

Minerva Cuevas: S-COOP

This is one section of a two part Street Project by Mexican artist Minerva Cuevas. She has also created an ice-cream parlour on Toynbee Street.

Cuevas explores links between the nearby Petticoat Lane Market which has been selling clothes since the 18th century - and early British cooperative movements. Developed since the 1800s, they were founded on the principle that communities should meet their needs through jointly owned enterprise. Some 'co-ops' introduced their own currency intended to rival legal state tender. Whenever a member bought something – typically groceries - they would be given a token. At the end of the year these were redeemed in the form of shares in the Co-operative Society. People could also buy tokens for bread, milk or coal with the amount spent registered for dividend payments.

Inspired by this alternative economic model, Cuevas displays historic co-operative tokens and literature as well as archive images of the local area. She has also designed the *S-COOP* coin, produced by the Mexican Mint, for circulation by Petticoat Lane traders as change for purchases. The *S-COOP* can be redeemed at the bookshop – or for an ice-cream at her specially designed parlour, *Monochrome*.

Born in Mexico City in 1975, Minerva Cuevas makes context-specific projects on the internet, in museums and other public situations. She has exhibited at the Sharjah Biennial 7; Frankfurter Kunstverein; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Secession, Vienna and Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven.

Visit *Monochrome* at 26-28 Toynbee Street, Wed-Sun, 11am-5pm

S-COOP is part of The Street, an ongoing programme of artist commissions based inside and outside of the Gallery. To see all of the commissions visit www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/minerva-cuevas

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