

IF YOU HAD

ONE WORD

FOR THE BRISBANE 80s ART SCENE
WHAT WOULD IT BE?

AND IF ONE WORD ISN'T ENOUGH

THEN HELP YOURSELF
TO SOME MORE

NOT

REFEL

Brian Doherty



If you had one word for the Brisbane 80s art scene what would it be? Please tell me - and if one word isn't enough then help yourself to some more. I really need your contribution for three ARI Remix publications to help correct the proposition that NOTHING happened.

The first publication, to be available online at issuu.com, has a focus on the overall art scene in Brisbane in the 1980s. The second will focus on the Artist Run Spaces and the third will focus on artists.

We will be using some content from this facebook site and from the remix.org.au site. You can also submit your ideas and images specifically for the Remix publications at <http://www.remix.org.au/pages/contact-us-01-2/> Just put 'newsletter' in the 'post tag' field. Hope to hear from you soon!# ariremix



“... despite the work that has been done, there remains a general perception that there is not much to either write about or exhibit when it comes to the history of Artist-Run projects in Brisbane...”

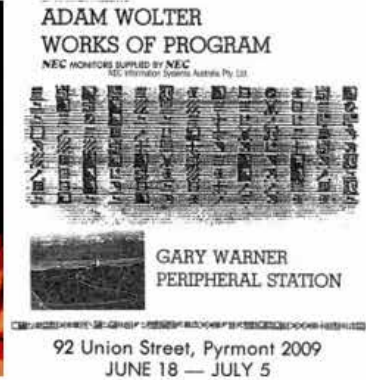
Peter Anderson
Marginal Notes: towards a history of an artist-run scene, Brisbane, the 1980s
Eyeline 82, p62

NOTHING HAPPENED...
... COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH
... TIME TO CHANGE THE STORY

FRI 3 APR



ADAM BOYD



ADAM WOLTER



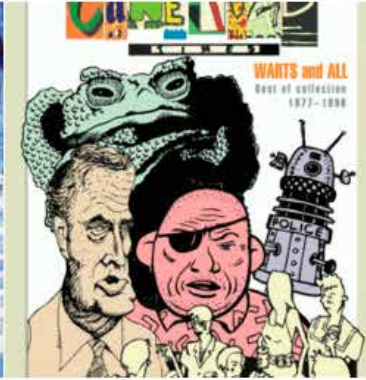
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DAVID HOLDEN



DEBORAH FENWICK



DEBORAH LONG



DI HEENAN



DONALD HOLT

HA CONTENT

NO

idea.

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IVAN NUNN



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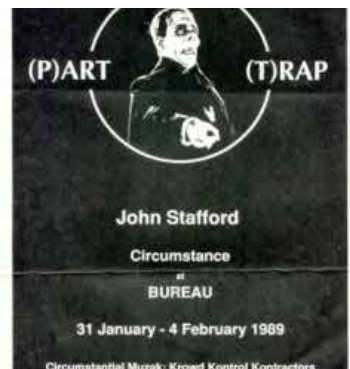
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JOHN STAFFORD



JOHN WALLER



JOHN WILLSTEED



JOSE MACALINO



KATE WHITE



KEN BULL

Brian Doherty:

I decided today that this little publication (x3) I'm putting together for Paul Andrew is not a newsletter nor an 'issue' as it has been referred to up until now.

It is a conversation. It is personal, open ended and taking detours and tangents – like standing in the kitchen at a party – going where anyone who wants to say something takes it.

The content will be presented so it is obvious where it came from – so Facebook posts will look like Facebook posts etc...

This conversation is not over it is just the start... to be disputed, corrected, added to and as the subject of other conversations. These are memories and personal histories with 'uncertain chronology' (Peter Anderson).

You can keep the conversations going on the Facebook group: Qld ARI Heritage 1980-2000 and the website: <http://www.remix.org.au/>

LIKE STANDING IN THE KITCHEN AT A PARTY

LIKE STANDING IN THE KITCHEN AT A PARTY

Intro section

(from BD ARI support letter for Paul)

The decade of the 1980s witnessed the emergence of diverse and vibrant cultural endeavours in Brisbane. These endeavours by individuals and groups spanned and intersected visual, performance and media arts; popular music; writing and publishing; radio; and political engagement. It was a watershed decade for the development of the cultural supports for arts practice in Queensland. I believe Paul Andrew's project would be very timely to gather oral histories and other documents of this period relating to arts practice and place these on the public record before they are lost.

From my perspective Artist Run Initiatives throughout the 1980s provided individual artists an opportunity to establish networks, exhibit works, have work critiqued by their peers, and to participate in a wide range of related professional activities. The foundation of the Queensland Artworkers Union (later becoming Queensland Artworkers Alliance) provided a significant infrastructure for artist rights including artists contracts and in turn published Eycline Magazine to take local art to a national and international audience.

Acknowledgements

ARI REMIX. A Collaborative Memory Of Ephemeral Artist-Run Culture An Interactive Archival Artwork. Stage one – QLD 1980-1990 April 2015 - April 2016

This newsletter is the first in a series of three newsletters that look at the art scene in Brisbane in the 1980s commissioned by Paul Andrew as part of the ARI REMIX project.

Design and production: Brian Doherty and Jane Richens

This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



**Queensland
Government**



**Australia
Council
for the Arts**



KENN BUSHBY



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LUKE ROBERTS



LYNDALL MILANI



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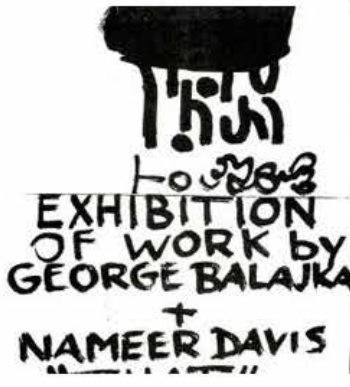
MATT MAWSON



MICHAEL EATHER



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NAMEER DAVIS



NICHOLAS ZURBRUGG



PAUL ANDREW



REBEKAH FOGATY



PHILIP DEAN



RACHEAL BRUHN



REBECCA CHAPMAN

ARI REMIX PROJECT

ARI remix is a three-year digital humanities, artist interviews and oral history project collecting and presenting memories of Australian Artist-run culture in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory between 1980 and 2000.

Its focus is fleshing out and illuminating the ephemeral and neglected histories of the many lively and socially engaged artistic scenes along the east coast of Australia during the last two decades of the 20th century.

2015-2016 will have a focus on The Queensland Remix. This is the first stage of the project and has received funding from Arts Queensland to kick start the collection of artist interviews, artist-run space profiles, artist ephemera, contextual accounts, documentation, photographs and videos.

We invite you to post useful commentaries, insights and related archival resources you are happy to share in today's creative commons "attention economy" zeitgeist. We are excited about being active participants of the growing open source movement.

Artist-Run Initiative (ARI)

noun. An artist-run initiative is any project run by visual artists to present their and others' projects. They might approximate a traditional art gallery space in appearance or function, or they may take a markedly different approach, limited only by the artist's understanding of the term. ... "Artist-run means initiating exchange; emphasizing cross and inter-disciplinary approaches to making art; developing networks; through curation, putting creative ideas and arguments into action"



ROSS WALLACE



ROBERT MUNDAY



ROBERT WHYTE



ROSS THOMPSON



SALLY HART



RUBY SPOWART



RUSSELL LAKE



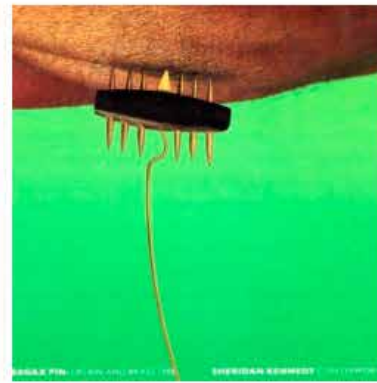
RUTH PROPSTING



STEVEN GRAINGER



SHANE KNEIPP



SHERIDAN KENNEDY



SIMON REPTILE



THOMAS BURLESS



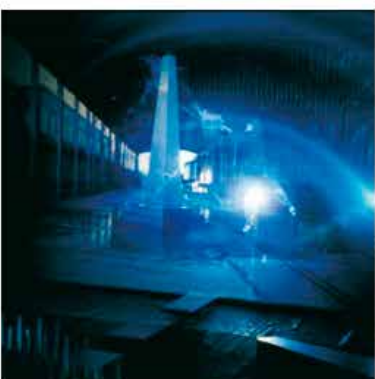
SUE PALMER



TED RIGGS



THE SHARED CAMERA



WENDY MILLS



TIM GRUCHY



URSULA SZULAKOWSKA



VIRGINIA BARRATT



Contribute to the 1980-1990 artist-run online archives.

ARI remix is being designed as a creative commons project of shared archival resources with appropriate accreditations and permissions.

Content can be submitted online into these areas.

QLD REMIX ARCHIVES 1980-1990

One to three artist-run related images, i.e. invitation, poster, postcard, flyer or photograph, audio or video you are happy to share online on the archive.

ARTIST PROFILE

Artist Biography – 50 -150 words about you written in third person.

Artist resume – one to two A4 page artist resume – this project is designed to be both archival and to provided added professional development opportunities for artists.

ARI PROFILE

Up to 500 words about the artist-run space/project you were directly engaged in with up to 3 accompanying images. Include links to any online content.

ARI NEWSLETTER

Submit your story and images for inclusion in our upcoming newsletters.

Artist Fee for ARI Remix Participation

- Each artist – up to 30 artists only- so first in best dressed
 - Written Interview- \$280
 - Short Story up to 500 words – \$120
 - Archival Photograph – up to three images only- \$80 per photograph
- Additional photographs, archival resources and ephemera are welcomed without payment.

There are also a selection of oral histories being undertaken now the artist fee for these interviews is negotiated one on one by ARI Remix Project Co-ordinator Paul Andrew.



Art Walk One Flat Benefit poster by Hollie, 1983
Collection of Brian Doherty and Jane Richens

COMING

This may have already been picked up in Facebook discussions, but I rang Peter and he said the exhibition opens to the public on 2 April, but the **opening night is Friday 8 April** with other events hopefully happening over the weekend.

xx John Waller
01.01.2016



COMING SOON

University Of Queensland Art Museum

ephemeral traces Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s

2 April 2016 – 26 June 2016

ephemeral traces provides the first comprehensive analysis of artist-run practice in Brisbane during the final decade of the conservative Joh Bjelke-Petersen government. The exhibition focuses on the scene that developed around five key spaces that operated in Brisbane from 1982 to 1988: One Flat, A Room, That Space, The Observatory, and John Mills National.

Drawing on artworks, documentation and ephemera, the exhibition provides a contextual account of this progressive artist-run activity, examining collective projects, publications and the spaces themselves, as well as organisations such as the Artworkers Union and Queensland Artworkers Alliance. A counterpoint to Michele Helmrich's earlier exhibition *Return to sender* (UQ Art Museum, 2012) which focused on the artists who left Queensland during the Bjelke-Petersen era. This exhibition is about the artists who stayed.

Curator: Peter Anderson

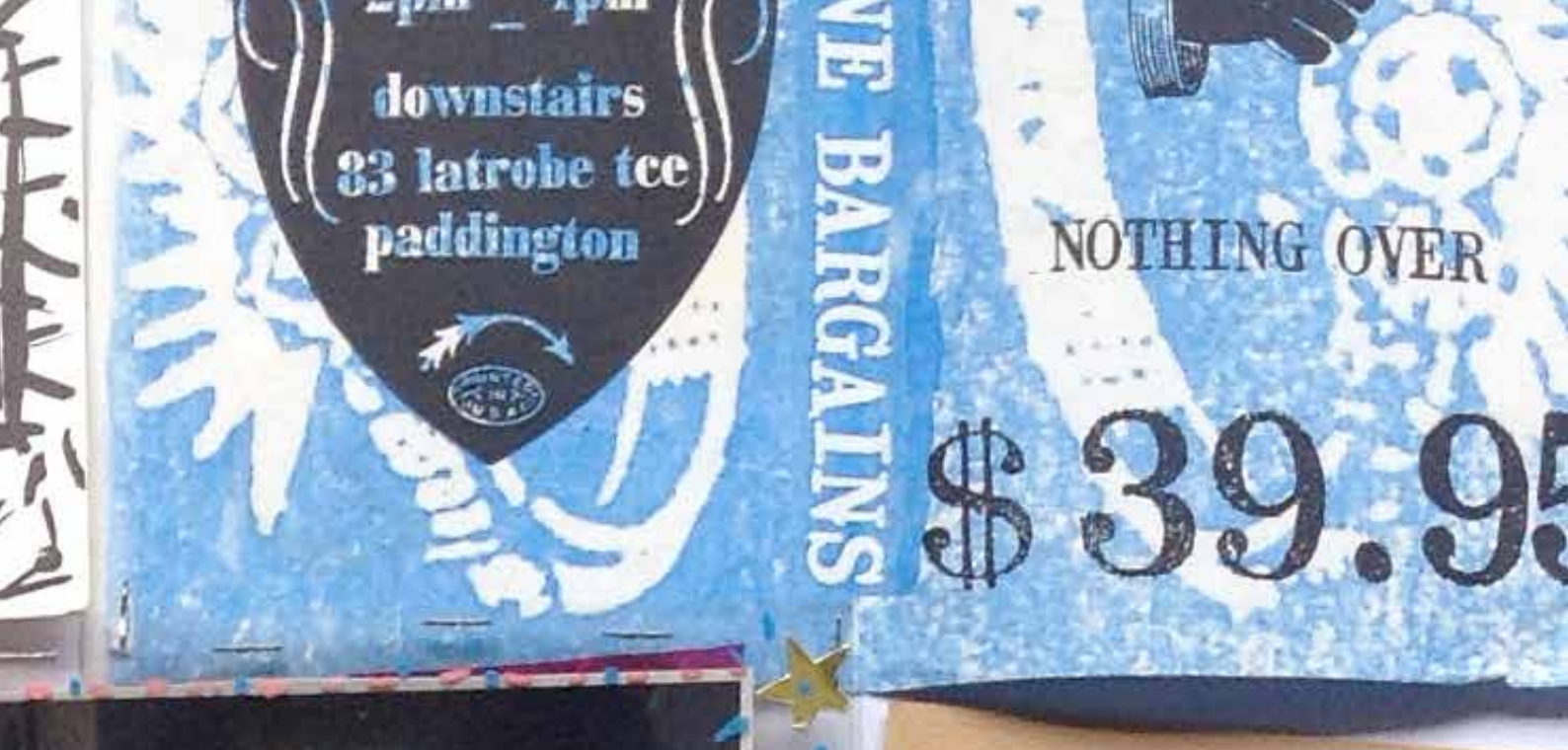
BARJAI and MIYA STUDIO

23 April – 24 July 2016

In 1945, at the close of the Pacific war, a group of young Brisbane artists formed Miya Studio, named after an Aboriginal word for 'today'. Founding members Pamela Seeman, Laurence Hope and Laurence Collinson, together with Cecel Knopke, organised studio space and encouraged artists to respond to the challenges of the contemporary world. In Collinson's catalogue preface for the second of the group's five annual exhibitions, he critiqued the local art scene, stating 'The members of Miya Studio are attempting, as far as a small group of young artists with only moderate means at their disposal can attempt such an undertaking, to make this arid soil vital.' Barjai ('meeting place'), a Brisbane-based magazine for literature and art aimed at a young audience, shared and supported their ideals.

This exhibition revisits these endeavours with a focus on The Miya Studio Archive, which Pamela Crawford (née Seeman) donated to UQ in 1988.

Curator: Michele Helmrich



An artwork seldom goes out into the world without a frame around it. I am not talking about one of those glorious gilt edged Rococo frames that adorn so many oil paintings in the historical sections of art museums - you know the ones that often seem to be far more imposing than the work itself. In contemporary curatorial practice where art may be a gesture, a performance, an immersive installation, such material frames are an unsuitable anachronism. Today the frame of art sits in the ephemera that surrounds it: the article in the arts section of the local paper, the didactic panels, floor sheets and catalogue essays that accompany the exhibition, the art blog on the web, the journal article by a learned scholar, the images uploaded into an on-line search engine. These frames inform the viewer what to expect and prepares them to see, and what to look for..

Ann Schilo 'introduction: A Curated conversation' in Visual Arts Practice and Affect: Meaning, Materiality and Embodied Knowledge, Rowman and Littlefield. London. Forthcoming. 2016.





Qld ARI Heritage 1980-2000

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Peter Anderson

April 1

Messing about with exhibition titles "Self-organised" ... didn't quite cut it ... now thinking ... "The Politics of Space: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s" ... comments, suggestions welcome ...

Like

Comment

Share

Paul Andrew, Sally Hart, Local Collapse and 4 others like this.



Local Collapse title thinkings head on...



Lindy Collins What That?



Adam Boyd 'Politics' might be a bit of a fly trap. It would only ever be partly true. You're looking for something that reflects the political but also the imaginative, the creative, the indifference, the playful. Will keep thinking. Dis confabulation?



Adam Boyd Nice and wanky.



Local Collapse also reflecting the affective, the spiralling out of inspiration, the ripples, the inflections. how this was the ground for alot of work that followed.



Local Collapse collapse ... title of a journal, already, but something along those lines re: disintegration of the geophysical space but then the occupation of that space by artists...



Peter Anderson The Politics of Space was actually the title of a 1988 QAA forum at QCA (you were a speaker Abject-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject, as was Jeanelle Hurst ... I was the 'chair'... and so reusing it opens up an immediate return to that moment) ... Just about any title has its limitations. Also thinking about the tension between different layers of art context, the political economy of urban space that was actually what made spaces available & then took them away, and the politics of Qld. at that time, and also the tension between practice that was focused on the 'white cube' and practice that thought outside that box ... and the politics of DIY ... make your own space (which is a bit like the title of Max Delany's 2005 ex. on 3 Melb ARS "Pitch your own tent") ... I really want to slide from 'space' to 'scene' here too ... and I think that the core of 'the scene' had a 'politics' ... and yes Adam Boyd a real sense of playfulness too ... and really I do want that to show through ... just not sure you can ever get the perfect title for a show like this. Thanks for the input ... it has to make sense to a very wide audience, give a sense of the exhibition's focus and not be too 'dry'.

THE QLD ARI HERITAGE FACEBOOK PAGE CAME TO LIFE WHEN PETER ANDERSON ASKED FOR COMMENTS ON THE TITLE FOR HIS UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND ART MUSEUM EXHIBITION

ephemeral tra
Brisbane's artist-run scene in

It was a brave move

The responses reveal a lot about the 80s Art Scene and about curating...

Adam Boyd

...looking for something that reflects the political but also the imaginative, the creative, the indifference, the playful.



Dis confabulation?



Local Collapse

also reflecting the affective, the spiralling out of inspiration, the ripples, the inflections. how this was the ground for a lot of work that followed.



Racheal Bruhn

Hot politics, cool space. I always think that the reflective nature of the work produced then, was taking out the heat of the horror of the blocking, the willful and 'happy stupidity' that party politics generated.

Racheal Bruhn Hot politics, cool space. I always think that the reflective nature of the work produced then, was taking out the heat of the horror of the blocking, the willful and 'happy stupidity' that party politics generated.

Jeanelle Hurst DONE as in you the viewer are about to see a bucketload of 'stuff' you had no idea existed....

Jeanelle Hurst The title doesn't have to tell the story...just open the door

Robert Heather No vacancy

Adam Boyd No vagrancy Like · 4

Adam Boyd I absolutely refuse to take any further part in this conversation until everyone has a couple of Cuba Librés under their belt. Like · 3

Jeanelle Hurst Neo ragency. ...boydyschmordy

Jeanelle Hurst thumbs up on 'the politics of space'.....'Why is public space disappearing? Why is this disappearance important to democratic politics and how has it become an international phenomenon? Public spaces are no longer democratic spaces, but instead centres of private commerce and consumption, and even surveillance and police control. "The Politics of Public Space" extends the focus of current work on public space to include a consideration of the transnational - in the sense of moving people and transformations in the nation or state - to expand our definition of the 'public' and public space. Ultimately, public spaces are one of the last democratic forums for public dissent in a civil society. Without these significant central public spaces, individuals cannot directly participate in conflict resolution. "The Politics of Public Space" assembles a superb list of contributors to explore the important political dimensions of public space as a place where conflicts over cultural and political objectives become concrete.'.....just found this <http://www.amazon.com/The-Politics-Public.../dp/0415951399> The Politics of Public Space...AMAZON.COM

Peter Anderson Lots opened up there ... even without the Cuba Librés. Michele Helmrich at UQAM came back with a brief 'I like it' email, which is like a 'like' on FB ... so it's looking like the 'working title' (with room for a little tinkering). After half a bottle of cheap Spanish red I remembered another old 80s title 'Lost in Space' ... and then riffed off on 'Space Cadets', and 'Making a Scene' ... I've been though a whole bunch of material on 'alternative spaces' shows from the US and Canada ... things like 'Cultural Economies: Histories from the alternative arts movement, NYC' ... back in 2002 I wrote a piece for Artlink on BNE called 'A History of Forgetting' ... but I think it's good not to dwell on amnesia with this project ... Rachel, your Hot/Cool kind of replays the way Peter Cripps set up some debates around Brisbane practice in 'Brisbane Hot' (IMA, March 85) ... In 86 for the Demolition Show cat essay I used 2 frames from a recent 'Doonsbury' cartoon which was in the middle of riffing on the NYC art scene ... couple in back of limo, '... you have to move fast, take responsibility for your own stardom. As one gallery owner told me, you have to pull yourself up by your own Reeboks' ... I think that's called 'bootstrapping' ... very much a case of 'just do it' ... but of course the Nike advertising slogan wasn't in play until some time in 1988.

Jeanelle Hurst Triple thumbs up to BooTSTRAPPING

Local Collapse bootstrapping thumbs up from me.

Adam Boyd Peter I think we are sitting at a kind of juncture here. There are some - and I'm not naming names here - but there are some who might have thought way back in 1980 something, that a forum on the politics of space, organised and supported by the same institutions that many artists were reacting against, was to grab the cauldron by the wrong side. Artist run spaces were nothing if not reactive. To revive that idea now is to make the same mistake twice. Your challenge, I think, is to honour a spirit that cannot possibly have survived within mainstream power structures then, and risks being diminished by doing it now. I think I speak for a few when I express a certain unease about about my past practice being co-opted into the very institutional mindset I refused at the time. I may have a certain maturity and perspective to see that things are not so black and white as that, but this needs to be said, flawed or not. 'Resistance' may be contained within certain ideas around the politics of space, but nothing screams co-opted more than that phrase. The curatorial direction needs to understand this, and the title needs to reflect it. Sorry to be blunt, but can you see the magnitude of this? I feel it's a huge balancing act to get right and nothing short of mountains of courage is what's needed.

Carl Warner Everything old is old again?

Local Collapse i'm with Adam here. there was a great tension between the underground practices and the mainstreaming of the artworld - the drive to be validated by agencies with money, power and authority ... but then we didn't give too much of a fuck about money, we just wanted to make the work in our contingent spaces ... As for politics, we were swimming in it! It was the air we breathed, and in that respect was not necessarily the driving force

for making art. The magnitude of our gestures, and their place in the political economy was fully realised only later, in my experience. With this in mind, i feel the framework of the exhibition, beginning with the title and ending with the off-the-wall (metaphorically and not) presentation of these works which are not just works, but the generative production of human connectivity, spatial disintegration, illicit activity, wild and free experimentation - existing in the interstices between institutions and the street... needs to recognise and reflect this gap... co-option is not and never was an option.

Peter Anderson Thanks for those comments **Adam Boyd** and **Abject-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject**. The Politics of Space forum was organised by the QAA (I chaired, and speakers were Virginia, Jeanelle, Sue Cramer and Noel Frankham from the VAB ... it was a kind of follow up to 'Lost in Space' from the year before, which was also a QAA organised discussion at the QCA gallery ... with **Abject-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject**, **Paul Andrew**, **Brian Doherty**, **Jeanelle Hurst**, Allan Furlong, David Stafford and Margaret Shields), and was concerned to explore some of the very tensions between formal and informal structures, particularly as they were being recast by the Australia Council - it was, if I recall, a quite heated affair. One of the things I want to be able to get at with this exhibition is just how unstable & fluid things were then (particularly compared with now, perhaps even by 1990). Of course there is a tension in doing this exhibition within the context of the UQAM ... but I'm not sure if that's at the heart of your concern about co-option ... in a way, the 'politics' you are articulating is precisely located at that point where decisions are made about where - in what space - particular practices might be located. There is also a politics to the way these practices are remembered and represented within current art contexts ... or not ... I'm acutely aware of this (eg. recent discussions of ARI practice that 'write out' this activity). My drive to do this work is a product of my sense that so much of this artist-run practice has fallen outside of accounts of art / cultural practice in Brisbane ... this exhibition is about trying to articulate how it might fit. From a curatorial point of view working out how to do this is the challenge ... as I think I've already made very clear, it's not just about sticking some neatly framed works on the wall. It is also about trying to articulate the different views and approaches that were at play at the time ... so how would you like your practice to be represented? As I've said, doing an exhibition like this is not simply a case of borrowing a bunch of stuff from the collection of the QAG ... because if you look there for traces of this practice, you will not find them.

Local Collapse Thanks for that considered response **Peter!** I will read this more thoroughly in a break!

Jeanelle Hurst Hey.....if we use the hierarchy of information.....principal....for crafting....the title for the exhibition.....it could look something like this.....
the politics of that era...was the fuel in the engine....frustration....anger....disbelief.....?....

people who were different.....feminists...homosexuals...leftwings....punks....musicians...creatives... were only tolerated if they remained invisible.....and passive.... they were NOT LIKED

Half to 2/3 of that collective of 'misfits'left....heading south to greener pasture....and why not....

The rest remained.....dug in.....and created relatively 'safe havens to live and work within'.....

BOOTSTRAPPING...was the acknowledgment of the politics....a decision to dig in....and the drive to go to WORK...despite....the politics....the hostility....the lack of acknowledgment....

Jeanelle Hurst BOOTSTRAPPING....Also speaks to the energy of that scene....across all mediums and disciplines.....painting... drawing...performance...installation...graphic design...Music...film... video...fashion...screen printing...writing and public speaking.....and we did this in the 'Low Tech' era.....we started with typewriters....went crazy with photocopiers...and welcomed in the first mac in while still hand crafting our posters by screenprinting....

Jeanelle Hurst first mac in 1985.....throughout that entire era we were modern digital.....tech poor....but energy rich in our transmedia skill sets...and drive....

Peter Anderson Hey, just realised that the credit for the title "The Politics of Space" should go to **Abject-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject** ... she wrote the original piece in the June/July 1988 QAA newsletter that set up the forum topic ... referencing the fact that Brisbane was 'becalmed in the doldrums of 1988' ... and making mention of the 5 artist-run projects the UQAM exhibition aims to focus on ... "These spaces operated in a hot-house environment providing a much-needed site for the production of experimental work, dialogue, and critical attention, the different exhibition biases of each space indicating the changing needs of the art community at various developmental stages ... There are philosophical, and indeed practical problems which arise when one administrative form is imposed as the expected model. that problem becomes more complex when the standard measure appears to limit innovative or visionary administration".

