



Artists' Desks by Char Jansen

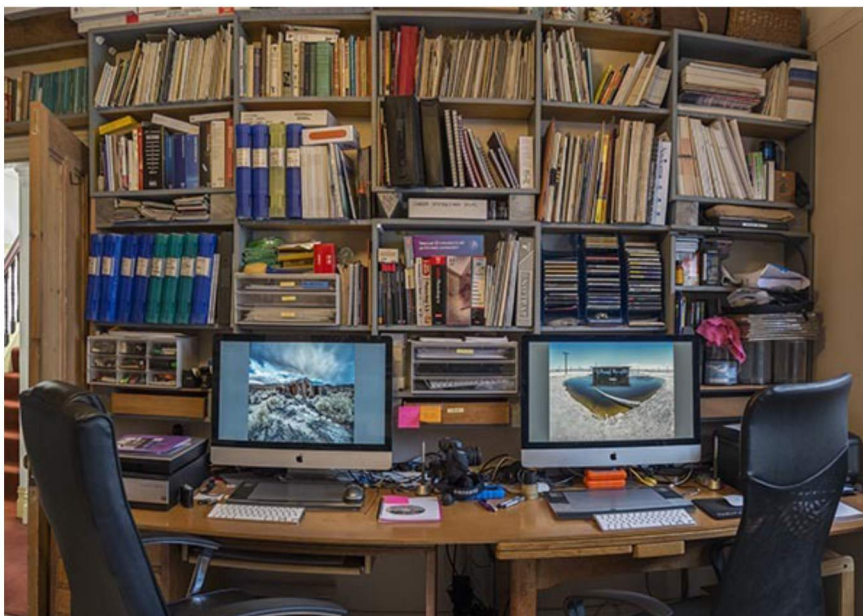
What does the interior architecture of the artist's workspace tell us about their process and practice? In psychoanalytic terms, it's often assumed that the artist's studio is a reflection of the artist's thinking.

But nowadays, the spaces artists inhabit are very different than what they once were: they've had to adapt to a more migratory life, squeezed by bigger economic problems. The desk is really the only universal marker left, a synecdoche of the artist's studio; it's where the action is caught in motion, where bureaucracy and creativity meet—whether it's on a laptop screen in a hotel room in Las Vegas, a sunny loft space in Zurich, or a bedroom floor in Barking.

This week, we've invited six artists who will be presenting their work at the [London Art Fair's Art Projects](#) to share their desk space with us.

Fionnuala Boyd & Les Evans ([Boyd & Evans](#))

Milton Keynes, UK



We have been working together since 1968 and our personal and professional lives are completely intertwined: We work in our house, most of the time in this study/computer room. There are three workstations, two scanners, an office printer, a pigment inkjet printer, tablets, external storage, portable hard drives, software discs, catalogues, filing cabinets, his and hers notebooks and half our collection of 250,000 transparencies. There is an ugly Click-Clack sofa bed for visitors if the spare room is occupied.

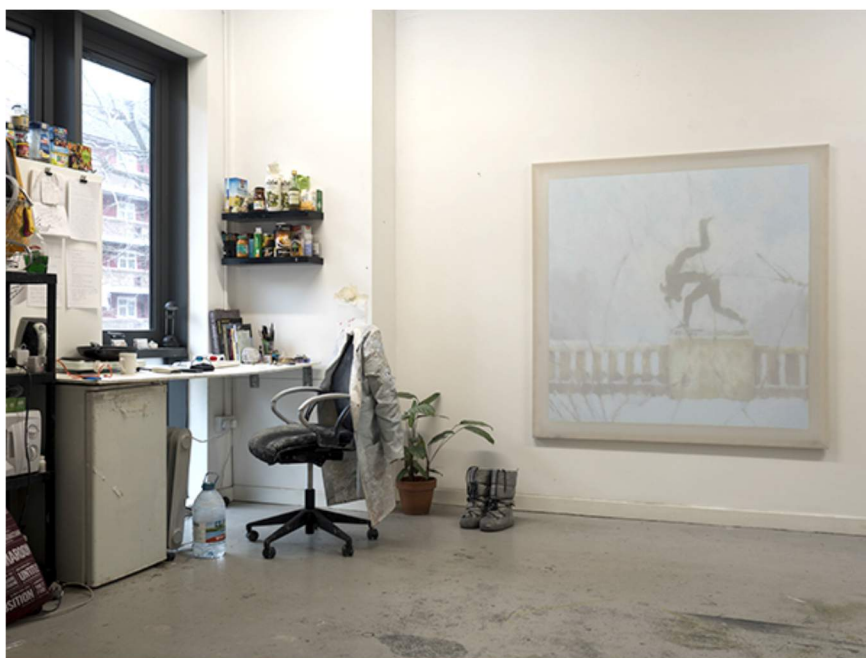
We have two painting rooms [one pictured at top], both of which double up as bedrooms for visiting grandchildren. Everything in the painting studios is on wheels so they can be wheeled away for safety. The table in our kitchen/dining room is also used as a conference table, where we discuss diaries (a pin-board with a calendar on the wall) and future exhibitions with curators.

