

It was a rainy start to the London Festival of Architecture's opening weekend.

Not the best news for an event that saw Exhibition Road filled with hundreds of cardboard structures. But the clouds cleared and the Brompton Stoops, designed by 6a Architects and patterned by icon, hit the street.



The flat-pack Brompton Stoops in 6a Architects' corridor



Unloading the stoops onto Exhibition Road



Making the mini-stoops



Tarpaulin at the ready





Wright performed to icon's amphitheatre



The cardboard structures even stood up to parkour



drumming session



Ruth Bartlett was Pimp my Plimsoll

The stoops were the scene of all kinds of activities, with poets, artists, designers, musicians and rampant kids all in the mix.



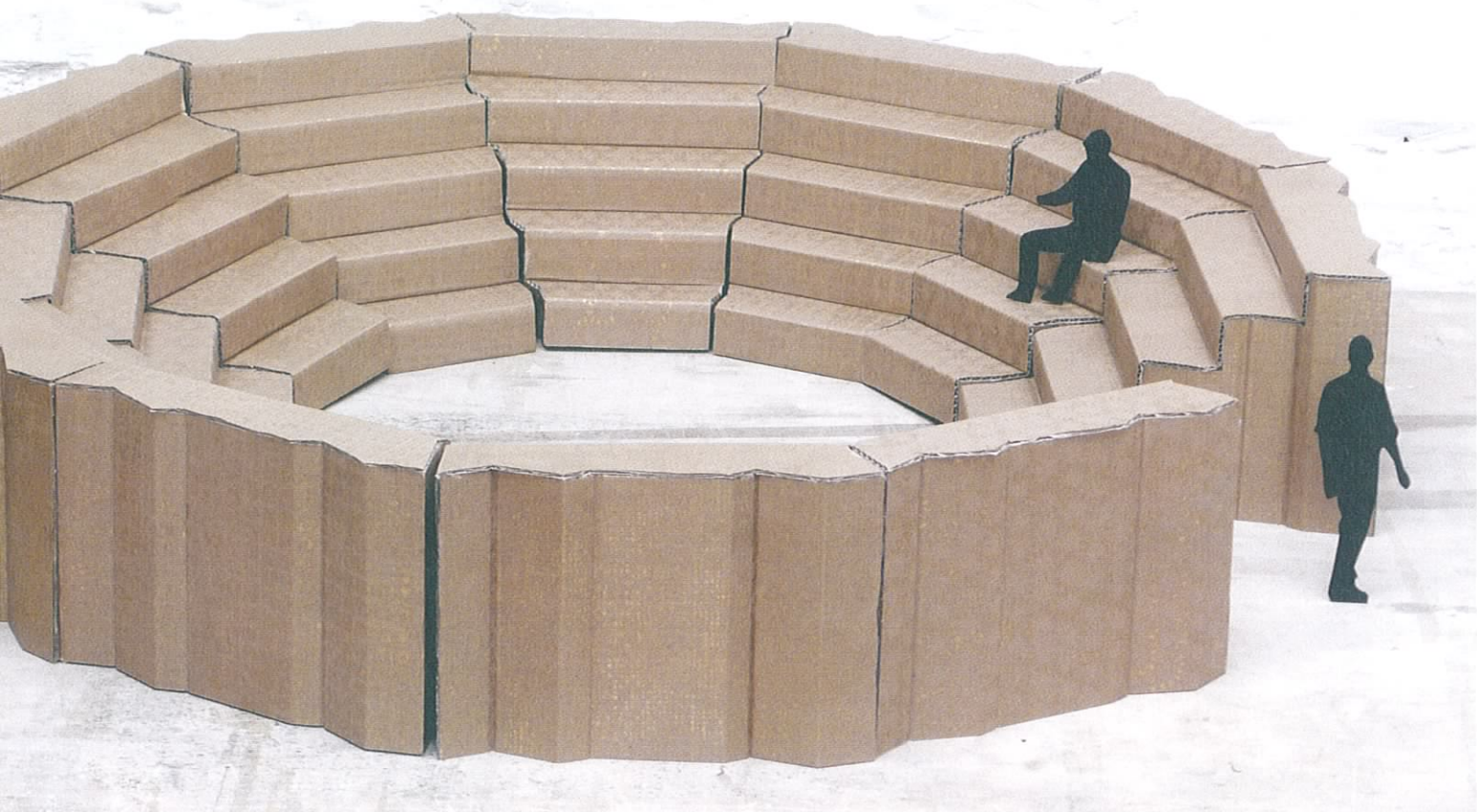
Artists Lundahl & Seidl mid-performance



The "dinosaur spine" configuration



POLLY BRADEN, MARKUS FRIESENBERG/5A



Brompton Stoops are 30 cardboard structures that will be occupying London's Exhibition Road when it is pedestrianised for the opening weekend of the London Festival of Architecture this month. Designed by 6a Architects, they combine to form pavilions, or can stand alone as places to watch the world go by.

The stepped structures were christened by icon, the event's partner, in homage to that classic New York hangout, the front steps, known as the stoop. The name was a response to the architects' desire to create an informal social space that was in tune with the street.

6a was commissioned to design a pop-up pavilion by the Brompton Design District, but found the task a complex one. "Exhibition Road is

just so big. How do you make a presence when there is so much grandeur?" explains Emerson. The practice decided to create a number of smaller objects that would make an impact along the full length of the road.

"We thought it might be better not to compete but show how adding small things can have a substantial effect, how people interact with the street," says Emerson. "We also enjoy seeing how an object has a relationship to its multiple."

Each stoop can seat 18 people, but can be carried by just two. They are made from heavy-duty, weatherproof industrial cardboard normally used for packaging cars for long-haul trips. The stoops will

line the road, locking together to create a 200-seat theatre, on top of each other to make semi-circular caves or back-to-back to form a dinosaur spine along the street.

There will also be dozens of smaller "mini stoops", which can be made up in around 20 minutes by the public on the day and taken home to be stools or stepladders. "We're happy for them to be reappropriated – they should be," says Steph McDonald. "It might be quite nice if they emigrate to Hyde Park or just appear all over London."

Icon is programming a series of street performances to accompany the stoops. **BEATRICE GALILEE**

Exhibition Road will be closed to vehicles 21-22 June

Above and below: The stoops can lock together to form an arena, a "dinosaur spine" and other structures