Jeanelle Hurst <http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2015/04/dancing-droplets/>

Local Collapse ha! (there you go **Adam**, you can blame me for that mistake!) wow, i wish i'd thought of a snappier title! i'd have done better now. hahaha. i get that it was a hot topic and generated heated debate, and that both "politics" and "space" are polyvalent, but it feels like breathing dead air to reanimate that title... we were inside it, and it was charged, but it misses the

EPHEMERAL TRACES Ephemeral Traces

Local Collapse
collapse ...
disintegration of
the geophysical
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artists...



Jeanelle Hurst
DONE as in you
the viewer are
about to see a
bucketload of
'stuff' you had no
idea existed....



Peter Anderson
As one gallery
owner told me,
you have to
pull yourself
up by your
own Reeboks'
... I think
that's called
'bootstrapping'

Jeanelle Hurst
Triple
thumbs up to
BootSTRAPPING

uncontained and xeno nuances that were so important (yes, the misfits, yes the autodidacts, yes the queers, yes the punks yes the mad love) ...

Peter Anderson In a way what I like about it is that it is 'of the time' ... it expresses exactly that moment in 'the doldrums' of 1988 ... which is pretty much why I wanted the exhibition to span 1982 - 1988. In a way, 'The Politics of Space' is roughly the point where the exhibition ends ... and maybe the air had gone out of things ... I guess I'm looking for that phrase that sits in front of "Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s" (or "the artist-run scene in Brisbane 1982-1988"). That's the very descriptive bit ... what sits in front of it? Perhaps I've written way too many bits of arts journalism to think outside the box ... I really don't want to have 'space' sit next to 'artist-run' in the title ... because the exhibition is about 'the scene' in and around the 'spaces' ... and having a title that says 'Brisbane's artist-run spaces 1982-1988' may run the risk of giving the impression that this might be one of those 'an art space to a room' shows, which is not what's planned at all, I aim for it to be much broader than that, and not really organised in that way either ... it's about the spaces and the 'scene' around them... but all this aside, I'm still wondering how the proposed 'working' title might feed into Adam Boyds concerns about things being co-opted .. as I think my little archaeological dig shows, the title actually comes from within the artist-run scene by way of setting up a dialogue about the way this kind of practice intersects with the more rigid institutional structures that were being put in place ... and this is an important theme of the project ... I'm not fixed on using it, but I like the dialogue it has opened up ... I certainly wouldn't see it as a 'mistake'

Jeanelle Hurst I'm not sure what you guys were doing in 88....but I was sure as hell working my butt off with the interface project

Jeanelle Hurst And searching the globe to see if there were other artists working in this area.... there was also the first Symposium on Electronic Art held in Utrecht Holland....and with Queensland representation.....

Jeanelle Hurst The "doldrums" is not an accurate perspective.... I think we need to investigate this 'end point'

Local Collapse i was learning 3D modeling and just about to take on the ANAT job. i was trying to find my practice and trying to work out what being an artist meant, and i was working on things like the QAA, and suspending myself upside down for the first time. i was trying to work out what being a feminist meant and how to do that thing. it was storms of becomings... so yeah, i think the doldrums was referring to a particular political climate, and not to the work we as individuals were doing. the stultification/oppression/breathless atmosphere we were working our butts off in...

Local Collapse also, i haven't read that since 1988 so i have no idea what i was talking about, but presumably it was important to me at the time, and deeply felt enough to get a few people worked up. the inflection that it takes on across time is not what i would wish to communicate, because we were forged in that oppression and it made for a rigorous practice, questioning, and yes, a fecundity... the politics of space feels very dour, and it was anything but...

Racheal Bruhn innocence and hopefulness Abject-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject is a glorious thing Like · 2

Peter Anderson My sense ... having just (re)read it, Abject-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject, was that the 'doldrums' reference was very much a product of the very recent closure of JMN & THAT, just at a moment when the whole structure of support for artist-run practice was being rethought by the OZ Co. ... and there was still perhaps a sense that the IMA wasn't as engaged locally as it might be ... and also that, despite everything, the QAG had barely noticed what was going on around it ... and the bloody National Party just seemed to be refusing to fall over ... if there were a group of artists who 'stayed' across the mid-80s ... there was also a bit of a rush to the exit door around 1989 / 90 (and, of course, new local stuff emerging) ... but I think that's another story ... (although I'm trying to make sure that the exhibition doesn't just look like it snips off a tidy slice of time ... the temporal edges will be blurred!).

Local Collapse ah yes, from ARS to ARI. Space to Initiative.

Brian Doherty I'm with Adam Boyd on this Peter Anderson. Where is the Art in all this? How about 'The Art of Space'.

Paul Andrew I like that Brian or "the dance of space"...

Peter Anderson Where is the art? The art, will hopefully be in the gallery! But first I have to work out where it is now ... perhaps because I started by looking at the ephemeral traces (in the SLQ's ephemera collection and archives) ... I may have been giving that aspect of the task of organising this exhibition more weight in my preliminary thinking. It's also been interesting to see what art has (mostly not) ended up in public collections ... so when Brian asks 'where is the art?' ... my first response is ... yeah, where is it? (as I've said, it's not in the QAG collection, nor at the NGA). My SLQ talk in 2013 was called 'tracing the ephemeral' and it often feels like that's my main task ... tracking down the art though ephemeral traces ... or finding that the art only exists in/as an ephemeral trace ... art - space - trace

Jeanelle Hurst

the politics of that era...was the fuel in the engine.... frustration.... anger..disbelief... people who were different..... feminists... homosexuals... leftwings....punks... musicians... creatives...were only tolerated if they remained invisible..... and passive... they were NOT LIKED BOOTSTRAPPING... was the acknowledgment of the politics....a decision to dig in..... and the drive to go to WORK

BOOTSTRAPPING...
Also speaks to the
energy of that scene..
across all mediums
and disciplines.....
painting... drawing...
performance...
installation...graphic
design...Music...film...
video...fashion...
screen printing...
writing and public
speaking....and we
did this in the 'Low
Tech' era...we started
with typewriters....
went crazy with
photocopiers...and
welcomed in the first
mac while still hand
crafting our posters
by screenprinting...

Ang Martinez If the subtitle is 'Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s', it doesn't need 'art' or 'politics' or even 'space' in any words of the title (sorry Brian). I just think it's a given when you've got the words 1980's/Brisbane/artist-run/scene together, that these ideas would feature. Maybe the title should express the dark times and provocative, subversive and angry people we were.

Peter Anderson ephemeral traces: Brisbane's artist run scene in the 1980s ... this, I think captures the impossibility of actually completely capturing what it was ... while we might often think of art (or exhibitions or galleries or cities and the people in them) as quite solid material things, I think they are so very ephemeral and the best we can do to try to give a sense of what that thing was is to bring together some traces ... it's a bit like building on the sub-title of the essay I wrote for Know Your Product - "Lists of ordinary things: the materialisation of memory". I can see how 'ephemeral traces' might also allow a useful unpacking of some of these ideas - while at the same time making it clear that 'ephemerality' was an essential feature of so much of the art ... and of course even things that seemed solid (the brick walls of the gallery space itself) proved so often to be just as ephemeral ... So ... new proposal ... 'ephemeral traces: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s'.
April 5 at 6:35am · Like · 4

Ang Martinez Yes! The title from your SLQ talk.

Peter Anderson OK ... it's Tuesday. Over the Easter break there was a lot of back and forth on exhibition titles. I've done lots of thinking on this, and a decision needs to be made. At this point the title of the exhibition/project has already gone through various permutations. In general the 'sub-title' has remained pretty static, along the lines of 'Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s' (or with specific 82-88 dates). I used 'Tracing the Ephemeral' as the general title of the SLQ research work I did in 2013, and 'Self-Organised' after that. Then planned to shift to reusing 'The Politics of Space'. That got a very negative reaction ... so now I'm back to 'ephemeral traces' ... Brian Doherty, Hiram To, Paul Andrew and Ang Martinez gave that a 'like'. I'm wondering what Adam Boyd, Abject-Anhedonic Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos SubjectObject, and Jeanelle Hurst think of that. I really do have to settle on a title, and if 'The Politics of Space' is out ... I have to feel that people are OK about 'ephemeral traces'. Do let me know.

Jeanelle Hurst okay.... Peter Anderson ephemeral traces....is what we have...27 years down the track....bootstrapping is what we did.... Do we want to be remembered for what we DID...or for the traces of what was done...

Jeanelle Hurst I think we have the right to celebrate and be bold about what we DID DO....WE PULLED ON THE BOOTS AND GOT THE JOB DONE....

Jeanelle Hurst A title like ephemeral traces...is...just...well feels...like...shifting sands....

Local Collapse I am interested in this idea that the works themselves are hard to locate (not saying that is the case for all works) but that peter is having a hard time locating actual works. there is plenty of "evidence" that we existed...

Also, just some more bootstrapping thoughts/convergences (i love the concept, the word i find to be unpretty, but... *shrug*)

"Some convergence: the bootstrapping metaphor has been used by:

1. Carl Woese, in the context of RNA developing the translation mechanism which led to the evolution of DNA replication.
2. Kurrzweil, in the context of exponential growth
3. Pinker, in the context of children's language learning algorithms (syntactic knowledge used to work out semantics)
4. in the theory of hyperstition (mmmm... briefly - bringing things into being through speculation, often occult speculation)

"It is the problem of starting a certain system without the system already functioning. It seems just as impossible as "pulling oneself up by the bootstraps" which Baron Münchhausen, according to stories, could do. However, solutions, accordingly called bootstrapping, exist; they are processes whereby a complex system emerges by starting simply and, bit by bit, developing more complex capabilities on top of the simpler ones."

Local Collapse hmmm, there was definitely a politics around documentation, which (in my personal application of it) translated into allowing the works to live in their moment (performance particularly), that the works were meant to be temporal, and anything that was "captured" beyond retinal ghosts was not the work, but something else. the practice itself was anything but fleeting (as is evidenced by the continued affect we operate under the influence of) ...

... and here lies the tension i guess: evidence, action, product, objects, ephemera, politics, affect ... the title should reflect this - and sorry peter, if it seems we are erasing the works off the walls! how to "frame" such a leaky thing, such a performative thing, such collaboration-based practice (a KEY value), such an embodied, hit-and-run practice... how to title that...

EPHEMERAL TRACES



ONE WORD

Racheal Bruhn

12-18

can't help thinking of a number, the average number of breaths taken...because the work was so inevitable, so part of what people, artists do... between (for an adult) 12-18-breaths per minute We breath at different rates, according to what we are up to...

Paul Andrew I really really really like jeanelle's observations about "being there' big time- and Peter this is the phrase I keep coming back to in our discussions too over the last few years - the embodiment of places, spaces and perhaps why so much performance art happened, from jeanelle and adam clamouring up the new QAG bunker replacing "the" flag with an aboriginal flag in 1980 something, Jeanelle will know the date, Virginia swinging a double edged axe, adam and virginia donning hard hats in the era when displacement and adaption was rife and the numerous performances in the 1981- 1985 that jeanelle, adam, russell barbara and many others made- we were not ghosts in the machine we were the machine....and my apologies for coming to this thread so late in the thread, life has been distracting me....thanks for the consultations Peter....xxxp

Local Collapse bootstrapping the machine. the flesh machine. the machine inside the machine.

Peter Anderson OK ... a couple of days back I put up a firm proposal for a title for the exhibition. I got 4 likes, and a comment pretty quickly, but was unsure if the new proposed title was as problematic as the earlier one had been. As I was about to email Michele at UQAM to indicate that using the 'working' title "The Politics of Space: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s" was a significant issue for some - Adam Boyd seemed to be suggesting that he didn't want to be involved in a project with that title. So today's post was about saying are you OK with the title I proposed in that post - 'ephemeral traces: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s'. In short, not do you love it, is it the best possible title, but can we work with it. I could write an essay on why the politics of space might be OK, and why ephemeral traces might be OK ... and probably on bootstrapping too ... the key point for me is that the exhibition is an exhibition of things - and these things have an origin in the activities of the 'scene' that is referenced in the sub-title ... it allows us to interrogate the question of object / action ... and in the context of the UQAM I think that's important. The fleeting ephemerality of the whole thing is perhaps why this exhibition is needed ... it's been the theme of the work I've been doing to put this project together, and was also a theme for much of my writing in this area in the past ... the bootstrapping reference in fact came from a comment I made in relation to the 1986 Demolition Show essay I wrote (via the 'pull yourself up by your Rebocks' remark in the Doonsbury cartoon frames that went with that text). The comments have probably go ahead of me now ... So what I'm asking ... is this ... is the proposed title 'ephemeral traces: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s' OK to go with? All these issues that are being discussed in the tread are what I've been thinking about and trying to deal with in working out how to do this show ... what ends up in the gallery ... well ... it's ephemeral traces of something bigger that hopefully the viewer will grasp. April 7 at 10:51am · Like · 2

Jeanelle Hurst Are we voting ? if so my vote goes with BOOTSTRAPPING.... **Peter Anderson** I think it's a great title...and you totally nailed it....smiles...

Local Collapse i will get back to this in a timely (note today) fashion - just gotta turn my attention elsewhere for a while...

Peter Anderson Me too VB ... off to lunch with my 6YO kid ... Back at the end of the day, when I'll email Michele at UQAM about changing from 'Politics of Space' which was the working title we were to go with until folks indicated over the weekend that they couldn't work with it. What I'm saying ... is this ... my proposed title is the one I put forward on Sunday ... 'ephemeral traces: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s'. And I'd like to go with that unless anyone has such strong objections that they feel they can't work with it. This thread has generated some great discussion ... but right now bood orange fizzy drink and pizza are calling.

Hiram To well, 30 years and it's definitely rather 'ephemeral' today- for me at least. The only thing it didn't say is how it brings to the present, and that is something that would be nice to be addressed in the show.

Paul Andrew the question of - 'ephemeral traces: Brisbane's artist-run scene in the 1980s'.- yes on reflection today Peter I agree, great title thanks - mindful this is an academic museum based undertaking you and michelle are working on - and all the comments you have made about context for the exhibition over the last few years this is my choice of the two titles you are proposing - it has vision, depth and breadth. The vibrant content, the vibrant 'traces' and their accompanying stories will in turn unpack and include all the many diverse and important points of view being cited here - I can understand why some are reticent about The Politics of Space.

Adam Boyd Hi peter, Have been in the bungle bangles for the last few days, slow roasting. Missed a few of the recent threads so I'm playing catch up now. I like bootstrapping too. I'm happy to run with the ephemera idea though. If I had to vote below the line I'd say bootstrapping 1, ephemeral traces 2, ephemeral bootstrap laces 3

Local Collapse ok, back on deck after a haircut. i always feel sharper after a haircut. so, to your question peter, because, yes, we could go on with this for a long long long long time... (because, of course, as soon as you title something it opens up, unfurls a whole fractal space of enquiry. the

EPHEMERAL TRACES

anxiety around fixing a title on something - which then fixes that thing - is immense!)
.... yes i can live with ephemeral traces. i'd live better with bootstrapping but that isn't on the table, and that's ok. i can live with ET! Thanks Peter!

Local Collapse so great to spend time with **Peter Anderson** today! Talked for hours, with the durry-smokin' **Adam Boyd** on board via skype for a while. my archives (my boxes of crap) are in a sorry state, and we found a large cockroach running in and around my love letters, family photos, caught brisbane moments, some jmn, some hysterical performance pics... has inspired me to go through all my stuff and make some order, but wow, i must have thrown so much out! also, was REALLY great to talk about the tensions between ephemera and materiality, and the slippage that happens over time... i feel much more comfortable with the title now. Thanks for making the time to visit peter x x April 23 at 6:35pm · Like · 4

Peter Anderson **Object-Anhedonie Anomie-Precious SyntacticalChaos**
SubjectObject ... it was a pleasure ... and so good to talk with you and Adam together. Also had a great (if shorter) meeting with Ivan who has some great posters & photographs. Nothing like a quiet 'country drive' to get out the cobwebs. Looking forward to futher conversations ... re ... re performance and the like.



ONE WORD? I'M IN!



Sally Hart

Fiona Winning and Sally Hart at the opening of the Queensland Artworkers Alliance office at 102A Annerley Road, Woolloongabba in 1988. The QAA previously had an office at That Contemporary Space and moved to 8 Cambridge Street, West End in 1989. Photo: Unknown

I happened to be there one day at the right time in the right place....I said yes to a lot of things in those daysthese days..... I tend to think too much before acting



Sally Hart... going through the archives.
Photo: Brian Doherty

MAKING CONNECTIONS, MAKING ART, MAKING A CREATIVE LIFE

Jane Richens, 2016

There were no mobile phones, internet, instant messaging, social media or fonts to choose from.

“Everyone’s gonna be there!” David Gorton’s famous words. Finding out what was happening around town was via the grape vine. If you weren’t in the orbit of an active group, you relied on the hearsay of someone-in-the-know to talk up a happening in another sphere. It was still fast and immediate because you were on the ground and active, or connected to someone else who was – a chat at an opening, on the street, in a share house, on the dance floor or you were on the mailing list. You knew where on the streets to catch up on the latest – particular walls, shops, bars, ‘the’ coffee shop – and that was how you got your info out there as well. For me it was less likely via a phone. I wasn’t often near one.

Info in the newsletters started to make up the calendar for the month – this was then – when & where were the openings, performances, meetings, talks. Then it was dotted with parties, music gigs. Somewhere in there we carried out our own art making pursuits and it became part of the calendar. (Better if the date was made before the work was done – more incentive to see it through.) When was I needed – to pick up photos, be at Triangle the photocopy shop, for a mail out, flier production at the QAA office at THAT or a planning meeting. “Can you help out with a performance...exhibition setup....props...shoot...door bitch...fundraiser?” “Sure I’m around”

We promoted our activities through paper documents that were often made quickly and cheap to produce. Our **newsletters & fliers** bordered on being zines. Handdrawn, photocopied photos, found imagery, lettraset, cutup type, getting access to a typewriter, post punk aesthetic, DIY, coloured ink for one-offs or a big statement.

Posters made a big statement. They were screenprinted in small runs, one-off collages or photographic imagery. (Notable to many who have tried to archive them, some had add-ons ie glitter.)

Exhibition / event invites and fliers were photocopied, hand made one-offs with found materials or very occasionally someone had a budget to offset print something.

Party invites & mail art were photocopied with elements coloured in or handdrawn, handmade one-offs with found materials and coloured stock was a bit ‘spesh’.

Many a valuable social time was spent pasteing up and collating mailouts. We got very quick at doing that fast fold which I use to this day.



'Getting it out there' meant mailouts and being on a mailing list or walking the streets to those places we knew people would look - and going on illicit poster runs. Paste ups were late at night after being out dancing when the streets were quiet and jumping out of the VW whose doors never really closed properly anyway.

The documents we were creating and receiving as active members of the scene started to become a collection. Many of us still have our slice of history through these fragments. Artworks were complemented by recorded documentation, notes to each other, meeting records, day-to-day artefacts such as clothes and random other objects like rippings from poster layers that I used in artworks or wallpaper.

My art practice reflected the style of ephemera we created. Photographs I took or commissioned were photocopied, painted and collaged then photocopied again many times to degrade the image and create large works to exhibit. The largest work was a series of billboards created for 'Interface: city as a work of art' in 1988.

Over time my interests and connections developed. While still in Brisbane, I did volunteer work in the Conservation Department, Queensland Museum which led on to becoming an assistant conservator for the international sculptures at Expo88 and publishing projects for the AICCM (Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials). When we moved to Sydney I worked in the publishing department at the Powerhouse Museum, worked at the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Sydney amongst other things.

As a staff member at these cultural institutions I had great exposure to collecting philosophies, artefact registration and conservation. So my little collection started to take on a life of its own. Brian had already built mapping draws to house his/our collections of artworks, we created large mylar sleeves to encapsulate the larger works on paper and poster collection and I created archive boxes for the small works and ephemeral documentation. Housed in our specially built office are not only our own artworks but those of our peers that we had bought, traded or were gifted.

The Powerhouse Museum's charter of collecting social history including chronicling artefacts from the everyday has been important to my justification of my random collections. So my suitcase of clothes and other non-arts ephemera from the time contributes to the value of our collection as an eclectic slice of time and place.



SELF PUBLISHING



Brian Doherty
Qld ARI Heritage 1980-2000

February 11 at 11:02am

I'm thinking of doing a couple of spreads in the newsletter dealing with self publishing - there was a lot of it - ... Art Walk, Art wonder stories, Cane Toad Times, 4zzz newsletter, City of Fear, Versions, Scam.. even Nick Z's stereo headphones and ... where to draw the line. Does anyone have a self publishing venture that they want to include or have a story about? Does anyone know about Sickness and other Benefits???

Steven Grainger

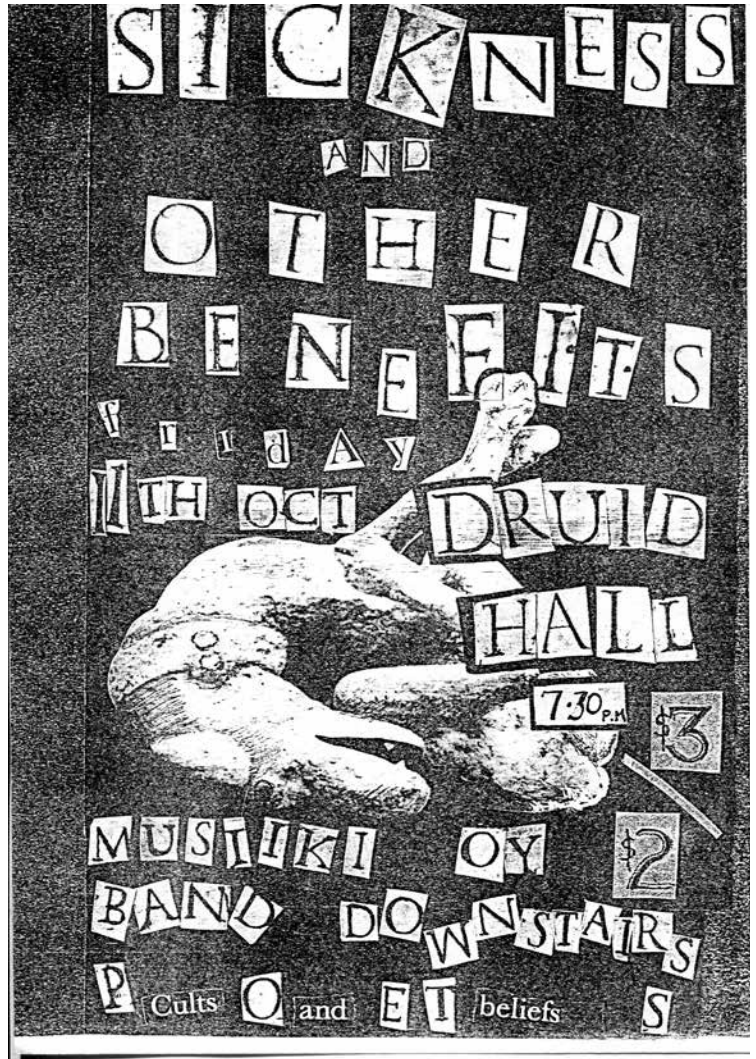
Musiki Oy, one of the best Bris bands, brought a little Eric Dolphy and their own originals to the wilderness. I forget the main horn player's name who wrote most of the material, but Ian Chaplin the other horn player, went to London and was on lots of the Acid Jazz coming from there in the late 80's and then formed the Aust Art Orchestra in the 90's, so whoever put it on, wasn't your average clodhopper.

Brian Doherty

Nlce layout too.

Dusan Bojic

Alex Prior was the person behind S&OB



Sickness and Other Benefits, Benefit?, 1985

It was a bit of a crazy moment.
What was I thinking?

A couple of spreads on
self publishing!

Where does it start and where
does it end?

It was before the time of the ubiquitous desktop computer and way before the internet. So much of what we did could be called self publishing... fliers, posters, magazines, postcards, mail art, newsletters, invitations, music cassettes, records...

It was time consuming, relatively expensive (compared to online) and required skill and often collaboration with others.

Self publishing had a power - or at least an impression of power. It was entering out into public space. Taking the private and underground out into the daylight and saying LOOK!

It is impossible to do justice to this idea - so here are a couple of samples of what is currently at hand and where possible some extra detail about their production.

Badges





**The Ephemera Interviews:
with Gary Warner**

February 13, 2016

<http://www.remix.org.au/interview-with-gary-warner/>

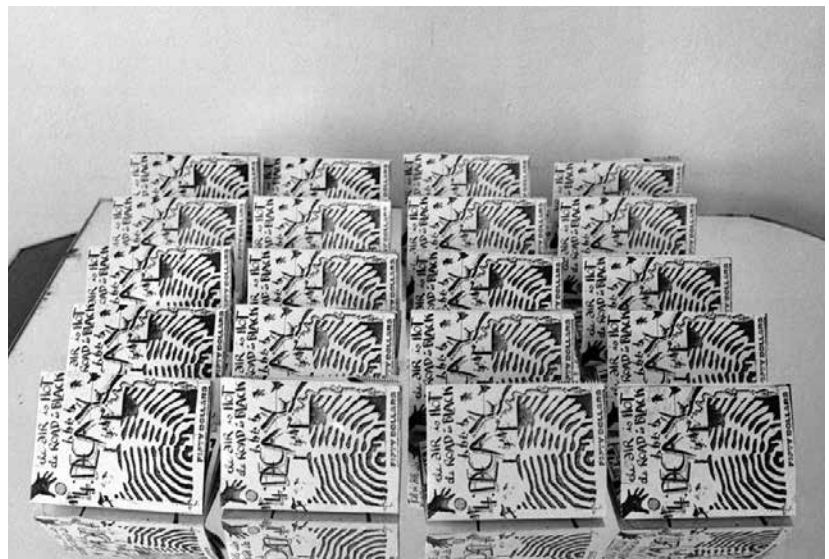
Paul Andrew

The question of ephemera and ephemera making, it was an important thread to each and every one of these artists you mention today and the ARIS they collaborated with, or instigated and ran, why did ephemera matter at this time?

Gary Warner

None of us had any money, but we all wanted to make stuff. Mail Art was happening – poster art was happening – xerox machines were just starting to become easily available and affordable (Terry Murphy, Adam Wolter and I used to go down to the xerox place under the Storey Bridge near Bellas Gallery to make copies, including some of the first colour photocopies...)

