

# scope

*Contemporary Research Topics*

**Scope: Contemporary  
Research Topics (AAA)**

August 2012

This issue of Scope: Contemporary Research Topics is devoted to AAA: Adrian Hall, Alistair McLennan and André Stitt, who were in residency at the Dunedin School of Art during May-June 2011.

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Scope aims to engage discussion on contemporary research in the visual arts. It is concerned with views and critical debates surrounding issues of practice, theory, history and their relationships as manifested through the visual and related arts and activities, such as sound, performance, curation, tactile and immersive environments, digital scapes and methodological considerations. With New Zealand and its Pacific neighbours as a backdrop, but not its only stage, Scope seeks to address the matters which concern contemporary artists and arts enquirers in their environments of practice.

The AAA residency at the Dunedin School of Art in 2011 included a press interview with the artists, three public seminars – one by each artist – regular performances, an exhibition, and many informal sessions with students around the School. This issue of Scope includes texts by the artists, by lecturers in the School and by a partner of the School. Most images document the residency, with some referring to other performance moments in the lives of the artists.

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# AAA AT THE DUNEDIN SCHOOL OF ART: INSTITUTION AND EKSTITUTION

Leoni Schmidt

This issue of *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics* is devoted to documentation of and responses to AAA at the Dunedin School of Art in 2011. AAA: artists Adrian Hall, Alistair McLennan and André Stitt, respectively from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, although their peripatetic lives have taken them around the world to many places.

In 2010, Carl A Mears and Michele Beevors mentioned the possibility of an AAA month-long residency in our School here near the southern tip of New Zealand, very far away from England, Scotland and Ireland. Support from the British Council and Otago Polytechnic (our home institution) followed and before we knew it AAA arrived. Looking back on their residency, the productive tension between 'ekstitution' in relation to 'institution' is foremost in my mind as Head of School (which by its very definition comprises an institution).

Artist and filmmaker Florian Schneider coined the term 'ekstitution' in 2010 to help explain the nature of self-organised and informal educational networks or events. AAA constituted such a 'network', and such an 'event', during their residency in our institution. Schneider writes that an 'ekstitution' is "...fluid, changeable, uncertain, not doctrinaire, constituted either in opposition or perpendicular to the formal physical and symbolic architectures of the institution, with its clear designations of inside and outside."<sup>1</sup> AAA inhabited the confines of our institution whilst questioning its constraints and making the artists' agency visible for their audience – mostly our students.

This is in keeping with AAA's experiences as artists who have worked critically within art schools. André Stitt writes elsewhere in this issue about the dynamics of the pedagogical environment at Belfast College of Art in the 1970s and also about the concurrent emphasis on "working outside the confines of the institution". Carl A Mears and Michele Beevors point to the involvement of students within the context of the Dunedin School of Art and its Gallery. For a while, the very structures, outcomes and processes of the institution were exposed, for example when Hall moved vertically into the inner spaces of the gallery architecture or when McLennan became a walking sculpture or when Stitt carved into his own flesh: instances when our understanding of the ontology of the known were profoundly unsettled.

Georg Scöllhammer urges art schools to "come back to a form of mobility which is also a form of academy".<sup>2</sup> This is what AAA gifted to our School. And, their gift came with a generosity which reminds us of Marcel Mauss's understanding<sup>3</sup>: the gift comes with generosity because it has to be repaid generously; it holds such force that it compels the recipient to repay it; and there is thus an ethics of behaviour embedded in the relationship between giver and recipient – a reciprocity which the audience (read: student) feels compelled to repay through retaining a qualitative critical mobility of practice in their own work – the ultimate repayment for the artist-teacher.

**Leoni Schmidt** is the Head: Dunedin School of Art.

1 See Fiona Woods, "Slivers of Critical Space: Some Thoughts on the Role of the Contemporary Art Institution", *Networks* 14, Summer, 2011: 2.

2 See Clémentine DeLiss., "Roaming, Prelusive, Preamble", in Steven Henry Madoff (Ed.) *Art School: Propositions for the 21st Century* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT, 2009: 133).

3 Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reasons for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Trans. W D Halls (London: Cohen and West, 1923/1990).























# AGENCY, AUTONOMY AND AURA: AAA AND OOO

Bridie Lonie

The gallery is rectangular and damp. It feels like a muddy pond. Partly the bare feet, partly the dirty shoes, partly the fish. I've heard this room shouting and screaming, smelt it redolent of fresh and less fresh fish; seen lights flashing and white ice smudge images of assholes. One man shouts "little horse, little asshole, little shirt." Another wanders blindfold with trusting and patient bare feet, feeling his way around the stuff. A third climbs a ladder, attaching some emblazon to the ceiling. The room's not green nature, for sure, but there is this barefoot shut-eyed druid with divining rods on his head, from which he and his friend dangle dead fish and stoats, cans and shoes, socks and stockings. There is also the kind of rubbish that fills car parks and the backs of buildings and has come to stand in for the uncontrollable element of the man-made environment.

I know – because I've felt it through these experiences – that children have been beaten, people killed, blown up in the names of war and hate. The room also feels like an exploration of masculinity, simply because these experiences seem to be coded with insignia primarily understood as that: flags, army stuff, police whistles and lights; areas women have climbed into, but only recently and not always with a welcome.

It's a horrible space. What has produced it?

AAA's performance work was announced as three related kinds of action: Akshuns, Actuations and Live Art, positioned within the very precise constraints of the white cube. The experience of attending the sequence of performances was one of intensity and dislocation. There were no seats; viewers sat around the outside, or looked in at the door. The artists interacted with clusters of objects as they reworked and re-ordered a changing set of metonymic and metaphoric indicators, through gesture, word, sound, performance, digital projection, cutting, crushing, writing, talking, thinking, arguing, shouting and murmuring. Weeping I saw on the audience's part.

We experienced the conscious creation and implementation of what Deleuze called "a block of space/time," something constructed with a heuristic bent, improvisational, experimental and at the same time contained, always operating somewhere between the production of affect and narrative, derailed from within by the inconsistency of its protagonists, but retaining a kind of interiority, and an intensity.

How to think this through? It was too consistent and methodical to be catharsis, and the words actuation, akshun (said with a Belfast accent) and live art have histories in performance art in Northern Ireland in particular. There was the sense of a dismantled Celtic Twilight, with the three Irish, Scottish and Cornish protagonists, but the provoking quality for this viewer was the consistency and the agency given to the white cube and the non-human objects within the space.

The object-oriented ontologists, also known as the speculative materialists, suggest that philosophy needs a new ontology that does not begin from an initial and epistemological question of how we gain knowledge, but is concerned instead (and again) with what things can be said to be. The urgency of this question lies in the contemporary understanding that humans have miscalculated their agency in the world, and that things/objects which hitherto appeared subordinate appear to have far greater power than previously thought.

Levi Bryant suggests that such a re-thinking may require us to operate without the principle of negation intrinsic to dialectical thought. Instead, the ontological or primary characteristic of being could be defined simply as the capacity to make a difference.

## HYPEROBJECTS

A further element of object-oriented ontology is the discussion of things that have not previously been characterised as objects, rather described as sets of connections understood through complexity theory, but within OOO have been described as hyperobjects. The hyperobject can be understood as a larger-scale complex set of interactions that is manifest in diverse forms simultaneously. This characterisation reflects the recognition of a degree of agency and coherence, and is particularly useful in understanding complex situations such as climate change and the connected material and psychological impacts of events such as wars or endemic societal pressures.

This model is allied to the post-structuralist surface model of consciousness and affect, but it does allow one to consider some things as essences or entities in themselves: some form of 'in itself' remains permissible.

Artists tend to focus their efforts on the production of particular experiences, or affects, open-ended or closed, through establishing sets of conditions for their reception, or the use of reproductive and formal technologies.

AAA's fortnight of performance – akshun, actuation, live art – could then perhaps be understood as a manifestation of a hyperobject through establishing the material conditions for behaviours that would elicit this experience. The hyperobject in question might be the political problematics of the late twentieth century, focused by events in Belfast in the 1970s and reflected in this art/trauma/affect effect produced through time, reflecting and incorporating and subsuming dialectical and arborescent models of political consciousness and psychoanalytic affect. Or even this characterisation might be one manifestation of a characteristic of something broader. In this model resolution, or form, would be found not in a dialectical model of action, reaction, revolution/synthesis, but in the production of a kind of consistency of affect, a rhythm, a noise.

## THE ARTISTS

Consider the trio of artists. The initiator of the project was Adrian Hall, a political being to the core, whose concern with A.R.T. is that it recognise its place in the biopolitical arena, the everyday world, recounting and encountering its reciprocities and complicity. Hall engages with the space, goes up into the ceiling, projects images slantwise across the walls and ceiling, reiterates its provisional nature and teases its linearity.

His previous colleague was Alistair MacLennan, whose performance history brings a Jungian, shamanistic position almost unimpeded by poststructuralist thought into the twenty-first century. MacLennan's practice includes a sustained relationship with groups of artists who perform in a diverse range of accessible spaces that are being used concurrently by members of the public going about their own ordinary and professional business.

The youngest, their student, was André Stitt, whose work remains close to Artaud's principles of catharsis and abjection, positioning those, however, very close to the cause-and-effect model of classic psychoanalytic theory: as with the child, so with the adult. Here also a biopolitical approach builds on the specificities of a Belfast 1960s adolescence. Stitt performs the rages that beset a child divided.

The three artists' meeting, 40 years ago, was in the context of the Irish 'troubles,' an art school, the recent history of Joseph Beuys's visit to Belfast, and the liberatory art politics of the 1970s. Stitt was the student, and he had been a child in Belfast; he came to the art school marked by experiences for which Beuys's approach to art seemed to provide a methodology. Beuys worked in Belfast and performed in public spaces: Stitt as an adolescent encountered him, as it were raw, in a market and recognised a way of acting in the world that met his sense of



the contrary absurdity and challenge of living. Hall came via a more measured conceptual art, and his approach provided structures and a formal relationship with political thought. MacLennan moved between art and Buddhism, abandoning and then re-engaging with the material elements that conceptual art almost managed to do away with.

These positions remained differenced, perhaps exacerbated by the situation, but in documentation of previous work each artist's practice remained intact and consistent. The performances threaded through one another as a kind of parallel play, with different ends in view.

What that approach did was to return the place of these three practices to the white cube, a place which each artist has used with caution. MacLennan usually works with urban performance groups; Stitt's performance practice merged early with punk but remains primarily politically engaged with street art, though he is also painting; Hall perhaps is of the three the most committed to the delineation of a space in which what he calls A.R.T. retains its autonomy.

I spoke of the rejection of the principle of negation, which Bryant argues allows us to lose the inevitability of the return to nothingness of the Hegelian model. The model of negation gives us the possibility of total change or revolution and the movement toward a new state. The rejection of this model suggests that such radical change might not be possible; the speculative materialists are to some extent aligned with the thinking of complexity theorists, for whom action does not occur through radical revolution but through a process of almost incalculable and unpredictable actions that lead to sets of connected tipping points. Artworks are far clumsier things than this, full of intentionality and expression, but they might contain a reaction or a response to this state of things. And the artists mentioned in conversation the comic progenitor of complexity theory, Flann O'Brien, with his postman-becoming-bicycle and vice versa sequence from *The Third Policeman*, a mid-twentieth-century account of Northern Irish politics.

Sometimes it seemed that three solipsistic, monadic performances were occurring, with little interaction or engagement. But then watching MacLennan calmly providing himself with the apparatus of the shaman from the metallic rubbish of the material elements of the set, as Stitt continued parading a Foucauldian obsessional and self-harming paramilitary subjectification, did suggest that these two artists were consciously opposing their positions.

Hall, who has had less contact with the other two, worked to provide sociopolitical context and the historical material of signification: flags, digital reminders of histories, whole narratives sliced into the set.

He also operated across the space diagonally, climbing into the ceiling, making visible its institutional and material infrastructures, occasionally threatening its health and safety parameters. As in the Sphinx's riddle of the ages of man, he moved from four feet to two feet to three feet, and shouted across generational and historical boundaries.

The white space was filled with objects such as trashed track shoes, signifying both people and the waste of capitalist consumption. Bits of old steel, cans, papers, newspapers, torn banners, buckets, red bloody water; hooks ... dead fish and stoats ... this wasteland was urban. The 1970s was the period when the first impacts of planned obsolescence hit and the development of mountains of waste and destruction occurred, so soon after the post-war reconstructions of the 1950s. But wars that were not regarded as wars continued to be fought. Sectarian violence built on and reinforced familial violence. The sexual abuse of children was a leitmotif of Stitt's work. At one point he pinned a gestural sequence of vivid, spider-like anuses across the wall. The performance suggested that nothing has changed: this was not a redemptive performance.

The larger objects into which art looks slantwise are the durable traumas and moves in consciousness of groups of people. They have a material and a felt element. Each artist is implicated in and inseparable from the subject formations of her or his time, manifest in material form as well as in consciousness.

Stitt, whose black army-like fatigues had been slashed to threads, took up towards the end of the performances a beautifully starched and white shirt, which he opened and shut, extending the arms up as in semaphore, until he sat with the shirt beneath him while he cut not the fabric but his own skin into the shape of the word 'northern.' Linen is resonant with the associations of Belfast table linen, Irish linen, linen to provide trade with the new America liberated from its relationship with England; linen to provide self-respect.

As Adam Smith wrote:

A linen shirt is, strictly speaking, not a necessity of life. The Greeks and Romans lived, I suppose, very comfortably although they had not linen. But in the present times, through the greater part of Europe, a creditable day-laborer would be ashamed to appear in public without a linen shirt, the want of which would be supposed to denote that disgraceful edge of poverty which, it is presumed, no-one can well fall into without extreme bad conduct.

While the white shirt sits as metonymic for the economic model of capitalism that has produced the detritus of the environment – its soft drink cans and its discarded running shoes – the shirt for Smith was also distinct, a signifier of non-alienated labour: Stitt's slow performance with it, and its eventual appearance as the possible canvas for the pouring of blood, also throws a simple dialectic into disarray.

The final sequence of the work was played by Hall as the end of a narrative as he recounted the story of a dark night in Belfast after a murder; rotating around, shouting the story into a megaphone. Stitt slowly cut the word 'Norn lrn' into his arm, and sat holding a starched and spotless white shirt, onto which the blood did not in the end drip. MacLennan continued to pad slowly around the room, his eyes shut, and a recently dead salmon slowly stiffening around the form of his head. There was a pause as Hall's story ended, MacLennan continued to walk and Stitt to hold his arm above the white shirt.

## GENDER

The density of the project was exaggerated by its gendering. Whatever one thinks of subject formation and difference, this was a set of three men operating from a system when men's primacy in the art world was still barely challenged. Gestures toward the presence of women occurred in the use of signifiers of women—dress, shoes, texts; but the monadic nature and the relationship between masculinity and power was one of the elements that produced the consistency of the project.

## BEING

Another element was the rhythms provided by the repetition of grammatical structures. Stitt's iterations of adjectives and nouns – little horse, little shirt, little anus – insisted on the materiality, the object-ness of things, any narrative occurring by implication and without explicit agency. MacLennan did a similar thing: his use of the present participle – being, encountering – insisted on the experiential nature of action rather than its agency. In this way both artists resisted the production of end-point narrative. Hall, on the other hand, told stories that had beginnings, middles and ends, and in his final threnody rotated with a megaphone around a central pole in such a way that he appeared to be about to pull the whole environment down around him. This was a contrast, a defined difference in approach, but again it was a consistent one, and consistently undone in terms of its presentation of the possibility of closure in contrast to the iterative, affective intensity of the rhythmic structure of the approach of the others.

## TIME

Hall's concern with A.R.T.'s capacity to have agency is a fundamental element of the series of performances, and one could see him forcing narrative through context and occasionally closure throughout the series. I felt that Stitt

and MacLennan were more concerned with affect. But the question of where that affect arrived, what it did, gives us the usual problems arising from theatricality, performance and documentation. As someone sitting on the edge of the room, I was a witness. Hillis Miller's account of a narrative's necessary structure is that it has a protagonist, an antagonist and a witness who learns (plainly a dialectical model); it is in the recognition of a coherence that we understand that a narrative has occurred. Affect is spoken of more in terms of rhythms, intensities and flows, with a distinct rejection of the notion of closure. I would disagree with a rejection of narrative for affect, finding narrative structure to be a common feature of whatever it is that makes communication possible, and art to be a case within this structure and not distinct from it. However, a focus on affect will lead to certain artistic forms, a kind of flattening or deferring of apparent closure, and this was a feature of the performance.

Obviously narrative structure, iteration, repetition and intensity have to do with particular understandings of the relation of time and agency, within life as within artworks. The white cube provides a grid form; drawing in the space with body and objects, and occasionally within discrete artworks, provided moments of intensity and discrete presence. But again, the use of a repetitive structure and consistent approach to the raveling, unraveling and re-raveling of the elements argued for the production of something that did seem to be a "block of space-time." Aristotelian arguments for time as a series of points were countered by the phenomenological account of time as a process, an engagement, inextricable from consciousness, during the youth of the three artists.

## AGENCY, AFFECT AND ETHICS

Quentin Meillassoux, speaking of philosophers, might be speaking about artists when he writes:

For it could be that contemporary philosophers have lost the great outdoors, the absolute outside of pre-critical thinkers, that outside which was not relative to us, and which was given as indifferent to its own given-ness to be what it is, existing in itself regardless of whether we are thinking of it or not; that outside which thought could explore with the legitimate feeling of being on foreign territory – of being entirely elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

Without that outdoors, we are within, inside (our ethics are contingent, dependent, provisional, not autonomous ...). It is in this light that I think AAA's performance can be thought. The contingent, planned or adventitious effect of the three different but related positions about art appeared in the end as a very intense interiority, in which each artist's *modus operandi* formed its own trajectory within the white space that formed its inescapable frame, metonymic of the frame from which nothing can escape. Here could be found neither a primary absence, an emptiness, nor a negation and revolution; instead, a kind of internal consistency, its roots in something appallingly dysfunctional. The production of affect without narrative is also the production of expression without ethics; the complexities and contradictions of this project arise from the ways that each artist re-inserts ethics into the production of sustained affect.

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- 1 Agamben, Giorgio, "Biopolitics and the Rights of Man," in his *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
- 2 Bryant, Levi, Nick Smicek and Graham Harman, *The Speculative Turn, Continental Materialism and Realism* (Melbourne: re.press, 2001).
- 3 Groys, Boris, *Art Power* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).
- 4 Meillassoux, Quentin, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (London: Continuum, 2008).
- 5 Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (London: Continuum, 2008), 7.

## STANDING ROOM ONLY

Michele Beevors

Guns don't kill people, people kill people. That may be so, but guns carry the agency of people's intentions. That is, you can't really kill someone with a feather. The materiality of an object counts and the sentence above should read, People use guns to kill people. The recent work of Triple AAA has developed out of a desire to make the relationships between object and intention manifest for the audience towards an understanding of a shared history.

