

## Michael Stuart: Kilburn bus stop

Guerrilla artists have turned a Kilburn bus stop into an artwork using just sticky tape, outlining the shadows cast on the surrounding pavement by a street light of the bus stop, its shelter and rubbish bin.

So: why this particular bus stop? Who wants to communicate anonymously with the inhabitants of Kilburn High Road? It could be a prank and, of course, open the question 'what is art?' However, the care of execution, involving 100 perfectly positioned foot-long strips of 'fragile' tape, suggests a serious intent.

The effect is striking, changing something everyday into a sacred space. It draws the attention and renders concrete something we take for granted and pass everyday without noticing. The shapes are surprisingly pleasing, combining to create a coherent trio, and the pleasure is enhanced by its gritty random location and the uncertainty whether it's art or a crime scene.

Initial surprise and enthusiasm gave way to fascination, observing the reactions of others. Why do most people walk through without noticing? Why do many people who DO notice display no curiosity? I'm uplifted and excited: proud to have this in my neighbourhood and wanting to share it. Some people do indeed stop, clearly surprised and trying to work out what it is. We exchange looks, smiles and opinions.

In a busy, crowded city, do we close off our senses and curiosity, ending up not noticing or caring what's around us? Would people react the same way in a village?

The famous Tate bricks are an example of everyday objects subversively turned into art by being brought into a gallery, but this goes a step further. The ordinariness of the subject and the high-street venue raise the question of the function of a gallery in framing art. Are the people who enjoy the Kilburn bus stop regular connoisseurs of art and vice versa? Will we now give prolonged attention and appreciate other objects around me? And how confident are we in our own observations and judgements, without the blessing of a curator, an esteemed gallery and a more imposing display area than Kilburn High Road?

The exhibition is located at the 32 bus stop opposite Brondesbury Station, NW6 7QB. It will run from dusk to dawn ... until the tape peels off.