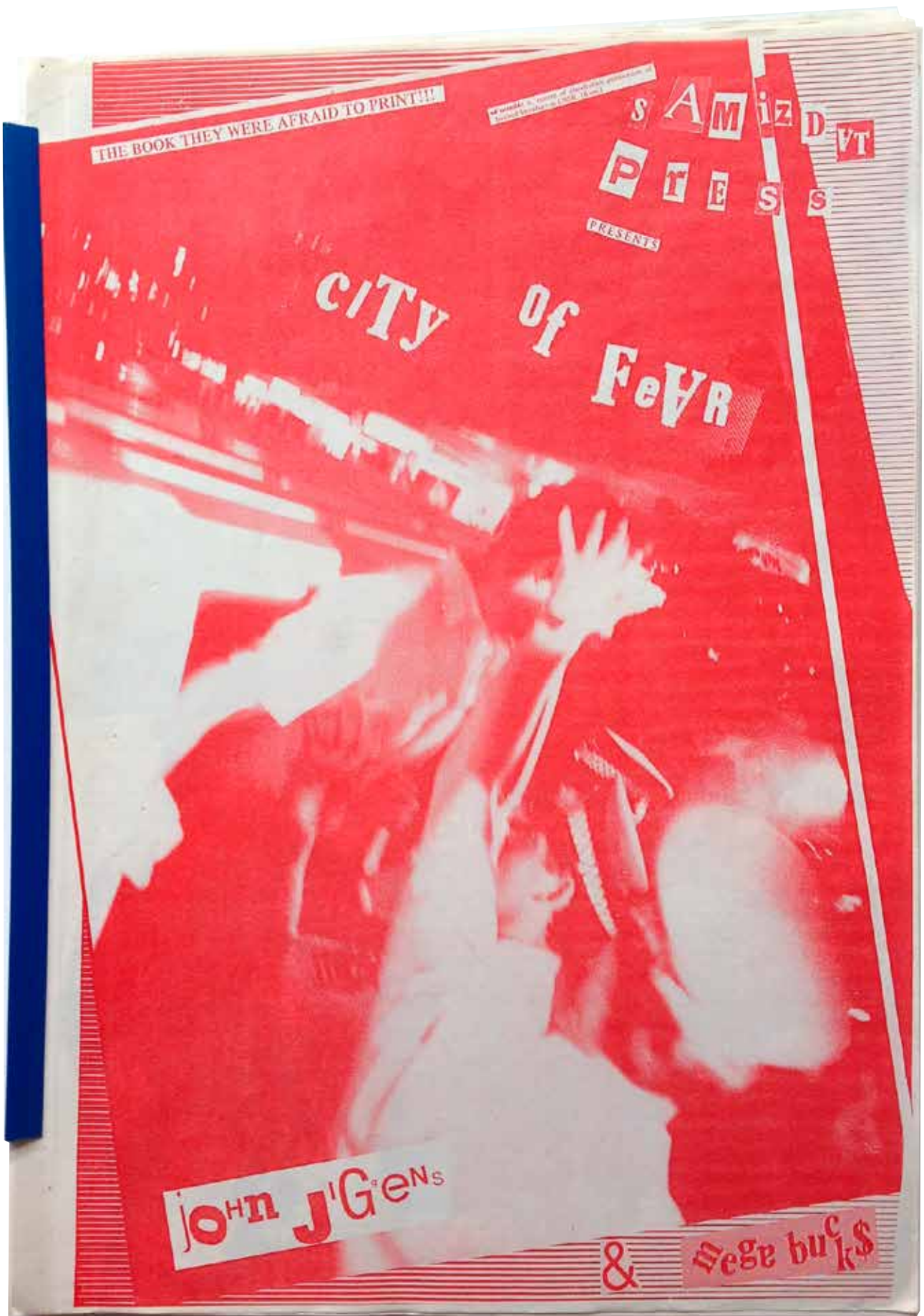
There was no inter web – communication was largely through paper media – handbills, flyers for bands, posters for bands and street marches; lots of collaging for mail art, some like Terry Murphy drew all the



Decay #4 photocopy mail art zine courtesy Gary Warner

time; I made my little Decay series with fragments of words from Adam and others, my hand-developed photos, magazine shreds, newspaper ‘screamers’ nicked from the local news agencies at night...

We didn’t think of it as ephemera per se, just something to do while unemployed, trying to make music or films or photos, while drinking, taking drugs, chasing excitement...



City of Fear, 1986, John Jiggins

Independent reportage and commentary covering the important mid 1980s including SEQEB protests, demolitions, Expo 88 reclamations, protests at the University of Queensland Mayne Hall over the awarding of an honorary law degree to Bjelke Petersen... and the Demolition Art Show - March 10 - 31, 1986. A3 photocopy 20pp plus an included poster.



**The Ephemera Interview:
with Barbara Campbell**

June 11, 2015

Paul Andrew:

If you have the time, I have always wanted to interview you about that vivid Black and White theatrical style self portrait of you reading a book Barbara, the one in Brian Doherty's Art Collection?

Barbara Campbell:

That is funny, given what I said about the lack of gay/queer culture yet there was I queering myself back in 1983.



That photograph was taken by a young photographer named Laura McLeod for an exhibition at the IMA called No Names in which none of the exhibiting artists, all local, would be credited by name either in the show or in the catalogue.

I called the image "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" so the impetus was literary rather than gender-politics, although I think I was somewhat aware of all the

codifications of power including gender, whiteness, Europeaness, bourgeois entitlement, higher education and so on.

At around the same time as the show, I noticed the Offset Print place near the IMA had a special offer on where they'd print any colour for the same price as black. So I had a series of postcards made, printed in 'sepia' and just distributed them freely to friends.

That 1983 postcard would be the first in a series of 25 annual portrait cards, each taken by a different female friend, the series ending with a group portrait of me with all the photographers on my 50th birthday.



Philip Toydog
Qld ARI Heritage 1980-2000
February 13, 2016 at 10:49pm

L to R, Top to Bottom - Christine Chance, Terry Murphy, Maria Filippow, Hollie, Andrew Wolter, Eugene Carchesio, Adam Wolter, Jenny Chirnside.
] Blind by Choice [

Philip Toydog

It was an A4 photo copied handbill/poster. The master was A3. The artists were photographed with Polaroid SX70 format wearing a sleeping mask. Each traced their own photo onto double matte drafting film in ink. After careful cleaning to remove finger prints these were assembled onto the master with torn little bits of gaff tape. The text was added wrong handed cursive and with a chisel tip for the block font. The reduction to A4 was done on the photocopier.

One of these was carelessly folded to DL size and left in a manila folder for 25 years. This was then scanned at 300 DPI 1 Bit and vectorized in an Open Source SVG Graphics Editor called Inkscape and output to PNG file at 3000 x 4366 pixels for upload to Facebook.

All stages of this process were intended to accommodate - before and after the fact - the high contrast intrinsic of the photo-copy process.

Blind by choice



**John Mills
National
Christmas
cocktails
invitation.
Thursday
December 18,
1986**

Sewn plastic pouch with aluminium rivets, brass foil, slide mount, photocopied clear insert, formica sample and found image.
By Adam Boyd

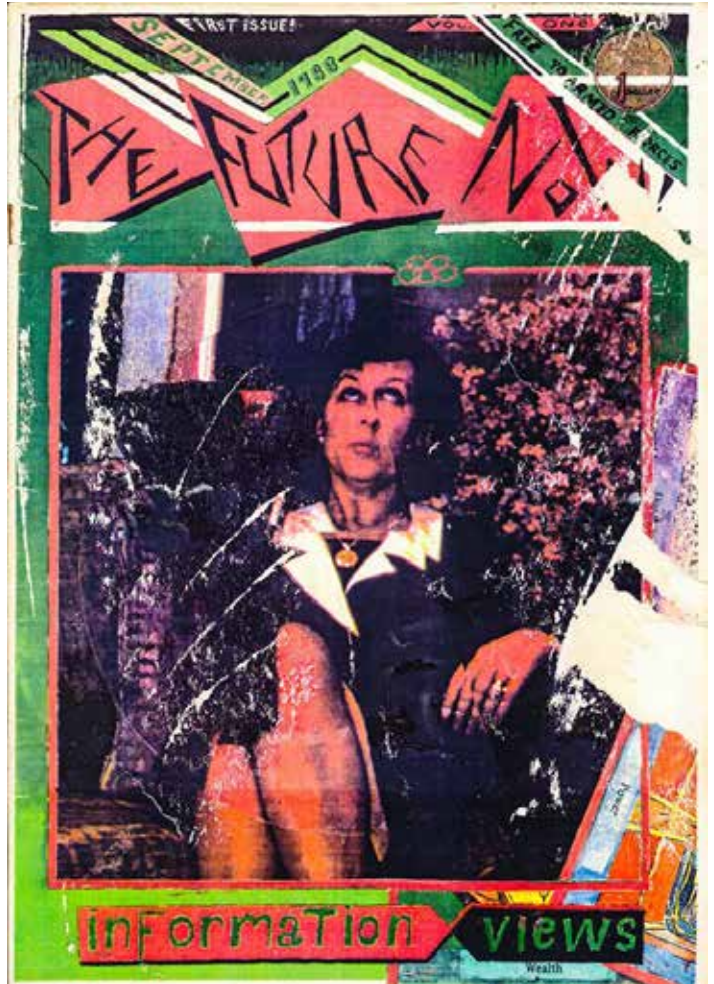
The Future Now



Ivan Nunn
 Qld ARI Heritage 1980-2000
 September 14, 2014
 added 4 photos
 The Future Now First Issue Vol. One
 September 1988.

First issue of The Future Now, a Brisbane anarchy-zine produced and edited by David Muchfree (Gorton). This home-produced zine provided a forum for fringe writers and artists. Issue 1 featured some focus on Sally-Anne Atkinson, Brisbane Lord Mayor, as a theme. Page 1 features a line reproduction of 'Expo-Spex', a screen-printed colour 'political' poster I designed (and printed) as a member of the poster designing collective called Black Banana Posters. Seven or eight issues were produced.

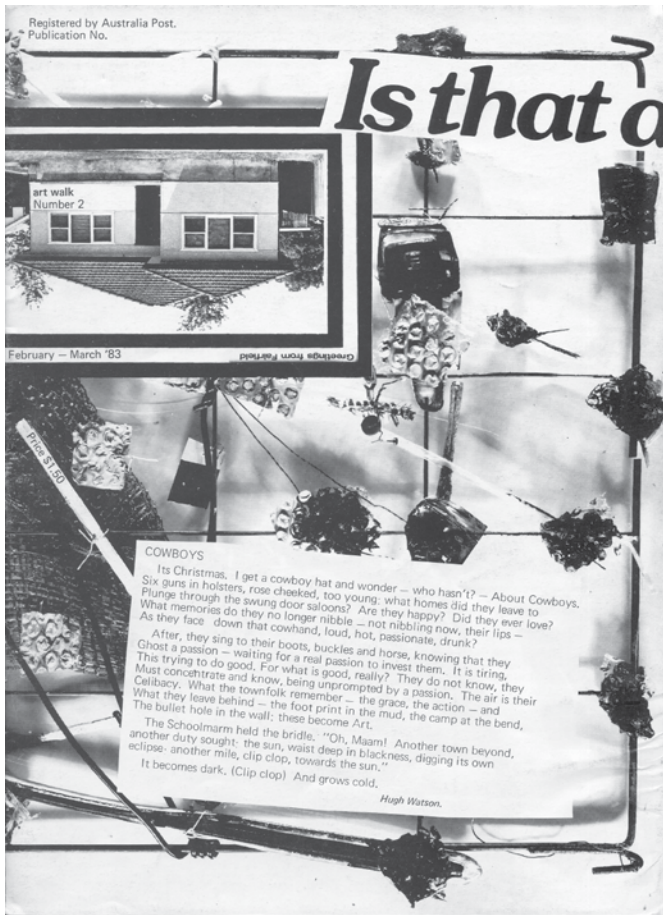
Issue 1 Contributions credit reads:
 Frank McKay, Mark Woodley, David Gorton, Bryan Law, Cath Hill, Victor Szram, Robert de Noir, N R Quay, Maude Bouncy, Ciaran O'Rielly, Bill McPherson, Pat + Ian + Darren + Julie



This is the first issue of a new magazine intending to be a forum type situation, for anyone to contribute and discuss matters important to the people as opposed to the manipulation and madness of the Murdoch mass media. One of the aims is to counter the myth (perpetrated by the left and right) that Anarchy = Chaos.

Sally-Anne has played a part in inspiring this mag with her massive wage rise and the putting up of public transport prices and rates, not to mention using our money for 2 Olympic bids, no concessions for the unemployed on transport, in action on cleaning the Brisbane river, etc, and continuing the ideology of the cancer cell "growth for the sake of growth." This all confirms my belief that popular politicians are the worst politicians. Next month we will move from Sally-Annes arena to the actual arena for most, the supermarket and shopping mall. So start writing, etc, now 'cause this paper will wither away without you
 N.R. QUAY





Art Walk Number 2 Feb - Mar 83, Front Cover, Mixed Media Assemblage Brian Doherty, Poem by Hugh Watson, Postcard from Tim Wirth (Open Studio Fairfield Sydney), Design by Brian Doherty & Jeanelle Hurst. Offset printed, folded to A4 and saddle stitched.

ART WALK Magazine 1982 - 1983

Art Walk Magazine was initiated by Brian Doherty, Russell Lake and Jeanelle Hurst in late 1982 as a collaborative strategy to produce a 'local' arts / culture magazine.

The planning and production of the magazine was undertaken at Gallery Office Exhibit, a small short term space (1st Dec 82 - 25th Feb 83) located at 66 Turbot St.

Art Walk Magazine was launched on the 18th Dec 82 in the car park at Red Comb House.

Three issues of Art Walk Magazine were published between Dec 82 and Apr 83 with a fourth issue drafted in June 83 as a photocopy only mag.

Contributors & Acknowledgments:

Adam Boyd, Barbara Campbell, Brendan Lloyd, Brian Doherty, Diane Heenan, Felicity Lawrence, Hollie Charlton, Jeanelle Hurst, Jo Forsyth, Judy Dunne, Kate Collins, Peter Lewis, Peter Anderson, Russell Lake, Ruth Propsting, Phillip Sticklen, Michelle Andringa, Jenni Bird, Frank Murray, Ted Riggs, John Stanwell, Gil Swensen, Hugh Watson, Tim Worth, Open Studio, Nancy Underhill, UQ Fine Arts Department, Lorenzo Boccabella, Ian Smith, Lee Mylrea, Heather Killen, Debra Beattie, Patricia O'Connor, Hardened Arteries, Clare McKenna, Gary Warner, Thomas Vale-Slattery, Adam Wolter, Matt Mawson, Anthony Becker, Katharine Morgan, Hugo Klang & Trans World Death Corporation, Cavellini, Kathy Phillips, Damien Ledwich, R.P. Sting, F.A. Gohyamug and Judee Helix.



ZIP too

not all here in this image, but ZIPtoo was: 20 page booklet, 45 min cassette and 6 x A5 hand silkscreened prints. 400 copies released in August 1983.

This image contains cassette and part of A5 backing card, A5 print (by John Willstead), magazine, and extra magazine insert E.X (A8 photocopied mag by JW)

John Willstead

"ZIP was Terry Murphy, Matt Mawson, Irena Luckus, Tim Gruchy and me...

...We were crossing boundaries of skill and expertise in order to create something new and unpredictable, with a strong desire to reach the widest audience.

The visual, the performative and the musical were being blended every day. The guitarist drawing and Letrasetting; the cartoonist toying with loops and machines; the graphic designer creating strange tunings on guitar; the sculptor shooting experimental videos."

Read more... WHERE THE ACTION ISN'T, THAT'S WHERE IT IS

ONE WORD



Dianne Heenan

FECUND

One of the dictionary meanings is “to produce many new ideas”. Another is “producing or capable of producing an abundance of offspring or new growth”



John Waller

I love Di’s “fecund”. From me: exciting, adventurous, crucible (stolen from Paul), multifaceted, expansive, cultural infiltration (adding to Irena’s “cultural resistance”), and diverse (from Brian). For me I think the most important two words from my little list are “adventurous” and “diverse”.



Penelope Glass

SLIPPERY

I am weighing in now, from the vantage point of temporal and geographic distance; and from the theatre end of things. My one word would be “slippery”, this said in a highly positive sense, I was able to slide and slip between several worlds that were in fact the one world of resistance to the BJ regime: political theatre and cabaret (Popular Theatre Troupe, Order By Numbers, Teatro Unidad y Liberación), Brisbane Migrant Resource Centre (the Fiesta multicultural and multi-arts festival), 4ZZZ-FM (Brisbane Line, Radio Latin America), Chile Solidarity Committee and other Latinamerican solidarity work (Australia-Cuba Friendship Society, Guatemalan and Salvadorean Solidarity, Resistance Centre in New Farm, Centro Latinoamericano where 4ZZZ is now), and last but not least the Andean music band Nancahuazu. I have never experienced this amount of slipperiness anywhere else. “Fecund” and “effective” also reverberate because I feel I was both cutting many creative teeth, and also actively and concretely being part of social movements that were actually changing Queensland (eg SEQEB dispute, etc). Ooops that’s 3 words.... Greetings to all, thanks for opening up this space.



Dusan Bojic

BOUNDARY-SPANNING

+FORMENT

fermenting future moments

WHAT DOES THE SCENE DO?

Brian Doherty, 2016

So often we are drawn into a concept of the social world that has ‘society’ or the ‘individual’ as its primary actors but if we think about it there are many other social units that pepper the metaphorical social space: families, businesses large and small, sporting clubs, schools, reading groups, any number of common interest associations – you get the picture – and of course I would put ‘scenes’ in that list as well.

So what is a scene? Is it any different to those other social spaces? Is it a productive social space or insignificant and irrelevant?

A ‘scene’ in the sense that we are using it derives, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, from slang associated with US jazz and beatniks in the 1950s. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed, Oxford, 1989, 606.) It refers to particular locations where people meet but also activities and social experiences characteristic of those locations.

The locations of meetings, particularly in reference to the scene’s original use, were clubs and bars and the experiences were often illicit or at least suspect. These spaces offered something that was not available elsewhere. The scene connotes a sense of both danger and delight; an unruly mixing of high and low society – of the legitimate and illegitimate. Here ‘unserious’ statements can be taken seriously and the ‘serious’ can become laughable.

The scene is a special social space lying between, and including, other social spaces. It is neither truly public nor private space. It is a type of social space that can act as an intermediate zone, or a zone of transition. It can be ‘both... and’.

In Christopher Heathcote’s book, ‘A quiet revolution: the rise of Australian Art 1946 - 1968’, there is a chapter titled ‘Inside the art scene: Clubs, Pubs and Cafes in the 1950s’. Here he explains that: “Melbourne did not maintain a simple art community. There was what would be better described as an art scene, a field upon which groups jostled and competed for attention. The compactness of this art scene meant that everyone tended to know everyone else at least by sight. It was not possible to ignore one’s commercial or stylistic rivals: one encountered them frequently... Socialising was a territorial, almost tribal affair, concentrated mainly on a series of pubs and restaurants. These were the locales where ideas and projects grew, where allegiances and little urban treacheries germinated, where friendships and arguments which lasted many years took root.”

I'm sure that resonates well with the memories of people involved with the Brisbane art scene in the 1980s. Historically I expect that there were productive scenes associated with the Ray Hughes gallery and the Johnstone Gallery, the Heide group and Angry Penguins. And I'm sure it's happening all the time in many other places across Australia and around the world.

This idea of a productive scene is not a rarity in the arts but quite the norm. Sir Alan Bowness, who was director of the Tate gallery for 9 years, in a paper titled 'The conditions of success: how the modern artist rises to fame', remarked that: "Most truly original art is the result of group activity." Some of the examples he mentions are the Pre-Raphaelites, Barbizon painters, Fauves, Cubists, Brucke the impressionist group and the American Abstract Expressionists.

I believe the social space that we recognise and designate as a scene is not an incidental or trivial characteristic of art production but quite important and generative. It is important because it is a space where different knowledges, different discourses and practices, can come together and be contested, inverted and experimented with. It is a social space equivalent to the type of space the French philosopher, Michael Foucault, termed a 'heterotopia' in a 1986 article, 'Of other spaces', (Diacritics, Vol 16 #1, Spring 1986, 24) This term indicates the otherness or difference of these sites. Places that exist "which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the other real sites in a culture are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted."

The Brisbane art scene in the 1980s through its openness and reduction of hierarchy created a space where different knowledges and different levels of knowledge - legitimate, illegitimate, local, illinformed, technical, historical, public and private - all could be brought together, contested, inverted, transformed, and most importantly taken seriously.

While the art institutions looked elsewhere for art, Brisbane's artists opened their own exhibition spaces and started to assert a very public presence through such spaces as Red Comb House, A Room, the various manifestations of One Flat, the Observatory, That, John Mills National, Bureau and many more. Journals were started and the Queensland Artworkers Union/ Artworkers Alliance was formed.

Throughout the 1980s there developed an extensive network of relationships between many individuals, organisations, government agencies, curators, writers, collectors, educational institutions, gallery owners, political groups, artists, the underground press, radio 4ZZZ, actors, DJ's, musicians, fashion designers, shop owners, business people, librarians, graphic artists, jewellers, cooks, and yes possibly some crooks, as well as the commercial media and the public at large. These people knew each other, went to parties together, had affairs, seriously discussed issues, did a lot of serious dancing, battled against each other, and were generally engaged in a life where art was a meaningful part of that life. This is my idea of a productive scene - a conspiracy that might provide for the emergence of art.



Paul Andrew

MULTIPLICITIES



Rachel Apelt

Here are some words about the collective impact of the collaboration and multiplicities. I was a little behind the 80's art scene, finally connecting in 1990, but I was immensely grateful to all of you who went ahead and cracked open space to be. I have often commented on this. I felt powerless when I finished art college in 1984... but in a short space of time you guys transformed the scene. So a few words: liberating, opening, transformative, making space to breathe. I could go on....



Steven Grainger

SUNRISE, CROSS-POLLINATION



Peter Pit

SPONTANEOUS

Okay stuff WAS planned, but then it became... what would happen if... which is the tipping point for any creative effort. I was thinking of the George Street ART BANK, Art walks/ marches, which may have looked like a bunch of randoms doodling around George street, drunks and shoppers with saxophones and such... You mean you can do MORE on Friday night in Brisbane than shop and get drunk???? Astounding! smile emoticon



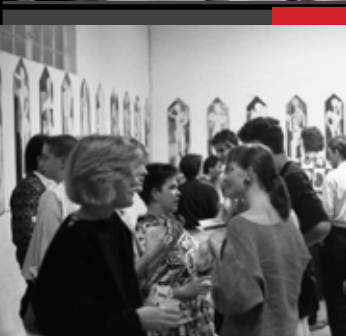
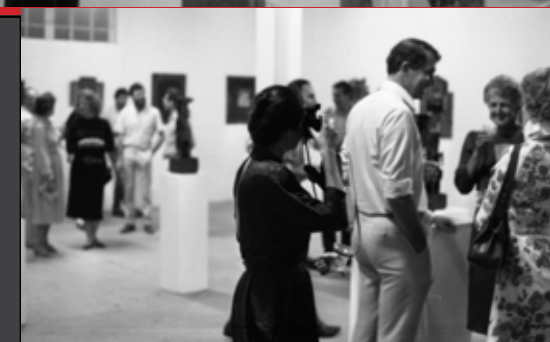
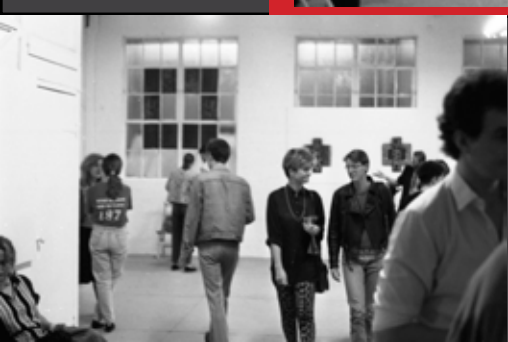
Elizabeth Bates

Too much happened,
I missed a lot of stuff!

Brian Doherty: We all missed a lot of stuff because there was so much of it. To me it seems like many people in many places all over the world were doing similar things - and that scenes are the historical breeding ground of most 20 century art - contrary to the impression one would get from the individual artist version of history. What do you think?

Elizabeth Bates: Ah! Brian you are opening up an interesting discussion that formed part of the debates surrounding the first APT in 1993.

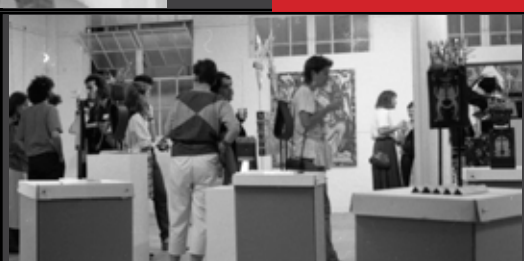
The concept of simultaneous development of contemporary practice across the globe was mooted, disputing the Eurocentric linear interpretation of contemporary art history. However getting back to the 1980s in Brisbane, among other things we experienced an exciting and vital performance art scene, amazing and quite engaging most of the time.





The openings meeting & greeting

The Shared Camera
That Contemporary Art Space
1985-1987



WHERE THE ACTION ISN'T, THAT'S WHERE IT IS *

John Willsted, 2016

Independence, a sense of adventure and a keen awareness that art-making had no boundaries – these qualities, lurking in the Brisbane underground music scene, struck me the moment I first joined Zero in 1978.

Zero had been around for a little while before I entered the maelstrom of Lindy, Iréna, Deborah and Nikki. If I'd had a hat, I would have held onto it. By the spring of 1980, it was just Iréna and me, and over the next few years we added and subtracted players like an abacus.

Pre-Zero, living in Kelvin Grove, I first met Ross Hinckley (aka Cecil) and Mark Titmarsh (aka Myles or Man Ray) and Lindy Lee (aka

Lindy Lee) through Joan Wilmott, my outré landlady. I soon discovered the punk thing, and glided over to the Pink Palace, living with Tony Blake who was working at Activities. We made tacos for Freddo's Vegaurant, and I was bribed into playing hippy music to an audience of Chris Maver and probably a cat or something.

I moved into a share house in New Farm. Gary Warner lived there, and then Johnny Burnaway moved in. Michael Callaghan from Redback/Tin Sheds lived with us while he was out at Nathan – eye-opening posters. Gary introduced me to Lindy Morrison who drummed in Zero.

The Zero gigs were theatrical – both Lindy and later Clare McKenna (Xero drummer) had performance backgrounds in Grin & Tonic and the Popular Theatre Troupe – and brought theatre into “rock” spaces, as well as bringing rock into theatre spaces. These spaces were varied: bands and political theatre groups were bound together in lineups at public rallies, community halls and in traditional theatres. All just young people playing games. Games a-plenty!

Gary's Super8s were made inside our social situation and screening them at Zero and Xero shows created a tidy loop. Through Gary, I became friends with Terry Murphy, which led to Matt Mawson, Damien Ledwich, Allan Martin. Terry pulled me into poster printing and the connection with Activities at UQ was re-made. Adam Wolter was Gaz's best mate and we were all involved in mail-art shenanigans and making little fanzines (Decay House Films Ink). Later, Adam Wolter like Davros, talking in mirrors, computing before anyone knew what the hell it was.

Iréna Luckus' performance works at the gallery in Market Street and the old cathedral site above the crypt, on Ann Street in the Valley, were an introduction to the IMA and its denizens. Iréna and Valentina were friends with Martin and Hilary Boscott, Ted Riggs, Glenn O'Malley, Jenny Watson and John Nixon.

I've always liked this, and use it a bit.

A class foto of sorts. It sums up that little 79-80 period for me. Not sure where to use it.

Up front? At the end?

The Crew, out the back of the Village Twin, 1979.

Camera on timer. Photo from Gary Warner



TERRY MURPHY, IRENA LUCKUS, TONY MILNER, LYN BARDSLEY, STEVEN PRITCHARD
KERYN HENRY, JUDY PFITZNER, GARY WARNER, CLARE McKENNA, ANNE KAY, CYRIL CULLEY
JOHN WILLSTEED, URSULA COLLIE, LINDY MORRISON, COLIN BLOXSOM

Zero
Lindy, Iréna, Deborah and Nikki
Ross Hinckley
Mark Titmarsh
Lindy Lee
Joan Wilmott
Activities
Freddo's Vegaurant
Chris Maver
Gary Warner
Johnny Burnaway
Michael Callaghan
Lindy Morrison
Clare McKenna
Xero
Grin & Tonic
Popular Theatre Troupe
Super8s
Terry Murphy
Matt Mawson
Damien Ledwich
Allan Martin
Adam Wolter
mail-art
shenanigans
fanzines
computing
the crypt
IMA
Valentina
Martin and Hilary Boscott
Ted Riggs
Glenn O'Malley
Jenny Watson
John Nixon



Zero at UQ Relax Block, 1979. Photo by Paul O'Brien. Courtesy of State Library of Qld.