I have for a long time been interested in the relationship between material culture and the constructions of subjectivity within contemporary art. I wish to invoke some recent debates in anthropology concerning the material world and apply these specifically to a series of events that happened during Triple AAA's visit to the Dunedin School of Art. In Alfred Gell's famous essay on technology, "The Technology of Enchantment," Gell outlines a theory of artistic practices that relies on the relationship between artefact and technology and revolves around the idea of agency – of both the maker and the communities that 'use' the object in question.<sup>1</sup> (The term 'use' could be seen here to mean both to experience and to understand.) While Gell's argument operates strictly within the terms of an artifactual or handcrafted tradition, I think it can nevertheless be used to open up debate around how contemporary art uses its artifacts. Gell's argument about agency was developed in his book *Art and Agency* (1998), and dealt with the idea of intentionality.<sup>2</sup> Gell does not believe in an aesthetic theory of art, but rather that art is a "distributed mind" of a society, and that the creative products of that society or the individuals that make it up are their distributed intentionality. This is interesting, because it leaves aesthetics out of the equation while it raises the problem of the artist's intention and the audience's participation within the artwork as social factors informing how we understand what we see, use, and in turn respond to.

In his 1952 essay "American Action Painters," Harold Rosenberg used the terms "action and arena" in relation to painting and the subsequent loss of identity necessary to the act of making.<sup>3</sup> Rosenberg's essay can be used to open up a discussion of intention and clarify the notion of the everyday and the collapse of Life and Art / Art and Life. It can also be used to reiterate an ongoing concern of Triple AAA, an interest in ordinary materials and the meanings that they accrue over time – how we interpret stuff through use, and how stuff means something else through the collapse of narrative time.

Rosenberg saw abstract painting as the "arena" where the artist records an indexical trace of his body in space through a loss of intentionality. This lost intentionality, Rosenberg goes on to assert, is replaced by immediacy. The final result of this process within the arena is unknown to the artist at the beginning of the work; he has to trade his desire for meaning for the labours of his body. This action, a wilful letting go of self-determination and history as representation, is replaced by the notion of the heroic artist as explorer of material reality (hence the collapse of art into life, life into art).

### TRIPLE AAA AT THE DUNEDIN SCHOOL OF ART GALLERY

#### AN IRISHMAN, AN ENGLISHMAN AND A SCOTSMAN WALK INTO A BAR ...

*Inventory: rusted steel, sticks, dead stoats, salmon, leaves, photocopies, megaphones, video projectors, scissors, many old shoes, brown paper bag marked "patient clothing," cameras, tripod, lots of string, uniforms, students, doing words, lists, electrical cables, a long table with white tablecloths, odds and ends, debris.*

Each Artist in Triple AAA provided their own interpretation of Akshuns, Actuationns and Live-Works while separating their practice from representation (narrative theatre), but still maintaining that accumulated time was a necessary component. It was important to understand that the audience was as much a part of the action, within the arena, as the artists or the objects. However, it is not simply the element of time that is at stake in relation to Triple AAA, but a concertina of time. No longer a straightforward narrative, time is malleable through the manipulation of audience, object and artist.

In the gallery there were no bleachers, no chairs – the audience had to make do, because the space was filled with things and people. It really seemed sometimes that the audience became a nuisance; with no real designated space, the audience was forced to move about the space, prop themselves against a wall or perch on the floor. On a number of occasions they brought their own chairs, but since the action overlapped all of the spaces – walls, floor and ceiling – on any given day the audience became nomads. The audience ducked in and out, came back over days or did not. No one stayed for all of the events. Each member of the audience took away a different set of memories, a different set of experiences. In the live actions, objects are assembled, used, cast aside, re-used – some are furniture, some not – and it is here that meaning tentatively accumulates.

Not even the blank arena of a brand new gallery comes without baggage, since the immaculate white walls of the School of Art gallery hide the infrastructure of electrical wiring, digital connectivity, plumbing, projectors, architectural design elements and the hundreds of people required to make it run. In this particular gallery, anything looks good – it is so pared back and refined, with just a hint of a connection to the external world hidden behind the ceiling panels. During the shows, all of this extra stuff was exposed by overlapping screens (on walls, floors and ceiling) and Hall's inserting himself through a ceiling panel was hard to miss.

In the first instance, a series of events were planned over two weeks. Students were asked to participate for the first week. A press conference was called.

The premise was to involve the students in the early part of the work, taking their cue from the older artists. The trio had first met at art school in the 1970s in Belfast, where Hall and MacLennan were academics and Stitt was a student. The thinking went that if you involve students, especially art students, then there is an element of not knowing how they will respond. The one consistent piece of advice they get at art school is to question everything ... The first few days seemed like a free-for-all, a getting acquainted kind of thing with no rules. Some of the students responded to the 'grown-ups' immediately. Understanding the gravity of the undertaking, others responded by testing the boundaries. Things which had been positioned for a particular reason were moved around, and I swear I saw students playing tag with bits of scrunched-up photocopies from the pile that Stitt had bought in. (These were photocopies of documentation of previous works.) On the second day, students were asked to bring their own stuff, so odd things appeared like a large cardboard ear. Then a man's suit was promptly hung from that the ear. On the second day a lot of smashing went on, with the students participating in the destruction of their own works – a cathartic letting-go of their 'objectness.' On day four most of the loutish behaviour had dissipated, with only three or four of the diehard students remaining.

It was then that things really began to happen. There was a lot of mess, broken plaster egg shells everywhere, together with knots of red wool. On the fourth day, the red wool was covering Hall's head. Like a bloody wounded soldier; he sat with his hunting knife and camouflage scarf tied around his face whilst Bri Chesler laid the red threads over his head. A video played behind him about pig hunting with a pack of dogs. It had been made in New Zealand, but was not as sophisticated as some of the other fishing and hunting shows on the telly. These images of savagery, in combination with Hall's red hunting bush shirt, represented an ideal of masculinity – one that is brutal and has a direct correlation with the image of the Southern Man as sportsman/hunter:

In Rosenberg's essay, the immediacy of action results in an immediate letting go of identity – but it comes with a certain amount of apprehension, giving oneself over to chance, meaning that you have to be prepared for

anything (like a dutiful Boy Scout). If you can't predetermine the outcome, you have to rely more heavily on your response mechanisms, your intuition and your trust of the other performers. Each artist uses action in opposition to apathy. Each overcomes his anxiety of the unknown in different ways. This trust stems from the history of shared experiences, but the anxiety evident in the blank canvas/arena was heightened by the unknown factor which was the participation of the students.

Hall reiterates this anxiety through his ongoing concern with narrative and narration (although his narratives are only partially linear), a re-occurrence of remembered and exaggerated retellings. On the last day of the exhibition Hall told the story of the bloody mop and blood-filled bucket, a tale that he and MacLennan had stumbled upon in a bar late one night. Hall's retelling lasted 40 minutes and had a tone of authoritarian self mockery, with him moving faster and faster in a circle around a megaphone. By the end of the story, Hall was breathless and began to pour red fizzy drink over things and over himself – the fizzy drink evidently stood for blood, although Hall claimed that it was no such thing.

During Hall's story, Stitt had been throwing baby powder around and onto the drawings made two days previously, and intermittently began to cut up the trousers he was wearing. Finally, he sat down carefully on a short stool and begun to carve into his arm with a scalpel. Initially, the word that he carved was thought by some who were there to be "normal." Later, after the carving had ceased and things were winding down they saw that it was "norven" – a dialect term for "northern." It clearly displayed the difference between the hard-boiled northerner and his southern counterpart (the pig-hunter of a previous day's video), although each was equally aggressive in his own way. Through a display of bravado, the Northern city-dweller had clearly won, resorting in the last instance to self-harm: the hard-boiled baby-face standing on the edge of the abyss, staring into a brown paper bag marked "patient clothing" as he patiently cuts words from a list – "little bastard," "little ...," "little ...." Are these self-descriptions for Stitt or are they 'little' insults, provocations to the audience? What is the relationship of these insults, and self-harm, to the neat plastic bag of child's soiled underwear? This hung from a piece of string, like evidence: tagged and bagged.

Stitt's "little asshole" charcoal drawings directly relate to the evocation of the ghost of Pollock's past and the dismissal of the private space of artistic contemplation (the studio) by making the action happen in front of the audience. One sees the ideas of artist as genius and artistic production as secret as disingenuous. The drawings are also reminiscent of a child being told only to draw between the lines, since Stitt's actions exceed the edges of the paper and continue onto the walls with all of the gusto of a wilful child. MacLennan begins at the opposite end to slowly introduce his own form of interference, turning every other drawing to face the wall and writing words like "belonging," "doing," "speaking" and "being." MacLennan wears things on his head – old tights, a busted soccer ball, an accumulation of old shoes, dead fish and, on the last day, dead stoats as well. MacLennan practices the calmness of the shaman, at one with nature as it is culturally constructed; the array of dead things and animals and fish resembles a constellation in which sometimes magic or coincidence is possible, perhaps even meaning is possible.

On the final night of actions, Stitt begins to remove the drawings, throwing baby powder onto them and then over his shoulder as he does so; the smell of the powder is all-consuming, obliterating the now week-old fish and smell of dead stoats that permeates the air. Baby powder is such an evocative substance, but its use here is sinister. While it temporarily hides the smell of rotting flesh, it overlays this with pleasantries, thoughts of new life, of baby skin. A sudden unease creeps in, it's difficult to breathe – what was once a loving gesture smothers instead of soothes, and so becomes evocative of impending doom. This gesture in particular highlights the fine line between nature, nurture and abuse but, together with the soiled underwear, becomes too much to bear. Stitt's examination of anxiety through authority seems menacing, an acting out of apparent toughness; black clothes, short back and sides – a uniform for artists, to be sure – but he also re-enacts trauma (self-harm). In an isolated incident he puts on a wig and shows the audience his breast.

MacLennan's demeanour is also a uniform, since his calmness slows almost all of the action to the pace of a dream. He seems to hover above the floor like some kind of ghost. MacLennan has chosen to deal with anxiety with dignity,



to highlight the constant threat encountered every day in a war zone. MacLennan projects an otherworldliness, a slow-motion composure in the face of undeniable grief, an attitude which tends towards the poetic. The names of people killed during the troubles in Northern Ireland are turned into a chant, a recording played over and over; as a male and female voice read the list of the dead backwards – as if this act can somehow, temporarily, even magically, resurrect the dead by the simple act of remembering. MacLennan becomes some sort of high priest of nature – in his long overcoat and bits of animal and sometimes fish, the shoes of people long dead, and (on the last day) a pair of dead stoats, mourning with us our own pathetic losses.

Hall seemed to see his role as a provocateur; often rushing about with a ladder (sometimes he was tangled in it), megaphone or camera – this disrupted the pace, which was purposefully slow as everyone fell into rhythm with MacLennan. Hall's work is defined by the stuff that travels with him. The camera, the pocket knife – it's out of these simple tools that Hall examines spaces. The baggage that Hall carries is the practical pragmatism of working-class logic, the efficiency of the right tool for the right job, a working-class masculine ideology. Cameras and documentation become of paramount importance if everything you do is temporary and fleeting. Triple AAA had Joe Worley, a student, take photographs throughout the whole exhibition. Worley wore a suit as an official photographer/documenter; but at times found himself caught between the real world and the arena.

Early on, Triple AAA went shopping at the local recycling centre, also known as the dump. What they chose to buy and dragged into the gallery were objects that both alluded to a defunct use and were tinged with the sentimental and profane in equal measure. The things they purchased were telling: a rusty old garden rake, a lot of old shoes and two totem tennis poles. What better symbol of a utopian ideal of childhood and sunshine than a totem tennis pole – at the same time as this object projects happiness and innocence, the spell of sentiment is broken as it turns rusty and abandoned, in every backyard in the antipodes, to finally end up in some junk yard or another. But what does this object mean once it enters the clean white space of a gallery? In a museum, the object is locked irrevocably in the past. But in a gallery the totem tennis pole, like many other similar objects, works as an index of time past and present simultaneously. Like a bag of leaves (see below) or a snap-lock bag of soiled underwear, the totem tennis pole is at once an index of its past use and a dredging up of the sordid histories that betray the initial understanding of the object as innocent. The innocent object becomes horrific by association; tainted, we recoil from its associations – what people get up to in the name of leisure becomes too traumatic to think about.

This collapsing and wilful compression of time is what is at stake throughout the series of events. As Stitt crumples photocopied documentation of past actions – as MacLennan slows down the pace of his breathing so that any action is performed at snail's pace (for everyone in the room) – as Hall whirlwinds around a megaphone, elaborating and embellishing his history as he proceeds, 30 years collapse into yesterday. An overwhelming sense of loss permeates everything; from the bedcover of leaves (a quilt-covered plastic bag full of decaying leaves) to the totem tennis pole, everything looks and feels immeasurably sad, everything and everyone is broken. The haul of old shoes dragged into the gallery grieves with the weight of the loss that they represent.

In his essay "Subjective Discourse or the Non-functional System of Objects," Jean Baudrillard sees the bygone object as an affect of anachronistic time; out of touch with its own time, it ceases to simply be useful, and therefore become a sign of the psychological need of the subject to return to the site of origin, the mother; and also an invocation of the authority of lineage, the father.<sup>4</sup> The assorted goods bought into the gallery reflect these ideas, especially the things associated with Stitt, the "patient clothing" bag, the soiled child's underwear; photocopies of documents relating to previous performances and shared acquaintances (including a photograph of the artist Kieran Lyons); with MacLennan, the mouldy old shoes added to the general feeling of hopelessness and a compression of yesterday into today. The gallery was filled with examples of the detritus of everyday living – and of the day before that. When the objects were in use, they were a constant reminder of lineage (an inheritance of working-class baggage) and when they lie there on the floor, death. At this point, the gallery becomes a space where past and present exist simultaneously.

If there is indeed a masculine musk that overhangs the gallery, then this is diffused by sadness, and if Hall and Stitt enact rage – at one point screaming at each other in a test of bravado, “I’m your mummy” – it is a re-enactment of the rage of youth. This masquerade seemed both ridiculous and sinister; invoking as it did an ear-to-ear grin in some and fear in others.

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- 1 Alfred Gell, “The Technology of Enchantment and the Enchantment of Technology,” in *Art and Aesthetics*, eds J Coote and A Shelton (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 40-66.
- 2 Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998).
- 3 Harold Rosenberg, “American Action Painters,” *Art News*, 51:8 (December 1952); repr. in his *The Tradition of the New* (New York: Horizon Press, 1959).
- 4 Jean Baudrillard, “Subjective Discourse or the Non-functional System of Objects,” in *The Revenge of the Crystal: Selected Writings on the Modern Object and its Destiny, 1968-1983*, eds Paul Foss and Julian Pefanis (London and Concord, Mass.: Pluto Press, 1990), 35-61. In Baudrillard’s universe there are two categories of objects: those that have a function (a toaster or a megaphone) and those that once had a function, but now do not as they have been superseded by more modern (and comfortable) versions of themselves. To this latter category Baudrillard gives the name of the bygone object. He associates this class of object with a telescoping of time as the subject imagines that the display of such objects (the example is given of the bed-warmer – totally useless and out of time in a modern house with oil-fired heating) as a stitching together of history in contemporary contexts acts as a reassurance of point of origins – which at the same time glosses over the inevitability of death.

# PERFORMING POLITICAL ACTS: PERFORMANCE ART IN NORTHERN IRELAND RITUAL, CATHARSIS AND TRANSFORMATION

André Stitt

## (I) ON YER DOORSTEP

*Each person is art (and can make what art is)*

*Real art resolves inner and outer conflict.*

*It heals wounds within and without the self.*

To HEAL is to make WHOLE.

Alastair MacLennan, *Is No* (Bristol: Arnolfini, 1988).

*My artworks seek to embody and identify with processes of transition, the resolution of conflict, community and communion. These elements constitute an evocation of the individual and communal body on a journey towards redemption. A treatment towards a new communionism.*

André Stitt, *Homework* (Köln: Krash Verlag, 2000).

For nearly 40 years artists have been creating performances, interventions and other time-based art in Northern Ireland during a period of traumatic civil conflict. However, their work remains largely confined to half-remembered anecdotes, rumours and hearsay. In the following essay I will explore through recovered documentation, memory and personal testimony how one might get a more insightful understanding of the vibrancy and importance of performance art that was happening on the artists' own doorstep.

With the recent reunion and performance of art collaborations by myself and Alastair MacLennan, I would like to take the opportunity to investigate how making performance art for us has continued to reveal through the legacy of those formative experiences an 'experimental exercise of freedom'<sup>1</sup> on our own doorstep.

In discussing context-specific examples of our work, I am interested in how and why radical art was made in an environment of political conflict taking place in a developed Western society such as Northern Ireland, and if remembering this art, produced through performance, contributes to conflict transformation.

The examples of our formative explorations using performance art in Belfast during the late 1970s, and simultaneous engagements by other artists, reveal the importance of performance art specific to the civil conflict in Northern Ireland. As a long-term supporter and advocate of experimental and interventionist art-making, Slavka Sverakova suggests that: "The North ... did not release performance from the severe grip of political and moral issues. It felt that the artists trusted performance to do the most difficult and sophisticated jobs in raising awareness to the public."<sup>2</sup>

## (2) PERFORMANCE AS ART?

**performance:** carrying into effect, to be agent of, task, operation, doing, execution, public function.

*A definition of performance as art: making art as a performed visual arts activity: Performance art is an action, designed and executed by an artist that takes place in real time and space with or without an audience.<sup>3</sup>*

The American academic Kristine Stiles has summarised the beginnings of performance art as taking place

After World War II, [when] performance by artists emerged almost simultaneously in Japan, Europe and the United States. The artists who began to use their bodies as material of visual art repeatedly expressed their goal to bring art practice closer to life in order to increase the experiential immediacy of their work.

Emphasising the body as art, these artists amplified the role of process over product and shifted from representational objects to presentational modes of action ... they also sought to reengage the artist and spectator by reconnecting art to the material circumstances of social and political events.<sup>4</sup>

In the early 1970s, artistic responses to the viscosity of the developing civil conflict in Northern Ireland had tried to find a suitable language for political and social engagement. A number of early responses, such as the series by F E McWilliams, *Women of Belfast*, tended towards illustrative comment made through conventional media such as sculpture or painting. However, a generation of emerging artists felt an inability to adequately confront daily violence through these traditional means of portrayal and exposition.



Figure 1: F E McWilliams, *Women of Belfast* (1972-75), sculpture, bronze.



Figure 2: Robert Ballagh, *Bloody Sunday Floor Drawings* (1972).

