained at the Royal College of Art, where he currently leads a Masters platform focusing on experimental co-design.

www.bh-n.com

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Exhibition details:

Friday 24 – Sunday 26 September 2021

Open 11am – 6pm on Friday and Saturday, and 11am – 4pm on Sunday

Book launch: Friday 24 September 2021, 5-7pm

Hatton Metalcraft,
Unit 3, 12 Trading Estate Road,
Park Royal, NW10 7LU

Park Royal Design District Press Breakfast

Friday 24 September from 9 – 11 am.

Bill Amberg Studio
14 Minerva Rd,
Park Royal NW10 6HJ

Publication details:

Designed by Studio Ard

Concept and photography by Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad

Featuring an essay by Matthew Harle alongside short interviews with Park Royal makers

Work-Leisure is a major art commission as part of Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation's (OPDC) Great Place Scheme Programme and is produced by Create London. The Great Place Scheme has been supported by the Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.