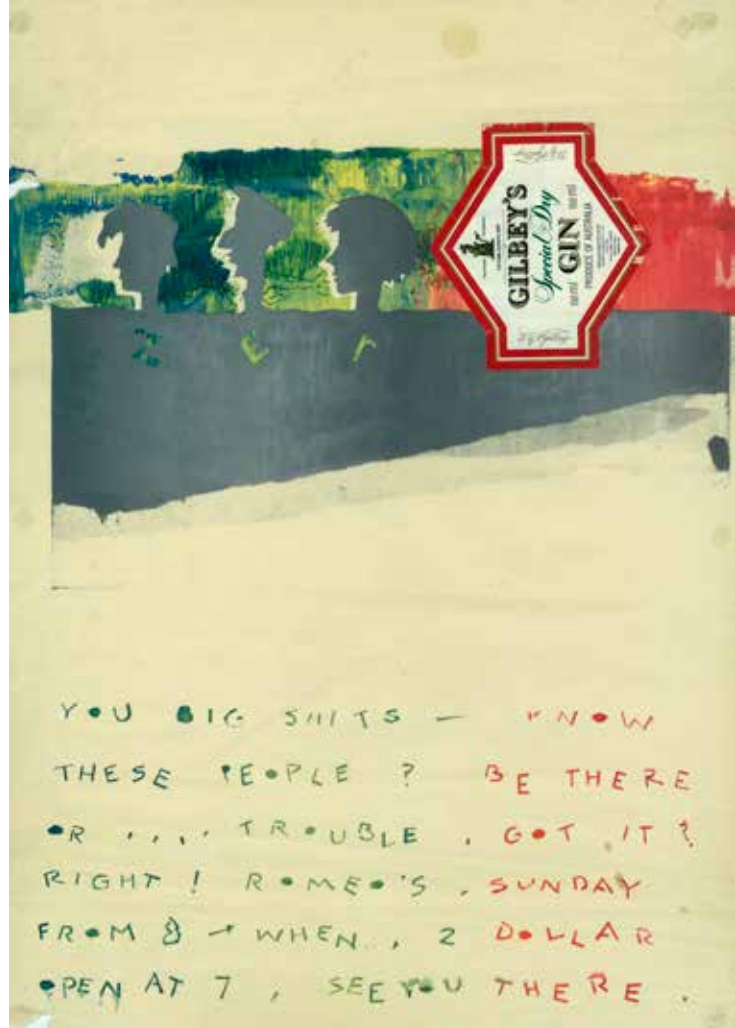
Live music at Freddo's Vegaurant, Sept 1978. Photo by John Frame.



Harcourt Street backyard, 1979, New Farm. From Super8. Gary Warner



Decay House Films logo - 1980. From Super8. Gary Warner



Zero poster, 1979. A home job at New Farm by the look of it. Handcut stencil screenprint with Gilbey's label. John Willstead.

What Now Mr Mao 22/11/79. Michael Callaghan



Red Comb house
 ZIP Start
 One Flat
 ZIP Too
 Art Bank
 Jeanelle Hurst
 Tim Gruchy
 cassette magazine
 crossing boundaries
 cassette multitrack
 colour photocopier
 polaroid
 photo-emulsion
 Climbing Frame
 O'Flate
 Peter Cripps
 Erroll O'Neill
 Sean Mee
 La Bamba
 La Boite
 Michelle Andringa
 Vik Gordon
 Ginny Barratt



Michelle Andringa swung and Vik Gordon sang.

Belltower
 Ironing Boards
 BoomBoom
 Plastik
 Order By Numbers
 UPU Theatre
 Performing Arts Centre
 Brendan Smith
 Antony Clare
 Le Scoops
 Ross Harley
 Know Your Product
 Posters
 vinyl
 cassette
 handbills
 photos
 radio
 ZZZ
 Feral Television
 AFTRS
 film sound

Our first warehouse rehearsal space was in the Valley. 1979. It was a hive, and we embedded ourselves in writing music and playing gigs, recording and filming, plotting and planning.

But once we were done with the Valley, moving into Red Comb house in late 1982 made sense. We shared with equally creative, eccentric types. Earlier that year we had launched ZIP Start, our group art/music project, at One Flat in Edmonstone Street. It was appropriate, then, to launch the second of the series, ZIP Too, in October 1983, at the Art Bank in George Street - Jeanelle Hurst was, as always, a generous, amused and thoughtful host.

ZIP was Terry Murphy, Matt Mawson, Irena Luckus, Tim Gruchy and me. We made little mags and music under our houses and crammed into sunrooms, releasing our first cassette magazine in 1982. ZIP was expressly created to play with the idea of the specialist. We were crossing boundaries of skill and expertise in order to create something new and unpredictable, with a strong desire to reach the widest audience.

The visual, the performative and the musical were being blended every day. The guitarist drawing and Letrasetting; the cartoonist toying with loops and machines; the graphic designer creating strange tunings on guitar; the sculptor shooting experimental videos.

It was a DIY world. We learned skills from one another, and made good use of the explosion of tool availability: cassette multitrack, colour photocopier, polaroid, photo-emulsion for screens. Like a Venn diagram, the disciplines expanded and the intersection became bigger and more diverse.

In December 1984, ZIP performed at the IMA as one of Three Nights of Performance, along with Sydney's Climbing Frame and O'Flate, and we were included in the IMA Young Contemporaries show early in 1985 curated by Peter Cripps. Cripps had previously organized an 'interdisciplinary experiment' across a few Fridays in October - me, Erroll O'Neill, Sean Mee, blurry other folk. There were no public outcomes that I can recall.

Through these couple of years there were also: La Bambas at La Boite - vague memories of playing guitar while Michelle Andringa swung and Vik Gordon sang, and you too, Ginny Barratt?; performances and printing fabric at Belltower in the Valley; making noises for Ironing Boards at the BoomBoom; and of course, Xero was around for a bit. I was in the house band for Plastik at La Boite in 1983. There was music to be made with other theatre people too: Popular Theatre Troupe, Order By Numbers and UPU Theatre for the opening of the Performing Arts Centre. Mostly political in nature, but wasn't everything?

December 1984 is remembered with great fondness: Brendan Smith, Terry Murphy, Antony Clare and I staged a VERY small exhibition at Le Scoops, a groovy ice-cream joint in Elizabeth Street. It seemed appropriate to return something to a space that had given us so much pleasure. 1985, Easter, I left for Sydney - following my heart.

Ross Harley's Know Your Product, in 1986, was a really fine way to pull all this stuff together. Posters, vinyl, cassette, handbills and photos filled the IMA in Edward Street; gigs, screenings, radio concoctions on ZZZ, and a book to bind it. After all this time, it still shines. In this same year, I produced music and sound for Damien Ledwich's animated short Feral Television. Our first proper trip into the film world was a collaborative triumph, and it pointed me towards AFTRS and a couple of decades in film sound.

It was a time of epic possibility - no boundaries on expression and no edges to the relationships. We drank of one another and feasted in the heat of the long nights. And as for The System? It didn't even know we were there most of the time. Which was fine by me.

* Title from 'Beasley Street' by John Cooper Clarke, 1980



Xero + GoBetweens, Ithaca Pool, 6/11/81. John Willsted



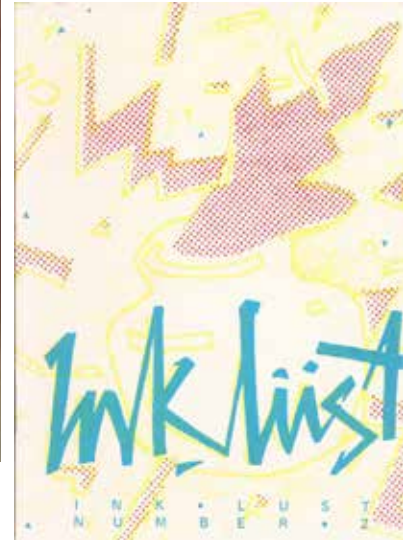
Willsted in New Farm, 1978. Gary Warner.



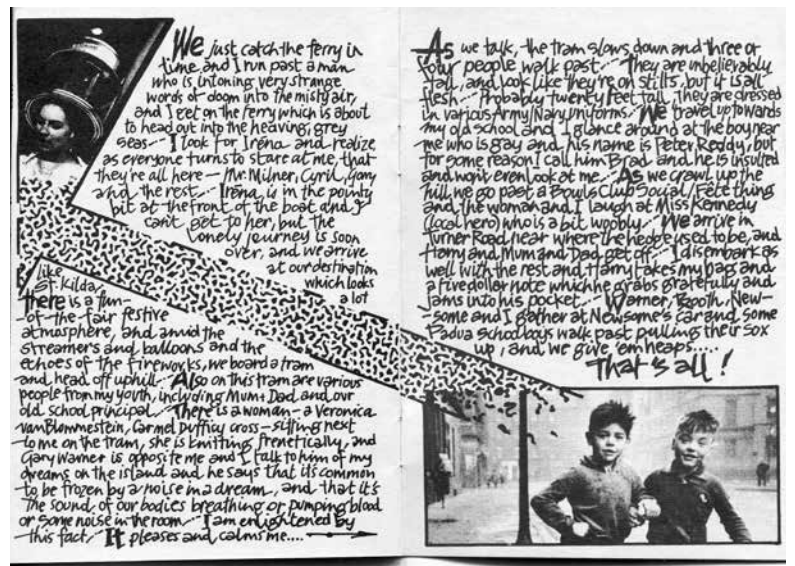
Red Comb House door. Peter Fischmann.

Ink Lust by Terry Murphy from ZIP Start

Know Your Product catalogue cover, 1986. Allan Martin



ZIP too. Luckus, Mawson, Murphy, Gruchy, Willsted



ZIP too inner pages. John Willsted.



The Shared Camera
That Contemporary Art Space
DOG FISH CAT BIRD & TOO GREEN FOR SUMMER
performance, 28 March 1987



Dog Fish Cat Bird:
Ian Wadley, Greg Wadley,
Pat Ridgewell, Tony Moore

Too green for summer:
Susan Ferguson, Andrew
Bartlett, Michelle Matheson,
Judith Hunter with guest
Eugene Carchesio



CHI CHI DELUXE – THE MARS BAR AND BEYOND

Words: Jon Adams 2016

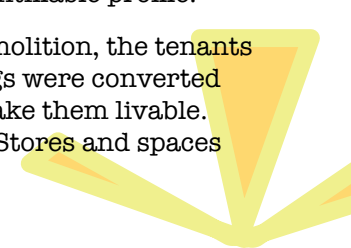
Jon and Claire Adams played a role in Brisbane's creative development 1983 – 2000 and contributed to a number of commercial and creative projects including Chi Chi Deluxe, The Mars Bar, Time Off, Expo 88, Expo Park, Club Absolute, Sleaze Ball, TOPS (Myer Centre) along with a numerous one-off art events and warehouse parties.

We landed in Brisbane in 1983 direct from Sydney where we'd played a part in that city's burgeoning and vibrant underground arts scene. By comparison, Brisbane's creative community was small, fragmented, hard to find and truly underground. Whereas Sydney had several community radio stations and half a dozen weekly street papers, Brisbane relied on Radio 4ZZZ and a shabby four page rag called Time Off as the only conduits of local information. Nightclubs and live music venues were also few and far between and apart from a couple of gay bars – including the Cockatoo in Fortitude Valley – there wasn't much to interest us.

Back then Queensland was a police state and Joh Bjelke-Petersen's much feared team of officers known as Special Branch controlled the streets, while the equally feared Licensing Squad controlled the venues along with the illegal gambling houses, sex shops and brothels – all the while keeping a lid on anything they deemed undesirable. Basically this meant anything or anyone that didn't fit the bill – namely artists, political activists, gays, the avant-garde, and the Indigenous population. For these social outcasts, Brisbane was a dangerous place to live but despite the harsh political environment Brisbane was also full of immense potential. Hardship bred true creativity and while many, understandably elected to leave, circumstance and repression conspired to deliver hope – and innovation flourished.

In late 1983 the Roma St precinct – a triangle of real estate bordered by George, Roma, Turbot and Little Roma Streets had become something of a focal point for Brisbane's creative community with a string of alternative traders, designers and artists setting up shop in the ramshackle buildings that had been vacated some years earlier. As more businesses opened their doors, the level of public interest grew and by early 1984 the Roma Street precinct had become home to Brisbane's counter-culture with secondhand furniture stores, galleries, design studios, fashion outlets, a nightclub, and bookstore attracting a steady stream of visitors. Chi Chi Deluxe, The Observatory, Anna Bourke's Atomic Studio, Sensoria and Ros Paton were among the tenants that gave the area an identifiable profile.

While the entire area had been earmarked for demolition, the tenants made the best of the time they had. Some buildings were converted and used for accommodation with lofts built to make them livable. Some had bathrooms and kitchens – most didn't. Stores and spaces





ONE WORD

Lisa Anderson

f#\$k ARt. **LETS DANCE**



Virginia Barratt



In the vein of fuck art let's dance, i'd like to

say that grammar saves lives, and that "fuck, art and dance" as transitive verbs summed up alot of my experience.

also:
haeccity (individuality, specificity, thisness).
nascent. incursions.
interstitial. fluidity. love.

PULSE
DANCE BAR
OPENING
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 9
FREE
FUN \$5

RAVEN ROOM
THE RAVEN ROOM
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 9
FREE

LATE NITE KLUB



BEAT DISCO

STEIN
music
beer
\$5 A \$8
relator SE.
LATE

ec 22
drag

8pm Sun Dec 2

BEERS for queers and their peep
FAG BAR

DANCE!
6



WEDNESDAYS

190 ROMA ST

300 workers.

\$2.50 4222 - POLE

er Edward St
Hill Q4000

AR

DO!
SANTA
Motif

nce

iffin

E

Practice New Year

PICASSO
445 Upper Edward St
Dorling Park Q4000

FRANKENHOW
FRIDAY JULY 25
RITZ BALLROOM
463 ADELAIDE ST, CITY

THE GROOVY THINGS ARE COMING
SENSORIA
OCT 6th

KYLIE DOES MICHAEL
(or vice versa)
THE HOKEY POKEY



Gezabel Dinasauro

D.J. Johnny Griffin
food • pool • bars • party

FREE

CHOOO
DIKKA DIKKA
BOUNDARY St HOTEL
WEST END
FRI. OCT. 14
9pm
1am
WITH HOLY GHOSTS

MARS
Friday
treasury hotel, city
9 till 3

CLUB VOLTAGE
OPENS THIS FRIDAY

Vortex of JUNK
ANNOUNCING
SUDDEN RELAXATION

were renovated using timber scavenged from deserted building sites with neighbors helping each other out – trading construction skills and materials in a shared economy. Many of the businesses had relatively short lives but those that lasted, survived on hope and each other's support.

The Roma Street precinct was important for Brisbane because it gave the creative community a visible and physical presence which had previously been denied them. People came out of the woodwork with a new sense of confidence and a 'fuck you' mentality. Sure there had been other spaces where artists had gathered and exhibited in the 1970s and 80s but these had been standalone, one off or individual art spaces. Having an entire city block occupied by artists was something else. It gave Brisbane's alternate community a form of legitimacy and acted as a catalyst for others to follow. Would it be too bold to say it ignited a new level of art based activism? Over the ensuing months, other businesses and creative enterprises opened up along George, Elizabeth, Charlotte and Mary Streets. And while the government tried to contain and control its citizen's, Brisbane's creative community beavered away, building an underground art scene that went from strength to strength. Pockets of creativity sprung up wherever cheap rents could be found. Galleries and art spaces grew where flowers couldn't and on the weekends there'd be rent parties or warehouse happenings around the city.

The Mars Bar, a progressive dance club opened on the corner of George and Elizabeth Street and soon became home to the musically aware who filled the venue every Friday night. Apart from its musical direction, the Mars Bar led the way with one of Australia's first female DJs Jane Taylor presiding over the wheels of steel. The long abandoned Wool Stores at Tenerife and empty buildings on Elizabeth, Charlotte and George Streets became popular spots for one-off art / dance party events that would run until dawn. Unlicensed, unannounced and unregistered, these illegal parties were promoted using a network of friends, flyers, or a 'secret' telephone number hooked up to an answering machine. Punters would call the number at a pre-arranged time (usually just a few hours prior to the event) to find out where the party was being held. That way everything was kept on the low down and you'd avoid any trouble from gatecrashers or unwelcome attention from the police.

Throughout the 1980s there was an eagerness, if not desperation, to experience something new – a byproduct of the repressive nature of government. It was a decade of DIY – spawned by punk and emboldened by the forces of authority. Venues came and went and development took precedence over arts and culture but there was still an upside. Expo 88 and the Myer Centre provided opportunities to engage and employ local artists with sculptors, muralists, designers and set builders finding work.

Over the years the city's legendary underground haunts were bought up, knocked down and built over in the glut of gentrification that consumed the city. White Chairs, the Canberra and New York hotels were lost to development. But despite the ever changing environment, Brisbane's creative community was growing steadily. Everyone knew each other and there was a camaraderie amongst artists, musicians, designers, gallerists, promoters, DJs and venue owners that made it particularly special.

I remember heading home from an all-night party, walking down the median strip of a deserted road in Tenerife, thinking that one day I would look back at this period, proud that that I was living in a city with a future instead of a town with a bleak and violent past. Of course there were days when the temptation to leave was overwhelming; when the pace of change stalled and friends left for greener pastures. But despite it all, we decided to stay and we're glad we did.



DRESSING UP IN THE EIGHTIES

Kenn Bushby, 2016

My boyfriend Robert and I are invited to our neighbour Thina's 21st Birthday. It's a costume party and is to be held on the pool deck of Brisbane's newly opened Hilton Hotel. Very swish. Not content with an invitation for two, I devise costumes for us that require an ensemble.

I am the Bride. I wear size 14 combat boots, oversized boxer shorts, a bodice and bouquet that I make with silver sprayed plastic flowers, and tulle - metres and metres of cheap white netting draped and flung about and trailing. Yari provides the beehive up-do, glued with a truckload of Final Net. Global warming, renewable energies and environmental sustainability are terms we are yet to hear and we are unconcerned about the precarious condition of the ozone layer. It is the Eighties, and we are concerned about having very high hair.

More plastic flowers and a veil go on top. I'm now seven foot tall and I'm gorgeous. I'm a bride. Robert is, of course, my groom. So handsome in his smart black suit and bowtie; poor darling - he doesn't know that he is marrying a monster. He is attended by Nick from across the hall; if not the best man, certainly the handiest.

Miss Murphy, herself no slouch with a few metres of cloth and a safety pin, gets busy with a flummery of pink tutus and more cheap netting for her appearance as matron of honour and for bridesmaid Sharon, who is married to Nick from across the hall.

Wendy Bradford guest stars as mother of the bride in a blowsy frock with a matching hat and gloves, and an intravenous drip disappearing into her handbag. We all wear masks; semi-transparent plastic full face masks through which you can distinguish facial features, but come luridly adorned with lipstick and eye shadow. The mother of the bride's complete with a ciggie in the corner of her mouth.

It's not exactly performance art, but when we exit the elevator to the Hilton Atrium Bar and make our way across the foyer, the pianist starts pounding out The Bridal Waltz and we get a round of applause.



L - R Sharon, Robert Ferguson, Kenn Bushby, Wendy Bradford, Nick, Miss Murphy. Photo: Wendy Bradford, 1987.

It's a cliquey scene, Brisbane's independent art obsessed, and I am probably not the only person who feels that their place is peripheral.

If it's Tuesday, we are at John Mills National, or at any other show that is opening. I go with Gayle Storm. We wear a battle-dress of black, look absolutely bored, drink the wine and suck Benson & Hedges one after another – Extra Mild for me, Special Filter for Gayle. We stand to one side of the room and spend the entire time saying dreadful things about what everybody else is wearing.

If it's Thursday, we are at Short Circuit at the Hacienda. DJ Jane Grigg is spinning records and my pals are all there. Donald and Scott, Mal and Barb, Sheridan and Maryanne. Brendan Smith is there. Tim Gruchy is there. All the dance monsters are there. If it's Sunday, it's a replay of Thursday. We are at Warhol in Upper Edward St, or wherever else Johnny Griffin is playing.

Lehan Ramsay is having a party that requires an item of handmade headwear. Apparently I will go to a lot of trouble to be seen in public with some ridiculous thing on my head and I spend days making a tray of cocktails out of silver card, clear acetate and coloured lighting gel. It's a sensational thing and I win the prize for best ridiculous thing on one's head, but I can't imagine whom I'm trying to impress.

I start to do some styling and design work with the Belltower girls; Chrissy, all blonde ambition and bluster; Lindy, the technical skill and stability; and Margo, the muse. I love Margo. She's the real deal – a genuine fake. She will become in the decades to follow, Japanese, German and finally American, as she Mata Haris her way around the world.

Lindy Stokes and I down an entire bottle of Peach Schnapps on the back steps of my apartment in Dunvegan. We are on our way to a party in St Lucia and decide that our fashion imperative will involve a single item of clothing and one length of cloth only. I go shirtless in a cropped jacket and a piece of dark wide-striped silk faille – green, red and gunmetal – wound very tightly into a full-length hobble skirt. It's very chic and I can't walk, but I can stand in one spot and hold a drink, which I do until I have one too many and fall arse-over, unable to right myself, onto a glass topped coffee table that shatters beneath me.

I start to work with Andrew Campbell at his photography studio in the Valley. We photograph models Annabelle and Sean wearing jackets that I've customised and send an image to Stiletto magazine. It's published and I'm hooked.

We shoot a story for Barbara Heath featuring a series of oversized brooches (Communication Devices, "Aids for the Hopelessly Inarticulate"). I cast an unlikely assortment of models and non-models including Annabelle, Dave Macpherson, Lance Leopard's mum Carmel and Ray Cook. Cookie becomes a cover boy for jewelry trade magazine Lemel, with a XXXX stubbie and a fag in one hand, looking like an alien craft has momentarily touched down on his left lapel.

We photograph Yolande in a winter story for Stiletto. She wears tartan dresses from Belltower, layered jersey pieces from Lyn Hadley, and the beautiful Crown Matrimonial. We're having a bit of a Coco moment at Belltower so I plaster her with camellias and satin bows. Amazingly, they publish the entire story as a five page editorial, highlighting Brisbane fashion.

Somehow I'm now a fashion stylist though it is not a job title recognised by many; certainly not the frontline public servants

of the Department of Social Security. There are one or two girls in Brisbane, of the pointy blonde variety, calling themselves stylists, but they work with the modeling agencies and belong to the fashion establishment headed by the Retailers Association of Queensland. I'm interested in weirder shit and have no desire to rub shoulders, or anything else, with the Daniel Lightfoots, the Keri Craigs and the Di Cants of the world.

For a long time, the U.K. has been the cultural innovator and the source of much inspiration, but the work now coming from Japan is sublime. Rei Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto and Issey Miyake are the new masters of the fashion universe. Robert has realised his mistake and fucked off. Without an ally, the Russians have invaded and my Dunvegan apartment is beginning to resemble a marbled mausoleum. I have a yen for Yokohama and off I go.

My friend Monica is living in the small Japanese city of Gifu, working for a well connected woman called Kai who manufactures and imports fabric. I plan to have a couple of months holiday and a lie down on Mon's tatami. Kai takes a look at my portfolio and has other ideas. Ten days later, I'm on the shinkansen to Tokyo and am introduced to a middle ranked designer called Ritsuko Shirahama who employs me as collection stylist for her Tokyo Collection show. I'm not entirely sure how that has happened, but very quickly my life has an entirely new shape. Although somewhat out of my depth, I am used to making something out of nothing, and here at least I have a materials budget and a workroom full of adorable boys and girls to help. I am regarded as something of a dignitary, a trophy and a pet. Japan is buoyed by the economic bubble and well aware of its moment in the zeitgeist; to have a big, swishy foreigner in one's design office holds no small cachet. Tokyo Collections is a month away. I work hard and make a real contribution.

Ritz's show is well received but she doesn't have an ongoing position for me. The mysterious fashion network galvanizes and I am introduced to Kansai Yamamoto, who does. I am employed as his Paris Collection Accessory Designer. Kansai is one of the big guns. He has built an immense, international business and oversees a vast number of brands and licensing

agreements, but his design work comes from a pure, creative source. It's he who designed the costumes for Ziggy Stardust. When David Bowie sings "Like a cat from Japan", it's Kansai to whom he refers.

He is a formidable taskmaster, inventing lofty and sometimes incomprehensible concepts which I attempt to realise. I become an ideas robot, at times drawing up to eleven or twelve hours a day. I learn to design in a way that is habitual and disciplined; how to hammer an idea into something concise and essential, and how to take a simple component – a motif or a period detail – and develop it into something complex and evocative. Perhaps I could do that already, but I certainly hone some practical skills under the editorial flourish of Kansai's pink fluoro marker.

I work with five other designers, four of whom are motorbike speed racers and turn up to work wearing red, white and black Kansai designed racing leathers; it's all very Power Rangers. If Kansai is the charismatic master, it's his sister-in-law who is terrifying. I'm not exactly sure what her job is, but she storms about broadcasting in her absolutely confident, hilariously inaccurate English. She could be played by Lily Tomlin rather well.

A couple of blocks, away Brian Donovan is having a not dissimilar experience in the architectural offices of Atsushi Kitagawara. We meet for lunch or beers after work to lend support and air grievances, not the least of which is our salaries, a pittance compared to those of our sneering English teaching expat friends. Brian discovers an English designer called Christopher Nemeth and takes to wearing corduroy breeches, knee padded and overstitched, and fantastic duck-feet leather lace ups.

I go to work in combat boots and full-length pencil skirts; sarong-like in summer and customised blanket wraps in winter, with plain white Miyake shirts. It's a world away from the sweaty style constraints of Brisbane. Nobody bugles at me in the street and calls me a faggot.

Margo lives in Tokyo now too and works at a glitzy hostess club. She dresses to impress and takes her cues from Romeo Gigli; lots of organza and velvet; voluminous collars on bosomy dresses cut very short; romantic and trumpy at the same time. Weekends are high earners for the best girls and early Saturday evenings at our house are a frenzied style swap meet for the resident flock of hostesses, who I frock up in tight bits of stretchy tat and very high hair.

The European Collections conveniently land a month before the Tokyo Collections on the international fashion calendar. I straddle both jobs; five months at Kansai working on the Paris show, a month at Shirahama tarting up the Tokyo show, followed by a few days in Thailand or a visa run to Seoul, then back to my desk at Kansai.

I love living in Tokyo and the expat experience suits me well. For two years, I manage both jobs successfully until a glitch in scheduling has me doing both collections at the same time. I'm working day and night and swilling too much vodka. I get through the work, but my skin is suddenly yellow and not in a "turning Japanese" kind of way but in a time to have a lie down and give your liver a break kind of way.

Six weeks in a Japanese hospital is an option with limited appeal, so I return to Brisbane.