Robert Ballagh's 1972 *Bloody Sunday Floor Drawings* was an early art-as-performance interface that used the artist's forensic outline to body-map a mass shooting in order to register a resounding act of military transgression: Bloody Sunday, Derry, 30 January 1972. Ballagh's work was literal, illustrative and only partially successful. The work's location at the Project Arts Centre in Dublin disconnected it not only from its source and location, but also from the aspirations of direct social and political engagement implicit in the artistic actions of performance art activity. It is, however, in early artistic engagements such as Ballagh's that we see a willingness to emphasise the body relative to a current public event and its subsequent trauma.

Although Ballagh's piece used the body as a template and as a signifier of traumatic public events, the act of drawing around the body was not promoted to the level of public spectacle and confrontation that may be observed in much performance art. An audience, or public, was not invited to see the 'live' manifestation of the act itself. The exhibited work constituted a 'trace' or document of the artist's action and was not, therefore, recognised as a performance artwork at the time.

There is no doubt that Ballagh's work was a significant departure from conventional art-making; however, performance art as such did not become a recognised feature of the visual arts in Northern Ireland until at least 1974-75. This was due in part to several visits by the German multi-artist Joseph Beuys and his support of an artist initiative in central Belfast, the Art Research Exchange, as an art/social interspace. A conflation of possibilities also emerged during this period, with a significant shift in the dynamics of the pedagogical environment at Belfast College of Art (Ulster College of Art, now University of Ulster) with the recruitment of Adrian Hall in 1972 and Alastair MacLennan in 1975. The impact of these artist/teachers alerted, enabled, and encouraged young student/artists like myself to the possibilities of making, thinking, and doing outside the confinement of traditional methodologies. Implicit in their guidance was the intrinsic relation to real and lived events taking place in the contemporary climate of 'the Troubles' in Northern Ireland. Emphasis was also placed on working outside the confines of the institution and 'predictable' art-associated venues.

### (3) ARRIVAL

#### HOW AND WHY RADICAL ART WAS MADE: PERFORMANCE ART IN NORTHERN IRELAND AS RITUAL ACTION LEADING TO CATHARSIS AND TRANSFORMATION

*Skill in action, where skill is the resolution of conflict.*

Alastair MacLennan, *Is No* (Bristol: Arnolfini, 1988).

*Art requires a spiritual, ethical basis, free from dogmas. Real art has little to do with refined sensibilities gaining pleasure. Its power is transformative.*

Alastair MacLennan, interview with Linda M Montano, in *Performance Artists Talking in the Eighties* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

The arrival in Belfast of the Scots artist and teacher Alastair MacLennan in 1975 introduced external performance art influences to an emerging generation of young artists. MacLennan proceeded to create a series of performance art interventions in Belfast city centre that had an immediate public impact. Crucial to these works was that they occurred in real time, in public space, outside of institutional visual arts centres. By their very nature they implied direct relationships between contemporary 'lived' experience, present circumstance and quotidian social and political events.

In making works of performance art in Northern Ireland, artists such as Alastair MacLennan have utilised elements of ritual activity to consider arts practice as a means for potential transformation, healing, and resolution of inner/outer conflict. In his work (and that of many others, including myself), elements of ritual relative to the social, cultural and political environment of Northern Ireland have also been used as structural devices and intrinsic references. Indeed, one can identify codes and signifiers in significant performance art from Northern Ireland as a reflection of the dominant ritual activities carried out within the country's sectarian divisions – for example, the use of coloured ribbons, distinctive clothing, hats, walking sticks, paramilitary garments and implements.

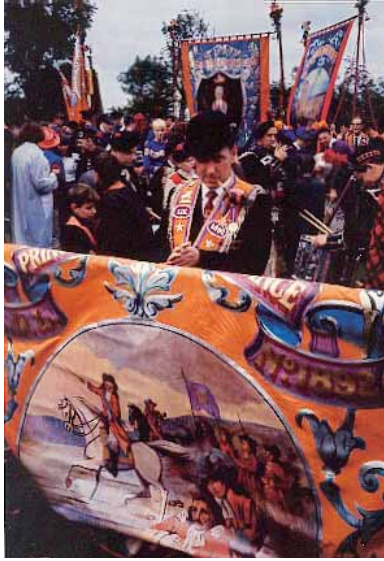


Figure 3: The annual Twelfth of July Protestant Orange Order marching in Northern Ireland.

Figure 4: IRA funeral.

From early on, in 'akshuns'<sup>5</sup> or 'actuations'<sup>6</sup> presented by myself or Alastair MacLennan, the influence of collective, social, communal and cultural ritual in Northern Ireland exerted a central role by means of their political and religious demonstrations and affirmations. These influences were utilised, converted and often subverted as a strategy in creating relationships between art and life. In many of these early performance or street actions, ritual repetition played an important part as a means to evoke demonstrative reaction or transformative outcome. In psychology, the term 'ritual' may refer to a repetitive, systematic, behavioural process enacted in order to neutralise or prevent anxiety. It may be a contention of these 'live' artworks that they could exert a subliminal or subconscious influence upon both artist and observer through the ritual enactments occurring within the transitional space of the performance. "Stitt began to experiment with ritualistic actions; his interest in utilising them was as part of a holistic process; to heal the psychological damage inflicted upon him by the violent situation he was living in."<sup>7</sup>

In my own performance, the ritual presented in 'akshuns' has its origins in the Protestant culture I grew up in, as exemplified in Loyalist iconography and demonstrations. "There were: religious, quasi-religious, paramilitary orders and sectarian groupings; the Church, Catholic/Nationalist, Protestant/Loyalist, all developed their own rituals to confer identity. These 'orders' integrated religion with politics along with social and cultural ideology through ritual to establish dependency. Ritual was ubiquitous, and used to affirm righteous power and control by being a conduit for dominant ideologies."<sup>8</sup>

For Alastair MacLennan, ritual emerged from his study of Zen and the communal discipline and meditation practice at a monastery in British Columbia in the early 1970s. I would emphasise the importance of ritual in these early developments, and how it has been used by both of us as a significant structural device when creating works of performance and as a reference to social conventions across the political and religious divide in Northern Ireland. I would also suggest that elements of ritual enactment and communal engagement in general had a direct correlation to lived experience and the life-as-art context which performance art provided to artists in Northern Ireland from the mid-1970s onwards.

Ritual provided the fulcrum by which to pass from private experience to socially engaged art-making. In so doing, ritual activity enabled performance art in Northern Ireland to inhabit a liminal space that provided a subversion of social engagement in an environment that otherwise depended on socio-political group affirmation and loyalty.



"By temporarily separating participants from everyday social structure, ritual creates ambiguous social status. Liminality is inherent to ritual, since participants' former identities and obligations to social status must be removed before new identities and obligations can be taken on. Transition from an old social identity to a new one necessarily creates ambiguous social status .... Most important, liminality represents "the possibility ... of standing aside not only from one's own social position but from all social positions and of formulating a potentially unlimited series of alternative social arrangements."<sup>9</sup> Thus liminality, inherent in ritual activity, is also essentially 'subversive' of everyday social structure; by association, performance art in the context of Northern Ireland, with its ritual associations, content, codified signifiers and mannerisms, can also be seen as inhabiting a liminal space 'subversive' of everyday social structure. It could be argued that this in effect corroborated and made real the aforementioned 'experimental exercise of freedom.'

The subjective and personal outcomes presumed and reportedly experienced by artists utilising performance can be said to be one of catharsis. Catharsis is the Greek word *Katharsis*, meaning 'purification' or 'cleansing'. The term has been used for centuries as a medical term meaning a 'purging.' The term catharsis has also been adopted by modern psychotherapy to describe the act of expressing deep emotions, often associated with events in an individual's past, which have never before been adequately expressed. Catharsis is also an emotional release associated with exposing and claiming the underlying causes of a problem.

It has also often been attributed to public observers of performance art that they may experience a form of catharsis, or – as has been reported to me personally at one of my own performance events – 'a second-hand catharsis.' Both Alastair and myself have often had experiences of catharsis by public observers being identified as an outcome relative to the process of incorporating elements of performing ritual activity or 'actions' in the work.

I started consciously exploring, inventing and developing 'personal' rituals that would, I hoped, lead me to some form of catharsis, understanding, and realisation, possibly a transcendence of my own conditioned identity. Through making these initial 'ritual akshuns' I identified ritual activity as a means of redressing the limitations of social structure. I identified it as a form of non-conformist art via 'ritual performance.'<sup>10</sup>

#### (4) MACLENNAN:ACTUATIONS

##### PERFORMANCE ART AS RITUAL AND CATHARSIS: *TARGET*



Figure 5: Alastair MacLennan, *Target*, performance piece, Belfast, 1977.

Daily throughout August 1977 MacLennan walked to and from work, dressed entirely in black with a plastic sheet over his head which reached to his waist. Bamboo canes attached to the bottom of the sheet held it in place and also acted as an 'auditory' signal or warning of his approach. Around his neck hung a dart board. He carried a black hold-all. The journey necessitated negotiating the city centre security barriers where the public were scrutinised, searched and sometimes singled out for interrogation by soldiers.

[He] became aware of anxiety as a shared experience between the searchers and himself that he could control. As time went on he realised that many of the searchers, especially the younger ones, were more anxious about the situation than he was. This created a type of tension and energy that he was able to manipulate and control and so reverse the status and intimidation of the situation.<sup>11</sup>

The ritual of daily business, of going to and from work, is exposed as something more territorial, oppressive. The ritual of being searched that became a feature of negotiating Belfast, and the use of a dartboard, made the artist a 'target' or marked man; it created a tension in a social situation and disrupted a modified appearance of normality – that of people going about their daily business in a developed Western society. This in turn drew attention to a social and political context conditioned by the civil conflict. MacLennan effectively and simply demonstrates that appearances are deceptive. What appears at first normal soon delivers unexpected tensions and poses questions concerning control and authority. What makes MacLennan's simple public action all the more remarkable is the fact that he could have been viewed as a security breach (carrying a bomb in his bag perhaps?) and, at its extreme consequence, he could have actually been shot at. By making himself the metaphorical target he could well have become a real target.

This performance, one of MacLennan's earliest in Belfast, also acts as an affirmation of life by creating a cathartic destabilisation of power at the interface between life and death. Catharsis in this example, as in much of MacLennan's later work, is a subtle shift in the consciousness of both artist and public. He has noted that the 'purification' or 'cleansing' associated with catharsis "can be very subtle, subliminal, an alteration in mood or feeling, or a subsiding of tension."<sup>12</sup>

Through making art as ritual daily activity, and drawing attention to its possible cathartic consequences, MacLennan was reclaiming the physical and social habitat, using himself as a public statement and as an example through creating a work of performance art.

## PERFORMANCE ART AS MEMORIAL: *NAMING THE DEAD*



Figure 6: Alastair MacLennan, *Naming the Dead*, performance piece, Belfast, 1998.

In *Naming The Dead*, MacLennan confronted the legacy of the Troubles up to that point by exposing the public to lists of all those who had lost their lives through the Troubles in Northern Ireland from 1969 to 1998.

He spent a day on the Ormeau Bridge in Belfast – a connective artery between Protestant and Catholic territories – tying pieces of paper to the bridge with the names of the dead, and placing small flowers along the bridge in an act of both remembrance and memorialising. A highly visible performance due to its location, the public engaged with it by stopping and reading through the lists attached to the bridge. The bridge, in effect, became both a metaphor and potential conduit for confrontation, reflection, and transformation.

## (5) STITT: AKSHUNS

### PERFORMANCE ART AS RITUAL AND CATHARSIS: *ART IS NOT A MIRROR IT IS A FUCKING HAMMER*



Figure 7: André Stitt, *Art is not a Mirror it is a Fucking Hammer*, performance piece, Belfast, 1976-78.



Throughout 1976-77 I daubed the slogan 'Art is not a Mirror it's a Fucking Hammer' on walls and buildings around Belfast. Intentionally crude, the slogans were a provocation that reflected the sectarian graffiti prevalent in Belfast at that time.

In 1978 the artist finalised these street 'actions' or 'performances' with a symbolic ritual immolation that consisted of the burning of his paintings outside the art school in Belfast city centre. Catharsis is expressed through a purging of traditional formulas and values associated with art-making (i.e., painting). The eradication of prior artistic concerns through the use of fire to cleanse and purge enabled the young artist to break free of traditional art-making and follow a more radical and social/political engagement through performance art. The processes of burning accompanied by a sloganeering manifesto converge in a brutal act of purification that draws direct relationships between making art and the physical and psychic environment of Belfast in 1978.

From 1978, I deliberately engaged in art-making that was specific to sites in and around Belfast and that reflected a number of concerns regarding territory, political power and the potential for ritual as a means of empowerment and for reclaiming or transforming identity.

## PERFORMANCE ART AS MEMORIAL: CONVICTION

"The akshun took the form of going on my hands and knees from my childhood home in Donegall Pass to the Duke of York pub on the other side of the city. A very tough and exhausting akshun. ... My head was covered in tar and feathers. An image from my youth when I saw people tarred and feathered and tied to lamp posts as a punishment."<sup>13</sup>

In *Conviction*, I confronted the legacy of the Troubles and my relationship to Belfast as an environment that incorporated a psycho-geographical personal history, and made a symbolic ritual journey that had a correlation to the lives lived and lost in the areas I travelled through. I negotiated divided territory on hands and knees in an act of penance and humility. The work became a cathartic act of transformation, redemption and healing. The performance activity incorporated elements of ritual relative to Catholic



Figure 8: Street kid with drum and 'King Billy' wall graffiti, Belfast.



Figure 9: André Stitt, *Conviction*, performance piece, Belfast, 2000.





Figure 10: Tared and feathered victim, Northern Ireland.

culture – acts of penance – and to Protestant culture – ‘tarring and feathering’ as an act of public punishment and humiliation.

## (6) RECALL

### DOES REMEMBERING THIS ART, PRODUCED THROUGH PERFORMANCE, CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION?

By concentrating on societal ills such as conflict and imbalances of power, it might be suggested that certain performance artists attempt to evoke trauma inherent within their observers’ psyches and elicit a purging of these repressed memories. I would suggest this to be the case in general concerning performance art produced in Northern Ireland, and as regards the particular works cited above by myself and Alastair MacLennan. In these performance works, ritual and catharsis are utilised as a means whereby public artistic testimony, context, time, space, repetition, codified enactment, recall and memorialising can be converted into acts of transformation.

Our means of recall relative to the works discussed is through witness, testimony, personal retrieval, memory, and collected documentation. However, it is also through our lived experiences and those of numerous other artists like us in Northern Ireland, who engaged in performance art as a political act of protest and empowerment under extreme circumstances. These ‘acts,’ and their attendant recollection through memory, recall and physical documentation, can also be transmitted through time to the present and therefore renewed. I would contend, and with the examples cited as evidence, that without the power of recall we are unable to summon images of past traumas that are evident in these performances and are needed to evoke the catalyst of recovery.

Conventional art mediums failed at a specific time in a specific location – Northern Ireland in the 1970s – because conventional practice separated art from everyday experience by operating in traditional terms in neutralised spaces such as galleries and art institutions. From 1975 onwards, performance art in Northern Ireland gained momentum because it placed the artist at the centre of art-making and evidenced the ‘live’ or ‘living’ process of making art as it actually

took place. In so doing, it created focus for the artists' actions and their placement in relation to a landscape of civil conflict. This in turn allowed artists, and by extension the public, to inhabit a liminal space where conflict might be converted into its opposite through performance art that utilised ritual and catharsis as a means for transformation in an 'experimental exercise of freedom' on their own doorstep.

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- 1 A phrase coined in the late 1950s by Brazilian critic Mario Pedrosa who applied it to a range of artists motivated to abandon traditional art forms such as painting and sculpture for a new aesthetic that connected directly with political, cultural and social concerns through a performative practice.
- 2 Slavka Sverakova, "Performance Art in Ireland 1975-1998," in *Art Action 1958-1998*, ed. Richard Martel (Quebec: Editions Intervention and Nouvelles Editions Polaires Nepe, 2001), 412-44.
- 3 I have tried for many years to simplify the answer to the question that won't go away. This is what myself and my students have come up with. It's as much to do with how they see performance art as it is to do with how I have problems of definition. It's a bit like the performance art joke: "Q: How many performance artists does it take to change a light bulb? A: I don't know, I left before the end."
- 4 *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*, eds Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996).
- 5 'Akshun' or 'akshuns' is a term I have used since 1977 to denote the 'type' of performance art I make. It is basically a Northern Irish phonetic translation of the word 'action,' as in 'live action' or 'action art.'
- 6 MacLennan uses the term 'actuation' for his work: "an 'actuation' activates a space ... it activates energy latently lying there ... it effects demonstrative interfusion of energies lying seemingly dormant." Email from Alastair MacLennan, Wed 1 June 2011, 11.37 p.m.
- 7 Neil Jefferies, "On through the not so Quiet Land," unpub. dissertation, UWIC, Cardiff, 2008.
- 8 André Stitt, "Early Akshun 1976-1980," in his *Substance: Residues, Drawings & Partial Objects 1976-2008* (Exeter: Spacex, 2008), 204-27.
- 9 BC Alexander, *Victor Turner Revisited: Ritual As Social Change* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 17.
- 10 Stitt, "Early Akshun 1976-1980."
- 11 Andrew Pendle, *Beyond Art* (Dublin: Theatre Ireland, 1984).
- 12 P Babot, unpub. interview with Alastair MacLennan, Belfast, 2009.
- 13 André Stitt, *Small Time Life* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2002).