Our paintings are based on photographs. We plan them on the computers, collaging elements from various pictures in Photoshop. Photography steadily became more important over the years and for the past ten years has been 90 percent of our output. Most of our current work is stitched from multiple (up to 100) photographs, hence the time spent with computers.

Boyd and Evans will be exhibiting at the London Art Fair 2016 at Flowers Gallery, Stand 36; they have a solo exhibition at [Flowers Gallery](#), Cork Street W1, from February 17–March 12.

Martine Poppe

London, UK



I have two desks, a kitchen trolley palette and a part kitchen, part computer hub. They belong to each their halves of my practice: painting and photography. The main desk has a branch from Petrified Forest, Macs, a ball of paint, hard disks, a ring from my gallerist, Kristin Hjellegjerde, frying pans, memory cards, Norwegian bark, hot plates, Grand Canyon wood, pens and a bullet casing from the mounds covering the floor of LA Gun Club. I wanted to do work on it this summer, whilst staying at Hooper Projects. On the desk there are some books, but I prefer audiobooks to keep my eyes free. Lately I've been going through everything available by Chomsky.

Although it's just MDF balanced on my fridge, it's my first proper desk, cluttered with coffee cups and papers. It contrasts with the rest of the studio where the different stages of my process are organized from left to right, factory style, complete with baskets of untested mediums and a forest of stretcher bars arranged by size. I keep it tidy so I can think and work without hassle, but I'm not a clean painter and my studio can be a hazard zone. Paint goes everywhere, especially on my desk, face, and lab coat, the latter of which has become so layered that I expect it to stand unsupported any day now.

Martine Poppe will be exhibiting at the London Art Fair 2016 Art Projects with [Kristin Hjellegjerde](#), Stand P4.

Isabelle Wenzel

Wuppertal, Germany



I'm not really a desk worker. Certainly I do have to do paper work and sit behind the computer. This is something I do not really like to do. I like change and change is movement. So I don't have a fixed work desk. I work at the library, at the café, on the kitchen table, in bed, at the round table in my sleeping room with the sewing machine on, at the desk of my home-based studio room where I mainly do paperworks and then I have two desks at my studio, one for big prints, etc. and the other as a general work table. Actually I do not really care about desks. I do care about space to move in.

Isabelle Wenzel will be exhibiting at the London Art Fair 2016 Art Projects with [Galerie Bart](#), Stand P2. It will be the artist's first solo exhibition in the UK.

Eduardo Padilha

London, UK



My desk at home is located in a former laundry room that has been annexed to the rest of the flat, which nowadays forms a living/kitchen space. It is literally in front of the entrance door where I oversee everything around me. It is where I see the post arrive and immediately open, it is where I receive visitors that come to talk over a coffee. Without much manoeuvre I can look out the windows towards the staircase to watch my neighbours' activities on the communal corridor.

Moreover, once a month I organize Sunday Lunches with an artist colleague. I cook for eight people and, at the desk that has become an extended table, we discuss current affairs. My desk serves as multipurpose place for many of my needs: it is a hub at home for both domestic and public activities. It is where all my connections are activated. I am constantly leaving papers and artwork on it and therefore selecting, filing, and discarding. Whatever is selected from the home desk I take to my studio desk for the second part to try out—from here I make the ideas to be developed and to come alive.

Eduardo Padilha will be exhibiting at the London Art Fair 2016 Art Projects with [Iniva](#), Stand P12.

[Harold Offeh](#)
Cambridge, UK



It's only very recently that I've reconnected with my actual physical desk. A recent move from London to Cambridge has meant I've been able to extract my furniture from an extended hibernation in a South London storage unit. The current state of my desk, though not ideal, is indicative of my working practices. There is an accumulation of material that is sifted and thanks to occasional binges, edited and cleared. As an artist and lecturer working with performance, video, and photography much of the material manifestations of my work are papers, notebooks, scraps of paper: I'm currently preparing for a performance with Iniva at the London Art Fair. The desk is also home to receipts, student essays, remnants of snacks, and my laptop, sadly missing from the photo.

Over the years, through various projects I've collected a lot of what I would call valuable popular cultural artifacts: wigs, plastic toys, etc. My partner calls it junk! In truth as someone who lives in Cambridge but works in Leeds and London I have many desks. I find blank spaces disturbing, I have to fight my natural tendency to fill spaces, I'm a maximalist, as Christian Lacroix fatefully said, "more is never enough!"

Harold Offeh will be performing at the London Art Fair 2016 Art Projects with [Iniva](#).

—[Char Jansen](#)

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