I have barely returned to my pale blotchy loveliness, when I bump into Chrissy Feld who seizes upon a platinum hair brained scheme. Peter Brown is planning a show at Transformers to

promote Spring/Summer '89 in his store The Mask. There is very little time but if we can send out ten pieces we can be included. Beats sitting around with a cup of dandelion tea, so I'm in. We set up in a room in Dunstan House on Elizabeth Street and conjure mini dresses, short shorts, bustiers and cropped jackets that are sparkly and sexy and fun. They are red, white and gold; heavy with beaded fringing, ecclesiastic motifs and irreverence. Ladies and Gentlemen... Glamourpussy.

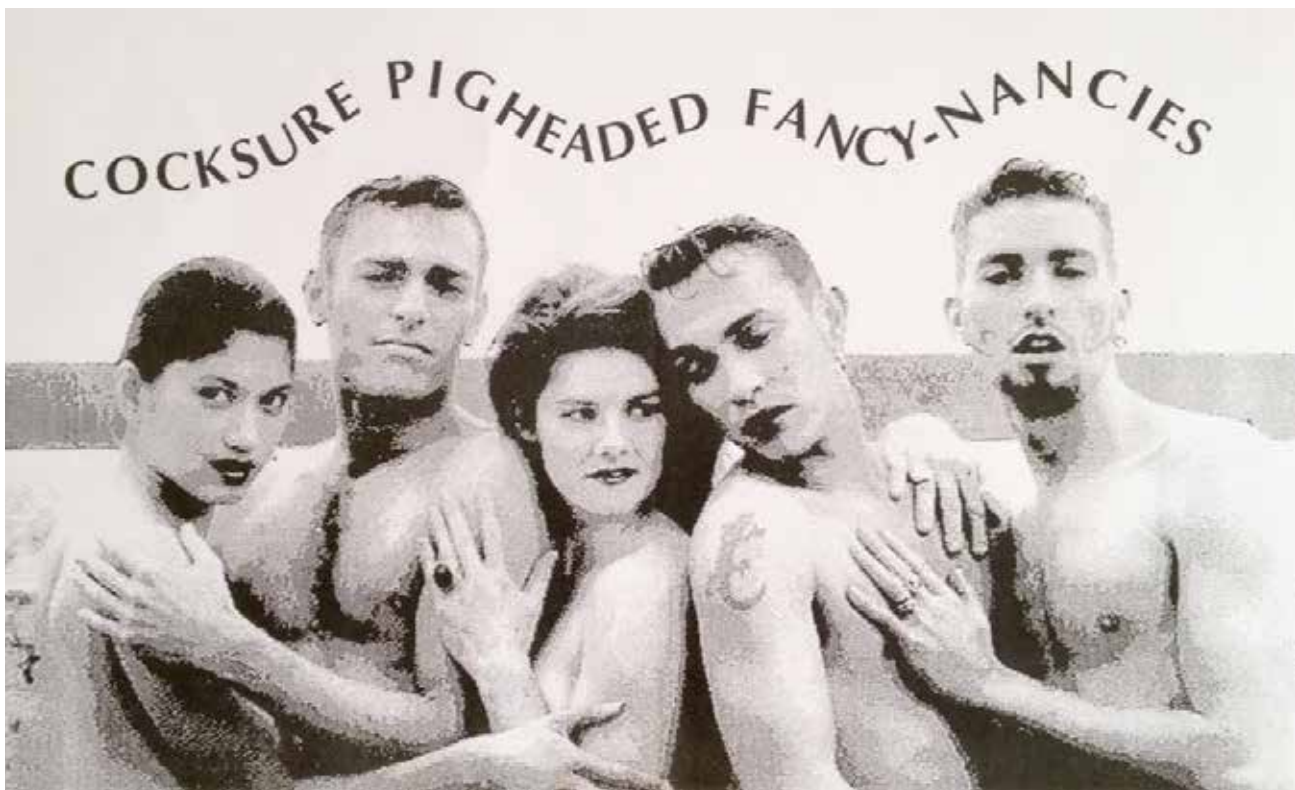
Overnight we are in business and GP's a hit. Little wonder since the Brisbane fashion downtrodden are still getting around in shoulder-padded burlap sacks and drop-waisted taffeta evening gowns. It's time to get slutty. We move to the first floor of 45 Adelaide Street and for two years produce fabulous pieces of tat and sometimes some wonderful pieces of fashion. We manufacture locally on a small scale and sell nationally. The magazines love us and we routinely turn up in Elle, Mode, Follow Me and Studio Collections. Vogue takes an occasional bite; we're a bit flash for them.

Our new address has space for my studio, Chris's office and a good sized workroom where our intern Liam Revel cuts his teeth and a good deal of cloth. Daniel Healy comes on board as cutter. Tom Burless, Sheriden Kennedy, Lehan Ramsay and Lindy Stokes work upstairs on level 2. We have a great design relationship with Tom who designs and makes the GP jewellery, belt buckles, pocket patches and insignia.

The late Eighties are exhilarating and non-stop. I share an apartment in New Farm with the gorgeous Marty Michel who dances for the Queensland Ballet. Chrissy, Tom and Liam all live around the corner, and every morning is a last minute pile into the Pussytruck, Chrissy's open-top army jeep, to barrel into town. We exist on adrenalin, black coffee and Peter Stuyvesant – extra mild – soft pack.

I work with maverick choreographer Gil Douglas and cook up 78 Tourette, a contemporary dance project with Jemma Wilks and ex-Ironing Board dancer Anthony Patterson. I do the art direction, costuming, promotion and mothering. Much of the creative work currently being made in Brisbane

comes from the need to address an evident cultural void, to counter boredom, to mark territory as one's own. 78 Tourette is a response to that, and we do it on the strength of our combined dole payments. Jem wears low slung, black satin bell-bottoms, and the boys, Guns N' Roses short shorts to launch at Jane Grigg's club Swell where the tone is "Deep in Vogue", thank you Malcolm McLaren. More club gigs follow in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Melbourne until the inevitable move to Sydney, where they are joined by Tobin Saunders and Annette Evans.



L- R; Jemma Wilks, Gil Douglas, Annette Evans, Anthony Patterson, Tobin Saunders Photo: Unknown

I work with fashion coordinator Georgia Straughan to co-produce and direct a collection show for Japanese designer Masakazü. I work with Gayle Storm to design the promo campaign including a Masakazü Who? teaser and a poster, shot by Paul Goldsmith. We convince Queensland Art Gallery to host the event and an enormous T-shaped runway is installed above the interior watercourse. Tim Gruchy is brought in as technical director and to add his trademark projection. It's a project on a challenging scale; more than ninety people contribute their artistry, muscle and skill. The gallery is packed and the show overwhelmingly received.

I work with Lehan Ramsay to photograph Tom Burless's jewellery. We shoot Rhana Devenport as a showgirl; slightly disheveled, but resplendent in a gold beaded corset, gold starburst headdress and Schiaparelli pink lips. I have always thought of Rhana wearing Schiaparelli pink lips, ever since I spotted her, long before I met her, browsing in the basement fabric department of Bayards. Glamazons were rare sightings in Brisbane in the very early Eighties, least of all in the basement fabric department of Bayards.

I work with Ray Cook to shoot doe-eyed boys in corsets and feathers. I'm invited to contribute a piece to Lehan Ramsay and Anna Zsoldos's Billboard Project. It's exciting to blur the lines between fashion and art, and much like dressing up, it's what you can get away with...

Lehan is having another party and this time it's for a select group, invited to attend dressed as another attendee. Liam Revel hilariously goes as Chrissy Feld in a short platinum wig, gold platforms and a red GP mini dress. I'm nominated to go as Rhana Devenport and in a clandestine manoeuvre get my hands on some of her own clothes. I wear fabulous navy and white spotted palazzo pants and a flowy navy top, flats, an avalanche of blonde waves and of course, Schiaparelli pink lips.

At Glamourpussy, Chris and I work well together; she takes care of the nuts and bolts of the business and is a sensational salesperson. I get to concentrate on the design, the photographic styling and the shows. I love directing fashion and work hard to make our shows unexpected and memorable events. When possible, I work with Gil Douglas to punch up the production dynamic, and the now five member 78 Tourette occasionally come back to Brisbane to dress up and play up. Our models, most of them semi-professional at best, are loyal and usually work unpaid. But that is the spirit of the time. We love what we do. I don't draw a salary either; I live on the dole and do disability arts support work on the weekend to pay the rent.

We win a national design competition sponsored by Mode magazine but astonishingly, when we submit the same pieces to the annual RAQ Awards – in a tawdry attempt to garner some respect from Brisbane's fashion establishment – we are ignored. What a bunch of cunts. I am furious, but the award night is not a total right off; I get to dress up as a cowboy and my mum gets to meet Ray Martin.

A month later, the Christmas issue of Elle magazine is released – December 1990. In spectacular response to the RAQ's lack of vision and savvy, smack bang on the front cover, beaming and looking a million bucks, Linda Evangelista wears a red sequined mini-dress and red feathered bolero, both by Glamourpussy.



Model wears men's sequined bomber by Glamourpussy and GP neckpiece by Tom Burless for Glamourpussy.

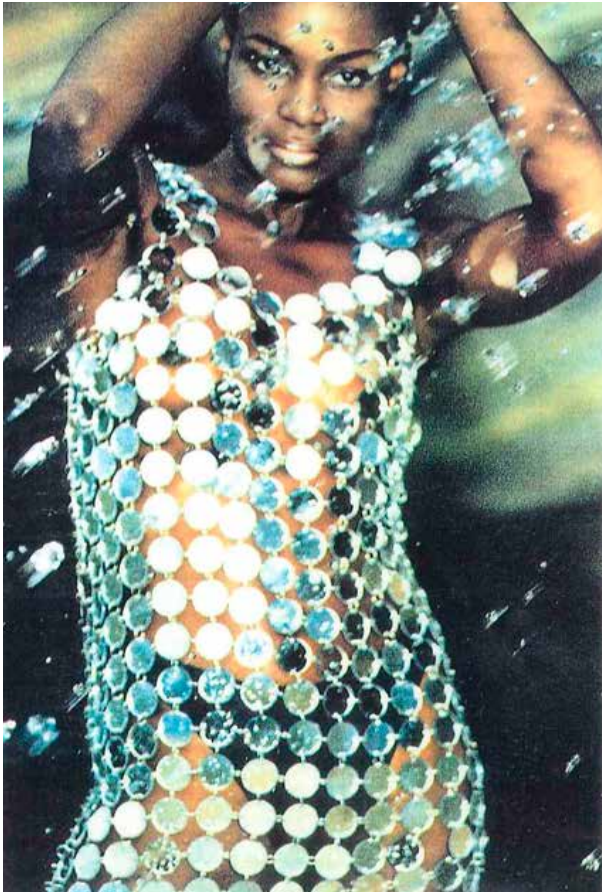
Front cover from Elle magazine December 1990. Linda Evangelista wears sequined mini-sheath and feathered bolero by Glamourpussy.

Linda. Fucking. Evangelista.

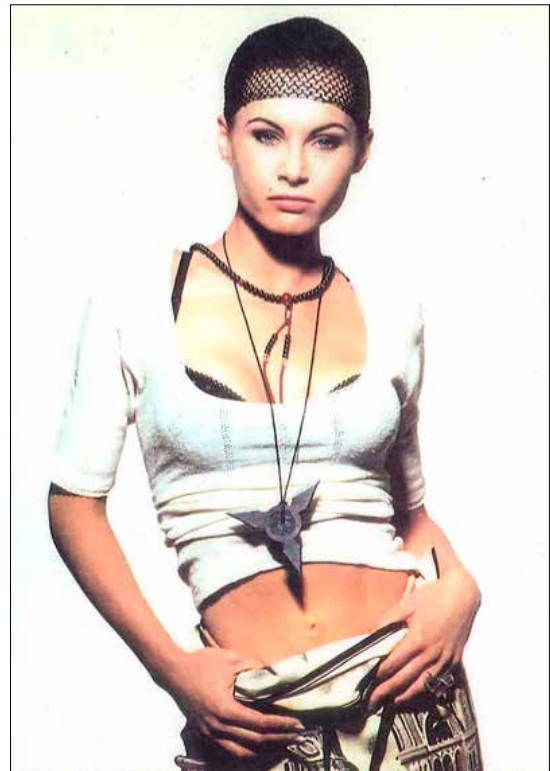
It's a great moment, and it's also the moment that I choose to walk away.

It's been a wild ride, but there's a lot about Glamourpussy that's not great. After two years it seems I've developed a fur ball.

Tokyo is calling and back I go. This time I stay.



Page from Mode magazine 1990.
Model wears mirror ball dress by Kenn Bushby
for Glamourpussy.

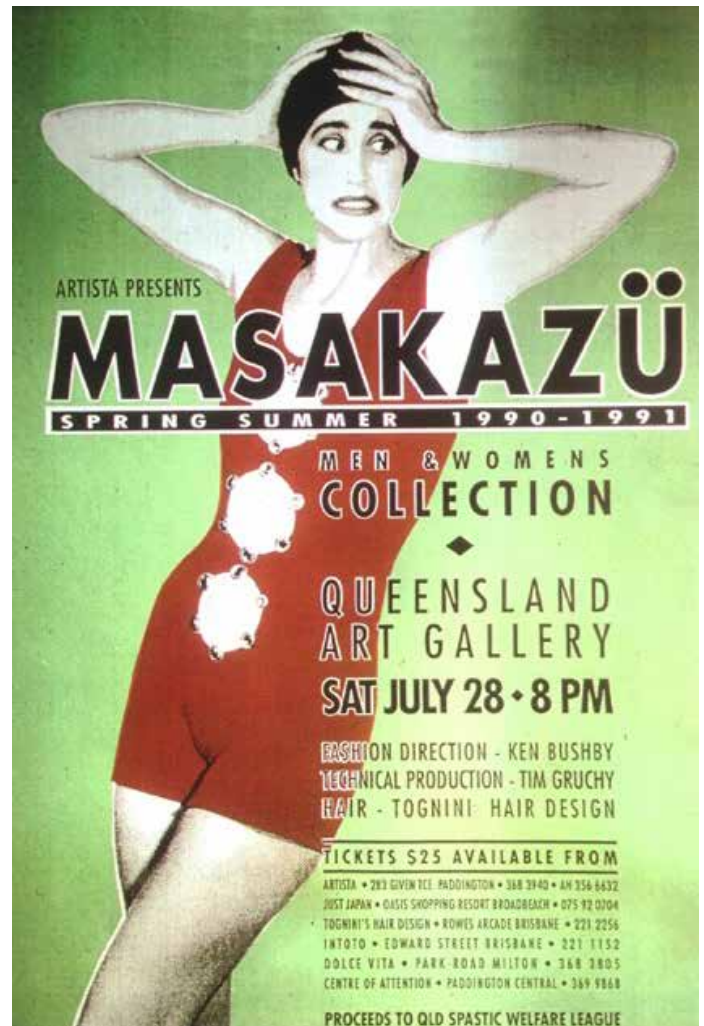


Model wears all stylists own. Stylist: Kenn Bushby.
Photo: Andre Campbell, 1987



Swell Dance Bar, Alliance Hotel, Spring Hill, DJ Jane Grigg
Model wears stylists own top, men's t-shirt as skirt, socks
by Antibody.

Styling: Kenn Bushby. Photography: Peter Kent.
Graphics: Kenn Bushby and Gayle Storm.

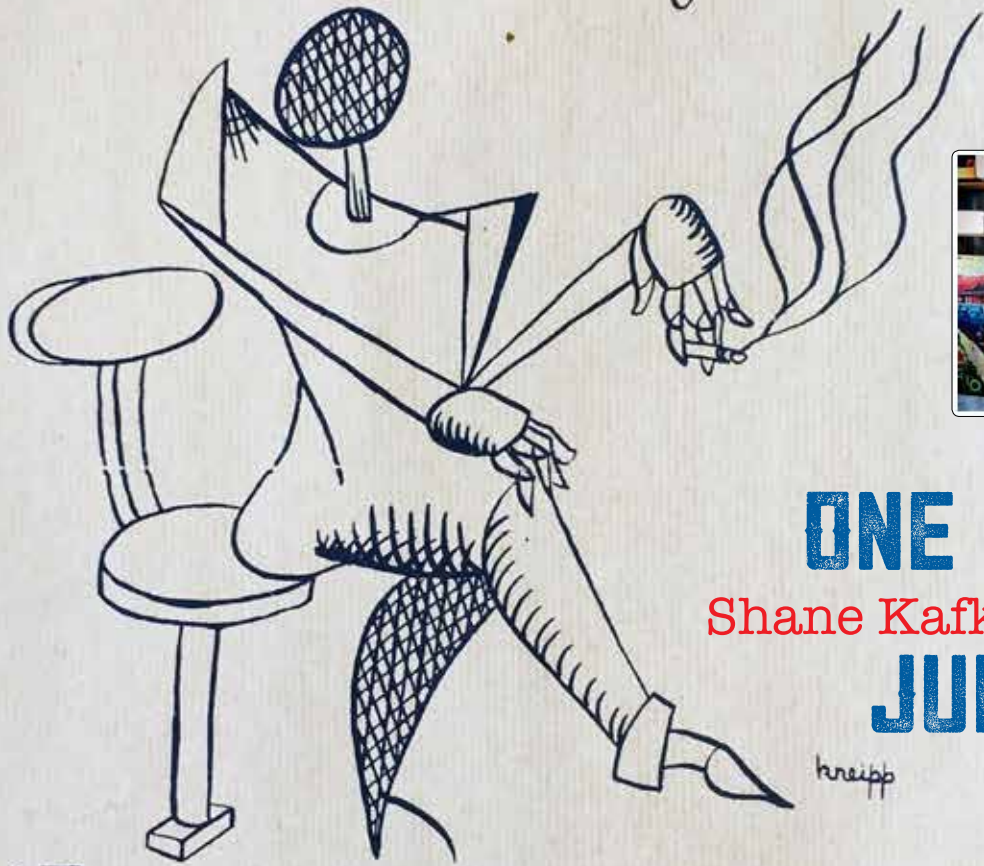


Poster for Masakazu collection show at Queensland Art Gallery.

Model wears one-piece by Masakazü.
Styling: Kenn Bushby. Photography: Paul Goldsmith.
Graphics: Kenn Bushby and Gayle Storm.

Joys for the Faded

stranger, the lamingtons
black assassins, kingswood trio



ONE WORD

Shane Kafka

JUMPING

Thur 17th Dec
8pm-1am

Licensed
cocktails a speciality

Ahepa Hall

Boundary St West End

\$4/\$3 concessions

A Backwater Cabaret Presentation

Prisoners' Action Group

BENEFIT

DANCE

No-one is innocent...

Joys for the Jaded poster designed by Shane Kneipp, printed by Shane Kneipp and Brian Doherty at University of Queensland Student Union Activities Centre.

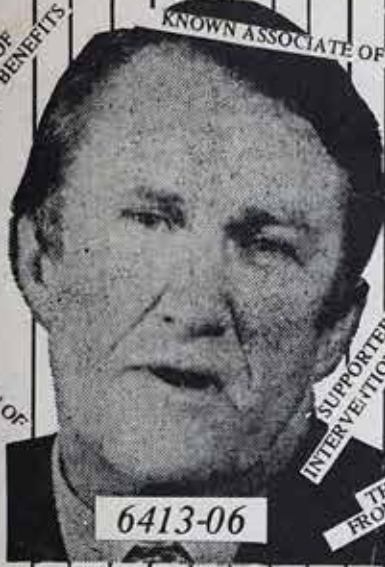
Prisoners' Action Group **BENEFIT DANCE**. Designer unconfirmed.

NON PAYMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

KNOWN ASSOCIATE OF RAZOR GANG

REPRESSION OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS

LEGAL POSSESSION OF A SILVER SPOON



6413-06

SUPPORTER OF ARMED INTERVENTION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

THEFT OF LAND FROM TRADITIONAL OWNERS



6413-45

MISUSE OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS

IMPERSONATING GOD

THEFT OF MONIES FROM WOMENS CENTRES

INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEATH OF WORKERS IN EL SALVADOR

NUMEROUS CHARGES OF INCITING RACIAL HATRED

ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND



6413-18

DIRECTING POLICE REPRESSION IN WORKING CLASS GHETTOS

POSSESSION OF DANGEROUS ATOMIC WEAPONS



6413-21

GUN RUNNING

POSSESSION OF THREE .38mm BULLETS WITHOUT A PERMIT

THREE MILLION COUNTS OF CREATING UNEMPLOYMENT

ILLEGAL COVERT OPERATIONS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND AT HOME

SELLING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

...but some are more guilty than others!!

THE HOSTAGES

PERFECT STRANGERS

KICKS

**AHEPA HALL, West End
7:30 Fri 14th Aug**

**\$3
licensed**



The Ephemera Interviews:

with Brian Doherty

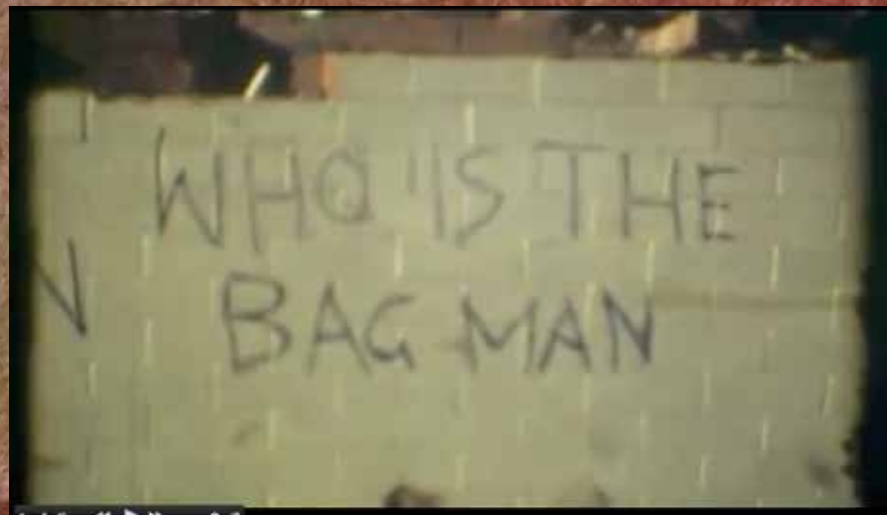
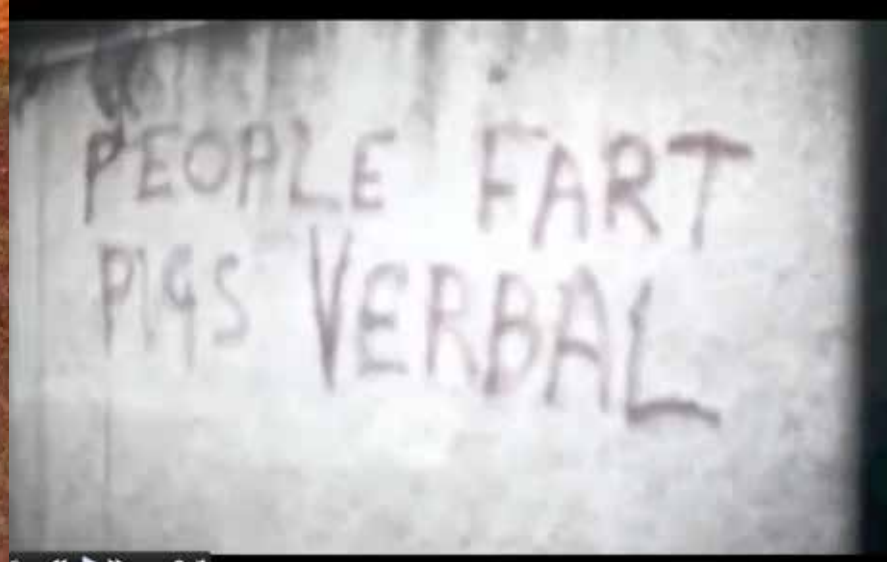
JANUARY 16, 2016

<http://www.remix.org.au/interview-brian-doherty-the-artist-run-impulse-1980s/>

Brian Doherty

The song 'Pig City' by the Parameters became a Brisbane anthem because it expressed an everyday reality. The repressive conservative political environment and politicised policing led to solidarity and a feeling of shared purpose between groups.

This impacted the developing art scene in Brisbane in a number of ways. There was an anarchistic visual style that related to punk and DaDa that probably had a greater general appeal than elsewhere in Australia. There was also a very broad movement of activism and many artistic and cultural artefacts had an ephemeral nature. Urszula Szulakowska's 'Bris DADA' article in Eyeline number one, 1987, is a good account of these influences. It's worth noting that the launch of Eyeline magazine was titled DADA DO. It is a title that confirms the recognition of a DADA lineage and also the humour inherent in that position. DADA DO was as much a reference to the 'Flintstones' theme song as it was to the historical art movement and the Flintstone quarry was Brisbane itself with holes full of (Barnie) Rubble.



PIG CITY

If you go downtown just beware
there's a demonstration in the square
the boys in blue are everywhere

see the blacks in the park
hear the doors slam, hear the dogs bark
they're keeping the city safe after dark

the minister for corruption's working late
he wants a piece of the action in race 8
no s.p. here, he's ringing interstate

the blacks at Aurukun have to go
to keep big business on the go
while joh gets shares in comalco

who is the bagman, who is the hit man
who are the front men, who are the big men
in the national scam

hello, hello, is that you dear
what's that clicking noise I hear?
walls have eyes and phones have ears

go to a dance to have some fun
here come the boys with their dogs and guns
they don't like punks. Run, Johnny, run

who's that knocking at the door
its 6a.m. it must be the law
Right, you know what we're looking for!

a state of emergency for the 'Boks
then to show the workers who's boss
you think you've got rights? they're already lost

so you don't want to know, you've heard it before
but if you cop this lot, you'll sure get more
where to now from '84?

The Parameters

Written by Tony Kneipp

AKA Fats Parameter

Recorded at ZZZ studios, Oct 1983

<https://youtu.be/Ehx4CZSsojI>

Images from the PIG CITY music clip
shot on super 8 film by Stephen Stockwell.



BRISBANE'S UGLIEST BAND

THE BLACK ASSASSINS

BREAK OUT



BLACK ASSASSINS
+ MARKO + SUPPORT
7:30PM TILL LATE
\$4, \$3 cover
PRISONERS ACTION GROUP BENEFIT
BLIND HALL, HUBERT ST. WOOLLOONGABBA
FRIDAY 15TH JULY 1983

Licensed, of course!

BRISBANE'S UGLIEST BAND

THE BLACK ASSASSINS

Beginn' the bullet



STRANGE BOUTIQUE
JFK and the CUBAN CRISIS
BLACK ASSASSINS
RESISTORS

SOUTHS LEAGUES CLUB (Jane Street, West End)
SAT. 27TH MARCH, 1982 7.30PM

Leave your dogs and babies at home.

Brisban's Ugliest Band - The Black Assassins

They were loud, they were fun, they were musically challenged, and they were the personification of rage and the Queensland condition.

Who can forget 'Azaria' sung to the tune of Gloria or the raging 'Swapo Guerillas'? If you have then here's a reminder...

Azaria
<https://youtu.be/aK-bhFTtEqA>

Posters and fliers by:
The Black Assassins

THE BLACK ASSASSINS

Few people know anything about the Black Assassins. Few people have seen them live. Few people survive an entire show.

The Black Assassins are horrific. They are hideous to the eye. They are the incarnation of everything the Birthday Party every dreamed of. One of them, singer Mohammed el Jackal, even crawled onto the stage and bit Nick Cave on the arm when the Birthday Party played at the New York Hotel.