# AKSHUN MATERIAL INVENTORY NORTHERN IRELAND 1976-1980

André Stitt

LITTLE BREATH

LITTLE BLOOD

LITTLE RED PAINT

LITTLE BIN

LITTLE MEAT

LITTLE NEWSPAPERS

LITTLE EXCREMENT

LITTLE LADDER

LITTLE STONES

LITTLE BLACK

LITTLE TAPE

LITTLE RED

LITTLE PAINTINGS

LITTLE WATER

LITTLE PASSPORT

LITTLE ID

LITTLE CARDS

LITTLE BURNT

LITTLE RUBBISH

LITTLE BIN

LITTLE T-SHIRT

LITTLE METAL

LITTLE BOOTS

LITTLE EGGS

LITTLE DOG

LITTLE LIGHTS

LITTLE CHALK

LITTLE BRICKS

LITTLE PLASTIC

LITTLE MASKING

LITTLE TAPE

LITTLE PETROL

LITTLE URINE

LITTLE PHOTOS

LITTLE STENCILS

LITTLE BANDAID

LITTLE WOOD

LITTLE BAGS



LITTLE GREEN

LITTLE TROUSERS

LITTLE JACKET

LITTLE SNOW

LITTLE GARDEN

LITTLE SLATE

LITTLE PROJECTOR

LITTLE PORNOGRAPHY

LITTLE WHITE CLOTH

LITTLE POWDER

LITTLE BED

LITTLE CAR

LITTLE LEADS

LITTLE BLUE BAG

LITTLE CAMOUFLAGE

LITTLE CLOTHING

LITTLE CAP

LITTLE SILK

LITTLE GLASS

LITTLE GREEN

LITTLE PIANO

LITTLE WHITE

LITTLE STICKS

LITTLE GLASS

LITTLE TEETH

LITTLE COMBATS

LITTLE BLACK

LITTLE DHARMA

LITTLE ROPE

LITTLE HOSE

LITTLE PYJAMAS

LITTLE PAPER

LITTLE CARDS

LITTLE TALCUM

LITTLE CHARCOAL

LITTLE FRAME

LITTLE JUMP

LITTLE LIGHTBULB

LITTLE LEAVES

LITTLE COMBAT

LITTLE CAMOUFLAGE

LITTLE ORANGE

LITTLE PYJAMAS

LITTLE TUBE

LITTLE LIQUID

LITTLE BUNTING

LITTLE SHIRT

LITTLE DRINKING

LITTLE FALSE

LITTLE TABLE



LITTLE CHAIR

LITTLE RED

LITTLE PIGMENT

LITTLE LEG

LITTLE GRAFT

LITTLE FOAM

LITTLE BOLT

LITTLE CORD

LITTLE HOOKS

LITTLE CROSSBOW

LITTLE BANDAGES

LITTLE WRIST

LITTLE MAKE-UP

LITTLE BONES

LITTLE PANTIES

LITTLE SANDWICH

LITTLE PHOTOCOPIES

LITTLE WIRE

LITTLE PAPER

LITTLE BUTCHER

LITTLE FEATHERS

LITTLE RIBBONS

LITTLE FLOORBOARDS

LITTLE JARS

LITTLE TAPE

LITTLE MARKER

LITTLE POWDER

LITTLE COW

LITTLE HOOF

LITTLE SHAVING

LITTLE SAW

LITTLE CUTTERS

LITTLE ROPE

LITTLE CAMERA

LITTLE ARROWS

LITTLE LEATHER

LITTLE CUFFS

LITTLE EYELINER

LITTLE BRA

LITTLE UNDERWEAR

LITTLE BOARD

LITTLE GUN

LITTLE SHREDDED

LITTLE CASSOCK

LITTLE KNIVES

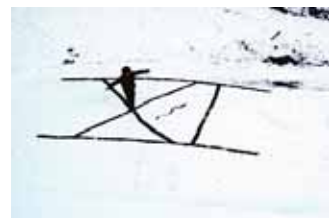
LITTLE FISH

LITTLE STAIRS

LITTLE GLASS

LITTLE CASSETTE

LITTLE PLAYER



LITTLE TRANSPARENT

LITTLE SCISSORS

LITTLE CHIPBOARD

LITTLE BLADES

LITTLE BOX

LITTLE GLASS

LITTLE AXE

LITTLE BATH

LITTLE MATTRESS

LITTLE METRES

LITTLE POUCHES

LITTLE BOXES

LITTLE HEADPHONES

LITTLE HEAD

LITTLE PAINT

LITTLE POLE

LITTLE DECOYS

LITTLE TOY

LITTLE SURGICAL

LITTLE BLUE

LITTLE PAINT

LITTLE SPAGHETTI

LITTLE BUTTER

LITTLE KETTLES

LITTLE GREY SUIT

LITTLE PLASTIC

LITTLE CRAYONS

LITTLE RAZOR

LITTLE RED

LITTLE SYRINGES

LITTLE VALVES

LITTLE HAMMER

LITTLE TUB

LITTLE ELECTRIC

LITTLE AMMUNITION

LITTLE AMMUNITION

LITTLE MICROPHONE

LITTLE PIGS

LITTLE CAMMO

LITTLE WOOD

LITTLE DUCK

LITTLE QUACKERS

LITTLE RIFLES

LITTLE RED

LITTLE BODY

LITTLE CANNED

LITTLE PEANUT

LITTLE VEGETABLES

LITTLE TOASTER

LITTLE SUNGLASSES



LITTLE PLASTIC

LITTLE RED

LITTLE DRIED

LITTLE FOOD

LITTLE ALKA

LITTLE ASPIRIN

LITTLE MUSTARD

LITTLE DOG

LITTLE BEANS

LITTLE TICKET

LITTLE HANGER

LITTLE DOGS

LITTLE GLOVES

LITTLE JOCK

LITTLE BRIEF

LITTLE GLOSS

LITTLE DRUM

LITTLE BLACK

LITTLE VIDEO

LITTLE TRIPOD

LITTLE ARMY

LITTLE ARMY

LITTLE HEAT

LITTLE HEAT

LITTLE PROTECTOR

LITTLE CUPS

LITTLE DRESS

LITTLE DOG

LITTLE BREAD

LITTLE SELTZER

LITTLE KETCHUP

LITTLE CANNED

LITTLE FOOD

LITTLE TRAIN

LITTLE COAT

LITTLE MAIL

LITTLE WHITE

LITTLE APRON

LITTLE STRAP

LITTLE CASE

LITTLE PANTS

LITTLE KIT

LITTLE HOOD

LITTLE CAMERAS

LITTLE NECKTIE

LITTLE TORCHES

LITTLE STRETCHER

LITTLE PROTECTION

LITTLE FACE

LITTLE DEAD



LITTLE RABBIT

LITTLE SAW

LITTLE TAR

LITTLE PHOTOS

LITTLE PAINT

LITTLE TELEPHONES

LITTLE STICK

LITTLE JACKET

LITTLE MAGAZINES

LITTLE SLAB

LITTLE EXCREMENT

LITTLE SHOVEL

LITTLE SELF

LITTLE BROKEN

LITTLE FOUND

LITTLE KETCHUP

LITTLE BROW

LITTLE MUSTARD

LITTLE CAR

LITTLE MISCHIEF

LITTLE FLOWER

LITTLE CHAIN

LITTLE DRILL

LITTLE FEATHERS

LITTLE SPRAY

LITTLE MONITOR

LITTLE WALKING

LITTLE STRAIT

LITTLE CHAIN

LITTLE PAVING

LITTLE CONCRETE

LITTLE EARTH

LITTLE BOOTS

LITTLE TOKEN

LITTLE LOST

LITTLE MAGIC

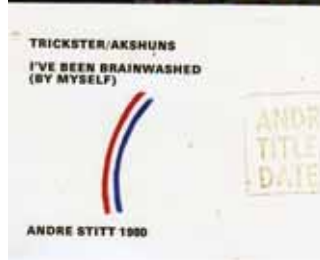
LITTLE FINGERS

LITTLE MAYO

LITTLE HORSES

LITTLE PEOPLE

LITTLE WONDER



**André Stitt** is the Professor of Performance and Interdisciplinary Art at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff and Director of the Centre for Fine Art Research at Cardiff School of Art & Design, Wales, UK. In 2000 he opened Trace: Installation Artspace in Cardiff initiating a robust programme of international time based work. [www.andrestitt.com](http://www.andrestitt.com) and [www.tracegallery.org](http://www.tracegallery.org)

## “NOTESCORE”(I)

Alastair MacLennan

... DYING ... SHOWING ... BEING ... SEEING ... SITTING ... INCINERATING ... UNLEASHING ... KILLING ...  
HAULING ... CARRYING ... BURNING ... SAYING ... BEING ... SIGNALLING ... HAVING ... THROWING ...  
ARMING ... KILLING ... TREATING ... WANTING ... BEING ... ATTENDING ... SEEING ... BEING ... ASSUMING ...  
FINDING ... SHOOTING ... PUZZLING ... SURROUNDING ... CRITICISING ... GIVING ... RUBBING ... BUILDING ...  
CREATING ... LIGHTING ... AVOIDING ... MAINTAINING ... GIVING ... CATCHING ... SPREADING ...  
CONSENTING ... JESTING ... PURIFYING ... REIGNING ... DISTRIBUTING ... PUTTING ... RESISTING ...  
DESTROYING ... ACCORDING ... HEARING ... ARMING ... DISTRACTING ... PACKING ... SHOUTING ...  
KILLING ... UNDERSTANDING ... DENOUNCING ... DELIVERING ... LETTING ... FOLLOWING ... INHIBITING ...  
PLAYING ... HAVING ... SCATTERING ... SITTING ... FIGHTING ... SAYING ... PROTECTING ... SEEING ...  
WANTING ... LOSING ... CONTINUING ... ASSUMING ... WINNING ... HAVING ... SEIZING ... BATTLING ...  
SEEING ... SHARING ... LEAVING ... BEING ... CRUSHING ... ASKING ... DESTROYING ... CALLING ... BEING ...  
BLENDING ... APPEARING ... TAKING ... REITERATING ... WELCOMING ... ACCEPTING ... CREATING ...  
MAKING ... SEEMING ... COMING ... COMING ... HAVING ... SPANNING ... GROWING ... HEARING ...  
APPROACHING ... LOADING ... PERFORMING ... POSING ... DELIVERING ... BEING ... SCINTILLATING ...  
WATCHING ... DEPRIVING ... SAVOURING ... BEING ... INSPIRING ... TREATING ... LEARNING ... AMOUNTING ...  
WATCHING ... BEING ... WATCHING ... COMPOSING ... LAMENTING ... WANDERING ... WANING ... STREAMING ...  
BEGINNING ... SAYING ... WANTING ... SUFFERING ... SEEING ... PLANNING ... SAYING ... DENYING ...  
GETTING ... BEING ... WATCHING ... KILLING ... JAILING ... RATING ... FEELING ... TOPPLING ... ENDING ...  
INFLUENCING ... KILLING ... BRUTALISING ... GOING ... BEING ... GOING ... TAKING ... CAPTURING ...



BECOMING ... AIMING ... PLEDGING ... UNDERTAKING ... FOLLOWING ... GIVING ... ESCALATING ...  
 DEMANDING ... USING ... REMAINING ... DYING ... REFLECTING ... BEING ... STRUGGLING ... LETTING ...  
 BACKING ... BEING ... DEVELOPING ... BREAKING ... WAITING ... MOVING ... DISCOVERING ... WRITING ...  
 APPEARING ... BEING ... BEING ... BEING ... SURVIVING ... GOING ... SHELTERING ... WRITING ... BRINGING ...  
 MATERIALISING ... BEGINNING ... BEATING ... FARTING ... IMPOSING ... ASKING ... SLEEPING ...  
 RECOUNTING ... MISSING ... BEING ... DISPATCHING ... DETECTING ... BECOMING ... USING ...  
 WORKING ... SPEAKING ... SEEING ... INFORMING ... ANSWERING ... BEING ... SIFTING ... COLLABORATING ...  
 DESTROYING ... ENFORCING ... BEING ... CHOOSING ... GIVING ... ENFORCING ... CO-ORDINATING...  
 STARTING ... WORKING ... ADMITTING ... TELLING ... HALTING ... STAYING ...  
 PREOCCUPYING ... BLINDING ... MEASURING ... LEAVING ... BEING ... STANDING ... BEING ... STARTING ...  
 BEING ... UNDERTAKING ... REQUIRING ... DELIVERING ... FIRING ... ENSURING ... FIRING ... MOVING ...  
 CRIPPLING ... DISABLING ... TARGETTING ... SUPPORTING ... MAKING ... BEING ... HITTING ... INCLUDING...  
 BEING ... BEING ... EXPLOITING ... SAYING ... ATTACKING ... BEGINNING ... HOSTING ... HAVING ... ACCUSING ...  
 CONTRASTING ... PUTTING ... SLIPPING ... EVALUATING ... PREFERRING ... ARGUING ... BEING ...  
 BEING ... SEEING ... UNDERGOING ... HAPPENING ... BECOMING ... INVESTIGATING ... WITNESSING ...  
 OFFERING ... BECOMING ... SENDING ... DEPLOYING ... CO-ORDINATING ... MANAGING ...  
 DRAWING ... BECOMING ... EXPELLING ... REVOKING ... DISPATCHING ... DEVISING ... GREETING ...  
 WORRYING ... STOPPING ... WINNING ... NOMINATING ... MAKING ... FOUNDERING ... JOINING ...  
 HOLDING ... CAPTURING ... ANNOUNCING ... DESTROYING ... SUPPORTING ... EXTENDING ...  
 DESTROYING ... BEING ... CROSSING ... ENDING ... COMMITTING ... ENDURING ... GIVING ... CHOOSING ...  
 SAYING ... CONTINUING ... INCLUDING ... CONTINUING ... ASSISTING ... GOING ... SERVING ... STRETCHING ...  
 BEING ... DISPUTING ... BEING ... REDUCING ... KILLING ... SHOOTING ... COMING ... SAYING ... STANDING ...  
 COMING ... THREATENING ... KEEPING ... BEING ... BEING ... DOING ... UNEARTHING ... RESURFACING ...  
 BEING ... MEANING ... CIVILISING ... NEEDING ... EXPRESSING ... DOING ... BEING ... PAYING ... PAYING ...

BEING ... DISCUSSING ... CONTINUING ... RECEIVING ... PUMPING ... CONTRIBUTING ... PUTTING ... USING ...  
 FUNDING ... RESIGNING ... BEING ... JAILING ... REBUILDING ... OWNING ... TENDING ... FUNDING ...  
 EASING ... BELIEVING ... USING ... SEEKING ... ALLOWING ... COMPLETING ... TWEETING ... LAUNCHING ...  
 PROFITING ... ASKING ... BEING ... PRESCRIBING ... STRUGGLING ... HAPPENING ... FORMING ...  
 IMAGINING ... CONCENTRATING ... AFFECTING ... BEING ... DENYING ... QUOTING ... SEEKING ...  
 PLACING ... RESPONDING ... HAVING ... DISCUSSING ... PROVIDING ... PRESENTING ... RUNNING ...  
 BECOMING ... HOLDING ... BECOMING ... STRUGGLING ... FACING ... MAKING ... KILLING ... ACHIEVING ...  
 PROTECTING ... HAPPENING ... WANTING ... BOMBING ... CLAIMING ... CALLING ... SAYING ... SHOUTING ...  
 OPPOSING ... FEARING ... BECOMING ... SPEAKING ... WETTING ... HAVING ... HAPPENING ... SEEKING ...  
 BEING ... PREDICTING ... SUCCEEDING ... OCCURRING ... PROCEEDING ... BEING ... SAYING ... HELPING ...  
 COMMITTING ... MOTIVATING ... RULING ... CALLING ... BEING ... RESTRAINING ... AIMING ... ASKING ...  
 ACCOMPLISHING ... REPLYING ... BECOMING ... COMING ... SAYING ... BEING ... SUPPORTING ...  
 ASKING ... GOING ... DISAGREEING ... TAKING ... JAMMING ... PROVIDING ... SAYING ... GETTING ...  
 BETTING ... KILLING ... AGREEING ... GOING ... DESIGNING ... STAYING ... SAYING ... RANKLING ...  
 BEING ... BEGINNING ... COMING ... BEING ... SHOOTING ... PREVENTING ... PRECIPITATING ...  
 STANDING ... ATTEMPTING ... DOING ... DEFENDING ... STANDING ... REPLYING ... VOTING ... MAKING ...  
 HAVING ... MAINTAINING ... HELPING ... STOPPING ... OCCURRING ... HIDING ... USING ... BEARING ...  
 MOVING ... DEVELOPING ... SELLING ... SAYING ... TRAINING ... LOOKING ... INCORPORATING ...  
 SUGGESTING ... RELEASING ... SEEMING ... COATING ... TRYING ... OFFERING ... HELPING ... GETTING ...  
 MAKING ... CONDEMNING ... OVERTHROWING ... DETERMINING ... SANCTIONING ... SEEING ...  
 SOLVING ... SUPPRESSING ... BEING ... GETTING ... HUMILIATING ... MANAGING ... KILLING ... CRUSHING ...  
 HAPPENING ... OFFLOADING ... BEING ... APPLAUDING ... BEING ... DRAWING ... DRAWING ... FORBIDDING ...  
 COMMANDING ... INTENDING ... UNLEASHING ... ASSERTING ... COMING ... TURNING ... QUOTING ...  
 HAVING ... SHIFTING ... SAYING ... WARNING ... ASKING ... WANTING ... WORRYING ... OPPOSING ...

TURNING ... ARISING ... ENCOURAGING ... PROMISING ... DIVIDING ... THINKING ... ASSERTING ...

SUPPORTING ... COMMITTING ... BEING ... INFORMING ... DRIVING ... PRESENTING ... AFFIRMING ...

PREVENTING ... JUDGING ... FINDING ... ACHIEVING ... MAKING ... RESTING ... RESULTING ... ASKING ...

JOINING ... FREEZING ... SOFTENING ... EXPECTING ... HAVING ... DESIGNING ... RECOGNISING ...

STRUGGLING ... BEING ... SEEING ... RISING ... INTRODUCING ... ASKING ... PREDICTING ... FLATTERING ...

RULING ... LOSING ... HAPPENING ... GOING ... GOING ... LOOKING ... INVOLVING ... SETTling ...

REALISING ... BEING ... PAYING ... TESTING ... HAVING ... BEING ... HAVING ... SECURING ... BEING ...

BEING ... POINTING ... PERSUADING ... UNITING ... FOLLOWING ... BEING ... DRINKING ... HOLDING ...

DROPPING ... GETTING ... SCRATCHING ... SUGGESTING ... THINKING ... BREAKING ... MAKING ...

LEAVING ... MOVING ... ANNOUNCING ... SIMPLIFYING ... BREAKING ... SPLASHING ... DEFEATING ...

LEADING ... FOLLOWING ... SAYING ... JUDGING ... DRAGGING ... SPEAKING ... BEING ... LOSING ...

BLOWING ... GETTING ... BEING ... WATCHING ... HAVING ... STEWING ... TOURING ... NICKING ... TOURING ...

TELLING ... FOCUSING ... EARNING ... CHAINING ... FORMING ... BEING ... SPLITTING ... KNOWING ...

PRETENDING ... KNOWING ... COMING ... CREATING ... FEELING ... TAKING ... NEEDING ... SEEING ...

PUSHING ... GOING ... FOCUSING ... MERGING ... SIGNALING ... CUTTING ... BEING ... SUBJECTING ...

MEANING ... SWALLOWING ... AVOIDING ... AMALGAMATING ... TAKING ... BEING ... GOING ... LINKING ...

QUALIFYING ... SCRUTINISING ... HAVING ... CUTTING ... SCALING ... JUMPING ... REPORTING ...

RELAXING ... ORDERING ... PUBLISHING ... KNOWING ... APPLYING ... PROTECTING ... SAYING ...

FOCUSING ... PREVENTING ... HAVING ... REBUILDING ... FUELLING ... LOADING ... BECOMING ...

CONTROLLING ... FACING ... MEANING ... NEEDING ... OVERTHROWING ... UNDERSTANDING ...

CALCULATING ... TRANSFERRING ... FOSTERING ... REBUILDING ... AMENDING ... GATHERING ...

WITNESSING ... SOUNDING ... HIGHLIGHTING ... POURING ... DRAWING ... HAVING ... VOTING ... BEING ...

TAKING ... SELECTING ... PRESENTING ... WITNESSING ... CROSSING ... BEING ... LOOKING ... GAINING ...

