

Anti-capitalists occupy empty home of Olympic artist

LONDON: A disused house belonging to sculptor Anish Kapoor, who designed the Olympic Park's landmark red tower, has been occupied by anti-capitalists for a one-day arts event.

Members of "Bread and Circuses" yesterday entered the five-storey Georgian building in Lincoln's Inn Fields, one of central London's most attractive and exclusive garden squares, to protest against corporate involvement in art.

It is the first in a series of planned protests by the group targeting next month's London Olympics and other events.

Members include some veterans of the London Occupy anti-capitalist movement who pitched their tents outside St Paul's Cathedral for four months earlier this year.

Kapoor's spiralling Olympic tower is largely sponsored by the world's largest steel manufacturer ArcelorMittal.

The 115m tall sculpture dominates the skyline, towering above a previously run-down part of east London.

A spokeswoman for the artist declined to comment.

Bread and Circuses takes its name from the Roman ploy to distract people from the collapse of the Empire, it said.

"The ArcelorMittal Orbit Tower and the staging of the Olympics are attempts to create public approval through diversion and distraction, whilst hiding the corporate influence on every aspect of our lives – even sports and the arts, not to mention democracy," the group said in a statement.

Britons are currently struggling with a recession and severe public spending cuts.

Legal moves have begun to evict the Bread and Circuses group. – Reuters