Despite numerous attempts, I was unable to trace them to get an interview. They live mainly by night and sleep by day. Nonplussed, I decided there was only one way I could find out anything about the band. I put on my suit coat and went and saw Inspector O'Beautyadance at Task Force's headquarters.

What follows is top secret and I ask you not to pass it on to anyone, for I was allowed to see the Task Force file on the Black Assassins. The information contained in it was extracted by the most intelligent members of the Force after hours of questioning. As a result the members of Task Force have a more precise understanding of the four people behind the Black Assassins. They feel it will help them accomplish their aim of ridding Brisbane of undesirables.

Sirhan Chapman
(keyboards and vocals)

favourite colour: black

BRISBANE'S UGLIEST BAND

THE BLACK ASSASSINS

LAST STAND



NO FIXED ADDRESS
THE BLACK ASSASSINS
3B2

AT SOUTHS LEAGUES CLUB
SAT. 5TH JUNE 1982

\$ 5,
\$ 4 ZZZ
SUBS

JANE ST.,
WEST END

THE BLACK ASSASSINS BATTLE IT OUT FOR THE LAST TIME

AVAILABLE ON ALBUM OR BASE CHROME

TWO LITTLE WORDS



Courier Mail: 3 Gung-ho State Ministers....more Police!



By Comrad Xero, 2016

BRISBANE... late 1970s and early 1980s.

Queensland, The Sunshine State'- we called it "The SS State".

Brisbane its capi-tal was a big country town - casual, conservative even timid. Mangoes, watermelon and sweaty hot days usually ended with a thunderstorm around 5pm. These were our streets - our backyards and our boredom as we transitioned from adolescence to young adulthood.

We found ourselves in a conservative hellhole governed by corrupted legislators 'with God on their side'. They were supported by the voting majority for over two dec-ades. Unbelievable.

It was inevitable that a clash was on the cards. It was inevitable that people would take their protests to the streets. It was inevitable that people would be drawn to a different way of seeing the world - a different way of expressing their ideas through Design, Music, Art and Political activism. The ugly daily reality, of old 'lecturing' men desperate to hold on to their status quo re-sulted in a violence prone Police force. Queensland's own 'Special Branch' pho-tographed and keep Files on all those who opposed this Paradigm.

Busloads of Police were dispatched to Rallies and even Musical events to smash dissent into the ground. An organically activated Cultural Resistance emerged. Brisbane blossomed because we all threw ourselves into whatever it was that claimed our passions. We activated ourselves and put it out there.

My little corner of this Universe found me drawn to left political positions and I hung around the Anarchists, The Self Management Group, and the Printers who filled the streets with political posters...

e.g. 'Rally for the right to say Fuck' was one that made me smile.
Joyous Political Activism!

I agreed to sing with a band of lefty Musicians who were totally sick of the rubbish on the



Xero at Caxton Street



Performance Art at "The Crypt"

CULTURAL RESISTANCE

radio and who wanted to play political music. We called our-selves Zero and our first gig was at the Aehepa Hall in West End.

We went through many metamorphoses from Zero to Xero to Xiro and back to Xero and somewhere in there we became brave enough to write our own songs. So many Brisbane Bands did the same. The Brisbane Band scene became a Col-lective of sorts, in the true sense of the word.

We often battled with the Police who came to break our events up - it was a clash of ideas and metaphorically we battled with our songs, our music, and the events we organised. We all played in each others Band and shared our musical excitement.

Performance Art was another way of proclaiming "Viva la difference"!

I was involved with small groups of Artists who put on 'Happenings' of sorts, in and around the City . This involved the first Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane which sponsored a Performance Art evening at The Crypt - Brisbanes own 'ruin'. It also involved do-ing a walking Performance Art Action, down Queen Street to the South Bank - then empty industrial space, on the first Shopping-night in the City. We lit fires, broke mirrors and the Fire Brigade shut us down. Art spaces opened and resistance was futile.

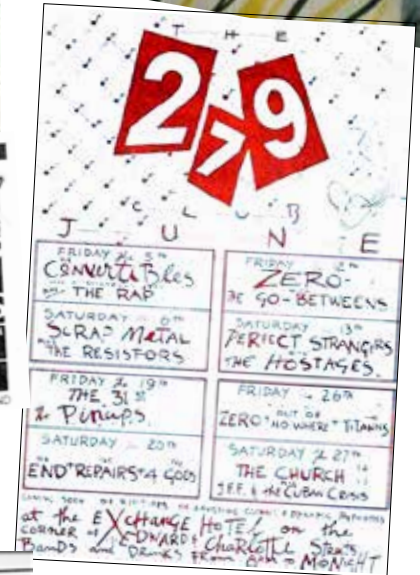
Flyers, Posters pasted up on city walls - the work of Designers lit up the Vacuum and, proclaimed that change was coming.

One cannot ignore 4ZZZ in this Cultural Resistance. This public radio station bound us all together by supporting our Music and Art Events. It agitated to subvert that Paradigm and it was the only Media outlet where we could engage with alternative sounds and ideas from around the planet. It cross pollinated us with other forms of audio stimulation and introduced us and Brisbane to the great sounds and culture of the Murri population.

We were a number of disparate individuals who took up artistic arms to change the stagnant pond we grew up around. I would like to think that we flushed that pond and made a better place. But most of all, we became a family of sorts bound by storming the barricades of complacency, conservatism and corrup-tion.

It was a cultural resistance.

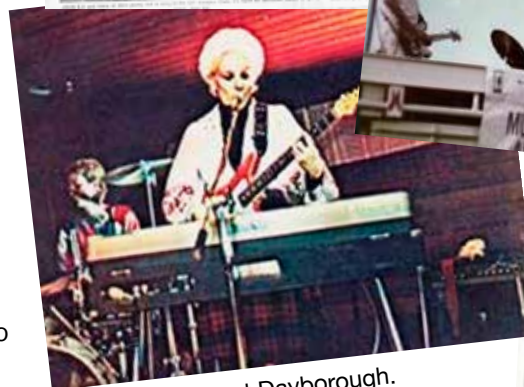
Comrad Xero



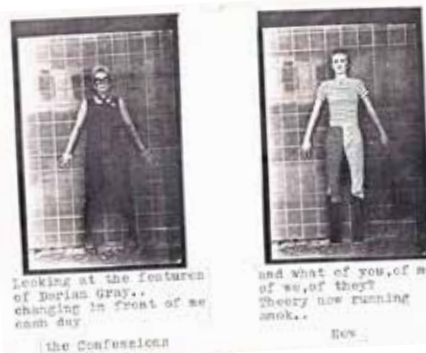
Fantastic Flyers. Birthday party & 279 handbills by Terry Murphy
X roads handbill by John Willstead.
Courier Mail Article about Xero.



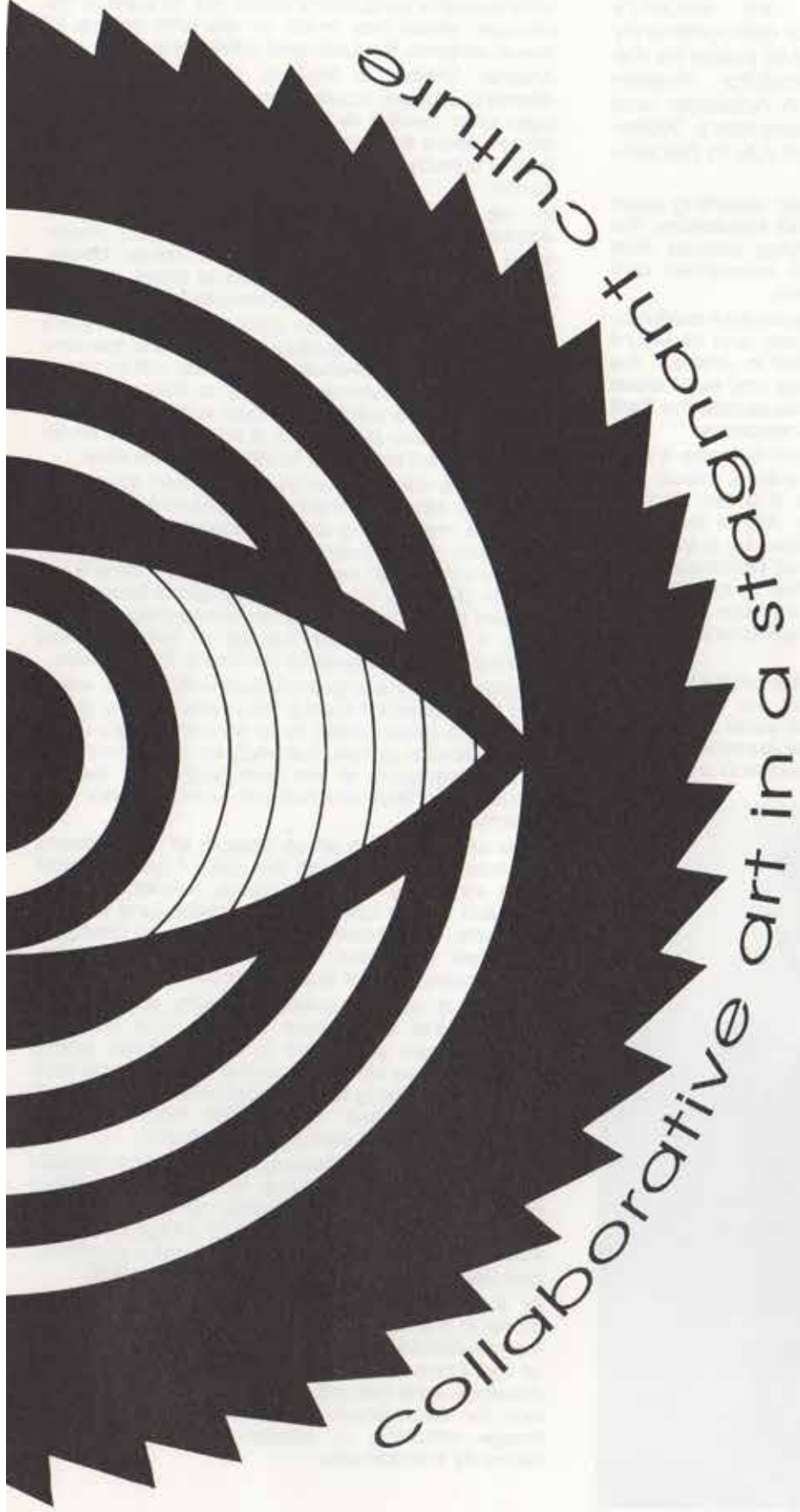
Xero at the Exchange Hotel.



Zero at Dayborough.



Xiro from Independent Cassette releases.



TO NAME SOMETHING IS TO ASSERT POWER OVER IT, to fix and trap it within a pattern by establishing a self-fulfilling prophecy. An analysis entitled "Brisbane Conceptualism" or "Brisbane Minimalism" would assert - in much the same way as the title "Brisbane Dada" - a common identity unifying art practice in this city. The outstanding characteristic of Brisbane art, however, as anywhere else, is the artists' individuality, lacking any overall qualities which would designate a "Brisbane" style. Many different external influences have affected it, some from the history of modernism, others from contemporary trends, not just a concern with the immediate personal, social and political situation in Brisbane.

However, there are contextual peculiarities of art production in Brisbane. It is worth establishing these within a tighter theoretical structure. They parallel the environment surrounding the Dadaists of the first world war in central Europe. In particular, the amount of collaborative interaction among the young artists in Brisbane is a similar response to the destructive political situation and the inheritance of a stagnant culture.

This situation is not readily comparable, except superficially, to that of other Australian state capitals similarly placed on the peripheries of the cultural determinants centered on Sydney and Melbourne. Brisbane's rural conservatism and the recent opportunistic, urban, economic exploitation imposes a paradoxical mentality onto the younger artists in particular. This is a condition of siege in which the walls seem on the point of imminent collapse, alternating with the opposite numbing effect of a seeming removal from active reality; both anxiety and vacuity in an absence of historical temporality and the accompanying possibility of change. It is an acute problem in Brisbane to reject surrender to extremes of anxiety and inertia.

Historically, Dada was a "state of mind" rather than an aesthetic program, or an artistic "movement". From about 1915 to 1923 its adherents, beliefs, forms and actions changed according to the geographical location of the protagonists and their immediate political and cultural concerns.

"What interests a Dadaist is the way he himself lives ... (Dada) transforms itself according to the races and events it encounters... it is nothing, it is the point at which Yes and No and all opposites meet... Dada has no pretensions, just as life should have none"

Tristan Tzara, *Manifesto*, 1922

We are all dadas to some extent, especially since its nature was so varied, taking a poetic-rhetorical character in Zurich, a political one in Berlin, a psychoanalytic one in Paris as well as including the scientific-mechanistic streak of Duchamp and Picabia, but common to all Dada was a rejection of the art object... that "thing" which was possessable, of material value, and which for that reason was artificially invested with aesthetic meaning. Revered by the modernist avant garde, the art object was the fetishistic depository of beauty.



BRISDADA: collaborative art in a stagnant culture by Urszula Szulakowska was first published in *Eyeline* magazine number 1, May 1987 and is reproduced with permission from the author and *Eyeline* Publishing.

In its place, Dada proclaimed the instantaneous moment as sole value. It was created through violence which incited and angered the viewers causing them to reject the system supportive of the aesthetic object.

"After Dada, active indifference entered into life." Tzara
Dada was an immensely energised moral force which asserted a new humanism, restoring value to the life of the individual - which is why leftist historians see it as merely another aspect of bourgeois liberalism, rather than a genuine revolution. Yet as an anti-art, Dada was collective and communal, even without a formal leftist theory. It rejected the 'male artist as hero' myth of bohemia, and could not abide the futurist theory which extolled the machine age tended by the faceless proletariat.

Dada's foremost purpose was communication and accessibility. There was no prophecy, and there were no (official) priests. In view of the denial of the male ego, it is not surprising that women played a larger role in Dada than in Cubism, let alone Futurism or Expressionism, which were fundamentally misogynous. Berlin Dada was especially committed to a didactic role in relation to the proletariat, hence its development (on the Futurist model) of photomontage forms, satirical graphics, broadsheet journalism, leftist worker newspapers, street theatre and cabaret. The popular nature of the audience demanded immediacy of form and ease of mass distribution, rather than of permanence.

Though Dada's action was intuitive, rather than theoretical, it was neither esoteric, nor subjective, it was anti-intellectual, but not mindless; brutal, but not inhuman; antirational, but not undirected. Dada language and visual art are described conventionally as "anti-rational" but it has taken the anti-psychiatry of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to rightly account for Dada on the basis of their notion of *délire*, a much more profound concept than that of delirium or clinical insanity.

Both Dada and anti-psychiatry deny that the rational exists. According to anti-psychiatry, reason is delusion, whereas what is customarily accepted as unreason is reality. This is not to deny the existence of intelligence but it is conceived in a new way. The individual master ego is short circuited in favour of a social configuration linking a variety of free elements in an unstructured, planar, horizontal fluidity: no stratification of languages as systems, no scales of reason and unreason. Reality is flow, change, the moment. In an historical transformation responsive to immediate conditions. Dada was working with *langue*, language before "languages", and manifested politically as peripheral culture.

In Paris the ground had already been laid for Dada by the inheritance of Alfred Jarry's anti-rationalism and by a succession of other distinguished involuntary explorers of the transcendent and independent power of language over the conscious subject-speaker. Among these, Jean-Pierre Brisset, with Raymond Roussel, and much later Antonin Artaud and Louis Wolfson, were to be major influences on French post-structuralist, psychoanalytic, language theory.

Post-modernism in certain forms is a continuation of Dada, and therefore it may be said that Dada is present in much of the new art happening all over the world, but it is still possible to make a specific case for Dada's manifestation in Brisbane as amounting to more than the common heritage of Dada. Dada cannot be

replayed by the simple adoption of its formal characteristics and actions. It demands a certain ethical commitment. Nor is it really the specifics of subject-matter which are the focus of Dada. It is Dada's collaborative anti-aesthetic, and its rejection of both object and subject/maker which is important and, above all, the socio-political context in which these appear which justifies the epithet 'dadaistic'. Brisbane Dada appears within a system of socio-political repression of a highly active kind and within a sterility of culture which creates a vacuum for the operation of severe rightism and its accompanying brutality. It is not too far fetched to compare it to Zurich and Berlin in 1915-1920.

The Brisbane artists selected for discussion, in the main, began their art practice in the late '70s or early '80s. They are the more "established" of the younger experimental artists in the city, having occasionally exhibited interstate, or in the commercial Brisbane gallery run by Michael Milburn, or at the **Institute of Modern Art** in Brisbane. The interaction between the individuals of this group is so close and constant, that is nearly impossible to document it all, or even keep track of it in a coherent account. In Brisbane, there has always been a very limited number of people whose work was of an experimental nature, or who were concerned with organising a support system for such artistic activity, and perhaps because of this there was, among these artists, an unusual degree of sympathy for each others' aims, and above all, a state-of-emergency consciousness that mutual encouragement must be forthcoming if survival was to be ensured.

The anti-linguistics of Deleuze and Guattari explains most satisfactorily the politics of this collaboration. The basic notion is the construct proposed by Foucault or Lacanian psychoanalysis, namely the existence of a central core of power, hierarchically tightly structured, from which a group of dissidents is excluded and cast into passivity and helplessness (rather on the model of the fallen angels!)

At the peripheries of power such groups develop, in reaction, languages and behavioural forms which are either overtly aggressive, or compensatory in some esoteric manner, possibly posing as initiated knowledge which can be so covert a response to exclusion that even the protagonists may not be aware of their belligerent status vis-a-vis the central dominant. This is how Foucault, Lacan and Kristeva analyse the delirium speech of Brisset, Wolfson, and Roussel.

Deleuze modifies these conclusions in a very important way in his accounts of the nomads. He denies that the languages of the peripheries, of the borders, are primarily a reaction, or an "alternative", to the modes of the state, but that they have their own self contained rationale for existence (the consequence of their own historical development). State and periphery do not rely on each other in the sense that, in historical time, neither preceded the other. The state did not create the nomads, nor vice-versa, not even indirectly. It is only secondarily that they have an "insider-outsider" relationship. The periphery is coherent without reference to the centre.

What has resulted from the state's repression of peripheral culture has been the creation of the war machine. Dada would not have existed had Europe not entered into a condition of war and economic disaster. But, the inner life of Dada has always existed, whether in Jarry

Brisbane Dada appears within a system of socio-political repression of a highly active kind and within a sterility of culture which creates a vacuum for the operation of severe rightism and its accompanying brutality.



JOHN HEARTFIELD: PAGE FROM *NEUE JUGEND* BERLIN 1917

Revered by the modernist avant garde, the art object was the fetishistic depository of beauty. In its place, Dada proclaimed the instantaneous moment as sole value.

ONE WORD

Murray Power



CUSPING

... The word itself is evocative and poetic and I think is a good

metaphor for what you may be wanting. There was something going on. Of course there was. Even in the smallest towns, but of course Brisbane at that time was under a repressive anti arts government, so Arts practices were not seen as something the general population could participate in and nor were there the venues or legitimisation in the media and so on. So, at that time the scene seemed to be on the cusp of something bigger, something less underground and more appreciated. That couldn't happen with the Nats in charge, so Cusping.

or Morgenstern or Brisset. Unlike *langue*, the war machine is always directed specifically against the state. (The 'state' should be understood as any condition of static construction, 'harmony', 'balance', which manifests corresponding socio-political and cultural forms.) The point is that in the Deleuzian account the peripheral is not merely a negative pole to the empowered centre, but is also positively charged. In fact, both the centre and periphery have negative and positive aspects and are not necessarily in a relation of right to left respectively, though this is a relation which is relevant in the present case. But they cannot interchange. When Dada was brought to the centre and empowered as surrealism, it was dead.

Although basically of a conceptualist nature, the most overt example of dadaist activity in Brisbane after 1981 was the O'flate group. In February 1982 **Jeanelle Hurst, Harley West, Adam Boyd and Chris Maver** established studios and performance spaces in **Red Comb House**, a vast, cathedral like disused chicken factory. Art activity of all kinds took place here including multimedia nights of live music and performance and crowds of up to 500 people. In May 1982 Jeanelle Hurst, **Russell Lake**, and **Gary Warner** and Adam Boyd established an art space called **One Flat Exhibit** in Edmonstone Street in South Brisbane. Jeanelle Hurst was living in the flat at the back of this space at that time, and finally, in the bathroom.

Meanwhile **Red Comb House** led an harassed existence. **Holle** continued the Red Comb studios until 1983. At the same time **Brian Doherty** and Jeanelle Hurst established **Gallery Office Exhibit** in Turbof Street. In 1983-84 what had become known as the O'flate group moved to the **George Street** space, a derelict office accessible to the public who did, in fact, come in and browse. When that was closed Jeanelle Hurst, Adam Boyd, **Zeliko Maric** and Russell Lake formed **O'Flission** and subsequently, **O'flate**. To work with conceptual, questioning modes of art in Brisbane is to take a definite political stand. It is not a fashionable or whimsical artistic fad. It means that a Dadaist lifestyle is obligatory, the adoption of collective action. **O'flate** organised, obtained VAB grants, and pushed events forward with energy and optimism.

Jeanelle Hurst produced a rich assortment of performances, films, and static installations in those years, including the co-editing of **Art Walk** with **Brian Doherty** and then her more personal **Art Wonder Stories**, where dadaist typography and layout combined conventional and experimental writings with outrageous montagist graphics, exploring anti-art through popular culture and the media.

Although **O'flate** did provide exhibition space for young artists who had no access to the commercial or state galleries, it should not be dismissed as yet another traditional reaction by bohemian artists to the status quo.

In their installation at the **Institute of Modern Art** in Brisbane **O'flate** aimed to instigate discussion of local art by institutions who, they felt, were reneging on their obligations to support local work. And the **O'flate** installation at the IMA's **Brisbane Hot** show, (badly misplaced in the context of expressionistic art) displayed the ellipsis of Dada, joined to an engaging, effervescent directness, both assertive and aggressive. The spontaneity masked an irony which paradoxically distanced and disciplined the references. Similarly, for their work in a display of Queensland painting at the **University of Queensland Art**

Museum (Queensland Works 1950 - 1985) **O'flate** produced a stack of televisions (operative) collaged and painted like totemic "sacra", questioning art/media relations and the sheer wonder of the electronic modes of communication.

In 1985 the building known as **"The Belltower"** featured an exhibition called **Studio Plunge**, in which the **O'Flission** show **Vision of O'Flission** represented the O'flate group and many others including **Chrissy Feld** working in dress, and others working in furniture/sculpture. At this show Jeanelle hung very large, Marcel Janco style cardboard "figures" from the ceiling, reminiscent of department store advertising displays. Russell Lake's wooden pyramids were built in a scientific optical dimension which has always been present in O'flate films and videos. Adam Boyd continued to use travel as a personal cypher which has continued into 86 in his Jumbo works. Zeliko Maric painted interplanetary backdrops.

In 1986 contact with other Australian art centres was achieved when **O'flate** toured the country. Since then, Jeanelle Hurst has continued working with the **Telecom Vatel** system where art/technology is relocated in the new inter-cellular structures inherent in telecommunications systems.

Adam Boyd is now operating an inter-active dialogue through the establishment of the **John Mills National and Annex** exhibition space at 40 Charlotte St, Brisbane with **Virginia Barratt**, herself a dancer and performance artist who has worked with **Michelle Andringa** in both gallery and popular music venues, producing performances of a critical socio-political nature.

Collaborating with **O'flate** at various stages and involved in very nearly every significant aspect of Brisbane's experimental art, **Brian Doherty** has combined aesthetic, communicative, organisational and political concerns in a preferred working mode of collaboration. Strongly influenced by Dadaist typography and by Robert McPherson's conceptualism his most recent concern has been the visual communicative tactics of the press, junk advertising and packaging. Acknowledging **Arp** and **Satie** as influences, he has experimented with all aspects of design. His large paintings of 1982 maintained a deliberately open quality, just as his recent work (which can be read either as series or as individual contemplative pieces) demands a vocal, interactive response from the viewer, a device which has occasionally provoked hostility. Severely reductionist in the manner of **Picabia**, **Brian Doherty's** work is, nonetheless, immediate and accessible, humorous, as well as intellectual. The elegance of the slightest intervention across the codes of the newspaper layouts by silkscreen, or with a brush, suggests an esoteric aesthetic, which is misleading. Like **Arp's** own chance collages and drawings, which are almost oriental in their refinement and discipline, **Brian's** work is not formalistic, but seeks the contrary, which is to reveal the structures of his found objects and the oddity of the perceptual process by which a verbal text is "read" visually and imbibed directly.

His prime concern for communication led to his involvement in the Production of **Art Walk** and, finally, almost inevitably, to direct action as secretary of the **Queensland Artworker's Alliance** to improve the economic, legal, and social status of the artist generally.

Brian Doherty's collaboration with six others - among whom was **Barbara Campbell**, the former Co-ordinator of the IMA - greatly aided by **Edward Riggs**, led to the

JEANELLE HURST, RUSSEL LAKE, ADAM BOYD:
VIDEO, 1983



ONE WORD

Ang Martinez



BRIZARI

Brian Doherty
Hi Ang Martinez.

Nice word that

I haven't heard before - I'm assuming a portmanteau word of Brisbane and Bizarre meaning... strange, peculiar, odd, funny, curious, offbeat, outlandish, eccentric, unconventional, unorthodox, queer, unexpected, unfamiliar, abnormal, atypical, unusual, out of the ordinary, out of the way, extraordinary... Is that what you had in mind?

Ang Martinez

Yes and hinting at that dada, absurd attitude and approach including a lot of the artmaking and performance - whether that was intentional or not.

Was thinking also of those hybrid colloquial words (or portmanteau..lovely word) Brisvegas, Brissney and Brisbland that local peeps use.

In the foreground l-r Peter anderson, Michael Milburn, George Petlin at That Space, *Local Colour* exhibition, 17 March 1987. They are standing in front of a large encaustic painting by Shane Kneipp titled *Yeah! Just what is it makes todays homes etcetera? 31.12.86*. Photo: Shared Camera



Peter Anderson

Looking at this image from March 1987 I'm reminded that George was occasionally writing for newspapers at this time - there's a great article from *The Australian* (9 April 87) in which he runs through a whole lot of what was going on at this time "Make way for the rebels - Dada's back in Brisbane". Paul posted it to the group ages ago, but we were discussing it just last month. George doesn't mention *Local Colour*, but he gives a pretty good account of what was going on at the time - Clout, JMN performances (Hiram To & Joe Macalino), *Little Alternatives*. Of course, this was also what Urszula Szulakowska was writing about at the time in "BRISDADA - collaborative art in a stagnant culture" published in *Eyeline* No1 May 87.

That first *Eyeline* also included an interview with Michael Milburn from about this time in which he discusses the origins of his gallery as a addition to his own studio on Latrobe Tce in Paddington a few years earlier - in a way he was a kind of 'accidental art dealer'. I might also note that in late March 87 Michael hosted the showing of 'Anywhere' the group exhibition of Brisbane artists that had been showing in Canberra at Bitumen River Gallery (Feb/Mar).