MAKING ... SECURING ... EXPORTING ... RISKING ... INCLUDING ... CONTROLLING ... SWEEPING ...

LEADING ... OVERHAULING ... TAKING ... ANNOUNCING ... REDUCING ... INCLUDING ... ISOLATING ...  
 GRANTING ... SURVEYING ... SAYING ... PUTTING ... TAKING ... SAYING ... NEEDING ... BEING ... DAMAGING ...  
 TELLING ... ATTENDING ... CANCELLING ... REFUSING ... PROCEEDING ... ASKING ... CONSIDERING ...  
 HAVING ... THREATENING ... ATTRACTING ... MAKING ... BECOMING ... MAKING ... DETERMINING ...  
 BEING ... COMING ... DISAPPOINTING ... DISGUIISING ... BEING ... TURNING ... BEING ... RISING ... CHANGING ...  
 STRENGTHENING ... KEEPING ... BEING ... TIPPING ... SHIFTING ... BOOSTING ... SCRAPPING ...  
 NUDGING ... PAYING ... SAYING ... BEING ... LASTING ... PLANNING ... GOING ... MAKING ... LIBERALISING ...  
 MAKING ... EMPOWERING ... REMAINING ... IMAGINING ... FORGETTING ... WORKING ... OUTLINING ...  
 ENCOURAGING ... ACCORDING ... RISING ... BLAMING ... THREATENING ... DESIGNING ... SUPPORTING ...  
 RECOGNISING ... INCLUDING ... TRYING ... ENSURING ... HAVING ... CONTAINING ... SCRUTINISING ...  
 AVOIDING ... HAVING ... DISCUSSING ... CUTTING ... RELEASING ... EXPECTING ... BANNING ... ADVISING ...  
 ENDING ... SACKING ... CUTTING ... USING ... WARNING ... CALLING ... RINGFENCING ... SUBMITTING ...  
 ADMITTING ... FORCING ... CAUSING ... RAISING ... FINDING ... TAKING ... CALCULATING ... RELYING ...  
 LOOKING ... IMPLEMENTING ... HOLDING ... PREPARING ... DISTRIBUTING ... SPLITTING ... ASKING ...  
 EXPECTING ... ALLOWING ... TRYING ... JAILING ... FOCUSING ... CHARGING ... GIVING ... USING ...  
 BEING ... ASKING ... SAYING ... FAILING ... ENTERING ... RELYING ... TRYING ... TRYING ... LEARNING ...  
 QUASHING ... SENTENCING ... DISMISSING ... ERUPTING ... SUSPECTING ... ASSAULTING ... FILLING ...  
 MAINTAINING ... HANDING ... SUFFERING ... CONFIRMING ... QUESTIONING ... SEARCHING ...  
 INCLUDING ... SIGNING ... BEING ... RETIRING ... FINDING ... WORKING ... EDUCATING ... ACCORDING ...  
 RETURNING ... STARTING ... FOUNDING ... SELLING ... BECOMING ... INTERESTING ... SLIDING ...  
 HOLDING ... VENTURING ... WARNING ... SUPPORTING ... CONTINUING ... WORKING ... SAYING ... BEING ...  
 SAYING ... CONFIRMING ... LOSING ... DISAPPEARING ... INCREASING ... REPORTING ... LOSING ...  
 STUDYING ... INCLUDING ... SHARING ... REDUCING ... SAYING ... REAFFIRMING ... SEEING ... RISING ...  
 FALLING ... AGREEING ... ALLOWING ... SECURITISING ... LEAVING ... UNDERSTANDING ... OWING ...

REMOVING ... BECOMING ... SAYING ... REPORTING ... RECOGNISING ... MISSING ... SELLING ...  
 SUSPECTING ... TAKING ... CONDUCTING ... BEING ... SHOWING ... BEING ... HOMING ... UPDATING ...  
 LISTING ... BEING ... MISSING ... ASKING ... ECHOING ... DYING ... NAMING ... BEARING ... IMPROVISING ...  
 FLYING ... CHANGING ... OCCUPYING ... EXPLAINING ... HAVING ... LIKING ... SAYING ... PERFORMING ...  
 BEING ... BELIEVING ... BEING ... SHOWING ... OBSESSING ... STAMPING ... BEHAVING ... IRRITATING ...  
 RECEIVING ... COMPILING ... ACCORDING ... DYING ... SURVIVING ... SHOWING ... PUSHING ... FOLLOWING ...  
 COLLECTING ... APPROPRIATING ... MAKING ... RUNNING ... HEARING ... LOOKING ... COLLECTING ...  
 ANNOUNCING ... PROVIDING ... DEMONSTRATING ... HIGHLIGHTING ... LIKING ... LIVING ... CONTINUING ...  
 ADAPTING ... DESIGNING ... BECOMING ... BEING ... COMMITTING ... DEFYING ... REMOVING ...  
 UPDATING ... STRUGGLING ... FILLING ... PAYING ... BEING ... BEING ... LAGGING ... FALLING ... POINTING ...  
 TAKING ... BEING ... GOING ... USING ... SAYING ... STOPPING ... REDUCING ... SENDING ... COMPLAINING ...  
 ARRIVING ... IGNORING ... DOING ... BEING ... DIAGNOSING ... ENSURING ... HAVING ... SAYING ...  
 DEVELOPING ... EATING ... HELPING ... STOPPING ... GETTING ... BEING ... TELLING ... BEARING ... BEING ...  
 INVITING ... BEING ... MAINTAINING ... PRINTING ... BENEFITTING ... VIEWING ... CONTINUING ... BUILDING ...  
 THRIVING ... GOING ... FORMING ... STOPPING ... SPENDING ... RETURNING ... REPEATING ... ASKING ...  
 ACCEPTING ... BEING ... TELLING ... WANTING ... BECOMING ... REFUSING ... FORCING ... DISAGREEING ...  
 SPOTTING ... OFFERING ... EXERCISING ... REPEATING ... WEARING ... WEARING ... PHOTOGRAPHING ...  
 CATCHING ... COMING ... COUPLING ... GOING ... BEING ... PLAYING ... NOTICING ... BEING ... DOING ...  
 SELLING ... MAKING ... WASTING ... CHANGING ... AGREEING ... APPOINTING ... SHOWING ... BESEECHING ...  
 BLAMING ... IMPLORING ... LEAVING ... WANTING ... GETTING ... CAUSING ... MAKING ... CURBING ...  
 EXTENDING ... ALLOWING ... PUBLISHING ... KICKSTARTING ... SAYING ... LOOKING ... EXAMINING ...  
 APPLYING ... LOOKING ... ALLOWING ... HAVING ... CONDUCTING ... CONCLUDING ... THINKING ...  
 ARGUING ... EMPLOYING ... DOING ... LAUNCHING ... FOSTERING ... CONCERNING ... SAYING ... KEEPING ...  
 ACQUIRING ... PORING ... SHARING ... BEING ... SAVING ... HOPING ... ANOINTING ... EXPECTING ...

POPPING ... WEARING ... MAKING ... PRESERVING ... STICKING ... BEING ... VANISHING ... HAVING ...

SURVIVING ... DROPPING ... INCLUDING ... STAYING ... REACHING ... DETERMINING ... DIRECTING ...

CRAFTING ... WINNING ... BLUNTING ... SAFEGUARDING ... LEAVING ... HAVING ... IDENTIFYING ...

COMING ... SHOWING ... BEING ... DISCUSSING ... SUMMONING ... PERSUADING ... SEEING ...

BECOMING ... BEING ... CALLING ... SENDING ... OWNING ... LIVING ... FORGETTING ... BECOMING ...

WINNING ... CLAIMING ... IMPLICATING ... BEING ... USING ... MEETING ... DELAYING ... PURPORTING ...

PLEADING ... SUPPLYING ... FAILING ... LYING ... DRAWING ... PLAYING ... LEASING ... OFFERING ...

RECEIVING ... BEING ... NEEDING ... STARTING ... FEEDING ... SAYING ... LEASING ... BEING ... COMING ...

WORKING ... CLEAR-FELLING ... CONCERNING ... MAKING ... RELOCATING ... BEING ...

COMPENSATING ... WAITING ... COMPLAINING ... STOPPING ... DISCOVERING ... SURVIVING ...

CATCHING ... FINDING ... SHOWING ... WINCHING ... MAKING ... INCREASING ... HAVING ... SAYING ...

BEING ... MAKING ... REBUILDING ... PLAGUING ... RETURNING ... TURNING ... SURVIVING ... STOPPING ...

SPLASHING ... EXPOSING ... DETECTING ... DECONTAMINATING ... SPRAYING ... DOUSING ...

HERALDING ... CAUTIONING ... EXPOSING ... TRYING ... DAMAGING ... DOING ... GETTING ... RUNNING ...

CRITICISING ... USING ... TRYING ... EXCEEDING ... ADDING ... FINDING ... FINDING ... SAYING ...

WRAPPING ... TEARING ... CARRYING ... ARRESTING ... ECHOING ... ISSUING ... RESPONDING ...

LEAVING ... CRITICISING ... RELEASING ... HAVING ... SHOWING ... ELIMINATING ... ISSUING ...

WEARING ... LEADING ... SCREAMING ... DESTROYING ... LOOKING ... RESCUING ... DOING ...

ACKNOWLEDGING ... SEEING ... RESTORING ... CUTTING ... SAYING ... BEING ... DIRECTING ...

BEGINNING ... STRETCHING ... HAVING ... WORRYING ... STRESSING ... STABBING ... PICKING ... BEING ...

MEETING ... GETTING ... BEING ... HAVING ... BEING ... BEING ... FEELING ... BACKING ... SETTING ...

KNOWING ... HAPPENING ... RETURNING ... LEAVING ... THINKING ... CUTTING ... BELIEVING ... DOING ...

PLACING ... BEING ... UNITING ... INVESTING ... REFLECTING ... RUMPLING ... REALISING ... BEING ...

LEANING ... HAPPENING ... FORESEEING ... HANGING ... EXCORIATING ... AWARDING ... ALLOWING ...

ASKING ... FAILING ... SENDING ... DRAWING ... CHOOSING ... FINDING ... PUTTING ... DEFEATING ...  
 BEING ... REMEMBERING ... WINNING ... PREFERRING ... SUFFERING ... BASING ... SOLVING ... EXPECTING ...  
 CONTRIVING ... BREAKING ... LOOKING ... BEGINNING ... RUNNING ... CATCHING ... HEADING ...  
 MISBEHAVING ... ADDING ... CRACKING ... BOWLING ... DELIGHTING ... PLAYING ... RECKONING ...  
 BEING ... SEEING ... TURNING ... WINNING ... THINKING ... SLEEPING ... SHOWING ... BEING ... KEEPING ...  
 ASKING ... HAVING ... TRYING ... COMING ... SIGNING ... DENYING ... SELECTING ... TAKING ... CATCHING ...  
 CALLING ... JOINING ... UNDERSTANDING ... LOSING ... ALLOWING ... WINNING ... TAKING ... GOING ...  
 HAPPENING ... MAKING ... RACING ... BEATING ... RECOVERING ... SAYING ... PICKING ... CAUTERISING ...  
 FINISHING ... THINKING ... BEING ... IGNORING ... TICKING ... THINKING ... CONCEDED ... BEING ...  
 LEAVING ... ENDING ... SCORING ... TAKING ... DISRUPTING ... FACING ... CONCEDED ... OPPOSING ...  
 BEING ... PRESSING ... SAYING ... HELPING ... SCORING ... SCORING ... FOLLOWING ... HAVING ...  
 CELEBRATING ... CHASING ... PREPARING ... CONCEDED ... DETERMINING ... FINDING ...  
 WINNING ... CLOCKING ... COACHING ... GOING ... MAKING ... FIGHTING ... DEFEATING ... ENJOYING ...  
 BEING ... ATTACKING ... HAVING ... BEING ... STAYING ... THINKING ... DELIVERING ... COMING ...  
 ACCEPTING ... FEELING ... CLOSING ... GIVING ... DETERMINING ... MUSTERING ... BUYING ... COMING ...  
 REPLACING ... ADMIRING ... MAKING ... BEING ... PARTING ... PICTURING ... ADDING ... BEING ... PLAYING ...  
 CONSIDERING ... ALLOWING ... PREVENTING ... ACKNOWLEDGING ... DESERVING ... PULLING ...  
 RESTORING ... GIVING ... THROWING ... SEEMING ... REBUILDING ... TRAVELLING ... LIFTING ...  
 MAKING ... STEPPING ... PANICKING ... RETAINING ... MAKING ... DRAGGING ... GOING ... ILLUMINATING ...  
 BEING ... STOPPING ... THRIVING ... TELLING ... DEMEANING ... IMAGINING ... HATING ... SENDING ...  
 SAYING ... FINISHING ... INVOLVING ... KEEPING ... BEING ... COMING ... GIVING ... OVERRULING ...  
 GOING ... WATCHING ... REMOVING ... GOING ... PROMISING ... CARING ... BEING ... WINNING ... MAKING ...  
 FOCUSING ... PAIRING ... FINDING ... BREAKING ... RECEIVING ... LIMITING ... GETTING ... SAYING ...  
 ELIMINATING ... CATCHING ... RENDERING ... SECURING ... PLAYING ... WANING ... CONSIDERING ...



REPRESENTING ... BITING ... MOVING ... GOING ... POLICING ... WATCHING ... ARRIVING ... FLYING ...  
 BREAKING ... APPEARING ... LOOKING ... COMING ... FINISHING ... BEING ... FULFILLING ... CONSIDERING ...  
 REMONSTRATING ... BEING ... INVOLVING ... KEEPING ... ELABORATING ... BAGGING ... RELIEVING ...  
 MISSING ... PERFORMING ... SAYING ... LOSING ... SUGGESTING ... INVOLVING ... TENDING ... WINNING ...  
 GIVING ... EXISTING ... PLAYING ... CONTEMPLATING ... DREAMING ... REGAINING ... NEEDING ...  
 OVERTAKING ... FACING ... LOSING ... GOING ... MISSING ... INVOLVING ... IMPROVING ... LOSING ...  
 REPEATING ... CUTTING ... PERFORMING ... FACING ... ADMITTING ... VOLUNTEERING ... GROWING ...  
 SENDING ... BEGINNING ... FIGURING ... COMING ... GRITTING ... HAVING ... STABBING ... BEING ...  
 HANDING ... BEING ... SAYING ... WANTING ... CELEBRATING ... BEING ... REBUILDING ... BUYING ...  
 HAVING ... PATCHING ... NEGATING ... GETTING ... ASCERTAINING ... MEASURING ... GIVING ...  
 MOVING ... SENDING ... BEING ... RAISING ... GETTING ... SENDING ... GETTING ... DEPLOYING ...  
 WORKING ... RECEIVING ... COMING ... UNDERLINING ... GETTING ... CLAIMING ... SAYING ... REVEALING ...  
 ASKING ... HAVING ... LOOKING ... THINKING ... BECOMING ... GOING ... HAVING ... KICKING ... BEING ...  
 MAKING ... GAINING ... TRYING ... BEATING ... REMAINING ... BEING ... REPLICATING ... BEATING ... BEING ...  
 FINDING ... NEEDING ... APPEARING ... SETTING ... TURNING ... COMING ... GIVING ... IMAGINING ...  
 OVERTAKING ... INVITING ... DECLINING ... SAYING ... CARING ... MISSING ... QUERYING ... HAVING ...  
 LETTING ... MARKING ... BREATHING ... SAYING ... HAVING ... WANTING ... PUTTING ... OWING ...  
 BECOMING ... BEING ... PUSHING ... FORCING ... WINNING ... DOING ... INVOLVING ... DOMINATING ...  
 SHOOTING ... REPLACING ... DEVASTATING ... SWALLOWING ... WIPING ... ENABLING ... INVOLVING ...  
 BEING ... FORCING ... HAVING ... BEING ... BELIEVING ... SENDING ... GETTING ... GETTING ... BEING ...  
 MOVING ... CONDEMNING ... CONFIRMING ... USING ... TRANSLATING ... WITHDRAWING ... TAKING ...  
 REALISING ... EXTENDING ... DOING ... CONFOUNDING ... REGISTERING ... USING ... SHOWING ...  
 NURSING ... SINGING ... SAYING ... MAKING ... NECESSITATING ... SEEMING ... RECRUITING ... BEING ...  
 HAVING ... LEAVING ... SAYING ... MARKING ... THINKING ... ASKING ... WITNESSING ... DELAYING ...

REITERATING ... REFUSING ... DOING ... ENJOYING ... SAYING ... HAVING ... WINNING ... SAYING ...  
 PLAYING ... GAINING ... GETTING ... GOING ... BEING ... BEING ... MEETING ... BATTERING ... HAVING ...  
 BURSTING ... EXPOSING ... LOOKING ... BEING ... REMEMBERING ... OUTMANOEUVERING ...  
 ACHIEVING ... PASSING ... USING ... MAKING ... HOLDING ... TURNING ... RECOGNISING ... NEEDING ...  
 BEING ... TEACHING ... REQUIRING ... HALTING ... MISSING ... BEING ... GRINDING ... RIPPING ...  
 REINTRODUCING ... WISHING ... SAYING ... SHOOTING ... GRASPING ... BECOMING ... PASSING ...  
 LACKING ... FOLLOWING ... RELEASING ... REMAINING ... GOING ... BEING ... BEING ... HAVING ...  
 BEING ... LEAVING ... RAINING ... QUALIFYING ... BEING ... SCORING ... FLYING ... FALLING ... ASKING ...  
 LOSING ... GOING ... CHANGING ... HAVING ... HAVING ... IMAGINING ... BEING ... SEEMING ... ENCOUNTERING...  
 AWARDING ... ARRIVING ... BEING ... PLAYING ... TAKING ... PLAYING ... DEEPENING ... FINDING ...  
 FRUSTRATING ... LEAVING ... EMPHASISING ... BECOMING ... SEEING ... GIVING ... MARKING ... PUTTING ...  
 TRYING ... WORKING ... DOING ... OVEREXPOSING ... FITTING ... PACKING ... TRAINING ... HITTING ...  
 CONTAINING ... SENDING ... WARNING ... INFLUENCING ... BREAKING ... KICKING ... TAKING ...  
 DOMINATING ... HAPPENING ... HOLDING ... ARRIVING ... FLIRTING ... ILLUSTRATING ... PROVING ...  
 GETTING ... LETTING ... STRIDING ... BEING ... STRIKING ... LANDING ... PROVING ... STIFLYING ... WRITING ...  
 SPEAKING ... ACKNOWLEDGING ... WITHDRAWING ... SURGING ... RECEIVING ... BEING ... GOING ...  
 DEVELOPING ... BUILDING ... APPEARING ... BEING ... PRESIDING ... EXTENDING ... CONTINUING ...  
 DECLARING ... TAKING ... SECURING ... FALLING ... SEEING ... DEALING ... SALVAGING ... CHECKING ...  
 BEATING ... SUSPECTING ... SHARING ... RETURNING ... COMING ... LOADING ... JUDGING ...  
 FEARING ... BECOMING ... SPEAKING ... WETTING ... HAVING ... HAPPENING ... SEEKING ... BEING ...

