

FOUR DECADES OF MARK ARTIST-RUN WILSHER SPACES IN NORWICH

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Artists have been setting up their own galleries since the 19th century, first and foremost as a place to exhibit their own work, but also to help build a scene within which to operate and perhaps even to gain a little influence in the world. There was a boom in such spaces during the 1990s as a generation of entrepreneurial graduates known as the Young British Artists came to prominence. This is an incomplete timeline of artist-run spaces in Norwich. Please get in touch with suggestions for further inclusions or if any of the details are incorrect.

1986 - 1999

Contact Gallery

A co-op of local artists set up Contact Gallery in a shop at 56 St Benedicts St, later taking over St Margaret's Church as well. Twelve exhibitions a year were drawn mostly from a membership of 200 artists, and there were exchanges with galleries in Sheffield and Norway, usually covered by the local media. Although the main gallery eventually closed in 1999 the charity kept on running St Margaret's until 2010.

1997

7 Alexandra Mansions

Kirsty Ogg staged a series of exhibitions in her flat on the Prince of Wales Rd while working as Assistant Curator at the Norwich Gallery. Small group exhibitions mixed local artists and many then-emerging artists from Scotland including Cathy Wilkes, Simon Starling, Claire Barclay and Jim Lambie. She went on to run The Showroom in East London for ten years and was Curator at the Whitechapel Gallery from 2009-13. She is currently Director of Bloomberg New Contemporaries.

Late 1990s

Atom

Atom staged exhibitions in an empty shop unit in Anglia Square and was run by Franc Brown, who went on to set up Mota Gallery on London's Old Kent Rd in 1999. Later a technician at Wimbledon College of Art.

2001 - 2003

Frontier Gallery

This space in a shop unit at 14 Unthank Rd was set up by recently-graduated Phil Gardner to show friends and local artists including Matthew Noel Todd, Paul Kuzemczak and Rob Filby. Phil went on to work at firstsite in Colchester, as an art technician at the Hayward Gallery, and is currently working with the Arts Council Collection.