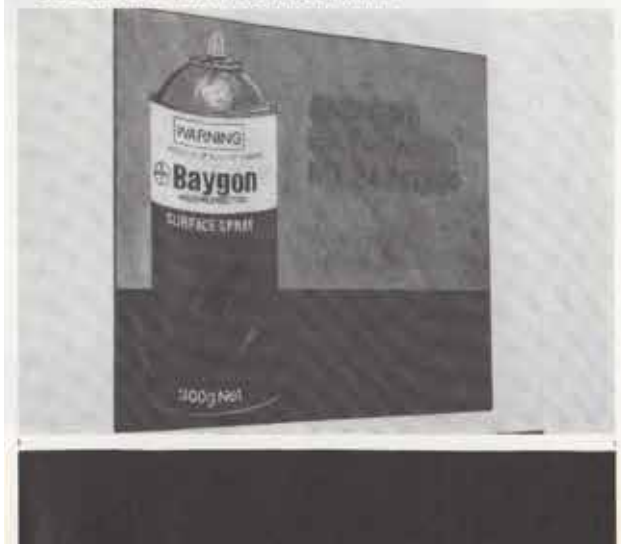
In early 1987 the scene really was buzzing. In fact, I just checked, and this would have been when Lehan Ramsay was putting together her 'Portrait/Self-portrait' show I have a photocopy of the piece in *The Sun*, written by Phil Brown (24 April 87) - in the accompanying photo Lehan is hanging the image of Dale ...



SWEET POTATO: EUGENE CARCHESIO



SCRATCH AND SNUFF, 1986: SHANE KNEIPP



prototype of recent experimental art spaces in Brisbane, **A Room**, which existed for six months in 1984. Although the artists worked as separate individuals, (sharing a common minimalist-conceptualist working method) Barbara continued the collaborative aspect which she and Edward Riggs had encouraged as IMA policy from 1982. Though not a studio space, **A Room** provided an informal meeting ground for like-minded artist experimenters, while operating also as a successful public gallery. Though the work of Barbara Campbell and Ted Riggs owes more to an ironic conceptualism than to Dada, it is not possible to give a sensible account of the latter in Brisbane without mentioning their supportive roles and organisational skills. Further, within some of their performances at **A Room**, dada humour and nonsense was certainly present as it was in Barbara's paintings of proverbs which studied word-image relations in a dryly reductionist mode, taking the relation to the logical extreme of dadaist absurd. This was also an element in her performance (the first by a local artist at the Queensland Art Gallery) **Culture Vulture** which was in dada fashion socially critical of the bourgeois supporters of "high art". Edward Riggs' word-pairs on a large scale were a more personal statement about dyslexia, a cool examination of himself as a specimen.

Two significant consequences resulted from the work of Barbara Campbell and Edward Riggs at **A Room**. Firstly, it generated a feeling that such a venture should be continued with a different group and this was carried out under the co-ordination of **Paul Andrew**, who saw through the establishment of **That** art space. Secondly, their resurrection of the **Queensland Artworkers Union** in 1984, lapsed since its first appearance as a model of the fabled **Poets Union** of the late '70s.

It was left to Brian Doherty to strengthen and enlarge this organisation, aided by an unusually energetic and motivated group of recent **Queensland College of Art** students, particularly a group of photographers, **Robyn Gray**, **Anna Zsoldos** and **Leanne Ramsay** who established themselves in the now demolished **Observatory Gallery**. **Jay Younger**, **Anna Zsoldos** and **Leanne Ramsay** have come out of this grouping into the political activity of the Alliance.

Among individuals who locate their work within a general leftist political context using dadaist modes **Shane Kneipp** has produced some significant work, shown at **That** in 1986. Openly and loudly anarchistic, his work takes the form of densely constructed collages and reliefs of found objects. Quoting '60s pop in encaustic paintings, he transforms its facile brightness into an Art Brut aggression. Highly idealistic and totally disbelieving, his work is close to Berlin Dada, and in its obsessive minuteness, recalls the British neo-Dada of the '50s, the pop art of Peter Blake, and perhaps, some early Hamiltons.

A close associate of Shane Kneipp, **Darryl Graham** in his exhibition **Less not more** also at **That** in 1986, through more formal structures drawn from Pop art and media culture debated the themes of war and nuclear arms.

Malcolm Enright, whose works either at the periphery or at the centre have been energised by the true spirit of Dada, has been an enthusiastic supporter of Brisbane art since the early '70s. His successful mainstream career as a self-trained graphic designer and his strong connections with the New York art world have not diminished his commitment to local causes. Whether bringing to **That**

the Graffiti Art Brut of the New York streets and linking it to such art in Brisbane, or working with the **Artworkers Alliance**, he has remained a central figure in experimental art in this city. In the Dada spirit, which he embraces enthusiastically, he has continued since 1972 to collage "inseparables", found objects, texts and images which represent eternal incongruities bound together in hopeless addiction by fate, nature, or custom. His 1986 exhibition of a large number of **Inseparables** at Michael Milburn Galleries ranged across the social, political, sexual, consumer, historical, and linguistic zones, varying in mood from the lyrical to the dark to the absurdly tragic. Without ideology, they trigger thought concerning the play of chance in creating a relation unintentionally, but with wicked appositeness.

Eugene Carchesio operates a similar, understated humour in a graphic mode on a diminutive scale. An exhibition at **That** in February '87 showed a move from a graphic style distantly influenced by Joseph Beuys, to minimalist relief sculpture consisting of an installation of matchboxes containing various motifs. They recall the boxes of Joseph Cornell. Miscast as an American surrealist, Cornell's boxes in fact demonstrate not the turgid psychological theories of that style, but rather the enigmatic presentations of situations in a freer, dadaist mode. Eugene Carchesio's works have similarly eluded interpretation on the level of symbol, although appearing to refer to signs both conventional and personal. They are intuitive, rather, re-using codes without the significance to which they are attached and determinedly avoiding formalistic organisation.

A final set of connections should be mentioned here in passing. Eugene Carchesio was originally associated with **One Flat**. Now, in his work with Tim Gruchy (who uses both static and kinetic visual modes) and with **Steven Grainger** (a musician as well as a visual artist) Eugene pursues the affiliation of sound, graphics and film, with performance. **Tim Gruchy** was a member of Zip who released experimental sound and graphic works from 1982. Before it was eventually dispersed in 1986, Zip was also the name of a performance group co-ordinated by **Mark Ross** in which Tim was involved. In various sound works, whether in a gallery or in a popular venue in the form of the band **The Closest Thing**, these artists have produced a rich mixture of dadaistic improvisation.

The above account has merely touched on the range of dadaistic work produced in Brisbane. Its chief intention has been to record the sorts of creative links resulting from an immediate response to unusually repressive socio-political conditions.

There was among these artists, above all, a state-of-emergency consciousness that mutual encouragement must be forthcoming if survival was to be ensured.





A BRIEF HISTORY OF BUBBLES.

Adam Boyd, 2016

Balloon wall. Photo: Brian Doherty



There are some compelling reasons why Ephemeral Traces, the UQAM exhibition curated by Peter Anderson, and Remix are of cultural and historical importance. Both of them examine the 1980's and 90's art scene in Brisbane as viewed through the lens of artist-run spaces, both are concerned with writing forgotten or neglected histories, but most importantly they both aim to set the historical record straight by giving the artists themselves control over those histories. It is the artists voices that tell the stories, not historians.

So what was that history? What were the main cultural and conceptual drivers at the time?

The political sphere in Brisbane in the 1980's was a kind of a bubble. The governing National Party saw themselves as a bulwark against an encroaching world view they didn't agree with for their own weird ideological reasons. The Hawke/Keating Labor government was in power for much of the time, and successive Labor governments in each of the states and territories. Nationally the political pendulum was swinging to the left while the Nationals held on inside their bubble, stuffing cash into paper bags.

Sadly, theirs was an ideology still familiar to us today and clearly visible in contemporary conservative politics. The Nationals held tightly to an unfashionable collection of ideas that were so out of step with the direction the western world was moving that to the naked eye it looked like the pendulum had stopped swinging sometime around 1956. The National party view of civil society was one where women were kept in the home cooking and ironing, safe from the threat of communist agitators. The White Australia Policy could still be openly discussed on its merits. Greenies and Aborigines were radical elements best ignored but if push came to shove, they should be crushed. The police force was an extension of the legislature. The white shoe brigade was in charge of coastal development. Selective protectionism floated among the wreckage of free market economics. Notions like decency, fairness and equality struggled under the strange moral authority of Bjelke-Petersen's Lutheran Christian ideology. This is not an allegorical account, nor embellishment. It is fact. It makes the transformation of Queensland's political and cultural spheres in recent times all the more extraordinary.

In any case that was the bubble of conservative politics in Queensland for twenty-seven years. I'll just say that again; twenty-seven years! With the benefit of today's retrospect-a-scope, the National Party bubble looks a lot like the ones that existed in eastern block countries at the same time. Pretty much like the bubble North Korea is still locked into today. As the Nationals eventually found out, the thing about bubbles is that although they're a lot of fun when you're in them, in the end you run out of oxygen.

Small wonder that against this backdrop a generation of younger and emerging artists simply went out and made bubbles of their own. This is an interesting point in the cultural history of Queensland because in the 1980's the local avant-garde is as much a story about architecture and civic spaces as it is about art.

The city was in the middle of a demolition and construction boom barely imaginable today. They just couldn't demolish the old buildings fast enough. Entire precincts became negative spaces, histories disappeared overnight. The Dean Brothers (demolition experts to the stars) made good on their promises. All they left behind were the memories. What the planners could not have foreseen was that in that urban chaos a generation of artists and artist run spaces flourished, moving into old retail and warehouse spaces that nobody with any business sense wanted.

It wasn't hard to occupy those spaces and roam the city claiming it for yourselves, any more than it was hard to move into the conceptual and critical void that existed in the local arts culture. It wasn't exactly contested territory; it was more like moving into a vacuum. Art was happening everywhere, covertly, and was headquartered in old buildings in Charlotte Street, George Street, Roma Street.



Performance and installation flourished in a way they never had previously in Brisbane. New modes of engagement were invented. The fact that engagement was not valued or validated by the establishment was a moot point. The space of your own making is always more valuable than the ones you are excluded from.

Eventually, at the top end of George Street, not the hole-in-the-ground end (Roma Street), the National Party Government collapsed following some unsavoury corruption scandals and the Fitzgerald Inquiry into Police Corruption.

Time had finally caught up with the Nationals. Their brown paper bags stuffed with bribes had burst, along with their bubble. The subsequent election of Wayne Goss and the Labor Government in 1989 was a euphoric moment. There were celebrations in the street and many moments of profound personal joy, one of those 'Where were you on 9/11?' moments.

Artist and colleague Virginia Barratt and I expressed something of that spirit in an uncharacteristically political performance during Oblivion! at the Brisbane School of Arts in 1989. I say political, but that's not strictly true. It was also personal. In fact, all we really wanted from it at the time was that it just be simple and affirming. More general than specific but no more than that.

'The Three Minute Kiss' involved a slide projection of Wayne Goss beneath a Triumphal Arch in the English Classical Romantic tradition. We went on stage and kissed beneath that projection to the sound track of the band Sweet Honey and the Rock singing 'Where are the keys to the kingdom?' (Open the doors and let me in!). We stood up there in front of everyone we knew and kissed one long, steady kiss for the duration of the song, then turned and left the stage.

The performance called to mind the iconic photograph of the American sailor in the V Day celebrations at the end of World War 2, kissing a girl in Times Square. It was a declaration of hope and faith in a new order at one and the same time. It was a celebration of the promise we could not see, but could feel. Things were going to change.

As it turned out it was also a kind of a good bye kiss. I had already joined the other 95% and left for Melbourne to set up another artist run space, 'The Greater Western' in West Melbourne. Virginia was soon off to Adelaide to head up the Australian Network for Art and Technology. The Nationals were off to purgatory. They were not missed. It was the end of an era and we all breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Virginia and I were celebrating more than just a change of Government though. We were celebrating Brisbane's entry into the twentieth century, and nothing illustrated the promise of that more than the achievements of the artist run spaces at the time.

That little performance, The Three Minute Kiss, was as simple as it was elegant, and only now can I see another narrative, one that has been hidden to me at least, for nearly thirty years. It was also a cautionary tale. Three minutes is all you get. Enter the Campbell Newman Government of 2012. See history remade. See the bubble blown again, and then burst all over. Just don't laugh too loud. History loves a head on a pike.

And there's the rub. I see now what I could never have anticipated thirty years ago. History can never be agreed upon. It can never be fixed to an agreed position. It is always, must always be, tied to the present. It can tell you the basic facts but we need razor sharp 20:20 hindsight to fill in the rest. That's why we need histories like the ones being built through Ephemeral Traces and Remix. So we can do the housework that history demands. Clean things up. Take stock. Flesh out the memories we have and build on them. Give them the benefit of perspective and experience and try our best not to slip into nostalgia.

What it all means for young artists today is a matter for them.





WEATHER

TODAY: City, Gold,
Sunshine Coasts: Fine.
City Max. 29. Bay: Seas
to 1.7m. See P29.

Telegraph

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SIR JOH'S LAST HOURS



**'Nothing
can
save
him
now'
-Hinze**

■ **THE PREMIER**, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, would be gone by Friday and Queensland would have a new Premier, Mr Hinze said today.

■ The Minister for Main Roads, Local Government and Racing said: "Nothing can save him now. He has gone too far this time."

■ He said police "bagman" Jack Herbert was in New South Wales, which supported Opposition claims that a mystery witness was set to give evidence to the Fitzgerald Inquiry which could topple the government.

— FULL REPORTS, P2,3



• Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen on his way to Government House today

TO STAY...

Email exchange:

On Thursday, 31 December 2015, 22:59, Richens&Doherty wrote:

Hi Penny

I have an impression that Brisbane had a great deal of diversity. The art scene, for me, was large and it had depth. Many people from different areas - different artforms and political orientation - came together and bounced ideas around. That just wasn't something I experienced in Sydney because each group was large enough to stay separate. Also I know, for myself at least, that group/shared houses formed the basis of very strong - and again diverse - social networks. These social networks meant that there was a lot of information going around and it was the basis for people working together, with trust, at a time when there was a lot of unemployment and very little financial reward involved. There was also the common enemy in the form of the Bjelke Peterson Government and the politicised police force to pull people together and also the feeling of isolation in Brisbane - that 'what happens in Brisbane stays in Brisbane'. We weren't going to be noticed by the larger world so we tended to do things that were meaningful to our peers and to the specific conditions in Brisbane/Queensland.

Cheers - Brian

On 2 Jan 2016, at 8:35 am, Penelope Glass wrote:

I totally identify with your observation and I did it in the reverse direction. I am originally from Sydney, then studied theatre at the Vic College of the Arts in Melbourne and then in 1982 moved to Brisbane after successfully auditioning for the Popular Theatre Troup who impressed me with a performance at the VCA. I was looking for political theatre and Brisbane offered all that and more. I remember other students and teachers at the VCA being completely under-impressed by my decision to go to Brisbane, very few people got it. Queensland was a joke. But I insist that it was the perfect place for me to work. I could cross over and develop many of my interests/creativities (theatre, music, languages, coordination, political activism, community radio, etc). And Brisbane was certainly a world unto itself, I never found much understanding or interest about Qld from theatre colleagues and/or family. And the share houses, the clear enemy, the smallness of the population, the siege mentality created this large pocket of resistance, and particularly within the arts community. The lack of money and jobs didn't seem to be a problem when share houses and unemployment benefits without huge restriction/regulation allowed us to live on very low incomes. I never had a car, always ate well and never felt like I was slumming it or suffering.

What I find most exciting here in Chile is the chaos and the driving force of self-motivation in the community theatre/arts scene here. There is little or no recognition of it through funding, there is political urgency and many pockets of resistance that make up a strong although beleaguered community. I have been running a community theatre "experience" with male prisoners here for the last 13 years, that has spread to urban gardening, and we self-generate our income as well as resort to occasional crowdfunding. Chile reminds me of Brisbane in the 1980s and this is why I stay.

Enjoying the conversation Brian.

Cheers to you.

"Everyone knew each other and there was a camaraderie amongst artists, musicians, designers, gallerists, promoters, DJs and venue owners that made it particularly special."

Jon & Claire Adams, 'Chi Chi Delux, the Mars Bar and beyond'
<http://www.remix.org.au/chi-chi-deluxe-the-mars-bar-beyond/>

ONE WORD

Lindy Collins

BEINGTHERE

...I loved New Farm and West End. I had a great job working as an art therapist with the Australian Red Cross, great cinema in Brunswick Street, I guess when you are young and in love with the whole world everything is just happening. I look back at myself and love the confidence and audaciousness with which we tackled Joh's Brisbane. Street marches and great theatre and music. I loved living in London and traveling Europe and then coming back to Brisbane. Now I must chase the chickens out of my studio and see who is arriving in the home paddock!

Urszula Szulakowska

COMMUNITY

INVOLVED

COMMITTED

YOUNG VITAL

CURRENT

COSMOPOLITAN

OR TO GO ?

Peter Anderson
Qld ARI Heritage 1980-2000
May 17, 2013

"95% of artists leave Brisbane, why don't you" ... (graffiti on the side of the Cultural Centre construction barrier) ... this text also used in the title to the Artist's statement for Luke Roberts 1982 IMA exhibition curated by Ted Riggs very early in the IMA's 'guest curator' period ... it was also referenced by Barbara Campbell in her Brisbane report in Art & Australia Winter-1983 ... which reports on the opening of new QAG, establishment of One Flat & Red Comb, Art Walk magazine & is illustrated with image of a work by Hollie ... "The years activities were a direct result from an enthusiastic leap from complacency taken by individuals who, traditionally, would have joined the queues moving to the cultural south. Perhaps when the graffiti on the side of the Cultural Centre reading '95% of artists leave Brisbane. Why don't you?' was finally removed, the significance of the action was greater than anyone realised."

Shane Kafka

I remember that graffiti well. It certainly struck a chord.

Paul Andrew

... I was reminded of when you mentioned this to me with such gusto in conversation and my immediate feeling then was that this firmly plonks you in the thick of the streets, the times and the moment, the pervasive sense of futility and vigilance fatigue, the idea to stay, to go and join the diaspora, a natural path for young people looking for green pastures and/or to make then nascent DIY artist-runs sustainable which is indeed what happened, for a time at least... Oh and Ian was inquiring about where this graf was actually located and when btw....

Shane Kafka

It was definitely on the hoarding at the then being built Kulture Bunker. Everyone felt it was exquisitely apt.

Brian Doherty

Thanks for highlighting this again. I've just been thinking about the Bjelke Petersen/police state media framework that has dominated a lot of the recent retelling of the period. Its an easy story to tell "the art of the period was a reaction to the repressive Government". And it is a story that should be told - but it isn't the whole story. The first recession in Australia since the second world war is an important part of the story - leading to cheap building rental in the CBD for instance. Brisbane's provincial status relative to both the Australian and International art 'centres' - was just as repressive and 'real' as the Bjelke Petersen regime. It was something that visual artists' discussed and it informed a lot of the artist run activity. There was a politics of space - creating discursive as well as practical spaces for things to happen - that was as strong a current as any State politics.

Paul Andrew:

Lets go back to your time in Brisbane, before the exodus, so many creatives left Queensland during this 1980's period, for you it was the malevolent series of male violence and attacks against women, were there other contributing cultural factors to your leaving Brisbane?

Jasmine Hirst:

I also left Brisbane because I couldn't deal with the extreme conservatism of that city. Also I was a teenager and wanted to leave home. I wanted to go to New York but instead I chose Sydney. It was absolutely the right move for me.

Within a short amount of time I found my soul mates, other punks and artists and musicians. A whole new world opened for me. I found people who accepted me for being me. I was free of the judgmental nature of the people I went to school and QLD UNI with. I blossomed. We are social creatures and we all need somewhere to belong. And I found my society in Darlinghurst, Sydney.

The Ephemera Interviews:
with Jasmine Hirst, June 9,
2015

[http://www.remix.org.au/
interview-jasmine-hirst/](http://www.remix.org.au/interview-jasmine-hirst/)

Paul Andrew
January 17 at 2:59pm
Brian hi thanks for your interview,

Peter Anderson

"Many people left Brisbane to follow an art career elsewhere - usually within an art 'centre' - and that decision was more likely to be the result of addressing art industry politics than addressing Queensland State politics." Brian, I think this is so important ... the discussions about staying (rather than going) were so often focused on building an context for art practice ... I think that Michele's earlier "Return To Sender" exhibition might have overstated the case for the politics being the determining factor.

Lisa Anderson

some of us left because of the politics..not just the finding a centre thingie. Getting arrested every other day..stabbed in the back for being a lesbian, (literally) hiding the print machine, police closing down parties, etc etc

STRANDED DOING THE STRAND

Luke Roberts

Whilst this is a response to your request Brian for a single word that might sum up ARIs in 1980s Brisbane, you'll read that I'm responding in a more extended way to the question. I ask the reader to at least try to understand why this era still rattles me after all these years.

STRANDED is the word that comes to mind, a loaded 1970s word to be using for latter day (read 1980s) Queensland organisations (read Artist Run Initiatives/ARIs). There are a number of reasons for me to suggest this word, some obvious, others maybe not so and some also contentious. We certainly were quite ISOLATED at that time in Queensland, both geographically and politically. The recent documentary on ABC about the groundbreaking punk band, The Saints gave a condensed and reasonably accurate account of the awful political situation in Queensland in the 1970s and 1980s. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4GASQ7Sv3I> It rattled the cages of the past, awakening 'demons' and put much into perspective, for me at least. In its way it was a kind of exorcism not only rattling, but also opening cage doors and giving much-needed acknowledgement of how things were. Recognition of horror goes a long way to healing post-traumatic stress disorder. It would be instructive to all of us to view this documentary and be reminded, and for those who weren't here to be given a quick lesson in Queensland's recent ugly past and be appalled.

Livin' in a world insane

They cut out some heart and some brain

Been filling it up with dirt

Yeah baby dunno how it hurts

To be stranded on your own

Stranded far from home, all right

[The Saints, (I'm) Stranded, lyrics written and composed by Chris Bailey and Ed Kueper, (1977).]

It was focused, understandably, on a particular subject, namely The Saints. However in describing the terrible background The Saints came out of it gave little indication of the suppression that minorities in Queensland were subjected to and presented the general state of affairs as a somewhat heteronormative left against a rigidly heterocentric, fascist regime. In this respect I'm reminded that despite the perceived leaps forward there is much that remains in place. Consider the current attitudes of the likes of Cory Bernardi and the Christian Lobby and their efforts to stop funding to protect GLBTQ and other teenagers from bullying at high school.

The concentration on the 1980s ARIs in this forum may result in part from the upcoming UQAM exhibition and simply underlines a certain weighting. (I appreciate that ARI Remix plans to extend its scope from 1980 to 2000 and is welcoming in its embrace. The greater input currently deals with the 1980 - 1990 and I am responding to your request Brian for a word that might sum up the 80s ARIs.)

STRANDED. Yes there were gay (GLBTQI) individuals that were involved in the ARIs of the 1980s here in Brisbane, but where were the overt political works? Where were the visible art protests? Perhaps they did exist and I'm simply unaware of them. No offence intended to Virginnia, Paul, Hiram etc. Where were the Aboriginal artists in these 1980 ARIs? I'm aware that at least one ARI artist (Jeanelle Hurst) was involved in a street march and I'm keen to hear what other kinds of political works came out of the ARIs. One can ask, "Do ARIs have to be politically focused?" or is it a case of "Keep calm and carry on"? ["Keep calm and carry on", a motivational poster produced by the British Government during World War II.]

I left Brisbane in early 1984 in self-imposed exile and returned in late 1987. Effectively I was away for four years. I'll admit that I couldn't possibly know all of what went on in those four years. However I did return to a certain status quo though the winds of change were palpable. Brisbane had grown up to some degree. The much-loathed Bjelke-Petersen regime had finally been disgraced and was on its way out. A new energy was apparent in the artworld here. This was in part due to the ARIs and the fact that the eyes of the world were looking towards Brisbane and Australia with the upcoming Expo88. Terms such as "post-modernism" were in lavish usage and the Aboriginal renaissance was well and truly visible. Women's rights were also being acknowledged and demanded. There were signs of a Matriarchy developing in Brisbane and using pejorative terms such as 'gay mafia'. I can name the Brisbane matriarchs of the time, but I'm still puzzled by who the Gay Mafioso were. No doubt I was considered one of them (read 'One of Them').

Gay and Queer politics were given a flowering in the 1990s and then packed away as a kind of 'been-there-done-that-lets-move-on'. 'The Queers have had their moment in the sun'.



IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Alice Jitterbug (Germaine Greer)*, Melbourne 1974.
Camera: Ron Ridge.

Postcard series,
From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement), installation detail *Entartete Kunst III, Where did you go to My Lovely?*

Postcards issued by the artist for *One Square Mile*, Museum of Brisbane 2003.

I WITNESS/OCULIST WITNESS II (LAL)
Atlantis Lola universal soldier. Where do you go to my lovely?
'... Satellite of Love ...'
—Reed

I was there at the first sighting. It was 1974 and a brisk damp breeze blew down St Kilda Road on an autumn evening in Melbourne. Outside the National Gallery a Balaclava tram stopped and She appeared.

She was Big, masses of rich jet black curls, towering over others, long shapely legs in platform heels, skirt split to the thigh, dark flashing eyes, vivid red mouth. She seemed other worldly, part goddess, part dervish, part whore. This was Alice Jitterbug, conceived and tempered in the stifling heat and repression of that distant northern city, searching for life and love in the cold south.

Later that evening, an elderly gentleman, dapper in a three piece suit, approached her and asked, 'Excuse me Miss, are you Germaine Greer?'. Alice was gracious, but non-committal. He apologised. She continued up along the 'Paris end' of Collins Street ...

Larry Strange
Asianist and traveller 2003

www.alicejitterbug.com

IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Alice Jitterbug (Germaine Greer)*, Melbourne 1974. Camera: Ron Ridge. Postcards series from *A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*, installation detail *Entartete Kunst III, Where did you go to my lovely?*, Museum of Brisbane 2003





IMAGE: Luke Roberts,
Starman 1973.
Camera: Ron Ridge.

Postcard series,
From A to B and Back Again
(*Tar and Cement*), installation
detail *Entartete Kunst III*,
Where did you go to My
Lovely?

Postcards issued by the artist
for *One Square Mile*, Museum
of Brisbane 2003.

I WITNESS / OCULIST WITNESS I (CARO)

Walk on the wild side calling occupants of interplanetary craft
'... a crack in the sky and a hand reaching down to me ...'

—Bowie

I was both witness and attendant to Luke Roberts' performance on his 21st birthday, Yom Kippur 1973 – coincidentally the beginning of the Six Day War.

My presence at the party was already a transgressive act involving a lie about my destination even before I boarded the 176 bus from Lota – cutting an incongruous figure in a 1930s evening gown. You had to make an effort ...

And was it after all extraordinary? – you bet it was. A large and disparate mix of friends, fans, followers, lovers and curiosities gathered together in one of those early '70s Brisbane parties that to this day make you shake your head and wonder whether it had happened at all.

David Bowie's 'Starman' channelled the evening's encounter. Larry Strange and I drew back the red velvet curtains to welcome our cosmic visitor with a shower of stars ... He gyrated hypnotically, stripping down to a G-string ... I was as gob smacked, enthralled and delighted as everyone else.