**Alastair MacLennan** is; Emeritus Professor in Fine Art, University of Ulster, Belfast, Northern Ireland; Honorary Fellow, Dartington College of Art, Devon England and Honorary Associate, National Review of Live Art, Glasgow, Scotland. His live works address discrepancies in world ideologies and world actualities with actuations (install-actions) formulated so that viewers/participants become implicated in its meaning and resolution rather than remaining at the periphery. <http://www.vads.ac.uk/collections/macLennan>





## “NOTESCORE”(2)

Alastair MacLennan

PROPOSING ... OFFERING ... TARGETTING ... BEING ... ORGANISING ... RECOMMENDING ...  
ALLEGING ... REPEATING ... HEARING ... COMMENTING ... ATTENDING ... SUFFERING ... BEING ...  
DOING ... WORRYING ... COMING ... GOING ... APPEARING ... FEARING ... PROTECTING ... SEEING ...  
SAYING ... REQUESTING ... SEIZING ... SAYING ... BEING ... QUOTING ... NEEDING ... BEING ... DOING ...  
HEARING ... EXPLAINING ... INVOLVING ... ADMITTING ... BEING ... SAYING ... IDENTIFYING ...  
ACCORDING ... TAKING ... SHOWING ... SCREWING ... SEEING ... DRINKING ... CATCHING ...  
CONFINING ... FLOATING ... REELING ... SWITCHING ... REQUIRING ... ALLOWING ... READING ...  
DISTURBING ... GIVING ... WRITING ... QUARRELLING ... RE-ARRANGING ... MAKING ... NAMING ...  
FINDING ... ADMITTING ... ADMITTING ... SAYING ... ACCUSING ... BEING ... TELLING ... SUFFERING ...  
CLOSING ... BEING ... DECLINING ... SCHEDULING ... SPEAKING ... COMING ... CLAIMING ... MAKING ...  
SAYING ... SUFFERING ... HACKING ... BEING ... INCLUDING ... QUESTIONING ... TRAVELLING ...  
EXPRESSING ... BEATING ... WANTING ... REPORTING ... VISITING ... GIVING ... GOING ... EXISTING ...  
BOOKING ... CALLING ... HAVING ... PAUSING ... EXPLAINING ... HAVING ... URINATING ...  
TOTTERING ... BECOMING ... SPEAKING ... OBJECTING ... WRITING ... BEING ... CLAIMING ...  
WORKING ... LOOKING ... LOCKING ... SELLING ... CONTAINING ... KNOWING ... COMPETING ...  
REPEATING ... CALLING ... CLOSING ... LOSING ... ATTENDING ... BECOMING ... BEING ... KISSING ...  
WOUNDING ... ENCOURAGING ... BORING ... DINING ... VISITING ... ASKING ... CLAIMING ... SAYING ...  
KISSING ... LEADING ... GOING ... GOING ... ASKING ... EXCHANGING ... TALKING ... BOTHERING ...  
LEAVING ... DOING ... ENJOYING ... BEING ... BEING ... SAYING ... FOLLOWING ... FEELING ... KISSING ...

BEARING ... ACCEPTING ... ASKING ... WALKING ... COMING ... BEING ... ALLOWING ... MOVING ...  
 EMBRACING ... WRITING ... BUYING ... CLOSING ... SAYING ... ADVISING ... BEING ... BEFALLING ...  
 LOSING ... OCCURRING ... ACCEPTING ... ENCOUNTERING ... WITHSTANDING ... COMING ...  
 FINDING ... DEVELOPING ... SUBJECTING ... MAKING ... BEARING ... ENTERING ... FINDING ...  
 INSISTING ... DESIGNING ... BRINGING ... ASSOCIATING ... BEING ... MAKING ... REKINDLING ...  
 SHARING ... SURVIVING ... MAINTAINING ... UNDERTAKING ... INCLUDING ... REMAINING ...  
 ACCORDING ... FUELLING ... IMPROVING ... PLANNING ... WARNING ... MAKING ... COMMUNICATING ...  
 SENDING ... TAKING ... NEEDING ... MAINTAINING ... ADMITTING ... SEEMING ... CHANGING ...  
 SAYING ... PROCEEDING ... ENSURING ... ENGAGING ... MAKING ... UNCHANGING ... SETTING ...  
 BEING ... MAINTAINING ... ANTICIPATING ... MAKING ... ALTERING ... VISITING ... TELLING ... SAYING ...  
 CAUSING ... SAYING ... TRANSMITTING ... CONCLUDING ... SAYING ... SUSPENDING ... ENDING ...  
 RELEASING ... ENTERING ... EMERGING ... EXPLAINING ... TURNING ... HEADING ... SEEMING ...  
 CHOOSING ... SEEKING ... VISITING ... VEERING ... INTRODUCING ... INVITING ... CONCENTRATING ...  
 RE-ENERGISING ... SUFFERING ... PRESENTING ... REWORKING ... BEING ... BEING ... CHEWING ...  
 ABANDONING ... REFLECTING ... YAKKING ... RANGING ... REVEALING ... FEELING ... INCLUDING ...  
 BEING ... WINNING ... DOING ... LOOKING ... GOING ... BEING ... BOOSTING ... CUTTING ... FINDING ...  
 BEING ... FACING ... INCLUDING ... ACCORDING ... SEEMING ... DESERVING ... DECLINING ...  
 OFFERING ... PREDICTING ... WINGING ... BEING ... SWAPPING ... BECOMING ... REMEMBERING ...  
 UNSURPRISING ... BECOMING ... OVER-DRESSING ... APPEARING ... RISING ... JUMPING ...  
 KEEPING ... DECLINING ... ENDING ... REVEALING ... LURING ... APPEARING ... HELPING ... JOINING ...  
 CONDEMNING ... STARTING ... DRINKING ... WARNING ... PLAYING ... WARNING ... HELPING ...  
 PLAYING ... REPAYING ... SHUTTING ... CLOSING ... FOLLOWING ... DAMAGING ... BEING ... TAKING ...  
 EXPLODING ... KNOWING ... TAKING ... REDUCING ... RESTORING ... COMMITTING ... HELPING ...  
 LEARNING ... RECEIVING ... STRUGGLING ... STEPPING ... POSTING ... SETTING ... STOPPING ...

RECOGNISING ... TREATING ... WORKING ... KILLING ... MEANING ... ARGUING ... CHANGING ...  
 IDENTIFYING ... HAVING ... SAYING ... TELLING ... HELPING ... KNOWING ... HELPING ... STUDYING ...  
 BEING ... HAVING ... SAYING ... SAYING ... KNOWING ... GETTING ... STAYING ... BEING ... DELETING ...  
 STOPPING ... GOING ... STRANGLING ... CHANGING ... AFFECTING ... FLOCKING ... PATCHING ...  
 IMPRESSING ... SUSPENDING ... DISPERSING ... AWAITING ... BEGINNING ... BRISTLING ... COMING ...  
 INCLUDING ... HAVING ... WANTING ... LEAVING ... HELPING ... BEING ... ATTRACTING ... THINKING ...  
 LEAPING ... CONTROLLING ... SELLING ... CRASHING ... THRILLING ... PUSHING ... SAYING ...  
 PARALYSING ... CUTTING ... COMPARING ... EXPECTING ... BEING ... SAYING ... DECIDING ... DOING ...  
 BEING ... HAVING ... TURNING ... BREAKING ... APPOINTING ... OVERSEEING ... DELIVERING ...  
 SAYING ... DEMANDING ... RESCUING ... FACING ... SELECTING ... INCLUDING ... SAYING ...  
 WISHING ... OWNING ... DETAILING ... SUING ... PRUNING ... DENYING ... DOING ... APPEARING ...  
 TAKING ... SAYING ... REPEATING ... MEETING ... SAYING ... REACHING ... FOLLOWING ... RISING ...  
 SACKING ... ORDERING ... SETTING ... GIVING ... WANTING ... KNOWING ... OFFERING ... POISING ...  
 EMERGING ... DISCUSSING ... HAVING ... DRIVING ... ARISING ... PRODUCING ... ENTERING ...  
 BOOKING ... CALLING ... BECOMING ... HAVING ... DRAWING ... RISKING ... WELCOMING ... GIVING ...  
 PUTTING ... SINGLING ... BEING ... FINDING ... KILLING ... BEING ... CHOOSING ... MANAGING ...  
 CLAIMING ... GOING ... DISPERSING ... PUTTING ... HAPPENING ... CROSSING ... SEEING ... HOPING ...  
 ATTACHING ... BASING ... FOLLOWING ... KNOWING ... BEGINNING ... WATCHING ... RELATING ...  
 DESCENDING ... INCLUDING ... BEING ... PREPARING ... SUING ... UNCOVERING ... NAMING ...  
 HACKING ... SUING ... ACCESSING ... ACCESSING ... SUSPENDING ... MATERIALISING ... BEING ...  
 HAVING ... CONSIDERING ... FOLLOWING ... PAYING ... ASKING ... RELEASING ... CONDUCTING ...  
 BEGINNING ... BEING ... PLANNING ... PHONE-HACKING ... BEING ... PAYING ... DOING ...  
 DEPENDING ... TAKING ... BEING ... FORGETTING ... LEARNING ... GETTING ... CONNECTING ...  
 CASTING ... MEMORISING ... IMPRESSING ... FINISHING ... BEING ... BEING ... SAYING ...



INSPIRING ... EMPLOYING ... HAVING ... PRESENTING ... LACKING ... DEALING ... ADDRESSING ...  
 HITTING ... BEING ... RECREATING ... HELPING ... LIVING ... EXPERIENCING ... DRAWING ... BEING ...  
 BEING ... BEING ... READING ... SAYING ... FUNDING ... CARRYING ... BEING ... PILING ...  
 PREFERRING ... GOING ... EXPLOITING ... SAYING ... BEING ... HOLDING ... BEING ... CONVEYING ...  
 LIVING ... TRYING ... EXPLORING ... SEEMING ... BUILDING ... BEING ... APPEARING ... EXPECTING ...  
 FORGETTING ... POINTING ... BUILDING ... BEING ... CONFORMING ... EXISTING ... ENSNARING ...  
 PUTTING ... BEING ... PRESSING ... SUPPORTING ... REFORMING ... AVOIDING ... ALLOWING ...  
 DEPOSITING ... PLEADING ... REDIRECTING ... CONTINUING ... CHALLENGING ...  
 INCORPORATING ... BEING ... CONSIDERING ... STRIKING ... PHOTOGRAPHING ... THINKING ...  
 SPREADING ... EXPECTING ... SUGGESTING ... FLOATING ... OPENING ... SAYING ... THINKING ...  
 MODELLING ... DRINKING ... INVOLVING ... DRAWING ... MIXING ... SAVING ... CALLING ... BEING ...  
 BEING ... GAINING ... ABOLISHING ... ASKING ... THINKING ... THINKING ... AGGREGATING ... SAYING ...  
 TELLING ... WANTING ... WANTING ... BEING ... PERVERTING ... FEELING ... PROVING ... CREATING ...  
 PROPOSING ... CONTROLLING ... TRADING ... MINGLING ... HANDING ... DERIDING ... REFUSING ...  
 BEING ... BEING ... REMINISCING ... BEING ... CHANGING ... BEING ... HAVING ... SAYING ... BEING ...  
 COMING ... BEING ... CAPITULATING ... WAITING ... BEING ... FILLING ... USING ... BEING ... PROVIDING ...  
 PROVIDING ... DEMANDING ... MAKING ... SATISFYING ... REMEMBERING ... CREATING ... SHOWING ...  
 DESCENDING ... SLIPPING ... SETTING ... EXPOSING ... BEING ... CREATING ... MAKING ... TAKING ...  
 OWING ... CONDUCTING ... DECAMPING ... DECAMPING ... AFFECTING ... OMITTING ... BEING ...  
 THINKING ... NOTICING ... BEING ... DESCENDING ... FINDING ... LOOKING ... INCORPORATING ...  
 MEANING ... THINKING ... ASSURING ... OFFERING ... RECALLING ... SHOOTING ... TRYING ... BEING ...  
 STRUGGLING ... AGREEING ... BEING ... ELECTING ... SEEING ... WIPING ... BEING ... PUTTING ...  
 POUNDING ... EXPLAINING ... TRANSLATING ... REINVENTING ... WINNING ... HEARING ...  
 MANAGING ... BASING ... SAYING ... AFFORDING ... EXPLAINING ... HIDING ... ADMITTING ... BACKING ...

EXPLAINING ... NEEDING ... DENOUNCING ... ADVANCING ... DISCUSSING ... BRUSHING ...  
 PUSHING ... POUNCING ... REPEATING ... MAKING ... TALKING ... ASKING ... GETTING ... TALKING ...  
 TALKING ... TRANSFORMING ... FOUNDING ... TALKING ... SPEAKING ... MENTIONING ... BEARING ...  
 TALKING ... TALKING ... PAYING ... TALKING ... TALKING ... HELPING ... NEEDING ... DOING ...  
 DENOUNCING ... TALKING ... TALKING ... BEING ... CELEBRATING ... STRENGTHENING ... BEING ...  
 BEING ... DISTANCING ... RETURNING ... BEING ... DIVIDING ... ENABLING ... MANIPULATING ...  
 FRUSTRATING ... APPOINTING ... ANNOUNCING ... INVESTING ... PROTECTING ... GOING ...  
 PREPARING ... PROSECUTING ... DECIDING ... HOLING ... BEING ... HINTING ... POLARISING ...  
 CREATING ... EXPOSING ... ACCUSING ... SCARING ... FUNDING ... KEEPING ... HAVING ... BEING ...  
 PASSING ... STINKING ... NEEDING ... COUNTING ... HIGHLIGHTING ... RUNNING ... VOTING ...  
 EXPECTING ... MEANING ... PAYING ... WANTING ... BREATHING ... SAVING ... COINCIDING ...  
 REMAINING ... DECREASING ... OPERATING ... LEADING ... ADDRESSING ... PASSING ... TAKING ...  
 PREVAILING ... NEGOTIATING ... PASSING ... PROVIDING ... HAVING ... GIVING ... DOING ... READING ...  
 REMEMBERING ... EXISTING ... BEING ... DISPLACING ... DISENFRANCHISING ... BEING ... HOLDING ...  
 GETTING ... BEING ... BEING ... GETTING ... MONITORING ... GOING ... INCREASING ... RETRAINING ...  
 MISREADING ... LABOURING ... MOBILISING ... CLAIMING ... BEING ... JUSTIFYING ... CLAIMING ...  
 CALLING ... RULING ... FALLING ... FALLING ... DOING ... GOING ... WATCHING ... BEING ... DEVOTING ...  
 ENCOUNTERING ... DECIDING ... SOUNDING ... DOING ... CELEBRATING ... FEELING ... MAKING ...  
 BEING ... LASTING ... ALLOWING ... ATTENDING ... MARKING ... MEETING ... TESTING ... SPENDING ...  
 TAKING ... MAKING ... BOOKING ... FRAMING ... HANGING ... BEING ... PUBLISHING ... SAYING ...  
 COMING ... RAISING ... BEING ... RECEIVING ... CONVERTING ... TAKING ... COSTING ... BACKING ...  
 ALLOWING ... ALLOWING ... FINISHING ... SCHEDULING ... TAKING ... HAVING ... STARTING ...  
 THREATENING ... COMING ... CONSIDERING ... STENCILLING ... ATTEMPTING ... SEEMING ...  
 USING ... BEING ... SAYING ... BEING ... TALKING ... UPSETTING ... DOING ... ADMIRING ... SAYING ...

GIVING ... SPEAKING ... FEELING ... WILLING ... BRINGING ... BEING ... MAKING ... MEANING ...  
 ACCORDING ... IMAGINING ... BEING ... EARNING ... SHARING ... BEING ... LIVING ... MOVING ...  
 DISCOVERING ... DECLINING ... BEING ... FORGETTING ... FINANCING ... RAISING ... GIVING ...  
 MEASURING ... BEING ... RUNNING ... READING ... PARACHUTING ... BEING ... RELOCATING ...  
 GROWING ... MOCKING ... INTERRUPTING ... BEING ... PRETENDING ... BULLYING ... BEING ...  
 EXPERIENCING ... BEING ... CONSORTING ... GETTING ... FINDING ... INCLUDING ... ENDING ...  
 BEING ... APPEARING ... ANNOUNCING ... OPENING ... GROWING ... JOINING ... BEING ...  
 BECOMING ... SUGGESTING ... RETURNING ... FINDING ... BEING ... TAKING ... DOING ... ALTERING ...  
 FOLLOWING ... GOING ... TAKING ... FINDING ... GIVING ... MARRYING ... FLOUNCING ... HAVING ...  
 PLAYING ... MARRYING ... MAKING ... LIKING ... DOING ... DREAMING ... COMPROMISING ...  
 PULLING ... SUFFERING ... ARGUING ... DILUTING ... DRINKING ... DRINKING ... GIVING ... ALLOWING ...  
 AVOIDING ... PLAYING ... REACHING ... STANDING ... BEING ... INVESTIGATING ... CRASHING ...  
 TWEETING ... ARRANGING ... REALISING ... DOING ... BEING ... CONCEALING ... HAVING ...  
 DESCRIBING ... BEING ... WORRYING ... DRIVING ... BEING ... HAVING ... WRITING ... GROWING ...  
 BEING ... FOLLOWING ... CARING ... BUYING ... HEARING ... USING ... BRINGING ... BEING ... HOLDING ...  
 OFFERING ... TEMPTING ... ADVISING ... WANTING ... COMING ... PUZZLING ... CONCERNING ...  
 BANNING ... USING ... CONTACTING ... INTERESTING ... AWAKING ... THINKING ... SINGING ...  
 RESONATING ... BODING ... BELIEVING ... KILLING ... WANTING ... GUESSING ... WORKING ...  
 DROPPING ... BEGINNING ... WORKING ... MAKING ... BEING ... LIFTING ... THINKING ... WEARING ...  
 SAYING ... USING ... FAILING ... YELLING ... RAISING ... DECLARING ... GIVING ... SAYING ... ADDING ...  
 ROAMING ... COOPING ... STARTING ... PRODUCING ... LIKING ... GETTING ... JOINING ... SMILING ...  
 TAKING ... THINKING ... GROWING ... IMPROVING ... BEING ... SPENDING ... INTERROGATING ...  
 GIVING ... LOOKING ... SEEMING ... MAKING ... NEEDING ... INCREASING ... SWITCHING ... SHOWING ...  
 MAKING ... TELLING ... CLOSING ... FORCING ... SITTING ... GIVING ... EXERCISING ... WANTING ...