Caroline Greenway

Director, Regional Cooperation International Telecommunications
Canberra 2003

www.alicejitterbug.com

IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Starman* 1973. Camera: Ron Ridge. Postcard series *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*, installation detail *Entartete Kunst III: Where did you go to My Lovely?*, Museum of Brisbane 2003



I realise that this is a venting of sorts. The trials of the past are conjured up by these memories and events. We were all affected by the horrors of that time, but I ask, "Were there laws in place specifically aimed at denying and denigrating your sexuality and also new ones devised in the 1980s?" Not only was it illegal to be gay, have gay sex, cross-dress [My performance persona, Alice Jitterbug wore female underwear. This was transgressive and illegal in some states. One could wear the clothing of the opposite sex, but men in particular had to wear male underwear to demonstrate that it was just a costume. I've tried to find the particular law/s in this respect to give specific reference here. At this distance in time I'm not sure if the legal situation was most vigorously pursued in Tasmania, even though we felt vulnerable to Queensland as well. Nonetheless drag queens and cross-dressers were subjected to whatever behaviour the police wished to dish out should anyone in drag have the misfortune to come into their custody.] in Queensland, but also in 1985 the Bjelke-Petersen government passed an atrocious, homophobic amendment to the Liquor Act known as the Deviant Law. Most people don't remember the fact or weren't even aware of it. Care Factor Nil I suppose, if one wasn't affected. It is also relevant to mention the World Health Organisation listed homosexuality as a mental illness to be eradicated and only removed it from its books in 1990. The Bjelke-Petersen regime and its police henchmen were obsessed with homosexuality and those other pinkos the unionists and communist reds.

Post the Bjelke-Petersen era, in the 1990s, I was wrongly accused by a member of the artworld as presenting as a victim. This writing isn't about outlining hierarchies of suffering, which I don't believe in anyway or an attempt to establish a victimhood status. We all suffered. I'm not sure how much it is appreciated that when anyone is discriminated against we all suffer. I simply want to remind the reader that this was an ugly era in Queensland politics and a disgrace to Australia in general. It was not, from my perspective, a period that I have many particularly pleasant thoughts about. I felt my youth and my dreams and those of my friends and any young Queenslanders were sacrificed to the political expediency of a grotesquely provincial experiment in fascism.

The specific dates of the upcoming UQAM ARI show simply underlines for me and others, the 'perceived indifference' and lack of understanding of what openly gay (LGBTQI) artists have had to deal with. By locating the scope of the exhibition between the Commonwealth Games of 1982 and Expo 88 the openly queer ARIs of E.M.U (1979-1981) and AGLASSOFWATER (1988 - 1992) are effectively sidelined. I understand these ARIs may be given a mention in the catalogue. This is not to be seen as an attack on the curator Peter (Anderson) either, but simply pointing out that the choice of dates can be perceived as a convenient decision about a heavily politicized era and could be interpreted as an example of the sidelining, editing and Totschweigetaktik [Totschweigetaktik ..."death by silence" is... "an astonishingly effective tactic for killing off creative work or fresh ideas or even news stories. You don't criticise or engage with what's being said or produced or expressed; instead you deprive someone and their work or opinion of the oxygen of attention". <http://gatesofvienna.net/2010/08/totschweigetaktik-death-by-silence/>] that still dogs the tracks of LGBTQI history here and continues to leave us STRANDED.

Naturally I'm encouraged that there is a concerted interest in recording the achievements and struggles of that controversial time. I give particular acknowledgement to Paul (Andrew) here and his Trojan Horse efforts in documenting the ARIs and bringing the existing wealth of peoples' voices and archives into the public arena. Nonetheless it still remains a period of history that is difficult for me to revisit.

Even though I attempted to seek political asylum in the Netherlands in the 1980s I returned to Queensland. Queensland after all wasn't a country, despite Bjelke-Petersen's threats to secede. Early on in the 1970s HDH Pope Alice had seceded from Brisbane and 'cordoned off' a section of the city proclaiming it Vitanza City after the tyre service in the Old Rivoli Theatre in New Farm. This conceptual gesture was neither enough to sustain me nor give me a sense of security. I sold my shop and house and travelled as far away from Brisbane as I could go, to "the Port of Amsterdam, where the sailors all meet". [Jacques Brel, Amsterdam, (1964) English lyrics as sung by David Bowie. Wikipedia state: Bowie's studio version was released as the B-side to his single "Sorrow" in October 1973. ... Brel originally stated that he didn't want to "give his songs to fags", and refused to meet Bowie, who nevertheless admired him.[6]] Before reaching the Netherlands I spent time in Tokyo, London, Ireland, Paris and Germany.

I was determined to stay away for at least two years and had a desire never to return. I'd only been out of the country once before on a two-week holiday and the prospect of surviving the other side of the world was a little daunting. Others had done it before so why not me. Brisbane had not given me the proper professional grounding that I required as an artist. Despite having had a solo show at the Institute of Modern Art in 1982, which was a rare event for a Queenslanders then, when I approached the Australia Council two years into my time away, they didn't know who I was and subsequently I didn't receive a grant. I know this as a member of the Australia Council told me when I returned to Australia.

Queensland has had a rocky relationship with the Australia Council and its funding program. The evidence would be there on their records. Queensland was the “poor relation” and at that time the laughing stock of the rest of Australia, except in Tasmania where they thought Joh was some kind of peanut god.

It was liberating to be the other side of the world in other cultures and countries. I ran my house on the top floors of an old clock factory in Monikenstraat in Amsterdam’s Red Light District somewhat as an ARI. I exhibited my work there and that of others and held events. I also exhibited in other unconventional space around the city and did eventually come to the notice of art dealers. My first public exhibition ‘Name Dropping’ was in a space opposite Central Station. Towards the end of my time in Amsterdam I exhibited ‘Plan 9’ at the advertising business Compagnons on one of the canals. ‘Plan 9’ took its title from ‘Plan 9 from Outer Space’, a Golden Turkey of a film that some of you would be familiar with. I worked with other artists and led as Bohemian a life as my need to earn a living allowed.

I was what was known as a ‘black worker’ and washed dishes and cooked in a restaurant to keep body and heart together. I was illegal in that I’d overstayed my visa and could have been deported at anytime. However the Netherlands, more than other countries, had a more lenient approach. Nonetheless there were regular deportations. There were times that I wished Queensland was a country so that I could’ve hoped to achieve political asylum in my new home. Support for South Africa was growing and Bjelke-Petersen and his regime were not given favourable press in Europe. One of my artworks of the time was a cartoon of two semi-abstract figures talking. One said, “Joh was a country remember”. The other replied, “Yes, we remember.” Ba Boom! After all the National Party had once been the Country Party.



**I WITNESS / OCULIST WITNESS IV (Long Tall Sal)
Macho man and all the young dudes re-make/re-model
Saturday Night Fever**

*‘... love machine lumbers through desolation rows ...’
—Bowie*

This is the scene. The first time I saw Alice was at the Silver Dollar or Sweenies or the New Guinea Bar or was it Willie’s Bazaar or the Hacienda? It was 1973 or ‘74 or ‘75. I can’t quite remember.

Alice was a wild black leopard in platforms. Style guru Rozita Tequila restrained her via a diamond studded leash.

This is my image of the event – Barry White ‘Love’s Theme’ playing on the sound system – over in the corner, semi-conscious, Peter and Nigel in snake skin boots and tight blue jeans. Alice snarled. The next five years are a blur ... I think we got married.

Michael Lane
Counsellor and former drug addict
Brisbane 2003

www.alicejitterbug.com

I however remember my great delight in seeing the Go-Betweens and their 'Spring Hill Fair' being listed as upcoming events when I visited Hamburg. Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds were the favourites of Berlin and Leigh Bowery was creating his legend in London. Fifi L'Amour and David DeMost moved to Amsterdam during my time there. They performed in Berlin for the 750th Anniversary of Berlin. I travelled there with them and met my hero Nina Hagen as I had backstage access being involved with Fifi's wardrobe and a friend of mine did their make-up. That friend Lesley Vanderwalt won this year's Oscar for make-up. Yes, name dropping again.

After four years away I was looking to move from Amsterdam to what might be greener pastures. Barcelona was in my sights. It was a fascinating city and Spain was throwing off the shackles of its own extended period of fascism. I didn't have much by way of savings and would be looking for accommodation and a job in a place where I didn't speak the language. I could also see that if I were to remain in Europe I would have to become a 'European' artist. Australia meanwhile was blossoming and much to my surprise even the young French wanted to travel to Australia. From day one in Paris it was obvious that Australia had become **branché**. Backpacks in the shape of koalas were everywhere; Aboriginal Art and golden beaches had opened up the eyes of the Europeans to a new world down under.

Reports were coming in that the horrors of the Bjelke-Petersen era were ending and the jig was up for the National Party. I decided to return to metaphorically knit like a latter-day Madame Defarge as heads rolled. I had to return to make sure I hadn't nightmared (sic) it all up. It was imperative for me to go through the necessary processes at ground zero to unburden myself. I'm still doing that. It is grist for my creative mill after all, whether I want it to be or not. I had seriously considered suing the National Party for mental anguish. Their spin-doctors would have had a great time with that idea.

Yes, we can hear the violins playing and we can either put lipstick on the pig that was the socio-political environment of that time or attempt to tell it like it was and achieve some healing and truly move on. I've set up strategies to avoid being continually enthralled with the hypnotic lure of painful emotions, past events, and any worries about the future. At heart I'm an optimist. I appreciate that happiness is a decision. However I'm also an historian with a belief that we can only really move on by acknowledging. My work has centered on hidden histories as much as anything else. We currently live in a world operating around great lies where the truth is marginalized and that which doesn't suit the Agenda is also marginalized and the marginalized are in turn used to consolidate the Agenda.

Marginalisation was forced upon me at birth. Of course I didn't realize it at the time, but its ugly shape began to be seen way before I even recognized it for what it was. I have taken it upon myself as a badge of honour, a *raison d'être* for my very existence. I am an activist for the marginalized. I understand that most of us feel we don't belong. I however was told in no uncertain terms from a young age that I didn't and don't belong.

The ARIs of the 1980s were admirable in that they happened at all, given the great cultural indifference that Queensland has for almost anything of its own. Whilst so much has come out of Queensland there remains an atmosphere of 'nothing to see here. Keep moving', 'nothing happened' or at least 'nothing good happened or happens'. On the other hand however, as a detective in Andrew McGahan's **Last Drinks** noted, Queensland will bend over for anyone or anything from the outside world. [Andrew McGahan, *Last Drinks*, a reflection upon the endemic political corruption in Queensland in the 1980s, and the aftermath of the famous Fitzgerald Inquiry.]

For the show 'One Square Mile' featuring Brisbane's minorities, which Michele (Helmrich) co-curated for the opening of the Museum of Brisbane I produced a series of postcards with witness statements on the back. This was yet another attempt to establish my own history and that of my peers. Richard Bell, who co-curated the exhibition, said to me he'd rather be born aboriginal than gay and freely admitted that he was a recovering homophobe. Richard added clarification when I recently asked permission to quote him. "I said that in the context of the situation in the 1970s Joh era with the rampant gay bashings. It was a harrowing time for many, many people but during that time I thought the cops hated gays more than they hated us blackfellas." [Facebook messages with Richard Bell, Feb 25 2016]

IMAGE: Luke Roberts,
Alice in Singapore, from the
photographic performance
series, *Transformer*, 1977.
Still camera: Jane Ulrick.
Video edit: Daniel Sala.

Postcard series,
From A to B and Back Again
(*Tar and Cement*), installation
detail *Entartete Kunst III*,
Where did you go to My
Lovely?

Postcards issued by the artist
for *One Square Mile*, Museum
of Brisbane 2003.



I still feel somewhat alone in endeavour to establish my story and that of others. Despite my achievements and being included in shows like 'One Square Mile', there remains that strong sense of 'death by silence' (Totschweigetaktik). Perhaps this void can never be filled for any of us. Do we ever have a sense that our story has been fully told? These days I'm far more at peace with myself and my communities than I ever was as a youth. Have I settled for less or is it simply that after spending several extended periods of time in the outside world Brisbane has more pluses than minuses for the moment.

Now that the past has 'safely' gone we often have a distorted view of it and make it more grandiose than it was, perhaps even more terrible than it was, change the emphasis, and even change the goalposts. We turn it into mythology. In its own way it also becomes STRANDED. The older we become the greater the heroes we were in our youth. Because there wasn't enough published writing and other serious witnessing in film and photography at the time we forget detail and see it through the lens of the present. We may even imagine we had mobile phones back then. However some things were very real.

In closing I'll add these extracts from Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Queensland

"While other states in Australia began to liberalise their anti-homosexuality laws in the 1970s and 1980s, Queensland was ruled by the socially conservative National Party of Joh Bjelke-Petersen.[4] His government refused to countenance changes to the law, describing gay people as "child molesters" and "perverts".[4] At this time government policy was hostile; the Education Department refused to hire the openly gay teaching graduate Greg Weir and in 1985 the government passed an amendment to the Liquor Act making it an offence for publicans to serve alcohol to "perverts, deviants, child molesters and drug users" or to allow them to remain on licensed premises.[4] The anti-homosexuality laws were enforced by police throughout the 1980s, including against men who were in same-sex relationships and were not aware that their private conduct was illegal.[4]

...The Fitzgerald Inquiry was commissioned in the late 1980s in Bjelke-Petersen's temporary absence, following allegations of corruption and misconduct in the Queensland Police. The inquiry subsequently investigated the entire system of government. One of its recommendations was that a newly established Criminal Justice Commission review the laws governing voluntary sexual behaviour, including homosexual activity.[7]

This proposal was an issue in the 1989 state election. National Party leader Russell Cooper, whose party was heavily implicated in corruption by the Fitzgerald Inquiry, tried to galvanise socially conservative support using his party's opposition to the legalisation of homosexual conduct. During the election campaign he claimed that his party's corruption was a "secondary issue" to moral issues like abortion and homosexuality, adding that the then-Opposition ALP's policy of decriminalisation would send a "flood of gays crossing the border from the Southern states".[8] These advertisements were satirised by Labor ads depicting Cooper as a wild-eyed reactionary and a clone of Bjelke-Petersen and/or a puppet of Nationals party president Sir Robert Sparkes.[9] Cooper's party was defeated in the election.

...Goss' government largely implemented the changes in the Criminal Code and Another Act Amendment Act 1990, which was passed by the parliament on 29 November 1990.[4] However, a truly equal age of consent was not implemented. Queensland's age of consent is 16 for oral and vaginal sex. By contrast, anal intercourse, or "sodomy", involving any person aged under 18, whether male or female, is a criminal offence, punishable with up to 14 years imprisonment.[11] Patterson described this as a "pragmatic political response" to the objections of religious lobby groups, who largely equated homosexuality with sodomy. [12]

For further reading on the GLBTQI history of Queensland I recommend Clive Moore's 'Sunshine and Rainbows' published by University of Queensland Press (February 1, 2001) ISBN-10: 0702232084 ISBN-13: 978-0702232084



IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Alice and Gina* 1977. Alice Jitterbug and Gina Gorshus, Arthur Street, New Farm, Brisbane. Detail from a film by Sue Rattle. Still photography David Sandison.

Postcard series, *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*, installation detail *Entartete Kunst III, Where did you go to My Lovely?* Postcards issued by the artist for *One Square Mile*, Museum of Brisbane 2003.

I WITNESS / OCULIST WITNESS III (GINA)

Life on Mars for dancing queen (can you hear me Pope Alice?)

'... pancake factor number one, eyeliner rose hips and lip gloss ...'

—Reed

Everything Ms Bug and I did was an expression of our sense of fun, but our fun was taken from us. We were walking works of art, but it often caused such anger and hatred.

One night in the 1970s I was carted from Rowes Arcade into the watch-house for the amusement of the police. They felt safe in doing whatever they liked. There was no safety net for the likes of me.

In full make-up I was paraded naked around the watch-house then bashed into a cell occupied by three of my intoxicated, indigenous brothers. They were even more brutalised than I. Our captors sneeringly encouraged them to project their anger at me. In recognition of my 'royal' status these fellow detainees threw me 'bouquets' produced from their bodily functions.

There was no official record of the event. What was fact was made fiction, what was fiction was made 'fact' by a regime in denial.

I prayed to Pope Alice for liberation.

Gina Gorshus

Saint, frock artiste and survivor
Brisbane 2003

www.alicejitterbug.com

IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Alice and Gina* 1977. Alice Jitterbug and Gina Gorshus, Arthur Street, New Farm, Brisbane. Detail from a film by Sue Rattle. Still photography David Sandison. Postcard series *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*. Installation detail *Entartete Kunst III: Where did you go to my Lovely?*. Museum of Brisbane 2003





IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Untitled (The Great Gatsby)* 1974. Left to right: Geraldine of Geneva, Sissy d'Arbenville (aka Alice Jitterbug), Crystal Palace (aka Rozita Tequila), Judith McC at the Top of the State, Brisbane.

Postcard series, *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*, installation detail *Entartete Kunst III, Where did you go to My Lovely?* Postcards issued by the artist for *One Square Mile*, Museum of Brisbane 2003.

I WITNESS / OCULIST WITNESS V (ROZITA)

Tar and cement, Railroad Gin and Nutbush City limits

'... you hit me with a flower ...'

—Reed

One morning in 1976 (?) there was a knock on our front door in Astor Terrace. I was feeding the cats and recovering from a big night at the Silver Dollar with Joey Bolero and that 'charming' raconteur Alice Jitterbug.

Detective Sergeant Murphy and a snarling lieutenant blocked the sunlight in the doorway. There'd been a murder at Lennons Hotel and my sleeping lover was a suspect. Apparently he bore a striking resemblance to the three almost identical identikit photographs of the alleged murderer. There were other disturbing details. The suspect wore clogs, smoked a particular brand of cigarettes, carried a shoulder bag and was suspected of being gay.

My protesting lover, once roused, descended from the upstairs bedroom for a grilling. 'Did we ever go to gay bars? Did we know any gay people? How many gay people did we think there were in Brisbane?'

Thinking back to the previous evening I said, 'About 300.'

Detective Sergeant Murphy raised his eyebrows. 'And what particular street would you be referring to luv?'

Rozita Tequila
Style guru and chanteuse
Brisbane 2003

www.alicejitterbug.com

IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Untitled (The Great Gatsby)* 1974. Left to right: Geraldine of Geneva, Sissy d'Arbenville (aka Alice Jitterbug), Crystal Palace (aka Rozita Tequila), Judith McC at the Top of the State, Brisbane. Postcard series *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*, installation detail *Entartete Kunst III: Where did you go to my Lovely?*, Museum of Brisbane 2003





IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Alice Jitterbug (Warrior Princess)*, from the photographic performance series, *Transformer*, 1977. Still camera: Jane Ulrick. Video edit: Daniel Sala.

Postcard series, *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*, installation detail *Entartete Kunst III, Where did you go to My Lovely?*

Postcards issued by the artist for *One Square Mile*, Museum of Brisbane 2003.

I WITNESS / OCULIST WITNESS VI (Wonder Boy)

Lucy in the sky with diamond dogs (can you hear me Major Tom?)

'... make way for the homo superior ...'

—Bowie

'You try something for the first time only once', he said, showing me black and white photographs from an unconventional life.

We were in a downtown Brisbane cafe – the Cubana, the Palms, Wilson's 1900 or Little Boys – one of those erased places that, but for memory, might just as well have never been.

'Camera Lucida in the sky with diamonds,' I thought, 'embroiderer of fish scales, Space Face to Lady Stardust ... so this is the guy they say, whose diary David Bowie reads'.

Unfair were the times, subtly abrasive like Jiff in KY. Days of Mott the Hoople and street marches; nights of iguanas in 'the crutch-hungry dark' of Fortitude Valley. I was sixteen ...

'Easy mistake to make officer, but I swear that he had long black hair and eyes of brown; while on his head he wore a crown, and yes, now that you mention it, big feet for a diva.'

Gary Carsley
Professional dilettante
Sydney/Amsterdam 2003

www.alicejitterbug.com

IMAGE: Luke Roberts, *Alice Jitterbug (Warrior Princess)* 1977. Detail from *Alice Jitterbug/Transformer* DVD 2003. Still camera: Jane Ulrick. Video edit: Daniel Sala. Postcards series *From A to B and Back Again (Tar and Cement)*. Installation detail *Entartete Kunst III: Where did you go to my Lovely?* Museum of Brisbane 2003.



HISTORY

ONE WORD

Philip Toydog

ERSTWHILE



adjective:

- 1. former.
- “the erstwhile president of the company”
- synonyms : former, old, past, one-time, sometime, as was, ex-, late, then; previous, prior, foregoing; formal quondam; archaic whilom
- “written in memory of the composer’s erstwhile teacher”
- antonyms : present, future

adverb archaic

adverb: erstwhile

- 1. formerly.
- “Mary Anderson, erstwhile the queen of America’s stage”

Philip Toydog

Just think what YOU will be able to do if you start an artwork now and WAIT 25 years for some Transformative Technology to be available to finish it with !!



Michael BouwMan

Gonna be hard to transfer those jpeg files to fifth dimensional holograms, but I’m sure the bioport app will be available

Philip Toydog

for FREE when you register your Samsung MindScanner!



NEC Monitor, Sinclair QL, Oregon Pine Table, Artist Adam Wolter, That Space, 1987. Photo Courtesy Paul Andrew.

Paul Andrew

And the notion of archiving and photo documentation Gary, was this important for you during your Brisbane years, so as not to forget, to obtain funding and so on?

Gary Warner

The answer is no – everything was so random, so infused with a ‘no future’ rhetoric that I just didn’t pay enough attention to it – I remember being amazed by John Nixon’s assiduous documentation of every single thing he ever did, whether it was a show for one hour in a friends apartment or showing at Documenta.

Interview with Gary WARNER, February 13, 2016
The Ephemera INTERVIEWS
<http://www.remix.org.au/interview-with-gary-warner/>



John Willstead

i think you have started something. It will finish of its own accord, in its own time

AND



Skeletones poster designed and printed by Shaun McGrath, 1985. The Skeletones were a 1980s Ipswich/Brisbane band and a regular at the 4zzz Joint Efforts before relocating to Sydney.



Shaun McGrath

Skeletones moved to Sydney from Brizzy in 85. We lived in Redfern. Just down the road was a community centre with a screenprint workshop.

I had been playing around with printing in Brisbane and was naturally drawn to graphic design. I became a signwriter later in life after about 15 years working as a screenprinter. But at the time I didn't know much. Shortly after that most of our band got jobs at Mambo Surfwear. It was like a rocknroll club. The boss was Dare Jennings. Part owner of Phantom Records. He made a lot of money from Phantom T-shirts that we printed too. Also we did tour shirts for loads of big bands. So many musos worked there. Members of the Sunny Boys, Mental as Anything, Hoodoo Gurus and lots more underground bands. Everyone made their own band t-shirts, posters and album cover art after work. And then went out and rocked the night away. I went on to have some pretty handy skills thanks to all the experience there.

Brian Doherty

Thanks Shaun. Objects rarely tell their own stories. I started out thinking the poster must have been printed at Activities because it was an open access studio and a lot of people went through there. It has been a fascinating process looking back through these objects how our lives evolved – one thing leading to another in such a chancy way. I remember going to workshops years ago where we were asked to plot out a career path for 5 to 10 years and how we would get there – Ha! Any way thanks for the information. Are you OK if I use your words as well as the image?

Shaun McGrath

For sure mate. I like your point of view. Cheers

ONE WORD

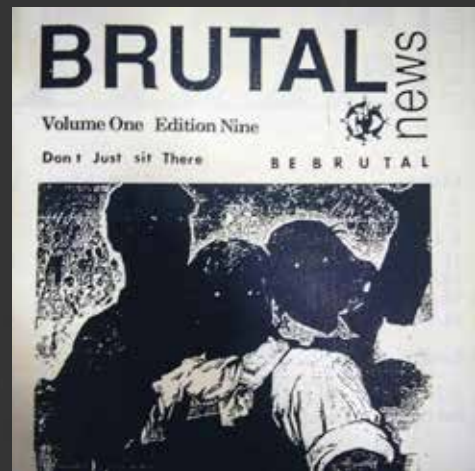
Adam Boyd



BUTOSIC

A diseased state resulting in rapid death, contracted

by chewing on the bones of the dead.



ONE WORD

Bek Schembri



AMBITIOUS

I came a bit later to the scene, 1989, when I opened and

ran Galerie Brutal with David Stafford at 21 Gipps St Fortitude Valley. We ran it till 1992 showing a lot of installation and holding events. All of the artists we worked with, and including myself and David, were focused on long term careers. We self published, worked the scene and promoted ourselves at any opportunity. It was a great time for us, doing what we felt passionate about and not having to answer to anyone.

AGENCY



Contemporary Artspace
20 Charlotte St
Gallery Hours
Tues - Sun
1pm - 6pm
Aug 6 - 17

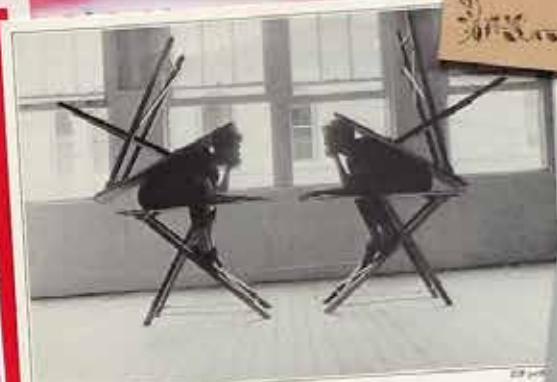
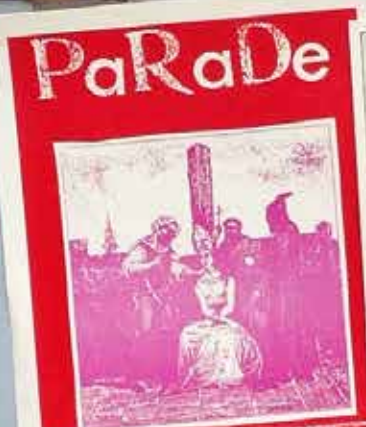
photography

REGAINS \$39.

brisbane city



Lohan Ramsey
Presents

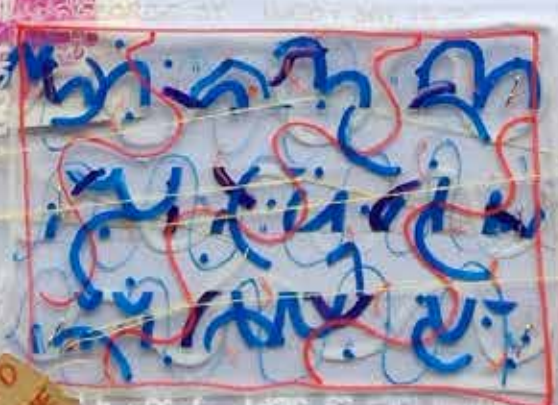


LR/EL
MARK JOHN PAUL
WORLD'S MOST
HELD TO ACCOUNT
WORST

Belltower
x
&
quasimodo
THE GROOVE



SIGN OF THINGS TO COME...



bell tower

TO BRIAN D
LOLE HOLLE

THAT
CONTEMPORARY SPACE
20 CHARLOTTE STREET, BRISBANE 4000
12842 TUESDAY TO SATURDAY, ONE FIVE PM

1. Sept
Dear
We would like
to have you as
curator, we
inclusion in
incurred by
to be held
The letters
form
They should
(and not to
by post or
10 Oct.
We hope for
Your friends
Morgan
H
GROVE & H