REALISING ... FINDING ... HAVING ... ENTERTAINING ... SAYING ... READING ... BEING ... CHANGING ...  
 THINKING ... DISMANTLING ... NEEDING ... SHARING ... MAKING ... REGULATING ... BEING ...  
 GETTING ... MEETING ... COMPARING ... BINDING ... MAKING ... WANTING ... DOING ... HAVING ...  
 SHOWING ... CHEERING ... BEING ... TWEETING ... HAVING ... GATHERING ... KIDNAPPING ...  
 ACCORDING ... STRANGLING ... KILLING ... SETTING ... DISCOVERING ... SAYING ... WORKING ...  
 COMMITTING ... PUNISHING ... EMBRACING ... CALLING ... SAYING ... CARRYING ... KIDNAPPING ...  
 ENSURING ... KILLING ... SURROUNDING ... BOMBING ... TRAVELLING ... REACHING ...  
 UNDERSTANDING ... CONCENTRATING ... REVIVING ... LOOKING ... BREAKING ...  
 ACCOMPANYING ... BEING ... MURDERING ... DYING ... ASKING ... AWARDED ... PROMOTING ...  
 DOING ... LISTENING ... POLARISING ... BELIEVING ... RAILING ... THINKING ... RAILING ...  
 CHANGING ... COMING ... CONVENING ... RECOGNISING ... LAUGHING ... WORRYING ...  
 BALKANISING ... BEING ... TALKING ... BEING ... ENVISIONING ... SUPPOSING ... WRITING ...  
 BELIEVING ... SAYING ... MAKING ... OBLIGING ... RUNNING ... HAVING ... DETRACTING ...  
 PRACTICING ... ADMITTING ... ENTITLING ... SAYING ... DENYING ... RECOMMENDING ...  
 PRODUCING ... REINFORCING ... ADMIRING ... CALLING ... WORRYING ... BEING ... PUBLISHING ...  
 ALLOWING ... CALLING ... BRINGING ... NEEDING ... CONTROLLING ... MAKING ... QUOTING ...  
 TAKING ... COMPROMISING ... WRITING ... DECLINING ... WORRYING ... BEING ... SHAPING ...  
 MEANING ... CHOOSING ... EXPRESSING ... DETERMINING ... TURNING ... SAYING ... SWIRLING ...  
 KILLING ... SPREADING ... ESTIMATING ... STARING ... RECONNECTING ... KILLING ... UPLOADING ...  
 COMING ... CHANTING ... GROWING ... EXPELLING ... REPORTING ... PREVENTING ... MARCHING ...  
 SIMMERING ... SHOOTING ... SAYING ... BEING ... COMPLAINING ... OPPOSING ... INTERROGATING ...  
 BEING ... SCARING ... ROUNDING ... ADDRESSING ... SCARING ... ORGANISING ... DOCUMENTING ...  
 BEING ... FOREWARNING ... DEPENDING ... HAVING ... JOINING ... CHANGING ... STUDYING ...  
 POPULATING ... DOLING ... LEAVING ... HOLDING ... SINGING ... SUPPRESSING ... WHIPPING ...

DESTROYING ... CAUSING ... KILLING ... RAINING ... SEPARATING ... BEING ... SAYING ... SAYING ...  
 LEAVING ... PROTECTING ... ARISING ... BEING ... ACCOMPANYING ... DISINFECTING ...  
 BECOMING ... SEPARATING ... DEPENDING ... AVOIDING ... APPROACHING ... LOCKING ... COMING ...  
 MAKING ... GOING ... DEPENDING ... DOING ... FOOLING ... CARRYING ... INCITING ... ALLOWING ...  
 GOING ... ABOLISHING ... BEGINNING ... PUTTING ... HANDING ... ASSASSINATING ... ORGANISING ...  
 MURDERING ... GUARDING ... GOING ... LIKING ... VENTURING ... REALISING ... WANTING ...  
 GETTING ... WANTING ... WISHING ... TESTING ... DETAINING ... WALKING ... FLYING ... KEEPING ...  
 STARVING ... THINKING ... VOLUNTEERING ... CHOOSING ... GIVING ... BEING ... THINKING ...  
 COMPROMISING ... DOING ... LOCKING ... REVIVING ... UNDERLINING ... TAKING ... DYING ... GETTING ...  
 REMOVING ... BEING ... INSISTING ... NEEDING ... REMAINING ... DOING ... BEING ... BEING ...  
 HANGING ... FINDING ... DISTRESSING ... PREPARING ... KILLING ... BREAKING ... STORMING ...  
 SCARRING ... SETTING ... ACCOUNTING ... FIGHTING ... REASSURING ... REFUSING ... BLAMING ...  
 TRYING ... SURPRISING ... REALISING ... ARRIVING ... TAKING ... LOOKING ... BEING ...  
 EXONERATING ... SETTING ... INVESTIGATING ... INCORPORATING ... CLAIMING ... FEELING ...  
 MARRYING ... RISING ... SWIMMING ... SEEING ... COMING ... DOING ... CREATING ... REBUILDING ...  
 SUPPORTING ... DECIDING ... INCLUDING ... WAGING ... COMMANDING ... COMMANDING ...  
 ACQUITTING ... PLANNING ... STUNNING ... FINDING ... SAYING ... SAYING ... HAVING ... DYING ...  
 ABANDONING ... PERSUADING ... PUTTING ... POSING ... BEING ... SMOKING ... BRINGING ...  
 INCLUDING ... HOPING ... TRYING ... HAVING ... BEING ... SPEAKING ... PROTECTING ... KEEPING ...  
 EXPORTING ... INCLUDING ... PRESENTING ... FOLLOWING ... TOBOGGANING ... SKIING ... HIKING ...  
 HIRING ... BEING ... FORCING ... HELPING ... REDUCING ... BEING ... MAKING ... COMING ... PROVING ...  
 SAYING ... CONCERNING ... AVERAGING ... HAVING ... SHEDDING ... GROWING ... LEAVING ...  
 GETTING ... BEING ... BEING ... MEANING ... REPRESENTING ... EXPECTING ... POLLING ... OPTING ...  
 GIVING ... SAYING ... PERMITTING ... CONTRIBUTING ... CONDEMNING ... INCLUDING ... TELLING ...

ASSURING ... MAKING ... KNOWING ... COMING ... EXPRESSING ... BEING ... SAYING ... SAYING ...  
 FORCING ... JOINING ... OPPOSING ... JOINING ... ACCOMPANYING ... BEING ... OPPOSING ...  
 SEEKING ... FOCUSING ... CLAIMING ... INVOLVING ... TAKING ... DELIVERING ... SURVIVING ...  
 PICKING ... SAYING ... DECIDING ... COMING ... AIMING ... SAYING ... LEADING ... DISAGREEING ...  
 DEFENDING ... SINGLING ... FUNDING ... PROMPTING ... MAKING ... BRINGING ... HAMPERING ...  
 PREVENTING ... SAYING ... SPEAKING ... THINKING ... KNOWING ... GRANTING ... REPORTING ...  
 GRANTING ... GAGGING ... HAVING ... BEING ... BUYING ... BEING ... LIKING ... SEARCHING ...  
 WATCHING ... WRITING ... COMPILING ... OVERRATING ... TELLING ... BEATING ... CALLING ...  
 QUOTING ... RATIONING ... AFFECTING ... INVOLVING ... DOING ... CONTINUING ... TAKING ...  
 GUARDING ... CONTACTING ... BEING ... RINGING ... EXCLUDING ... SENDING ... CARRYING ...  
 HELPING ... RECEIVING ... DELAYING ... BEING ... COMING ... INCREASING ... TAKING ... STARTING ...  
 RISING ... SAYING ... READING ... SAYING ... CHANGING ... WANTING ... MAKING ... LIMITING ...  
 REFERRING ... ESTABLISHING ... REMOVING ... KEEPING ... LOSING ... MAKING ... ORDERING ...  
 COINCIDING ... GROWING ... BEING ...

**Alastair MacLennan** is; Emeritus Professor in Fine Art, University of Ulster; Belfast, Northern Ireland; Honorary Fellow, Dartington College of Art, Devon England and Honorary Associate, National Review of Live Art, Glasgow, Scotland. His live works address discrepancies in world ideologies and world actualities with actuations (install-actions) formulated so that viewers/participants become implicated in its meaning and resolution rather than remaining at the periphery. <http://www.vads.ac.uk/collections/macLennan>

# TRIPLE AAA MYCOLOGICAL HISTORY

Matt Middleton

Culture swarms. That gnarley mycological descent into winter: First frosts, first slurries. First feel-up. First Blood. And while you're at it son ... please ... bleed for me and *only* me. The city of *sin*. Dunedin. Dunedin warmth – Dunedin hands. Ugly, ugly and even uglier.

Anyone for tennis?? A tv party? Lacrosse? Badminton? Shall we break into the Forsyth Barr coliseum and streak naked across the pitch to the mocking applause of the mighty Dunedin Police? Yes! All that and more, Jorge! Bottoms up!

Triple A – where the body is the medium. Andre Stitt, an intense and spritely Belfastian living in Cardiff, tears meaning into bacon strips and defies all codes. Alastair MacLennan, a Scotsman living in Belfast, places banana skins atop his head and offers up autumnal leaves – his is a sagely grace. There is a sense of absolute freedom – of the old Thelemic method – any whim expressed, one's will exposed and 'actuated.' These men are the invited guests of conceptual artist Adrian Hall, a Cornishman who has made Aramoana his home. These men are old colleagues but, more importantly, old friends. They talk of careers and communities, galleries and fluid spatter, the finer points of Gaelic performance art, war stories and close encounters, of the natural and the preternatural, of institutions and surviving them. This is wisdom.

I can't report on the daily(!) performances aside from the flailing dada that was the 'press conference' (it was flailing and dadaesque) – and a truck accident on state highway 88 blocked my path en route to their last soiree – which I am told was madness (flailing and dadaesque even) – but I can convey my impressions from their talks and presentations.

MacLennan presented video and stills from recent installation/performances which he coins *actuations*. He is present in each installation, as ghost or statue or slime mould. His body is usually enshrouded in all manner of detritus – earth, rubbish, meat, roots ... These sittings are feats of absolute endurance, of encasement, of concentration, of meditation. Becoming earth. The Alastair MacLennan signature is an item placed on his monkish head, perhaps there to aid concentration, to enhance poise. In any event, each and every item MacLennan uses is a potent symbol. A charm.

As a zealous consumer of Eastern philosophy, certain motifs used in MacLennan's video *The Alchemist* resonated deeply within me. Shot in the primordial grey/green of the Scots forest, *The Alchemist* documented what seemed like several days' worth of quasi-druidic nature ritual. Artist and cohorts assuming arcane forms, mirroring movements of the elements and elementals, cupping waters, lithification of forms, the tearing of wool and bracken. A natural minimalism – the minimalism of universal movement unchallenged and unfettered by human intention – left to move as it moves. *The Alchemist* focussed on tiers of temporality – those occurring on the forest floor; those occurring in streams, moments, lifetimes, death, rebirth, the dissolution of watery forms, bubbles, carcasses, skin, bone, morning dew.

If MacLennan is Gnostic sage, then Stitt is Celtic warlord. We are subjected to his tightly packed energy right from the get-go as he entered the press conference sporting a sinister pair of dark aviators and protected by bribed art-student-as-security – not a word – just enter, sit and begin tearing strips out of A4 paper, strip after strip. I think of structure and code and paper-as-template, as control. He tears it up. This is the artist who, in the midst of war-torn Belfast, pours petrol over his paintings and sets light to them. His was the slogan, “Art is not a mirror; it’s a fucking hammer.”

Since making these gestures, he has built a career that has earned him the reputation as one of Europe’s foremost performance artists. He held a talk on his famous residence-slash-gallery, Trace, in Cardiff. The home of blood painting, extreme golf, menstruation-as-art and of course Stuart Brisley’s “curator of a shit” show ... *Salò*, eat your asshole out. Trace became an art piece in itself as Stitt & friends built replicas of the entire building in various locations worldwide as part of the “Trace Displaced” project. Wherever the crew went, there was what could loosely be called construction and ultimately deconstruction ... mess, detritus, ‘traces,’ memories, flotsam, jetsam, jissom, the beloved gallery re-made readymade cookie cutter cut-out do-or-die performance art cluster fuckery. His is punk industrial energy. I believe the *piece de resistance* of the daily performances here in Dunedin was Stitt cutting the word ‘Norn Irn’ in caps along his left forearm. Flamin’ heck. Slayer! Missed some painful fun there, I’ll be bound.

... which brings us to the Cornish Kiwi resident Adrian Hall, who first arrived here in 1971 as artist-in-residence at Elam, after a stint stateside.

He has shown his work alongside Hotere and McCahon (who?), performed at the National Gallery in the early ‘80s, is about as (other)worldly as you can get, having travelled to scores of lands and cities and villages including Ireland and the US, and was artist-in-residence at our beloved Dunedin Art School in 1999 where he experimented with textual semiotics and radio art.

I asked Hall to describe how he ‘found’ the triple A experience. “Your pesky questions – one good answer to them all would be ‘I dunno.’”

**Matt:** What performative/aesthetic/philosophic objectives/tropes/motifs did you have in mind for AAA?

**Adrian:** Two weeks of escalating trust, and for each of us utterly pushing what we had each been about. No compromise. We visited our individual histories and dug ‘em up and tossed them over again.

Knowing A1’s buzz-cut, and A2’s pate, I let my hair grow to the length which it was when I first knew them. Before I cut it off after a day in the barracks with the Army when I was photographed etc. 1976.



Figure 1: Lars Preisser, *Alastair MacLennan*, Ballpoint pen on paper, 2011.





Figure 2: Lars Preisser; *The General (André Stitt)*, Ballpoint pen and coloured pencil on paper; 2011.



Figure 3: Lars Preisser; *Balance (Alastair MacLennan)*, Ballpoint pen and coloured pencil on paper; 2011.

Objectively with AAA I moved from (fairly) straight man, in the suit, for the official press conference, to a deliberately scraggy, non-uniformed person intuiting actions from a heap of junk. They stole my best(!) suit and abused it in the space. And my best shirt and tie and f... wedding shoes. Testing the space, climbing into the roof, towing the ladder around, climbing up and round it on the floor – railing against André and shouting titles from one of his amazing paintings – “I’m Yer Mammy” – at him in a high-decibel mad screaming contest.

I found myself working through causal actions which caused monotonous or rhythmic sounds to mix in with the recorded-backwards male and female voices, which was a list of the names of all of the casualties in N.I. I was tramping around in a circle and deep breathing, kept in a tight circle by the off-megaphone mike on a cord, tin cans banging aggressively but rhythmically on their strings, which I was dragging at as I went widdershins – anti-clockwise, like the witches do – round and round. Unwinding these joint 35-year-old memories from our communal consciousness.

I busted out with ordinary things as well as the manic sergeant-major-shouting with A1, like highly polishing one work boot, shaving with an electric razor suspended from the ceiling or lying on the floor. We each went with a ‘dare’ attitude I think, but in that neat new space – the drawings of A1 & A2 on the walls and the sound, and the awful mess which became readable as a chart of our engagement, during the following week – was all quite outstanding in my experience anywhere.

**Matt:** The gist of your artist talk?

**Adrian:** It was meant to be about 'decoding' the detritus left behind in the gallery. Someone asked if my role was of a provocateur; and yes, I think it was, as each of us had that role. There was no anticipation, no rules, no leader. We seemed to happen, and the amount of history unfolding was an avalanche which we truly never anticipated. It was intense. It was full bore. I can only imagine that it would have been like a pale shadow of the feeling Elvin Jones and 'Trane, and Eric Dolphy felt – after one of those gigs not long before Dolphy died.

**Matt:** What would you liken the AAA experience to?

**Adrian:** Like a bath in Cornish clotted cream, drowned with Jameson's whiskey. Like a tiptoe through the tulips, like a hyper-adrenaline scrunch through the window-glass after a bombing campaign. We laughed like trains when we met up for about 24 hours solid. It was like playing with the grown-ups. There were no holds barred and there was no compromise. And from this experience and a *priori* knowledge, and very great trust and confidence, some kind of striated coherence emerged. Performance. Fragmentation. Slice, dice, sever, reattach, slash, hack, recompose. Anger, fury, loss. Rage and redemption and Rinzai.

Ultimately there was an aura of life-affirming positivity to these artists – to the visit as a whole. Here were men who have made a living out of the systematic expression of different hues of human madness – rituals and performances and psychic experimentation that would have had many 'put away.' But for them, it seems to have actualised deep personal and spiritual growth – they will make of the world what they will and that is final – art's arms are wide



Figure 4: Lars Preisser, *Triple AAA Performance*, Ballpoint pen and coloured pencil on paper, 2011.

open and welcome all psycho-social adventurers, well ... so long as there is included at least a micro-semblance of an 'artist statement.' I was re-invigorated. I applied their teachings to my world. "Use your intuition," MacLennan informed me in kindly Scots-Irish vernacular: The aesthetics rocked harder than ever the following weekend.

Thanks, Adrian, for bringing these creative forces over. I'm all the better for it, I hope the students of the art school are too ...

It's cold. And fervour dwindles. Where's the whiskey? 3Ds re-release *Swarthy Songs for Swabs*. And we turn it up in the car and you make out a crude version of the band made famous by *Helzapoppin*. And fervour is stimulated that little bit more. And fervour dwindles back into its shell. There's always something to do. Someone to save. Someone to love. Something to pick up. Something to clean up. Something to bleach. We decide not to visit Auschwitz.

**Matt Middleton** is a recording artist based in Melbourne and Dunedin. Going by the moniker "Crude", he has an extensive back-catalogue of works spanning the worlds of lo-fidelity, noise and it's various associations and releases on Flying Nun, Ecstatic Yod, Ecstatic Peace, Artless Intent. Matt plays an active role in promoting innovative audio culture and appears on many recordings by New Zealand bands and artists in a supporting role.

#### **Andre Stitt**

<http://www.tracegallery.org>

#### **Alastair MacLennan**

<http://vads.ahds.ac.uk/collections/macLennan/>

**Adrian Hall**, born in Cornwall, has taught at the Royal College, London, Yale School of Architecture, and lectured at U.C.L.A. He has continually pushed back the boundaries of convention and shown artworks in public regularly since 1960. He has worked with time-based media, installed works, drawing, writing, performed-gestures and actions. He is the current Artist Adjunct to the Dunedin School of Art in 2012.

<http://www.imageandtext.org.nz/adrian-bricks>

# ‘THE THREE BAD BOYS GO TO THE MATRIARCHY’: TRIPLE AAA AT THE DUNEDIN SCHOOL OF ART GALLERY

Carl A Mears

*A privileged overview with a slight apology to Enid Blyton.  
And another to ‘the matriarchy’ – which is no more!*

**A1** was André Stitt – the youngest, but most hardened by extreme world experience. Perhaps and maybe. Though both soft and hard. Masquerading always behind his meticulous Akshun Man cargo pant- and uniformed-cleaner persona. But the hard man ever there, bred in Belfast’s East, London’s building sites, and the lower levels of the Lower East Side, N.Y., in the eighties. Now gripping the reins of the Cymru Academy, a wild child at the wheel through disciplined circumstance. Never letting go.

*Redeemed. A joker. Staunch.*

**A2** was Alastair MacLennan, always relaxed but ever engaged. Twinkling in a kind of cocoon of indefinable spirituality. Prepared to talk much more than 30 years ago. Surprisingly. Lurking there with gentle humour and eagle eye. Impervious. Son of crofters on a western Scottish isle, somewhere near but not near Skye. A McKay-McLennan, only just his generation this side of English as a first language. A postgraduate of the esteemed Chicago School of Art, U.S. of A., a two-year Zen research graduate dishwasher. Sifting his koan – “How to better the world through painting?” Then being turned back after those two years by being told – “You are not an artist yet.” Now though 50 years on from then, an artist living his creed of testing balance ...

*A walking candalabra. A joker. Staunch.*

**A3** was Adrian Hall – in this trio of nostalgia, arbitrary personæ and archaeology, maybe the hardest to frame. Peripatetic: self-conscious. Varied. A gabbler, sceptic, self-proclaimed non-intellectual. Striver for clarity but failed logical positivist: as with “But now I’m not so sure.” Still trying to evolve. Paradoxically restraining more latent violence than the other two, but needing to. A deliberating schizoid, a mediator, a rash provocateur, calm but frenzied. No compromise. Did rather be a motor-cycle courier through a London winter than fake it in a fraudulent art school as a head of ...

*Bloody-minded. A joker. Staunch.*

A3 also somewhat overawed that A1 and A2 had interrupted their distinguished and manic trajectories to deliberately deviate in this direction. To play in the sandpits of Dunedin, somewhere near the South Pole, with someone they had once known 30, almost 40 odd years ago back there in the War Zone, mid-seventies. Bel-Fiastre, Norn Irrn.

## THANKS TO:

They made it happen, though, with the help of many – British Council, Otago Polytechnic, and notably the enthusiasms of Professor Leoni, most favourite head of ... pirate captain, proud empress of a new Dunedin School of Art Gallery. Brand new, splendid. Now to be entrusted to the three bad boys. Kieran Lyons, artist U.K., commented on the poster: “like three bad boys from a reform school.”

Thanks also to the students and staff of the Dunedin School of Art, to the Photo Media team: Kim Pieters, Campbell Walker, Sally Macintosh, Joe Worley, Cath Cocker, Edward Wittaker, Pam McKinlay and to André, Alastair, Adrian. Thank you and to all the others.

Triple AAA also were generous with their time, giving half a dozen lectures and seminars and interviews on their histories and philosophies during their brief visit. Thanks also to those tireless time travellers.

Snippets of the overheard should start this overview. Might help illuminate the bloomin' obvious:

*"Smells like a lot of very sweaty men in there."*

*"Too scary by far."*

*"What a mess."*

*"Look like three very traumatised Men ..."*

Then of course at first there was the very self-consciousness of the fellers themselves; self-conscious of their own hetero-gender, three old blokes in our fallible postfeminist world. (Pardon?) Those years of the seventies had helped, like all the other 140 years of their combined professional experience, to further forge their sensitive artist souls. It did though become evident, Miranda – the discipline and crust and scars from deep and bloody learning which still goes on. Everyday. Everything. It all goes on. The perennial learning: of which this fortnight was to be but another Coliseum day.

They are workers. They are skeptics. They are anarchists, they are anarcho-humanists. They are pig-headed, strong-minded. They are deadly freaking serious. They are painters, exquisite draftsmen, installation-, sculptural-, time-based film and video makers, readers and reciters, rabble-rousers and thoughtful jokers. Benign beyond their noise. They make nothing into something. They are children. They toy with time, they use their Selves as human sacrifice. They use the fabric of their being as the medium, their souls as message. Not one of them believes in those words 'Performance Art,' for there is never 'acting,' no theatre. Instead – *Akshuns, Realisations, Live Works*. They stalk a mysterious truth.

Slightly closer is as much as they get. Certainly no standard 'acts' are rehearsed. Never just entertainment practised. Most always though with the humour draining like a catheter. Definitely human sacrifice. A peculiar distillation of reality – from the real. And this particular Dunedin triple-wammy, never before attempted in the history of the known universe: two old blokes, A2 and A3, and one younger; fitter; with grey flat-top hair; and some attitude – A1. No rules, no wasted talking, no leader.

*Three working-class lads, all graduates of the Butler Education Act of 1947, all grewed up – all believing that 'maturity' is merely finding out that which seems no longer worth doing. And not doing it.*

## **SUNDAY, 19 JUNE 2011**

Three old fellers. One empty space. Thirty-six years in three separate worlds, Old and New: and who can count now their colleagues already 'gone?' The perennial and recurrent 'Big C' – over-enthusiasms in various forms. Alcohol, and despair the rest. It is a long hard road without compromise, to forge one's own pathway. They had each known some, many even, who had succumbed.

**So.**

They entered the Arena, the White Room, and entered the Sunday Silence. They walked the floors of that deadliest of dark dead spaces. An empty art school. They felt the chill of echoing footsteps. They rescued a table, they felt

their way. Then they found the harbour, drove the perimeter, and felt again together the distant, distant presence of Northern Ireland and the Western Isles of Scotland.

## MONDAY, 20 JUNE 2011

They tip-toed round one another making lumpy jokes. Susing out the passage of time, then cruised the thrift shops and the city dumps together. The magnificent detritus of a privileged society spread out, one which lives by and off the old institutions. Sneaking glimpses at each others' treasure, so they were. Meaning – meaningful scrutiny, but not one failed this rigorous test of mutuality. They laughed a lot.

*Some citizens would swallow the scent of their hunt and join in. "So where is the other swim-flipper?" "I only need one. (Jimmy.)" "Ach, you can have that one then." "Why don't you take my picture too?" "Then smile then." Looking up into the booth at Greenisland, then showing the gatekeeper the digi-pic: "Why d'you make my beer-gut so big then?" "And that will be fourteen dollars and another dollar-fifty dangling from the glasses you have got on, you're not getting away with them!" More laughter from the three rollicking trauma men. On this 24-hour tourist spree, delighting in all the commonalities, this was to be their Reality Check and their Theory. "Greenisland? – That's where I live in Antrim, in Nor'n Irelan! We have to go there." "Look, the Arthur Daley Bar. Quick – a photograph!"*

Above all, they are three believers aligned enough that no questions are to be asked regarding belief or action. There is a strangely united family reforming. No word save the grapevine, and fragmented art-writings over the decades, to convey the gist of it. But nevertheless there is a flicker of flame from the forge of '73, '74, '75, '76, '77, '78, and there is the intense energy which feeds the extreme generosity of these old chums as they later on talk and talk more, to the young artists around them. Good craic. They are wholly on a mission.

Those young artists are invited to the first day of public engagement in the almost empty gallery. This is to be 'The Press Conference.' An audience assembles and takes seat in the official, formal style after a parade of chairs, individually dispensed. Those younger artists are asked to participate in a sober choreography with which their mobile bodies delineate that which is to become the Arena. They zip around the perimeter on murky missions of their own. Two of their brothers are the security guys, with rip-off Ray Bans and Miami yellow sweaters: The Yellow Men. The audience is bullied and seated. Formal introductions are made by A3 wearing the grey pinstripe – white shirt and tie.

A1 and A2 enter; just a little jolt, but from behind a screen from within a window recess. They each introduce themselves. Then things start to mutate. One journo is lifted and roughly frisked; a Yellow Man darkly surveys the situation, searches bags, while a wi-fi camera on his colleague's head throws images of the goings-on onto a wall from a video projector. The contents of a bag, details of a giant image of the clock on the table. Close-ups of our faces. The formalities degenerate quite swiftly – megaphone ranting, poetry, random-seeming word-reading.

Astonishingly, these shy young Southern Kiwis join in mouthing and chanting chapel-style the cut-up word porridge fed them. Is this the Karaoke Generation? Even the hip media men join in, at least with sheepshaped moving mouths. André recycles lists of the materials and things he has denigrated, destroyed and sanctified over the years through his Akshuns. Now verbally and physically, with shreds of scissored text. Alastair has a constant mantra for all their actions to come, which is the complete list of names of the murdered victims of the Troubles in the North. Bi-gendered stereo voices reversed perform the litany: names of ordinary men and women and children slain by bombs and guns and knives and bricks and rubber bullets. The non-mortal kind of rubber bullet which only punches out eyes, breaks bones and maims the brain. The fat rubber bullet which, despite the best of humane intentions, does wound, does rip off parts of jaws and does kill. A wordy jumble ensues, with the gallery space patrolled at the border by darting young and lithe. The Yellow Men survey.

Anxiety ensues as A1 starts his own rant on a wicked little megaphone, and A2 starts to balance things on his pure and perfect pate. Is that a large mangled rusty bar? An oxide accent from a modernist sculpture on his naked head?

A3 found it a good time to relearn the semaphore alphabet, there in his whistle and flute and tie, in the light of a projector. Shadows quietly projecting way back, from the Wolf Cubs. He poned about in his suit, and looked in his executive tie somewhat out of place. At least as much as each and every single other one there.

In later days that empty suit was retained by request as another kind of history – was also abused by fragments of the revolving urgency of the ever-present present. The students recognised anarchy when they felt it. And they went with their own. Beautifully. Other punters peered in and generally moved on. A few entered through the architectural gesture of the massive white, pivoting door. The formal gallery, the white cuboid, had transformed into a sprawl of garbage, broken glass and fractured histories of the two visitors. Through photocopies of drawings (A2) and articles and photo-histories (A1). No *a priori* knowledge is presumed there. The image of a young and naked and hirsute André, from a time when Jim Morrison was large in his life, was a gem to behold; contrasting neatly with his authoritative Janitor-Commando present self. Past into present – through palpable objects and their effects on neural triggers.

## **TUESDAY, 21 JUNE 2011**

By now, a party pleasantness was maintained while younger denizens of the Dunedin School of Art in general had creative fun. They pushed at times to points of provocation, while the old fellers rationalised their responses and became more cunning. Their invention became an interpersonal set of triadic references, which over the first week caused the student improvisations to seem more distinct and more formal. In the second week the students had become spectators. They had self-consciously been trying, and been interesting, but remained isolated in islands of individuation, unlike the larger discursive behaviour of Triple AAA. Their chaos was to form patterns in time though, through redisposition and night edits and recycle, and through differing intuited action strategies.

Other participants had brought in all kinds of arbitrary junk. How could this be? It was all in the shopping choice. Destruction, and redisposition. Chaos re-ordered the cuboid.

*The genuine garbage gradually became both eloquent and resonant. Later in the third week it became a vivid history of process indicative of the personalities and the force of their actions. It also became tuned with a symbology emerging from culling and editing. With an intrinsic power independent of a priori knowledge, but with the power of imaginative restitution, based on individual experiences personally supplied. So the detritis spoke volumes, mediating with the graphic actions frozen into the wall drawings from the second week, which in themselves were a static, visual counterpoint to confident, trusting actions between A1 and A2.*

## **WEDNESDAY, 22 JUNE 2011**

The present is tense and only a live, attentive engagement is presumed – which some garrulous and ignorant visitors learn to their embarrassment. In later weeks one of the mystery visitors materialised elsewhere to proclaim that it was “really great to have a good, old-fashioned ‘Happening,’ happening again, where anything and everything goes!” Obviously the irony of her ignominious eviction, after unexpected expletives were delivered brilliantly in context, was lost on her, and no lesson was learned from a practical demonstration of that which was not to be tolerated within the arena. Anything definitively did not go. Tension forms like cobwebs, some students withdraw.

The heightening of tension underscored the sensitivity and sensibilities of the artist trio. They were searching. In the days to follow visitor numbers fluctuate, but those remaining become aficionados beyond expectation.

The ante had upped as the time had ebbed. A1 took more liberties with his own body, A2 became more versatile with unlikely small corpses. Manic and cretinous self-abasement became the dharma of A3. An odd unity through independent action was formed. The last restraints between the artists were diminishing, and the unconstrained audience were free too. They participated in an engagement born of respect and an appreciation of the unfolding, unpredictable phenomena. Old-fashioned wonder perhaps, outside the expected parameters of a gallery-void/showcase.

On this afternoon A1 became more vocal in counterpoint to A2. A3 became more mobile, in some kind of motorvated zombie mode. He got caught up with things, walked into and over things. Dragged over a set of steps, nearly fell and froze. A2 found more remarkable things to balance on his head – a branch, a huge salmon, draped over his pinkness. A3 finished the day ringing changes on tin cans tangled in string round himself. He was braced against a wall, bent close banging his head repetitively while cans jangled at each contact. This went on for a while. A2 enunciated past participles clearly. A1 cut paper; read portions of the *Belfast Telegraph*. Tin produce cans jangled, and then again through silent consensus – things ceased. Even despite the alarming clocks.

## **THURSDAY, 23 JUNE 2011**

This was a day of a natural climax. There was no negotiating their shared weariness, but it was to be the last of it. The night before, A2 had acquired two frozen stoats from a man who set and cleared traps at the yellow-eyed penguin colony on the northwest harbour. Stoats are the most vicious and voracious predators on native fauna – there happened to be two in that man's deep-freeze. Which he happily donated to A2 and his heady cause. They appeared, de-frozen, limp, somewhat cute even, suspended from the large tree branch on the head of A2. Their cuteness was ensured by a sensitive looping of string under their armpits. A less respectful person might have placed the loop around their throats. This gave a recreational aspect to their morbidity. They hung out. And downward. Balancing them on other ends of the twiggery were the two stripped skeletons of the large salmon, tails down, huge heads up and proud. At the end of their useful lives. Also in suspension footwear of unknown women.

While A2 severely, almost blindly it seemed, negotiated the cluttered space, A1 began to slowly follow the course of his scissors previously used to snip and clip texts. They came to feast upon his uniform trousers and consumed strips and increasingly dangerous portions of fabric which were laid out. Self-evidence, perhaps. Meanwhile A3 in zombie mode again found himself trapped by suspended shoes and cans and lots of strings. He was impelled to go round and round relentlessly while casually reminiscing over a lengthy, tense story of an execution in the room over a bar, in which he had been drinking with A2 until early in the morning once 38 years before. A2 had reminded him of that night within two hours of their meeting again – neither had referred to it ever before. A3 took 40 minutes to reconstruct that tale. He walked widdershins, on a leash of tangled memories, as his memories over all that time were spun out through the microphone into a large megaphone. He for one seemed entranced by his own slow rhythms as he unwound 32 years.

Outside the vision of A2, A1 had resumed cutting operations. Now with a scalpel. Upon his forearm. Half denuded, he carefully cut strokes into his own flesh which, despite the trickling blood, spelt out in capital letters the vernacular pronunciation "NORN IRLD." A2 maintained his gentle vigil. His pendant creatures had become less shocking, even friendly/normal through familiarity. There had been beauty in his barefoot delicacy of movement and a large audience which had convened waited in silence, as motions slowed down, and a loud silence ensued which lasted more than ten minutes. Two unsynchronised alarm clocks rudely then interrupted the dead-set silence while A3 moved slowly around the rapt visitors, crudely pushing a small camera at their faces to take a portrait of every single witness. Surprisingly, there appeared to be tears on the faces of a number of the audience.

*Evocation. Reconstruction. Reconstitution. Restitution.*

## **FRIDAY, 24 JUNE 2011**

A1 and A2 flew out from Dunedin, to return to Norn. Ireland and Cymru.

A2 drove them to the airport for their 5.30am flight.

*They talked of meeting in another 35 years to make another work together.*



**MONDAY, 27 JUNE 2011**

Triple AAA had left the space as a rich static coagulation of 'detritus' from their actions, to be viewed at leisure until the following Friday. Suspended shoes of mixed gender, age group and kind. Spread banners. The empty suit. News clippings stained by red wine and florid gesture. Documents to be displayed, to be used, had been trashed, abused, sliced and diced and quoted from. They were grisly records of tortured victims and other sad, mad, histories. They loomed larger in import as the days went on, feeding the verbal rants and the actions. Now that large innocent space seemed full of the most disturbing content, but curiously resolved, stasis.

A3 had permission to modify that detritus at will. This though was too rich, too complex, to apply any individual or personal rules of taste or tidiness. It seemed to him sacrilegious. It was what it was and had to be as it was. Actual history. Agincourt after the fact. A stale barroom after a night of frolic. A forensic site waiting for the C.S.I. Multiferious logic systems, causality and profound evocation, waiting, recovering, still pregnant, redolent, realisable, reiterative. It heaved with the breath of dead souls but trembled with the live optimism of attainment.

So on the following Thursday, A3 entered with a pistol crossbow, having taken a cue from a photo-moment in the history of André in the States. And A1 shot up the suspended footwear; and static footwear; in a truly perverse but Achillean moment of whimsy. Leaving it all literally shafted by the sadistic punctuation of anodised gold crossbow bolts. Golden light refracted off the shafts, illuminating the sad sweat stains on the old sport shoes, singling out the scuff marks on the smart suspended court shoes of unknown women, and querying the whereabouts of the tiny owners of the cute pink flip-flops. Again the twin gendered voices on Alistair's tape gave velvet wallpaper sound to the giant shoebox, which held so much time, so many times. So much distance brought close and so many, many persons who are somewhere else. But not there.

*Lacan, and Patty Smith and Coltrane. Iris Murdoch and Guy Debord, Prince Kropotkin, Michel Foucault, Three Blind Mice, Three Wise Pigs, Three Little Plonkers, buffoons and heroes. Profound failures everywhere at the lock-step, two-step, two-faced suburban shuffle and all those other lawn-mowing games. We salute ye, Lads!*

**Carl A. Mears** hailed from New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A. sometime in the mid-sixties. He gleaned a lot in the ambiance of a great university, and from its superior art-collections and libraries gained a love of culture, learning and librarians. He is a Veteran of a Foreign War, and served in a junior officers' mess somewhere or elsewhere. Until recently peripatetic, he lives now at Walden Pond.



## IN MEMORY

Adrian Hall

In the night they can find you. In the night - I will reach you.

In the night I ferry memories across the mud and lay with the elders as they shift and sift the truths. I will watch and I will see your words in the wind.

A whirl.

With no less meaning than they had – no more,

than when your ordered envy laid your tidy plots and built your paper towers. Your sham and shameful power: Just fragile as the bones of long dead labourers. And serfs , my people.

Sidekicks, button pushers, keyboard queens and other charlatans who played your fleeting game, will find - I found - in truth you could not hurt me. Then or now. For never did I bite, never swallow your slime, your filth, your bile. Your dreams of shoddy things or the bogus admiration of your Fools.

In the night they will also find you.

In the night, I too will reach you.

In the night . . .

Cold.

Smiling.